

**HORNET** GUYS **STORIES** PLACES

LOGIN

LOGIN

HOME

NEWS ▾

ENTERTAINMENT ▾

HEALTH ▾

CULTURE ▾

TRAVEL ▾

VIDEO



SUBMIT

English ▾

**BREAKING NEWS**

Fake News Stories About the Flu Vaccine

36 mins ago

Lady Gaga's Emotional New Music Video May Be Her Most Per



BOOKS, ENTERTAINMENT

# The True Story About The U.S. Hunt For Buried Fairy Treasures

Written by Matthew Lawrence on October 24, 2015

More in Books:



#EVERYONEGAMES

CONTENT SPONSORED BY

**GX3** SAN JOSE



### A Right-Wing Transphobic Screed Is Inexplicably Number One on Amazon's LGBTQ Charts

January 26, 2018



### After Being Dropped by His Lawyers, Milo Yiannopoulos Has Decided to Represent Himself in Court

January 8, 2018



### Trump Tell-All Reveals Ivanka's Secret Plan to Become President and Her Thoughts on Daddy's Hairdo

January 5, 2018



*GaymerX* is a gaming convention that takes place every year in San Jose, CA. GaymerX is a "queer space"; a convention where panels center on queer themes, but all are invited and welcomed. As a proud media sponsor of GaymerX, Unicorn Booty covers gaming issues of all sorts.

Right now, as you read this, there are 10 casques of fairy and goblin treasure worth thousands of dollars buried around the United States, and a small army of treasure hunters trying to find them. Yes. Really. And the hunt has been going on for over 30 years.

Published in 1982, *The Secret* is a children's puzzle book devised by publisher Byron C. Preiss, who promised clever readers actual jewels if they could unlock secrets buried in twelve poems and paintings. Pair up the poem with the correct painting, then decode both for visual and directions clues, and voila! Treasure!

A then-recent college graduate named John Jude Palencar handled the book's twelve coded paintings, it seems that Preiss himself composed the enigmatic poems, and he also traveled across the United States (and possibly Canada) burying the twelve ceramic casques in their corresponding public spaces. Each casque held a key, which finders could mail in to the publisher in exchange for a jewel. The twelve jewels were **reportedly** worth a combined \$13,000.

*The Secret* tells the story of the Fair People, Old World goblins and fairies who came to North America loaded with jewels. Its supernatural characters included mythical Maitre D'eamons, Tupperwerewolves and an elf named Elf S. Presley. Preiss commissioned two *National Lampoon* writers (Sean Kelly and Ted Mann) to help write the story.

*The Secret* was inspired by a wildly successful 1979 British children's book called *Masquerade*, which promised a **large rabbit amulet** for the first astute reader to decipher clues in the book's artwork. It took someone three years, and that person ended up **being a fraud**. But *The Secret* wasn't quite as successful. It sold only about 28,000 copies, and the has since long been out of print. It's possible that other casques might have been uncovered by puzzled landscapers with no knowledge of the book, but a whole network of people are currently using the **Quest4Treasure** online forum and **PBWorks** wiki to figure out the riddles.



*The cover of The Secret, which probably represents Boston*

Most of the treasures are probably still buried which is understandable considering how cryptic the poems and paintings are! In thirty-three years, only two casques have ever been claimed: one in Chicago (found in Grant Park in 1984 by three school children) and one in Cleveland two decades later, found by a bankruptcy lawyer named Brian Zinn who first became enamored with the books while in college. *The Cleveland Plain Dealer* **ran a whole feature** on Zinn as he dug up the backside of Cleveland's Greek Cultural Garden.

As for *The Secret*'s creator, Preiss was a successful editor and publisher, one of the first to publish graphic novels and interactive children's books during the CD-ROM era. He also specialized in celebrity children's

books, publishing titles by **LeAnn Rimes**, **Jerry Seinfeld** and **Jay Leno**. Before his sudden death in a 2005 car accident, Preiss kept the sought-after jewels in a Chase Manhattan safe deposit box. After his death, it's unclear whether anyone has the key to the box, particularly because the assets of his publishing company were sold in a 2006 bankruptcy auction after his death. Today's treasure hunters are definitely in it for the glory, not the jewels.

The remaining ten casques are **believed to be scattered** across the country, from San Francisco to Roanoke Island. One may be in Montreal, although it might also be in Saint Louis, depending on how you interpret the clues.



Each painting represents a different immigrant group, and each casque is buried in an area with a high concentration of that group. (Italian/Boston, Chinese/San Francisco, Spanish/St. Augustine, and so on.) To give you an example of how hard these clues are, here's the easiest of the twelve, the one discovered by those Chicago schoolchildren in 1983:

*Where M and B are set in stone  
And to Congress, R is known  
L sits and left  
Beyond his shoulder  
Is the Fair Folks' Treasure holder  
The end of ten by thirteen  
Is your clue  
Fence and fixture  
Central too  
For finding jewel casque  
Seek the sounds  
Of rumble  
Brush and music  
Hush.*

Can you decode *The Secret*? [Click here](#) for all the images and poems and try your hand at the 33-year treasure hunt!

*This led readers of The Secret to Grant Park in Chicago.*



GX3: Everyone Games marks the third year of the GaymerX convention, a meeting of LGBTQ tabletop and console gamers with panels, meet-ups, parties and more! The convention takes place December 11 to 13 in San Jose, California. This year's Bosses of Honor include RuPaul's Drag Race alum Trixie Mattel, Mass Effect's Jennifer Hale, and many, many more! Tickets are available at [GaymerX.com](http://GaymerX.com).



Trixie Mattel