

= Terry Pratchett 's The Colour of Magic =

Terry Pratchett 's The Colour of Magic is a two @-@ part television adaptation of the bestselling novels The Colour of Magic and The Light Fantastic by Terry Pratchett . The fantasy film was produced for Sky1 by The Mob , a small British studio , starring David Jason , Sean Astin , Tim Curry and Christopher Lee as the voice of Death . Vadim Jean both adapted the screenplay from Pratchett 's original novels , and served as director .

Terry Pratchett 's The Colour of Magic was broadcast on Sky One , and in high definition on Sky 1 HD , on Easter Sunday ( 23 March ) and 24 March 2008 . The first part drew audiences of 1 @.@ 5 million , with the second part attracting up to 1 @.@ 1 million viewers . The film was well received by fans , but drew mixed reviews from critics , who generally praised the acting talent of the all @-@ star cast , but criticised the film 's script and direction .

The production is the second adaptation of Pratchett 's novels as a live @-@ action film , following the successful release of Hogfather on Sky 1 over Christmas 2006 . A third adaptation , Going Postal , followed in 2010 with more planned for the future .

= = Plot = =

The plot of the adaptation largely follows the first two Discworld novels , The Colour of Magic and The Light Fantastic . The story follows the exploits of Rincewind , a wizard who is expelled from Unseen University after spending 40 years failing to learn even the most basic magic . In fact , Rincewind 's head holds one of the eight spells from the Octavo , the most powerful spellbook in the Discworld , and he has been unable to learn others because " they were afraid to be in the same head " as the Octavo spell . Rincewind is forced by the Patrician of Ankh @-@ Morpork to act as a local guide for Twoflower , a property insurance salesman and the Discworld 's first tourist , who is visiting Ankh @-@ Morpork , and Twoflower 's luggage , which is made from Sapient Pearwood and can run on its own legs .

After a misunderstanding over an insurance policy causes the owner of the inn where Twoflower and Rincewind are staying to commit arson , the pair flee the city . They proceed across the disc , encountering a variety of mythical creatures , most of which lead to near @-@ death experiences for Rincewind . Fortunately for Rincewind , the Octavo spell in his head precludes him from actually dying , resulting in several comic encounters with Death . Meanwhile , a significant power struggle is occurring within the Unseen University . Narrator Brian Cox explains that " in the competitive world of wizardry , the way to the top is via dead men 's pointy shoes ... even if you have to empty them yourself " . The power @-@ hungry wizard Ymper Trymon ( Tim Curry ) plans to become Archchancellor . Trymon assassinates several faculty members but is thwarted by the incumbent Archchancellor , Galder Weatherwax , and his superior magical knowledge of the Octavo . Trymon knows there is no point in deposing the Archchancellor until he learns how to control the Octavo , which is growing increasingly restless as Rincewind ( and the spell in his head ) moves further away from Ankh @-@ Morpork and into greater danger .

Rincewind and Twoflower are eventually washed rimwards to the kingdom of Krull , which lies on the very rim of the disc , where they are taken prisoner . The astronomers and " astrozoologists " of Krull have for many years attempted to determine the sex of Great A 'Tuin , and are on the verge of launching a space vehicle to carry a pair of " cosmocheilonians " on a new mission over the rim of the disc . Unaware of this , Rincewind and Twoflower take the place of the two cosmonauts and ' escape ' to the spacecraft , which they accidentally launch , catapulting them off the rim . The prospect of losing the eighth spell in this fashion prompts the Octavo to act , causing A 'Tuin to perform a barrel roll to recapture Rincewind , landing the pair near the centre of the disc . Watching the Octavo 's restlessness , the Archchancellor reveals his intention to use the Rite of AshkEnte to ask Death about the Octavo and also about a large red star that has recently appeared in the sky . Now knowing all he needs , Trymon throws Weatherwax from the Tower of Art and becomes Archchancellor in his place .

The red star grows steadily larger , and the worried people of Ankh @-@ Morpork mob the Unseen

University because the wizards appear unable to save the disc from it . Trymon learns from Death that all eight spells of the Octavo must be said together at the solstice to save the disc from destruction and that Great A 'Tuin is flying towards the red star for a purpose that Death says is " nothing to do with me . " Trymon dispatches a group of mercenaries , led by Herrena , to capture Rincewind and retrieve the eighth spell , along with a force of wizards . Meanwhile , Rincewind and Twoflower encounter Cohen the Barbarian ( 87 years old and retired ) , and Twoflower rescues Bethan , a human sacrifice in a druid ritual . A battle between the wizards and Rincewind leaves Twoflower in a coma ; Rincewind rescues him from Death 's door , and Cohen in turn rescues Rincewind and Twoflower from Herrena and the mercenaries .

The four take a ferry to Ankh @-@ Morpork , where the populace is rioting because the star is now larger than the disc 's own sun . Trymon assembles the senior wizards of the University , and orders them to unchain the Octavo . When they release the spellbook , Trymon steals it and locks the wizards in its chamber . Rincewind releases them and they follow Trymon to the top of the Tower of Art , afraid that he will attempt to say the spells and that they will destroy his mind ( and the rest of the world ) . Trymon , however , says the first seven spells successfully and gains near @-@ ultimate power , and turns the wizards to stone . Rincewind fights Trymon , who is eventually killed , returning the spells to the Octavo . Rincewind expunges the eighth spell from his head , completing the set , and reads the entire spellbook .

The red star is finally revealed as a world @-@ turtle breeding ground : the Octavo spells prompt several eggs orbiting the star to hatch into juvenile discworlds , which follow Great A 'Tuin as it returns to deep space . The narrator tidies up a few loose ends : the Octavo is eaten by the luggage , which Twoflower donates to Rincewind . Rincewind , now able to learn new spells with the departure of the 8th spell from his head , re @-@ enrolls at Unseen University . Cohen and Bethan decide to get married ( despite the 60 year age difference ) , with Cohen celebrating by commissioning some Din Chewers , made from troll 's teeth ( pure diamond ) . Twoflower presents them with a dozen gold coins as a wedding gift . Although Twoflower , who comes from the Counterweight Continent where gold is extremely common , considers this a small sum Rincewind comments that in Ankh @-@ Morpork a dozen gold coins is enough to buy a small kingdom . Twoflower returns home on a ship and Rincewind returns to the Unseen University with the Luggage happily following .

= = = Differences from original texts = = =

Although the film generally remains true to the original novels , several scenes and characters were removed or merged with others to bring the script to a reasonable length . Noting that " there wasn 't time for everything " , the producers cut completely the scene in the Temple of Bel @-@ Shamharoth and the associated plotline about the significance of the number eight ; Director Vadim Jean defended the decision , saying " we could have gone there , but we went to the Wyrmsberg instead . There [ were ] time constraints and we could have gone one way or the other , so we went the whole hog on just one . " The scenes in the Wyrmsberg were themselves shortened and simplified , reducing the character of Li ! ort to a cameo and losing the characters of K ! sdra , Greicha and Hrun completely . The inter @-@ wizard rivalry at Unseen University , by contrast , was expanded and spread out throughout the film , while in the novels the sequences are short and mainly found in *The Light Fantastic* . This established Trymon as a more easily recognisable antagonist . To avoid the necessity of explaining the deus ex machina in detail , the Octavo in the film simply causes A 'Tuin to roll to recapture Rincewind , whereas in the novel , a complicated ' change spell ' returns him to the disc . The creatures from the *Dungeon Dimensions* which invade reality at the end of *The Light Fantastic* , and Rincewind 's fight in the *Dungeon Dimensions* themselves , are completely omitted , and Trymon is simply driven mad by reading the Octavo spells at the end of the film version . Galder Weatherwax is also killed by Trymon in the film version , whereas , in the books , he is killed by accidentally summoning the Luggage instead of Rincewind . Furthermore , when Rincewind spotted the Luggage in the film , it was after he had attempted to jump into the River Ankh , whereas in the book he spotted the Luggage when he was sitting the

Broken Drum .

= = Production = =

The adaptation was produced by The Mob , with Rod Brown , Ian Sharples , Elaine Pyke and Sarah Conroy credited as producers . Vadim Jean continued his involvement with the film as director .

= = = Adaptation = = =

The Colour of Magic is the second live @-@ action adaptation of Terry Pratchett 's Discworld series , following the highly successful Hogfather , which was broadcast over Christmas 2006 to an audience of 2 @.@ 6 million . After the success of Hogfather , Pratchett was easily persuaded to release the rights for The Colour of Magic and The Light Fantastic . Vadim Jean was employed to adapt the two literary works into a three @-@ hour , two @-@ part screenplay . While Pratchett was given " carte blanche " to " turn up whenever [ he ] wanted " , he was happy to see a more liberal interpretation of his first two works than he had been for Hogfather . Speaking to Sky Magazine , Pratchett said that , " There [ was ] not so much emotional baggage ... riding on The Colour of Magic and The Light Fantastic . It was just this book of mine that suddenly started selling incredibly well " . Jean 's main challenge was to streamline the plot and remove the many irrelevant , but highly amusing , tangents that are an iconic feature of Pratchett 's work , without destroying the appeal of the books . Jean said that " there [ was ] a real danger , with this story , that one could strip out the ' Pratchett @-@ ness ' ... I had to fight to keep [ it ] in " . Pratchett was pleased with the final script , saying " it wasn 't the slaughter job I thought it would have to be " , and " [ we 've managed ] to keep the soul ... it 's still recognisably [ the same ] book " .

= = = Filming = = =

Filming took place at Pinewood Studios for the interior scenes of the Wyrnberg , the Octavo room in the Unseen University , and for exterior shots of Ankh @-@ Morpork and the Broken Drum . Pinewood 's exterior water tank , the largest in Europe , was also employed for the scenes where Rincewind and Twoflower are washed towards the edge of the world . These sequences , as well as being the most challenging to film , were also one of the most physically exhausting for the cast . Background shots of Niagara Falls were also taken , and digitally merged with the bluescreen film shot at Pinewood , location shots taken on a river in Wales , and CGI sequences of A 'Tuin and the Discworld . Digitally combining all this material together in a believable fashion was , according to Jean , " the toughest week of the shoot " . All the digital effects and CGI for the film were provided by Fluid Pictures , a small digital effects group based in Soho .

Jean , who had adapted and directed Hogfather in 2006 , was keen to return to some of the locations used in that film to provide continuity . The scenes in the Great hall of the Unseen University were filmed in the crypt of the Guildhall in the City of London , and the same Victorian country home was used for Death 's house as had been seen in Hogfather . This time around , Jean was able to film more extensive panoramic shots in the latter location , thanks to The Colour of Magic 's larger budget . Other filming locations included Anglesey and Snowdonia for exterior shots , Gloucester docks as the docks of Ankh @-@ Morpork , and the Royal Courts of Justice as the Patrician 's Palace .

= = = Effects = = =

When choreographing the various fight sequences in the film , Jean sought to maintain the atmosphere and humour of the Discworld while still creating an exciting action sequence . Jean explained that " the tone of all these fights is the tone of Discworld ... it has a kind of chaos to it ... there are very few set pieces , it 's more about the chaos and the humour " . Although all the fight sequences were carefully controlled for safety , some were choreographed to be more haphazard

than others ; each fighter was also given their own style for variety and humour . Liz May Brice ( Herrena ) noted the contrast in the ferry fight sequence , saying " the way we 've done the fight , he [ Cohen the Barbarian ] is almost [ winning ] by mistake ... it 's sort of fun , whereas [ Herrena ] is very deliberate " .

The inverted fight between Rincewind and Liessa in the Wyrmsberg , by contrast , was the most meticulously choreographed sequence in the film . In addition to the need to add CGI backdrops to every shot , hanging upside down from wires whilst fighting proved to be what David Jason described as " a nauseous experience " . The sequence had to be filmed in very short bursts as " all of the actors and stunt people could only manage around four to five minutes before they wanted to [ vomit ] " . Karen David , who played Liessa , pulled several stomach muscles during the filming , and Jason described the experience as like " being hung upside @-@ down like the last chicken at Sainsbury 's ... I wouldn 't do that again in a hurry " .

= = Casting = =

David Jason was the first actor to be cast for the production , as it had always been his desire to play Rincewind in a film adaptation of The Colour of Magic . Jason had mentioned in an interview some fifteen years previously that , of all the parts available , the character of Rincewind was the one he coveted the most . Jason describes the wizard as " just such an amusing , endearing character ... I always kept this idea in my head that one day I [ would ] play Rincewind " . Jason 's appointment to the role , announced in April 2007 , drew mixed reactions , with comments ranging from " terrible choice " to " brilliant " . A common criticism was that Jason , at 68 , was too old to play a character who is , according to the books , middle @-@ aged .

From the day Jason was cast , rumours began to fly that a major American actor would be cast alongside him to bolster the film 's international appeal . On 31 July 2007 it was revealed that Sean Astin , world @-@ famous for his part in the Lord of the Rings film trilogy , had been signed for the role . - before filming started , Sean had to ask his agent just who " Dave Jason " was and left the video store with two large bags of David Jason 's back catalogue to watch . The casting of Tim Curry as Trymon and Christopher Lee as the voice of Death was revealed at the same time . The choice of Astin as Twoflower was criticised by some fans , who had anticipated that the tourist would be Oriental . Pratchett responded to this criticism in an open letter , where he noted that he had only described Twoflower as " exotically foreign " until Interesting Times . The choice of Lee to replace Ian Richardson , who had voiced Death in Hogfather , was more widely accepted ; Lee had previously voiced the part in the animated adaptations of Soul Music and Wyrms Sisters .

The part of the Patrician of Ankh @-@ Morpork , Havelock Vetinari , was not revealed until the premiere of The Colour of Magic , where Jeremy Irons , billed as a " guest star " , was revealed to have played the role . A small number of Pratchett fans were invited to participate as extras in the mob scenes towards the end of the film , and the bar fight in the Mended Drum .

Several members of the cast previously had roles in Sky One 's previous adaptation of Pratchett 's novel Hogfather , including David Jason as Albert , Nigel Planer as Mr. Sideney , and Stephen Marcus as Banjo . Pratchett himself had also made a cameo in Hogfather as The Toymaker . Nigel Planer had also previously contributed his voice to Discworld audiobooks , as well as the computer games Discworld II : Missing Presumed ... ! ? and Discworld Noir .

= = = Principal cast = = =

David Jason as Rincewind , a failed wizard and the main protagonist .

Sean Astin as Twoflower , the discworld 's first tourist .

Tim Curry as Trymon , the power @-@ hungry senior wizard at the Unseen University .

Christopher Lee as the voice of Death .

Jeremy Irons as Lord Vetinari , the Patrician of Ankh @-@ Morpork .

David Bradley as Cohen the Barbarian , the most famous barbarian in the discworld , now ' retired ' .

Laura Haddock as Bethan , a druid sacrifice , who falls in love with Cohen .  
 James Cosmo as Galder Weatherwax , the incumbent Archchancellor of the Unseen University .  
 Nicolas Tennant as Head Librarian of the Unseen University , who is turned into an orangutan during the events of the film .  
 Karen David as Liessa , a dragonlady from the Wyrmborg .  
 Liz May Brice as Herrena , a mercenary who is employed to capture Rincewind .  
 Nigel Planer as the Arch @-@ Astronomer of Krull .  
 Richard Da Costa as The Luggage .  
 Roger Ashton @-@ Griffiths as Lumuel Panter .  
 Miles Richardson as Zlorf , the leader of the Ankh @-@ Morpork Assassins ' Guild .  
 James Perry as Kring , the enchanted sword .  
 Stephen Marcus as Broadman , the bartender at the Broken Drum .  
 Toby Jones as one of the heads of the eight orders of Wizardry .  
 Terry Pratchett appears in a cameo role , playing Astrozoologist # 2 in the opening and closing scenes of the film . Richard Woolfe , the director of programming at Sky One , also appears as the Alchemist .

= = Release and reception = =

A teaser trailer , released in late February 2008 , featured principal cast members , including Rincewind , Twoflower , Trymon and the Arch @-@ Astronomer of Krull , attempting to describe octarine , the ' colour of magic ' . The teaser concludes with the film 's tagline : " a pigment of your imagination " . Two more trailers were released in March 2008 , containing a more complete synopsis , with narration by Brian Cox . The trailers formed part of a multimillion @-@ dollar advertising campaign in partnership with Amazon.com and Borders Books . In addition to conventional adverts in national newspapers and banner ads on sites including MSN.com and Yahoo ! .com , Sky launched a viral marketing campaign , and established a bluetooth hotspot at Victoria station , London , where fans could download video clips and ringtones to mobile phones .

The film was premiered at the Curzon Cinema , London , on 3 March 2008 ; the event was covered in several major newspapers after David Jason , somewhat inebriated , got into the wrong limousine by mistake when departing from the premiere .

The film was released in two parts , breaking at roughly the same place as the literary versions of The Colour of Magic and The Light Fantastic , although some scenes ( such as Trymon 's murder of the Archchancellor ) were moved across the break for dramatic effect . The first part , concluding with Rincewind and Twoflower falling off the edge of the disk in the Krullian spaceship , was broadcast on Easter Sunday ( 23 March 2008 ) , at 6pm GMT on Sky1 and Sky 1 HD . The second part was broadcast on the same channels at 6pm the following day ( Easter Monday ) . Viewing audience for the first part reached 1 @. @ 5 million , 8 % of the viewing total . The second part of the film attracted an average audience of 967 @, @ 000 , peaking at 1 @. @ 1 million during the 15 minute block from 7 : 15 pm .

The film was generally well received by critics , with The Times believing it to be " better than Sky 's previous Discworld adaptation Hogfather " . The Scotsman admitted that it was a " good @-@ looking production that proper fans probably appreciated " , but criticised the film for being " far too long ... with leaden direction and script " . The Times agreed , saying that " It looked good , in an over @-@ glossy , Hallmark Productions kind of way , although every now and again the budget ... looked stretched " .

Pratchett himself said he was " very pleased " with the casting and production of the film , although he admitted that seeing his literary work adapted for the screen was " very bad for me : it 's like I 'm wandering around on the inside of my own head " .

The film was released on DVD and Blu @-@ ray Disc on 3 November 2008 .

In the United States and Canada , it is premiering as The Color of Magic on the Ion channel .

The North American DVD was released on 14 July 2009 . It is considerably shorter ( 132 min ) than the British version ( 184 min ) . The version available on Netflix is the original British presentation .

