By Brian Kibble  
Staff Writer

The highly anticipated film adaptation of ‘Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets’, the second installment in J.K. Rowling’s ‘Potter’ series, has finally arrived. And it has been worth the wait.

The story begins with Harry (Daniel Radcliffe) about to start his second year at Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry. One evening Harry enters his room to discover a house elf named Dobby (voiced by Toby Jones) waiting for him. Dobby warns Harry not to return to school, for terrible things will happen to him if he does. Despite Dobby’s warning and attempts to stop him from going, Harry returns to school and reunites with his friends Ron ( Rupert Grint) and Hermione (Emma Watson).

As the new school year continues on, Harry starts to hear strange voices that no one can hear and then students start to turn up petrified. Hogwarts is no longer safe, and its up to Harry and company to save the day.

In addition to Radcliffe, Grint and Watson, the rest of the original cast has returned. Alan Rickman (Died Hard), Maggie Smith, and the late Richard Harris once again portray professors’ Snape, McGonagall, and Dumbledore, respectively. Adding to the cast is Kenneth Branagh (Hamlet) as the self-worshipping Gilderoy Lockhart, the new Defense against the Dark Arts teacher.

The movie itself is about two hours and 40 minutes long. Despite the run time, the story moves at a fast pace keeping the attention of younger audiences throughout.

The movie’s themes do a good job of following the novel. As with all novels turned into films, many scenes in the book had to be taken out to stay at a reasonable run time, but this does not detract from the movie. Fans of the novel will recognize missing scenes or characters, while viewers who have not read the book will not see anything missing from the plot.

The one negative part of the film though is the score. Academy Award winner John Williams, who created the memorable music from the first ‘Potter’ film, did not return for Harry’s second year. Instead, his main themes were reused, similar to what happened in the ‘Superman’ movies and the new music that was composed for the movie was not worthy of a film of this magnitude, despite the attempts to rehab the first movie’s themes.

The special effects in ‘Chamber of Secrets’ are better than the first, with new advancements in technology, and there are more creatures in the film to put them to use. The first movie only had a three-headed dog and a baby dragon while the new has Dobby, who is completely computer animated; multiple spiders, including a very large one; a brightly colored Phoenix; and a huge snake. As for the people flying on broomsticks during the Quidditch game, they look more real this time around, giving the sequel an extra depth of realism.

The Oscar-nominated sets are back along with new ones that look just as good. The costumes also look just as beautiful as before, with the teachers clothing brightly colored, elegant and elaborate in design.

Coming out a year, almost to the day, after the first movie, ‘Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets’ was worth the wait. However, fans will have to wait a little bit longer for the next installment, which is scheduled for a 2004 release. Until then, Potter fans will not be disappointed with ‘Secrets’.

By David Maccar  
Opinion Editor

Rider’s Gill Chapel became a place of remembrance and mourning, last Tuesday, as the Memorial Service was held for Jonas Penn, the Rider student who was found dead in Wharton State Forest in Tabernacle, N.J. on Sunday, Nov. 10.

As people slowly filed in, and eventually filled the entire chapel, a stereo was playing a variety of classic rock songs performed by the Grateful Dead and Led Zeppelin. The atmosphere was somber but with Jonas’ parents and other members of his family filling the first few pews of the chapel.

The service began with an introduction from Rubhi Grossman, who led the service.

“We are here to honor a friend who has left us,” said Grossman. “The highest form of that honor is to have those who were close to him speak about him. Their words truly come from the heart.”

The rest of the service was composed of various speakers who were personal friends of Penn. Some of those speaker had lyrics to songs that Jonas was particularly fond of. Sophomore Chris Lee performed a song on guitar that he wrote for Jonas, whom he was friends with before.

“I kept thinking about this one time last summer when Jonas and I were sitting on my porch in Long Beach Island and we were smoking a cigarette,” said Lee. “That’s what this song is about.”

The song was a reminiscence with a deep poetic sadness that Lee performed with palpable emotion.

The service concluded with Jonas’ former History Professor, Joseph Rider remembers Jonas Penn

Gowaskie, who formed a connection with Jonas early on.

“A number of you who have taken my course in World History know that I am very proud of my bulletin board in my classroom,” said Gowaskie. “I think the best way to remember Jonas is to have this sign that says Jonas Penn: a great student and a wonderful person.”

After the service concluded with Jonas’ mother, Marlene. She talked about Jonas’ decision to come to Rider and the struggles he had throughout his life.

“He had graduated from the alternative school system and we did not expect much from him. He told me he was going to college,” said Jonas’ mom. “But he wanted to so we encouraged him. He took the SAT’s and didn’t do very well. So he went out and bought an SAT’s For Dummies book and the next time he took them he improved his score by 300 points.”

“Jonas struggled with a lot of sadness, pain, and loneliness in his life,” added Marlene. “The friends he made at Rider couldn’t care all of his problems, but they certainly cured his loneliness. His outlook improved dramatically after his first year. He loved it at Rider; that’s where all of his friends were.”

Marlene ended her speech by reading some lyrics that Jonas had written himself after his first year at Rider. He was an avid guitarist and wrote songs, although his mother said he was very shy about showing them to anyone.

“I appreciate life like never before,” said Marlene. “And my smile is bright and new.”