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ORD THE RINGS

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THEHEAT ISON

June/July issue equally hot. And we've turned our attention to a special but appropriate aspect of the films.

The tradition of lighting beacons has been used for ages as a means of communication between villages. In *The Return of the King*, the beacon flames on Gondor's mountaintops started a warning that leaped from peak to peak, sending out the word to Gondor's people and allies that war was upon them and to send aid. With all of the recent speculation from fans about whether *The Hobbit* will be made into a film, we were inspired by the sense of community outreach that the beacons represent in the trilogy's final installment, and so we have designated beacons and fire as this issue's underlying theme, through both imagery and text.

Since the final film was released, *The Lord of the Rings* fans around the world have increasingly rallied together, expressing their "burning" wish to see *The Hobbit* on the big screen—and that Peter Jackson should be the director. From letters to the Fan Club to message board postings and even online petitions (see petitiononline.com/hobfilm/petition.html), fans have voiced their overwhelming desire to see more of Middle-earth. For the latest reports on *The Hobbit*, see this issue's Update with Peter Jackson and the News from Middle-earth. As for the "beacon/fire" theme, we invite readers to keep this idea in mind while reading through the issue, particularly the Unsung Heroes piece on helicopter pilot Alfie Speight, as well as Jackson's interview.

In addition, this issue includes Part I of our interview with the successful child star-turned-adult actor Sean Astin (Sam Gamgee), who we discovered is one busy man these days! The story on the trilogy's leatherwork is another not to be overlooked. Clearly, no corners were cut when it came to the props and wardrobe, as shown by the intricate detailing of King Théoden and Théodred's battle costumes.

Readers will also learn about the new exclusive "book" cards of *The Lord of the Rings* Trading Card Game. In "Finding Tom Bombadil," Weta Workshop senior designer Daniel Falconer talks through the process of creating these special cards, including the first group of the book card series: Tom Bombadil, Goldberry, Radagast, and Glorfindel. Even readers who are not interested in trading card games will be impressed by the cards' film-quality imagery.

We'll continue to keep you posted on Middle-earth news, including the latest developments on *The Hobbit*. In the meantime, we hope you enjoy your summer reading!

Julie Matthews Managing Editor

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Vailbaggins

A CHRISTIAN'S OPINION

Thank you for your awesome magazine. My son, Nicholas, [and I] look for it in the mail and count the days until its arrival. I wanted to give you a Christian's viewpoint on the LOTR experience. It's nice to be able to have my faith and not compromise but also to enjoy such an awesome fantasy. The good thing about the LOTR is that any faith can see parallels to its own. I know a lot of Christians who are big LOTR fans. It's great that the movies and your magazine—are bringing so many different people together with a common love for the LOTR.

> DeAnna Kinney Bessemer City, North Carolina, USA

FAVORITE SEQUENCE

have been searching fan magazines in Lthe bookstores for pictures from my favorite scene: Denethor eating, Pippin singing, and Faramir riding to what is could I find. When I turned the page in your magazine and saw the whole scene sequence laid out, I was thrilled. That had to be one of the best scene sequences in movie [history]. It was magnificently done. Now I can look at the scene whenever I want. I also enjoyed reading Jamie Selkirk's rules on editing. I appreciate the variety of articles you include in the fan magazine. There's always something for every fan, and this issue will be special to me.

Lee Van Wormer Winter Springs, Florida, USA

ART APPRECIATION

Thave been a musician all of my life. As Lan adult, I have also become a composer and a songwriter. The older I [get], the more disillusioned and cynical I have become with what passes for "art" in this society. It seems so often "artists" appeal to the lowest common denominator so

certainly going to be his death, but none

they can sell their work—or worse, they have such a shallow view of what art can be that they think mediocre is "great." Then along came The Lord of the Rings movies, which has restored my faith in two things: one, that people are still motivated to make exceptional art and will do so without compromising their vision; and two, that the general public actually does have the sense to know good art when they see it. Thanks to everyone associated with the making of the LOTR. It was the artistic achievement—and for me—the experience of a lifetime.

> Iulie Moffitt Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, USA

A KIWI'S VIEW

I'm 14 years old, and I am from Auckland, New Zealand. I, like all the LOTR fans, have dreamed of the chance to be at one of the movie premieres. Well, that dream came true for me on Dec. 1. On the day before the premiere, I went to return the extended FOTR DVD back to our family friend, and we started a conversation on how cool it would be [to go to] Wellington and see the parade. Soon enough we decided we had nothing to lose, and within an hour, we were off on our way to Wellington to the world premiere of the ROTK. Before I knew it, I was standing on the rail beside the road waiting anxiously for the parade to begin. The Air New Zealand 747 swooped over our heads, and Peter Jackson came around the corner leading the procession. I was so excited to see the stars and the people who had made my favorite movies. I am grateful to them for making the whole thing possible. I feel so privileged to be a New Zealander and that I can go a few hours down the road and be in Hobbiton or Mordor. I'm sort of in awe that the places I have grown up around are suddenly so famous and that everyone from all over the world wants to come to my homeland.

> Kelsey Schroder Auckland, New Zealand



OSCAR BIRTHDAY

My husband and I went to Los Angeles with the dual purpose of celebrating my birthday and, of course, to revel in the glory of The Lord of the Rings at the Oscars! Many thanks to Sala Baker [Sauron], Lawrence Makoare [Lurtz], and Bruce Hopkins [Gamling] for pausing on that busy pre-Oscar day to indulge a birthday wish. The guys happened along in front of my hotel and were kind enough to pose for a picture with me. [It was a] lovely birthday gift from the cast of our favorite film. Thanks again guys!

> Sandy Nesbitt New Jersey, USA

PEERS ROTK BALL.

Tam writing to thank your magazine I for mentioning the PEERS The Return of the King Ball in Issue #11. I was pleasantly surprised to find out that the ball was to be held in the city where I live! I attended the ball Feb. 7, and I had an amazing time. Quite surprisingly, your advertising the PEERS ball has led me to a long neglected interest of mine that I didn't even know I've been missing-dance! I had so much fun doing British country-set dancing and waltzes at the ball. We even did a long line, handin-hand, free-form dance (called "Bilbo's Journey") in circles around the ballroom. There were hundreds in attendance, and almost everyone was in fantasy or period costume. So now, I've also discovered a new creative outlet-period costume! I wore an Éowyn costume just like in The Two Towers. There was also a sing-along, a poetry reading, and live Celtic-fusion music. Thanks again, and I look forward to reading and enjoying your magazine for years to come!

> Jean Martin San Mateo, California, USA

EMOTIONAL RIDE

Tam a 33-year-old mother of two, and ▲I am still amazed by the way Peter Jackson and the team were able to make



us all feel such extreme emotions. One minute we are angry that The Ring was never destroyed, and in another, we are saddened that the reality of The Ring being destroyed was slim and would come with a great loss. But then [there's] this overwhelming feeling of hope that if the Fellowship stayed true, The Ring could be destroyed. Peter Jackson and all involved have created not just an amazing trilogy but a world that we can escape to that feels as real as our own. I am saddened the trilogy is over, but the effect it has made on all the LOTR fans will never fade. Congratulations to Peter Jackson and the team on the Oscar Awards. You more than deserve each and every one!

> Renee Sider Wainfleet, Ontario, Canada

GAMES TO MOVIES

T'm an LOTR fan from Istanbul, ■Turkey. Years ago, when computer games were almost the only reason to have a home PC for kids and teenagers, my favorite game was an early version of

[the Chinese game] "Mahjongg." I always preferred to play with the fantasy tile set among which there were Halflings, Elves, etc. They were somehow fascinating figures for me (with their interesting and weird sound effects), but they meant nothing else then. I hadn't the slightest idea that they were a part of the Middle-earth culture, and I wouldn't have guessed at that time that all these characters would one day stand before me on the big screen and grasp my mind and soul entirely. While reading the first book five or six years ago, it was my only wish to watch the movie of this amazing world. Every single thing in the film was more splendid than I imagined. The first episode is my favorite for it was the first step to go beyond the boundaries of this world we live in and discover what lied beneath the magic of Middle-earth. I would like to thank Peter Jackson, his crew, and the cast for enabling all the LOTR fans to experience such a great enlightenment.

Selin Aysay Bakal Istanbul, Turkey

We're eager to hear your feedback, so please write to us via email at editor@lotrfanclub.com or by regular mail at The Lord of the Rings Fan Club Official Movie Magazine, Attn. MailBaggins, c/o Decipher, Inc., PO Box 56, Norfolk, VA 23501, USA. We will assume that we can publish your letter in the magazine, along with your full name, hometown, state, and country, unless you state otherwise. Letters may be edited for the sake of brevity and clarity. We look forward to hearing from you!

FROM MIDDLE-EARTH

Jackson Receives Modern Master Award

Peter Jackson was named a "Modern Master" by the Santa Barbara Film Festival on Feb. 2 in honor of his remarkable work on The Lord of the Rings films. Accepting the award before a sold-out crowd at the Arlington Theatre, Jackson entertained the overflowing audience with one story after another about how wonderful it was to work with the film trilogy's creative cast

One story Jackson shared with festival attendees was about Ian McKellen. At one point during the filming of The Return of the King, McKellen wanted to know why he had to perform hand-tohand combat with Orcs, so he asked, "Why am I hitting these people and not just blasting them with my staff?" (This seemed like a reasonable question given that Gandalf's fight scenes with Saruman were fought this way.) Jackson responded by saying, "The batteries have run out!" According to Jackson, McKellen just looked at him and replied, "Right, then!"

When asked who would be his choice for the Modern Master Award, festival director Roger Durling reportedly responded, "I could think of only one name that perfectly exemplified a Modern Master, and that is Peter Jackson." ~ Dave Joy

(and Fran, Cast, Crew, Phillipa, Barrie, Mark & New Line, New Zealand, & all who helped!) fans sign a giant postcard for the Lotr cast and crew.

Return of The One Party

BY IAN SMITH

Nost viewers of this year's Acad-Lemy Awards broadcast probably didn't notice the round blue pin, depicting a single white tree surrounded by stars, that each The Lord of the Rings cast and crew member was wearing on Oscar night. However, its significance was not lost on the 1,100 fans watching the broadcast on huge cinema screens just around the corner from the ceremony venue.

The public appearance of the pin was a repeat performance of the Oscar ceremonies of the past two years, and

while previous pins for The Fellowship of the Ring and The Two Towers nominations have been different in design, they have always been inscribed with the same simple message: "Good luck from TheOneRing.net."

In March 2002, the first TheOne-Ring.net Oscar party was a relatively small, intimate affair held in one small section of The Hollywood Athletic Club. It had taken several weeks for the 300 tickets to sell. A year later, the demand for tickets was so high that the party filled up the entire club, with just



two weeks needed to sell 1.000 tickets. This year, The Hollywood American Legion was booked to allow the numbers of attendees to increase to 1,100. but even with the slight increase in numbers, it took fewer than 15 minutes for tickets to the "Return of the One Party" to sell out. Fortunately for those who had already booked flights and hotels in anticipation of this year's party, there were other fun fan activities in Hollywood during Oscar weekend.

On Saturday morning, many fans headed to the Egyptian Theatre, where the American Cinema Editors hosted an event called "Invisible Art: Visible Artists." Along with all of the Oscarnominated editors, The Return of the King's own Jamie Selkirk participated in the two-and-a-half hour talk and Q&A session. Selkirk treated attendees to his "favorite clip" from The Return of the King of Sam fighting Shelob, and he explained that it was a difficult edit, involving a combination of special effects footage, miniatures, live action, and a certain amount of reshoot work to complete. Fans were also interested to hear that he prefers the theatrical cuts to the extended editions and that while the multiple endings of The Return of the King had been difficult, "originally there were even more!"

The next stop for fans was the Fashion Institute of Design and Merchandising Museum and Galleries, which featured costumes from several Oscar-nominated films, including The Lord of the Rings, The Last Samurai, and

Pirates of the Caribbean. The detail on these costumes goes far beyond what is visible on film, and fans were no doubt



delighted by the fact that Oscar winner Ngila Dickson had been spotted at the exhibition on at least five different occasions since it

first opened. The Return of the King costumes on display included the scaledouble battle costumes of Merry and

Pippin, the wedding robes of Aragorn and Arwen, and The King of the Dead in full ghost-like regalia.

On Saturday evening, hundreds of fans headed to The Hollywood Athletic Club for the "Rivendell Hall of Fire," an evening of poetry, music, art, costume, and comedy organized by Fan Club board moderators "Rosie" and "Primula," who also organized the following night's "Into the West" party at the same venue for fans who had been unable to get tickets to TheOneRing.net party. (See this issue's Fan Focus section for more on "Into the West.")

The Embassy Theatre Ties One On

The newly refurbished roof of the L Embassy Theatre in Wellington,

New Zealand, was nearly blown off from the exhilarated crowd of more than 550 fans celebrating The Lord of the Rings' Oscar victories. The loud cheers were not limited to when The Return of the King racked each of its 11 recordtying Oscars; rather,

any reference to New Zealand sent fans over the top with excitement. While Peter Jackson was in Hollywood accepting his award for Best Director, milling around in the Embassy Theatre crowd were a number of surprisingly good Jackson look-alikes, along with an

abundance of Hobbits, a creepy Black Rider, and scores of Rings fans in their



finest fashion gowns. Even dignitaries attended the party, including Wellington Mayor Kerry Prendergast, Prime Minister Helen Clark, Governor-General Dame Sylvia Cartwright, and a smattering of representatives from the American and Italian embassies, Amanda Mor-

rison, long-time friend of Peter Jackson and administrator of the Embassy Theatre Trust, reported on the evening's events. To view a 360-degree panorama photograph of the event, click on panoramas.dk/fullscreen3/f2.html.

~ Dave Joy



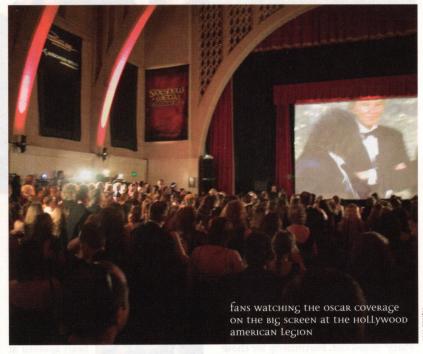












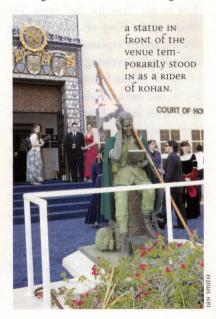
But for many fans, TheOneRing.net Oscar party was the main reason for traveling to Hollywood at the end of February. This year, as in the past, fans experienced a bit of Hollywood glamour by dressing up in posh frocks and tuxedos (and sometimes both!) to celebrate Peter Jackson's movie trilogy with fellow fans.

The Hollywood American Legion was festively decorated in a Middle-earth theme. In the front of the building, a statue of a United States Marine holding an American flag was transformed into a Rider of Rohan with one of the beacons of Gondor burning brightly high above him on the roof of the venue. Various The Lord of the Rings displays, such as a scary Shelob-like spider with messy webs and Sideshow/Weta full-sized sculptures of Gollum, Lurtz, and the Black Riders, were sprinkled throughout the venue. One of the most popular exhibits was a giant postcard addressed to Peter Jackson, Fran Walsh, Phillipa Boyens, and the crew with party attendees invited to sign.

The Academy Awards broadcast was a huge party event in its own right. Every glimpse of one of the Hobbit actorsno matter how blurred or far away in the

background—caused a surge of enthusiastic screams, and as The Return of the King won award after award, the fans cheered wildly with delight. When Peter Jackson was announced as "Best Director," giant cannons fired streamers from the roof. And, during commercial breaks, MC "Quickbeam" entertained the crowd, appearing first as Elrond, then as Aragorn, and finally, in drag, as a rather outrageous Éowyn!

Good food, free drinks, and joyous dancing were the order of the night. In



addition, live music from Dorian Mirth and Emerald Rose, as well as The One Ring Circus, a group of Middle-earth costumed characters that performed a hilarious song and dance medley of tunes in a pastiche of *Moulin Rouge*, further enhanced the party mood.

Shortly after the Academy Awards ceremony was over, the first of many surprise The Lord of the Rings celebrity guests began appearing on stage. John Rhys-Davies (Gimli) thanked the fans for their wonderful support, and a half an hour after Rhys-Davies' appearance, Peter Jackson, with an Oscar in each hand, walked onstage, followed by what seemed like every single member of the film's production crew, whom Jackson introduced one by one, giving each the opportunity to say something.



Dominic Monaghan (Merry) bravely announced that he, Elijah Wood (Frodo), and Billy Boyd (Pippin) would answer any question, prompting one audience member to immediately ask if he wore boxers or briefs. This then resulted in costume designer Ngila Dickson boasting of having seen most of the cast naked, and Phillipa Boyens joking that she had debated extensively with Jackson about the need for more shots of Aragorn with his shirt off. The mood throughout the night was one of good humor, and it was apparent that Jackson regarded the event as a chance to have fun.

Celebrity Tracks

BY DAVE JOY

ELIJAH WOOD (Frodo) threw "precious" beads to wildly cheering crowds in New Orleans at the 147th celebration of Fat

Tuesday. Wood reigned as "King Bacchus" in this year's parade, while DOMINIC MONAGHAN

(Merry) ruled as "Celebrity Monarch" over the Krewe of Orpheus. Monaghan is also currently in negotiations with the Discovery Channel to host nature programs. Monaghan freely admits that his love for nature, animals, and the environment stem from watching his childhood hero Sir David Attenborough on the "telly."

VIGGO MORTENSEN (Aragorn)

celebrated the world premiere of his new movie Hidalgo at the El Capitan Theater on Hollywood Boulevard only two days af-

ter The Return of the King's big victory at the Academy Awards. Mortensen made a sensational entrance, wearing a black tux while riding the fabulous horse that played "Hidalgo" down the red carpet. John Rhys-Davies showed up to support his friend, as did famous "nine-fingered Frodo," Elijah Wood!

SEAN ASTIN (Sam) will have a sup-

porting role in a coming-of-age drama entitled *Smile*. The movie is scheduled to begin shooting this year in Los Angeles, and then the majority will be filmed in China. Other actors who have signed on to do the film include Mika Boorem, Beau Bridges, and Linda Hamilton. The story involves a relationship between an American teen (Boorem) who meets his Chinese counterpart, both of whom

require facial surgery.

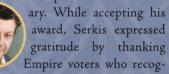
IAN MCKELLEN (Gandalf), a presenter at this year's Academy Awards ceremony, can be seen playing lead roles later this year in the films Asy-

lum and Emile.

LIV TYLER (Arwen), who accompanied McKellen as a presenter at this year's Academy Awards, co-stars with Ben Affleck in the recently released film Jersey Girl.

Congratulations to IAN HOLM (Bilbo), who has recently remarried! Holm met artist Sophie de Stempel early last year after she asked him if she could paint his portrait. After a whirlwind romance, they tied the knot in a low-key ceremony in late 2003.

ANDY SERKIS (Gollum) was named "Best British Actor" at the Sony Ericsson Empire Awards in Febru-



nized his acting in the role of Gollum. "It's fantastic!" he said about his win. "I'm very happy!"

ORLANDO BLOOM's (Legolas) film career continues to thrive. His action-adventure film Troy recently hit theaters in mid-May, and he has been in Morocco shooting Kingdom of Heaven, a Ridley Scott film that is scheduled to be released in May 2005. The film—whose set had to be guarded by hundreds of soldiers as a result of death threats from Islamic extremists offended by the production's battle scenes—also stars Liam Neeson, Kiera Chaplin, and Jeremy Irons.

Upon arriving outside the main hall, Weta chief Richard Taylor explained why he and co-founder Tania Rodger had headed straight for TheOne-Ring.net party. "All the fans looked after us so well over the last seven years," he said. "It's lovely to have the chance to say 'Hi' to them all." While onstage, Jackson echoed Taylor's sentiments about The Lord of the Rings fans. "One of the things that really motivated us was that we were absolutely terrified of letting you guys down," he said. "We really didn't want to disappoint you. We're really appreciative of the response. I hope this is not the end."

When the cast and crew eventually cleared the stage-a good half-hour after they'd arrived-Wood was left to introduce the rock band World Without Sundays. For one number, the band featured a special vocalist for a cover rendition of the Oasis hit "SuperNova." Monaghan proved that if he ever wanted to give up a career in acting, he could start another one as a rock singer!

Not to be outdone, Boyd strolled on stage, picked up a guitar, and delivered a raunchy performance of "Oh Jean," a song written by acclaimed Scottish pop group The Proclaimers. During the chorus refrains, fans sang at the top of their lungs, "I love you, I love you, I love you."

Just when the party was starting to close down around 1:30 a.m., a boisterous crew of Sala Baker (Sauron), Lawrence Makoare (Lurtz), and Bruce Hopkins (Gamling) arrived to the delight of the crowd and began teaching everyone the Haku, a New Zealand Maori dance. And with goody bags donated by sponsors Sideshow/Weta, EA Games, Houghton Mifflin, and Nexcess.Net Internet Solutions awaiting party attendees as they left, fans all agreed that the night had been a very special one.

Undeniably, The Lord of the Rings fans took over Hollywood during Oscar weekend. Even The Los Angeles Times reported, "The hottest bash in town last night was the Hollywood American Legion." And not many attendees would disagree. The fact that the party was entirely organized by the hard work and sheer determination of fan volunteers is nothing short of amazing.

The Hobbit Movie Trailer Online?

Relax. Take a deep breath. Despite the fact that there is a near-perfect movie trailer now out on the Internet, the old truism still applies: If it looks too good to be true, it probably is.

The only problem is, it's a brilliant fake and some very creative wishful thinking from the imagination of Steve Latham, a student at the University of Oklahoma majoring in film and video studies. The movie trailer, which can be accessed online at lathamfilms.com, combines edited shots from The Fellowship of the Ring and a popular sciencefantasy film from the early 1980s, Dragonslayer.

For diehard fans of The Lord of the Rings films, waiting is the hardest part. However, there are a number of Internet Web sites set up to track The Hobbit news, including thehobbitfilm.com and thehobbit-movie.com.

Peter Jackson himself has added hope to the possibility of it becoming a reality. "It would be strange for somebody else to do it," he recently told the Associated Press. "I also think to do justice to The Hobbit, it would be great to bring some of the same actors back." (See this issue's Update with Peter Jackson to read more about Jackson's views on The Hobbit.)

Latham's feeling on the matter is no surprise considering his elaborate Web site. "I think it would be pretty cool if they could do it." So do we, Steve, so do we! ~ Dave Joy

Product update

BY DAVE JOY

SABERTOOTH GAMES

Sabertooth Games, the winner of Inquest magazine's "Fan Award for Best Miniatures Product" for its The Lord of the Rings Tradeable Miniatures Game (TMG), has recently released the first in a series of large creatures



for this popular product line. Adding an exciting new dimension to The Lord of the Rings TMG, the Cave Troll stands on a special "monster base" and comes with three heroes, including Aragorn, Legolas, and Gimli, which are only available with this exclusive package.

Another new product is the TMG Map Pack 1. The first in a series, this pack includes two double-sided hex maps that can be used to expand the battleground, making it a whole new war! Players looking for a large scale mega-battle will be able to take two map sets and link all four sides of the map together to make a huge 2 foot by 8 foot map. It provides new terrain, new locations, and new places for the heroes of Middle-earth to defend the evil forces of Sauron.

Sabertooth Games has also released its large-scale Sauron (on a large monster base), as well as its The Fellowship of the Ring Booster Expansion Pack. For the latest updates on the company's products, visit sabertoothgames.com.



[ORD: RINGS

Featuring The Return of the King™ winner of II Academy Awards® including Best Picture and Best Director

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The epic action and adventure, romance and fantasy of The Lord of the Rings™ has thrilled film critics and movie fans in every corner of the earth and Middle-earth—winning an incredible 11 Academy Awards® this year! Who hasn't been swept up in a hobbit's impossible quest, a noble warrior's desire for good and glory, a Dark Lord's evil, and the romantic dreams of an Elven princess?

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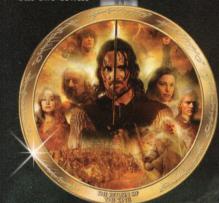
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MASTER REPLICAS

This past February, Master Replicas announced its partnership with New Line Cinema in creating a full line of electronic prop replicas from *The Lord of the Rings* epic films. Master Replicas will be marketing a wide range of collectibles in the spring of 2004.

The company has been a pioneer in the field of licensed movie and television prop replicas for serious collectors. A limited number of select prop replicas are produced annually, thus establishing value with each unique piece. The accuracy of the replicas is maintained through a rigorous development process with meticulous attention to quality and detail, including a thorough examination and measurement of each original prop. There is also extensive, high-resolution digital photography of

the original prop, as well as state-of-theart laser scanning to produce an extremely accurate digital model. The technicians at Master Replicas carefully examine studio archival photos and the documentation around the creation of each original prop, building each prop through hand-assembly (rather than by machines) to create a flawless finished product.

"Master Replicas has done an outstanding job developing their extensive line of *The Lord of the Rings* high-end electronic replicas," Randi Goodman of New Line Cinema says. "We're impressed with their technology and pleased to offer consumers a whole new dimension of *The Lord of the Rings* collectibles." For more information, go to masterreplicas.com.



SIDESHOW TOY

At February's International Toy Fair in New York City, Sideshow Toy unveiled its latest *The Return of the King* products. Full 360-degree shots of the products can be viewed on their Web site at sideshowtoy.com, including statues of Gandalf on Shadowfax, Shelob, and the Haradrim Soldier.

The Gandalf on Shadowfax statue was particularly a big hit at the toy fair. The dynamic polystone statue depicts Gandalf the White riding the magical Meara steed Shadowfax as they fly like the wind into battle against Sauron's forces of darkness. This piece is expected to

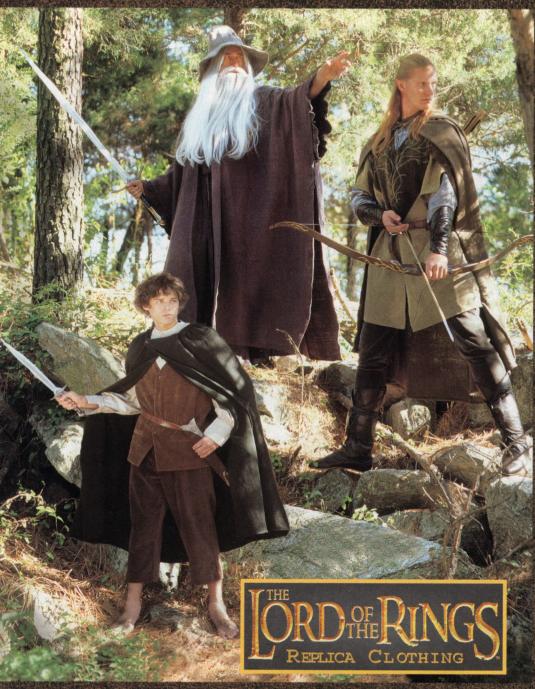
sell quickly, so placing orders now is recommended.

Other soon-to-be-released items (all still in the sculpting phase) from this year's new line-up include Sauron the

Dark Lord of Mordor, Balrog, and Lady Éowyn, the Shieldmaiden of Rohan. In addition, to celebrate *The Return of the King's* stunning success at the Academy Awards this year, Sideshow/Weta is unveiling its exclusive new Mines of Moria polystone environment. The highly detailed sculpture features a scaled representation of the Halls of Moria from *The Fellowship of the Ring*. Don't miss out!



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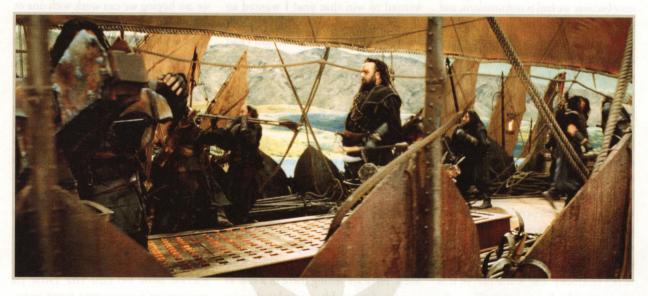
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The director on Oscars, beacon fires, and The Return of the King theatrical DVD

BY DAN MADSEN

WHAT WAS OSCAR NIGHT LIKE

From the perspective of talking to you now, it still seems like a dream. It seems very disconnected and like it happened to someone else. It seems like I saw it on TV rather than experiencing it. The actual experience of it has faded away very quickly, and I think that is because it is so overwhelming that somehow it doesn't seem like reality anymore. Basically, the experience of it was that of incredible gut-wrenching nerves because no matter how relaxed you tried to be, you couldn't help but be incredibly nervous on the day of the awards. In fact, you're nervous a day or two before the event because there is this pressure that is building. It's like a mind game you keep saying to yourself, "Listen, I am either going to win or I am not. It doesn't matter. Either way is fine." You keep trying to tell yourself this, but there

is no doubt that you are just stressed when you wake up that morning and think, "Oh God, it's the Oscars!" Then you think, "Oh well, by the time I come back to bed again tonight, it will be over, and one way or another it will be done." We didn't do anything that morning. We just stayed in the hotel. We had



E! Entertainment Television on, and they had all of the red carpet coverage, which really didn't help. Having everyone talk about the Oscars didn't help our nerves! Nonetheless, it provided us with something to do, so we sat around in the hotel room just waiting. I sent a couple of emails, but I basically didn't do anything. There really isn't anything you can do. You can't enjoy yourself, and you can't go out for coffee. You have to leave the hotel at about 3 p.m. in the afternoon. When 3 p.m. eventually arrives, you get in the limousine, and they take you to the Kodak Theater. There was an immense red carpet there, and I tried to get through that as quickly as possible. You just want to get inside and get it all over and done with. They have you spend about an hour talking to the press. You slowly inch your way down this press line. You end up going inside, you sit down, and it starts.

For us, it was an interesting experience because we had 11 nominations, and the ones that I was personally involved with—the writing, directing, and producing categories—were the last ones of the night. What I started to do was just enjoy it. We had all of our technical categories up front. Once they started to win, it became a lot of fun. There was a lot of cheering. There is always a little bit of butterflies in your stomach as you are realizing that your categories are still a little way away, and you are wondering what is going to happen. But at the time, you are enjoying seeing everybody else winning. As it turns out, it is a lot less unpleasant when you are in the middle of the ceremony. The worst part of it is all the time leading up to it. Once the ceremony is underway and Billy Crystal is on stage and people are going up and accepting awards, it becomes a little more enjoyable. My experience on these awards shows has been that when the envelope is ripped open, there is a split second when you hope that your name is not read out. Your mind suddenly goes blank, and you are thinking, "God, if I have to do a speech, I can't think of a single thing to say. I don't know anything. I don't know anyone's name anymore. I have forgotten everything." You have this panic. But it was a bit different this time because the first category I was a part of was screenwriting. Fran had already won for writing the song, and everybody else that had been nominated for The Return of the King had won up to that point as well. I had this horrible feeling as they were preparing for the screenwriting award that Phillipa—who has done so much incredible work on these films, and I know because I was there as she wrote these scriptswouldn't get her Oscar. I have seen how much work she has done. I had a sinking feeling that Phillipa could be the only person that missed out on an Oscar if we didn't win this particular award. The screenwriting award was certainly one of the ones that we weren't favored for. I wanted to win that one! I wanted so badly for Phillipa to win an Oscar! It wasn't about me because I thought I had a decent chance for Best Director and a decent chance for Best Film. I had two other chances. But this was Philippa's one and only shot at an Oscar, and we had been nominated twice before and had lost twice before. So I was delighted when our names got read out, especially for Phillipa. She definitely deserved it!

Where do you have your Oscars sitting?

At the moment, they are sitting in our office where we are writing King Kong. They are sitting there in a row as a rather formidable reminder that we have to write a good script!

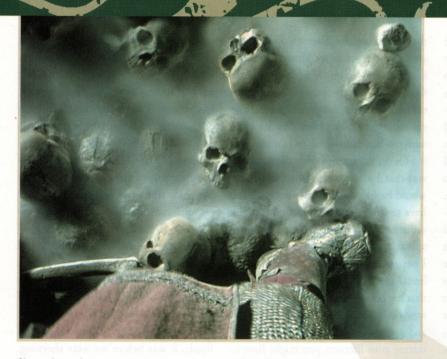
FAN CLUB MEMBER HEIDI BARNES ASKS, "DURING AN INTERVIEW BEFORE THE OSCAR AWARDS, YOU SAID THAT THE NEXT MORNING THE BOOK ON The Lord of the Rings movies WOULD BE CLOSED FOREVER. ELIJAH WOOD WAS NEXT TO YOU, AND THE LOOK ON HIS FACE SAID HE REALIZED THAT, TOO. AFTER THAT NIGHT, IT WAS THE END TO A LONG AND WONDERFUL JOURNEY. WAS IT HARD TO LEAVE THE OSCAR PARTY KNOWING THAT THIS WOULD PROBABLY BE THE LAST TIME YOU WOULD ALL BE TOGETHER LIKE THIS?"

Yeah, it's tough when you stop and really think about it, which we all have at various times. You sort of dismiss the thought because it is quite painful. You just hold onto the hope that we are all going to work together again at some point. There is not a single actor that I worked with on *The Lord of the Rings* that I wouldn't love making a film with again. I am hoping that I can. I love the way some directors have an ensemble of actors they like to work with. Martin Scorsese does it—he uses DeNiro and other supporting actors. We are a little bit too early

in the casting of King Kong to know, but we are hoping we can work with one or two of our The Lord of the Rings actors again on that film. After King Kong, there will be other movies and hopefully more opportunities to work with them again. Beyond that, we just have to hope that we are all going to be traveling around the world as part of our profession and that there will be opportunities for us to have dinner with each other. It is a friendship that is born out of working together on a film set, and it is strange when suddenly that experience stops. You do realize that the friendship doesn't have to end there and can continue.

Peter, how do you top this? In some ways, do you feel more pressure? Do you think that people have higher expectations for your next film?

No, I actually don't feel the pressure particularly. The pressure is always to make a good movie, and that is tough. It is easy to make a bad film. It is harder to make a good film. I always apply pressure on myself every time I make a movie because you have to. The best motivator is fear, and you have the fear of failing, so you try your hardest to make a good film. Winning an Oscar or the success of The Return of the King doesn't really change that. The fear is still there, and the motivation is still there. The desire to just want to create a good movie is still there. I don't really mind what happens in the future so long as the films that we make are good. That's what I care about. It doesn't matter to me what genre they are, what budget they have, what size they are, or what subject matter they are. What matters to me is to make films as good as they can possibly be. From that point of view, there is pressure, but it is not actually related to The Lord of the Rings. The other thing that I feel is that there is always a sort of expectation. Once you reach a certain level of filmmaking, there is an expectation that if you are a



"This is the most
BIZARRE THING BECAUSE
WE [WERE] EFFECTIVELY
shooting the
last shot of the
film AFTER WE WON

the Oscar. I bet this is the only time

THAT HAS HAPPENED
IN HISTORY!"

filmmaker, when are you going to win an Oscar? You should win an Oscar at some stage because that's a degree of some success that people aspire to. In some respects, I feel that that pressure has gone away now. Rather than feel that we have more pressure because of the Oscars, I feel we have less because we have won an Oscar. How many Oscars do you need in your life? Winning once is absolutely fine. We have done that now. I don't have to go forward in my career thinking, "Gosh, I missed out on an Oscar last time. Is this film I am making now going to be the one that gets me the Oscar?" There is that sort of self-imposed pressure that people put on themselves, and actors do it as well. We don't have that pressure anymore. We have won our Oscar, and it is wonderful. Now we can just concentrate on the films that we want to make.

FAN CLUB MEMBER NEIL OTTEN-STEIN ASKS, "WILL ALL II OSCAR ACCEPTANCE SPEECHES BE PRE-SERVED ON The Return of the King DVD?"

That's a good question. I don't know what the legalities of it are because obviously we don't own the Oscar acceptance speeches. They would be owned by either the Academy or whatever television station filmed them. It is one of those situations where if New Line were to try to do that, they would have to pay a royalty to the people that owned that footage. I don't know whether New Line would want to do that. It is an interesting question and something I can certainly ask. I hadn't thought about that idea, so thanks to Neil, I will put that into the mix. It would be interesting.

What was the last day of working on The Return of the King like for you?

The interesting thing is that on the day I am talking to you, I just shot the last piece of footage for The Return of the King! There was only one shot, a scene for the extended cut of an expanded version of the Paths of the Dead. We make the Paths of the Dead a little more exciting in the extended cut, and it ends with a whole lot of skulls collapsing out of the walls. We did those shots for the theatrical version, as everything is, but then we decided that we would make the scene tighter. When we cut everything together, there was a moment where I wanted Gimli to look down, and I wanted to see just two or three skulls

rolling across the floor before the rest of them collapse out of the wall. We had never gotten that shot. It was only when I cut the scene together that I had this shot of John Rhys-Davies looking down, and I decided it would be good to see a couple of skulls that he was looking at. Two days ago, I got Alex Funke and the miniature crew to make me a little piece of floor in their studio, and I got some skulls out of storage that we had, and we made a little shot of the skulls rolling across the floor so we can have Gimli look at these things. I said, at the time, "This is the most bizarre thing because we are effectively shooting the last shot of the film after we won the Oscar. I bet this is the only time that has happened in history!"

One of the most amazing scenes in the movie was the lighting of the beacon fires. How did you film that?

The lighting of the beacons was one of those sequences that J.R.R. Tolkien describes in a fairly perfunctory way in the book. Yet, I was intrigued by it because I just loved the idea of the beacons being lit across the mountaintops. I thought that this is one of those examples

of taking a reference in the book and turning it into something a little bit grander in the movie. We only built two beacons. We built the beacon that is above Minas Tirith, Barrie Osborne actually shot that scene. That was a second unit sequence where Pippin climbs on top of the woodpile and sets fire to it. I was doing something else on that day, so Barrie was the director of that scene, which was shot in the quarry where Minas Tirith was constructed. The second beacon was also a real beacon, and that was much more interesting because we built that on the top of a mountain. It is exactly what you see in the film. We put the beacon there and made a little hut and had these two guys there. We helicoptered everything in because there were themselves are real. Everything that you see is exactly what we filmed from the helicopter. We simply added the little flames with the computer leading up to the last flame that Aragorn sees before he runs into the Golden Hall. The fun I had with the beacons—and we talked about it a lot on the set and with the actorswas that I just couldn't imagine what it would be like to man the beacons! You have to live in this little hut on top of a mountain with some matches-presumably a flint. And you just have to wait. I am assuming that the beacons haven't been lit for hundreds of years, so it is a job that has been passed down from father to son. I can imagine an old father retiring and saying, "Well, you never know son, during your lifetime, you might have to

gine cuts out on your plane, you have an ability to glide to find somewhere to land. On a helicopter, if your engine stops, you are in trouble. They are not aerodynamic in that way. I am a nervous flyer. I am not a great flyer even in the best of times, so I was always very worried about helicopters. But to tell you the truth, one of the great joys of the experience of making these films has been the helicopter travel I have had to do around New Zealand. It wasn't so much even the filming; it was the location scouting and searching. We would often spend seven or eight hours a day in a helicopter just traveling all around the most beautiful countryside you could ever imagine: mountains, glaciers, alpine lakes, and fiords. It was before we were shooting,





no roads there, so we had to bring all the materials in for the beacon and construct it there and bring in the two actors who were playing the two beacon guards. We filmed this very grand helicopter shot. The only visual effects in there were the distant beacon we had at the very beginning, which was a CG (computer-generated) flame in the distance, and then at the very end when the next beacon lights a few miles away, that's a CG flame. But the actual beacon itself that the helicopter is flying around is real. Everything else in the shot is real. It was the top of a very remote peak in the Southern Alps of New Zealand. After that, the sequence goes into a series of helicopter shots where we are flying over mountains—all of those beacon flames are put in with the computer. But the shots

light this beacon so keep your eyes peeled! Don't take your eye off the horizon. You never know when you might have to do it. I was here for 60 years, and it didn't happen to me, but you never know, it might happen to you!" The job is passed down from father to son, and they sit there with their matches in hand just in case they have to do it. I thought to myself, "What an incredibly boring job being a beacon keeper!"

What was it like filming in the helicopters when you were doing the Aerial Shots?

It was fantastic! I was scared of helicopters before *The Lord of the Rings*. I had hardly ever flown in a helicopter. They were things that I tried to stay clear of. I understand airplanes and that if your en-

and we were just looking for places to film. We were having the most amazing experience flying around. I am no longer afraid of choppers anymore. I like helicopters now. It was a great experience.

A LOT OF FANS HAVE WRITTEN US AND ASKED WHY YOU PORTRAYED DENETHOR THE WAY YOU DID AND WHY YOU DID NOT SHOW HIM WITH THE PALANTIR THAT HE HAD?

For us, we always had a problem with the palantir. We obviously used it with Saruman, but we felt that we wanted to just stick with Saruman and not have it introduced with another character. This has nothing to do with the story that J.R.R. Tolkien wrote or why he was motivated to give Denethor the palantir, but we just felt in terms of a movie audience,

it would seem like a repetition after we had used it with Saruman. That's really the only reason. There are elements of The Lord of the Rings—when you break it down for a movie, and you are trying to make three movies fresh and original where there are areas of repetition that were part of J.R.R. Tolkien's plan, but from our point of view, it wasn't really something that we wanted to have. We have the character of Théoden, who is slightly deranged under Saruman's spell, and we've got Denethor, who is a little bit deranged, and we have a palantir at Isengard and one at Minas Tirith. We sort of just wanted to reduce that repetition factor a little bit. When we looked at what we wanted to do with Denethor-and again, this is not what J.R.R. Tolkien did with him but what we felt would be most



simplifying the complexity that J.R.R. Tolkien built into the character using the palantir and the various other aspects of the character. You are simplifying that complexity down to a basic dynamic that the city is under threat. Gandalf is trying to do what he can to save it, and Denethor is standing in his path and providing an obstacle. That's really what the movie comes down to.

that particular sale may not happen anymore. I am hearing that that may not occur at this point. But it requires lawyers to sit down and thrash deals out. I think it is going to come down to how much leverage does MGM have and how much is New Line prepared to give away because MGM is going to want something in return for the distribution rights. What are The Hobbit's rights worth to MGM? What are they worth to New Line? Can a deal be worked out? I am reasonably optimistic that it will happen. I have not heard anything, though. I am not privy to any conversations or discussions that I am holding back. I literally am not involved in the process. The one thing that we have said to New Line is that if you want to talk to us about The Hobbit, by

"... I was intrigued by it because I just loved the idea of the

BEACONS BEING LIT ACROSS THE MOUNTAINTOPS. I THOUGHT THAT THIS IS

one of those examples of taking a reference in the book and turning it into something a little bit grander in the movie."

useful in the film—we wanted to basically use Denethor as a foil for Gandalf. The dynamics at that point in the movie are simply that there is a huge problem that exists, and Minas Tirith is going to be under attack. Adapting The Lord of the Rings was a process of simplification not of putting everything in because we didn't have the time for it. Minas Tirith is under attack, and Gandalf realizes that he has a huge problem, and it is only through incredible organization and command of the defenses that he may be able to survive. If that is the dynamic, you have to create an antagonist and a complication. Obviously, Denethor is perfect for that in the sense that he provides the disorganization and the confused thinking that Gandalf realizes will send the city to its doom unless something changes. In the movie, you are really

How optimistic are you that The Hobbit will be made into a feature film in the near future with you as the director?

I assume that it will happen. As we have discussed in the past, there is this legal situation where MGM owns the distribution rights and New Line owns the rights to make it but not to distribute it, so somehow there has to be a deal worked out. New Line is owned by Time/Warner, and I was reading in the press a few weeks ago that there was speculation that MGM might be sold and that Time/Warner could actually buy them. I was thinking that that would solve The Hobbit rights because if Time/Warner bought MGM, then effectively the rights will fall under the same parent company, and that would make it easy. As it seems now,

all means come and talk to us, but sort the rights out first.

Wouldn't you agree that after King Kong, The Hobbit might be a good project for you to step into?

You never know. The one thing that will happen—because it is Hollywood—is that if and when New Line does sort the rights out, they are going to want the film made straight away. They are not going to want to wait. It could take as long as it takes to sort it out, but once they sort it out, they will want to start tomorrow. That's what happens, so we will wait until we hear from them.

THANK YOU FOR TALKING WITH US.
My pleasure. Many thanks!

to the

Sean Astin

Talented actor, dedicated humanitarian, and family man

Even with a full schedule, Sean Astin—who plays the lovable character Sam Gamgee in The Lord of the Rings trilogy—finds time for the many passions in his life. Along with upholding his promotional obligations to the films, Astin balances a life devoted to community activism and family values. In Part I of our interview with the veteran actor and aspiring film director, learn about Astin's experience working on The Lord of the Rings, including his latest project concerning the trilogy as well as the "Hobbit" he remains closest to. Also, discover how having two famous actors for parents has affected his approach to the craft.





EAN, HOW HAVE YOU BEEN? I am doing great! I just got back from Shanghai. I was over there visiting a friend who is directing a movie called Smile that I actually appear in. My stuff was filmed in Malibu, California, but we did a scene at Malibu High School in the hallway at night that was to double for a hospital corridor in China. We were hoping that I would be able to get to Shanghai in time to redo that shot. Even though the shot turned out great, we wanted to redo it just so we could say we did it in China. We were not able to do that, but I can say that I was able to make it to China to lend moral support to the production and visit them on their last day of filmingwhich I like the symmetry of, because I was with them for their first day of filming in Malibu and their last day of filming in Shanghai.

HAD YOU EVER BEEN TO CHINA BEFORE?

I had been to Hong Kong twice before, in 1991 and after 1997, when China had resumed control of Hong Kong. My wife and I took a day trip. I had never been to Shanghai or Beijing previously, but now I have spent a good 48 hours in Shanghai. My wife and my kids loved our time there. I couldn't recommend it more highly.

You seem to be everywhere these DAYS. YOU ARE MAKING APPEARANCES ALL OVER THIS COUNTRY IN ADDITION TO YOUR FILM AND TELEVISION ROLES.

I am doing a lot of things these days. I [was] in the Toyota Pro Celebrity Race. I also was the grand marshal in the Shenandoah Apple Blossom Festival [in Virginia]. I [went] with a colleague of mine to the White House Correspondent's Dinner on May 1. I am a busy man! Maybe it is even arguable to say that I am too busy! I have figured out how to include my family in almost everything I do-or at least in as much as they want to do. It is important. I had been promising Alexandra, my oldest child, that I would take her to China. [The trip] was a little too fast, but we had a great time. We went to the Shanghai Museum, and she got to see the pottery, the ceramics, and the sculptures there. It is an extraordinary thing to be able to be associated with a movie that has done as well as The Lord of the Rings. I am looking at this year as a kind of one-year victory lap for being associated with The Return of the King, which did so well at the Oscars. We're making as much out of the year victory lap as possible. There are people in my life that would like me to focus my energies in a different way so we could yield huge career benefits from it, so I am trying to figure out how to learn to do that, too. You know, I always think of that Elton John song from The Lion King, which says, "There is more to do than can ever be done, more to see than can ever be seen."

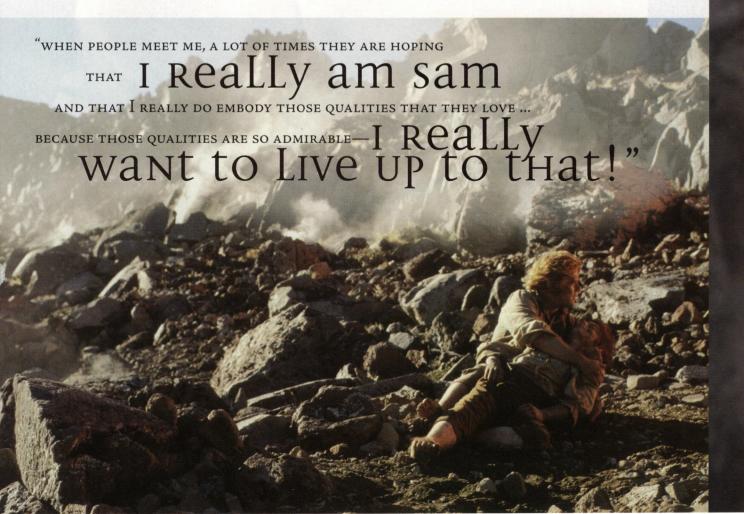
As you know, Sam is a loyal, goodhearted, unwavering friend in the films. He has a lot of qualities that people look up to. How have these films affected the way people look at you? In other words, have Sam's great qualities made people reflect those qualities onto you?

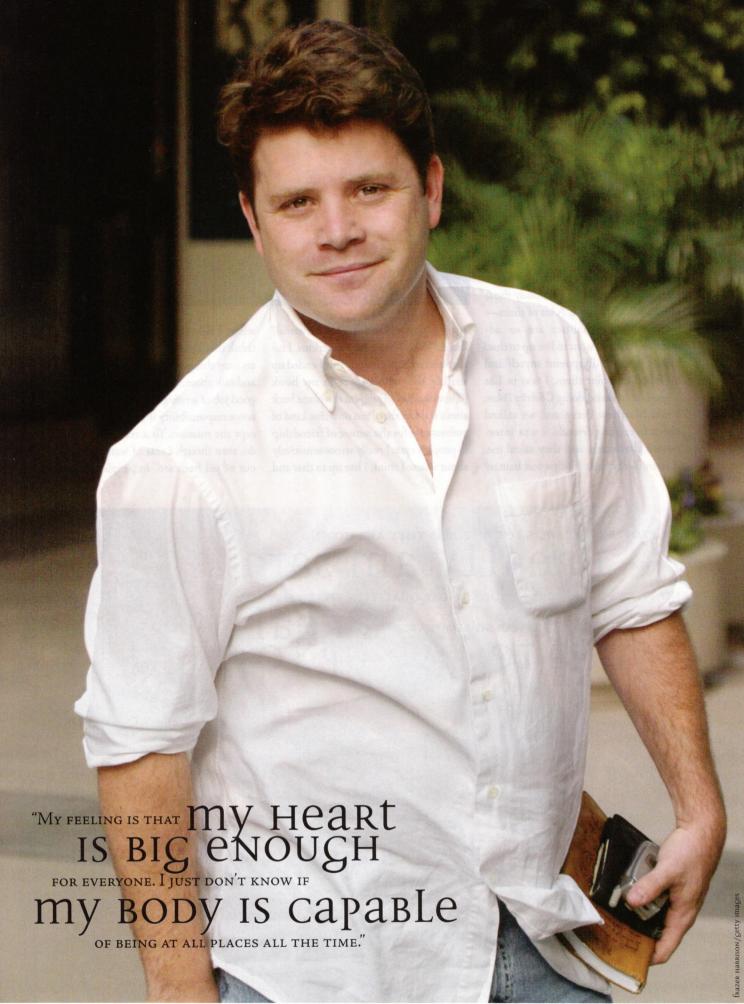
Well, I do share many of those qualities but not as much as people might want. When people meet me, a lot of times they are hoping that I really am Sam and that I really do embody those qualities that they love. A lot of times—because those qualities are so admirable—I really want to live up to that! I don't want to disappoint myself and no less disappoint them. I was in Las Vegas last weekend doing Celebrity Poker. I met Matthew Perry, and we talked about becoming friends. I was interviewed afterwards, and they asked me, "Listen, is that just Hollywood banter?



Are you guys really going to be friends?" I said, "Well, I hope he was serious. I really want to be his friend." But I ended up writing this whole piece in my book [There and Back Again] on the plane back about the fact that I am now this kind of ambassador for the nature of friendship in people's eyes. I really wrote sensitively about where I think I live up to that and

where I fail to live up to that and what I think that dynamic is all about. It is not an easy thing to get your head around and talk about, but I think I did a pretty good job of writing about it. It is an awesome responsibility if you choose to accept the mission. To a certain extent, I do, even though I sort of want the "Get out of jail free card" in people's hearts.





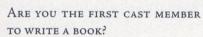
Listen, I have clay feet just like everybody else, and when I screw up, please try and be forgiving of me. Basically, the resolve that I come up with in the book is that I think it is fair to say that I now am consciously trying to be a better friend to my friends after having played Sam than I would have realized I should be if I hadn't played him. I have had to learn about the classifications of friendships relative to acquaintances and colleagues. You should see my emails. I have these email categories for "new friends made on the run" and "just good friends" and "more than an acquaintance," and "industry types," etc. I was going to end up dying from a heart attack because I was putting so much pressure on myself to try and be all things to all people, which people don't really require that of you. A lot of people—especially when you are in a movie like this—want a piece of your time and a piece of you. My feeling is that my heart is big enough for everyone. I just don't know if my body is capable of being at all places all the time. You have to set parameters for interaction sometimes. If the whole goal of this life is to end up, at the end of your life, more enlightened than when you started, [then] playing Sam has been a kind of spiritual bellows that has blown into my soul in regards to what friendship means on this planet.

OF THE ENTIRE The Lord of the Rings CAST, WHO DO YOU REMAIN CLOSEST TO THESE DAYS?



If you put a gun to my head, I would have to say Elijah Wood, but I feel like I remain relatively close to many of them. I have talked to Peter Jackson a couple of times. He made a call for me to help me try and get The Fantastic Four [Astin was interested in directing the upcoming science-fiction/action film about a group of astronauts that gain superpowers], which I didn't ultimately get, but I thought it was pretty special that he was willing to take the time to hear my request and acknowledge it and act on it. There are probably millions of people on the planet who would kill to have him do that. He is a great man. I talk about Peter in my new book. I am really proud and excited about this new book of mine coming out in October. I think fans—not too long after my book comes out—are going to be able to commune with the extended version DVD of The

Return of the King. That horrible sinking feeling that people have that this December is coming but now the threeyear tradition is over, and that they are not going to get a new film, is not really true. They will get something new. There are lots of new scenes in the extended DVD. I am really proud to be able to give this book to the fans. To be honest, I'm a little worried about it. I used the book as an exercise to unpack a lot of the things that were on my mind and heart and consciousness that were less than positive, in terms of the idiosyncrasies of my mind. I fear that my colleagues might respond poorly to it, but ultimately if they see how selfdeprecating I am in the whole thing, I think it will be fine. I am proud of it. I am pretty excited that I am going to have that to offer people. When I go to a convention, [I] only get a moment with each person. It always goes too fast because those things are about volume of people. I can't wait to be able to offer people a more substantive part of myself with this book.



Ian McKellen did a real interesting thing as we were shooting. He had The Grey Book on his Web site [www.mckellen.com]. That was a kind of real-time snapshot of how he was thinking and feeling about it, which was really cut-





SELECTED Filmography

50 First Dates (2004) Doug Whitmore "Jeremiah" (2002) Mister Smith The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King (2003) Sam Gamgee The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers (2002) Sam Gamgee Kingdom Hearts (2002) Hercules (voice) The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring (2001) Sam Gamgee The Sky is Falling (2000) Mr. Schwartz The Last Producer (2000) Bo Pomerants Icebreaker (1999) Matt Foster Deterrence (1999) Ralph Kimberly (1999) Bob Dish Dogs (1998) Morgan Boy Meets Girl (1998) Mike Bulworth (1998) Gary Courage Under Fire (1996) Patella The Low Life (1995) Andrew Safe Passage (1994) Izzy Singer Rudy (1993) Rudy Ruettiger Where the Day Takes You (1992) Greg Encino Man (1992) Dave Morgan The Willies (1991) Michael Toy Soldiers (1991) William "Billy" Tepper Memphis Belle (1990) Sgt. Richard Moore The War of the Roses (1989) Josh at 17 Staying Together (1989) Duncan McDermott Like Father, Like Son (1987) Clarence aka Trigger White Water Summer (1987) Alan The Goonies (1985) Michael "Mikey" Walsh

DIRECTOR

"Jeremiah" (2002) The Long and Short of It (2003) "100 Deeds for Eddie McDowd" (1999) "Angel" (1999) "Perversions of Science" (1997) Kangaroo Court (1994) On My Honor (1988)

ting edge. He would make assertions on there that I would be nervous to make. With signed confidentiality agreements, I would be afraid of giving away too much too soon when it wasn't my place. He is so smart and so confident that he was able to do that. Andy Serkis put out a book, which I read and thought was great. It was not a very big book in the sense that there wasn't that much information in it. The information that was in it was presented in a really cool way so people could get a sense of him and what his experience of bringing Gollum to life was [like], and they could see pictures of what some of the process looked like for him and the animators. It told how Gollum was created, and that was cool. My book is like a cross-section of my mind. I didn't keep a very good diary throughout the whole course of making of the movie, so it is essentially from midsummer of last year through the end of the Oscars. It is my best recollections of things. It is not just a chronology of what it was like making the movie; it is really a book that takes a lot of my experiences as an actor from the time I was 17 or 18—and not just an actor but also an aspiring filmmaker. Everything that I share relates to how I experienced The Lord of the Rings. I talk a lot about other earlier experiences that I had, but it shows you what my frame of mind was at the time I found out that The Lord of the Rings was being made and how I went through the deal and how I got the job

and how I looked at the experience. It is a The Lord of the Rings memoir in the sense that I am not just talking about auditioning for The Goonies and other earlier projects. It is not like that. It is The Lord of the Rings-centric. Everything that I share amplifies how I was feeling on The Lord of the Rings.

AREN'T YOU ALSO DOING A FILM WHERE YOU WILL PLAY JULES VERNE?

Yes, there was some news on the Internet about a film called Mark Twain's Greatest Adventure. A friend of mine had submitted a script to me, and I met with the director years ago. I told them that if they ever got their money in place, I would be happy to play Jules Verne. I understand that they are getting close on their money issue. So, my phone remains poised to hear that they are ready to start shooting. I want to be involved with it for a number of reasons—not the least of which is that it would be a great excuse to reread or to actually read fully as an adult Mark Twain's works, Jules Verne's novels, and the great literary masters who are included in this film. I would take it as a professional obligation to commune with the literary masters of the past!

THE FACT THAT YOU GREW UP WITH TWO PARENTS WHO WERE ACTORS (PATTY DUKE AND JOHN ASTIN), DID THAT AFFECT YOUR DECISION TO BE-COME AN ACTOR, AND DO YOU THINK IT HAS MADE YOU A BETTER ACTOR?



It has affected me totally. I probably wouldn't be doing it if it weren't for them. Just benefiting from my association with all of their life experiences as professional actors has seeped into my consciousness. You can't help but learn from everything they have gone through. It has oriented my mind towards thinking about it and making it my career and performance and craft and technique, all the attendant issues that go along with having a successful acting career. It has helped me more than I can possibly state in an interview. I sort of allude to it a little more in-depth in my book. I am, unquestionably, a better actor because of my parents. They literally gave me acting lessons. They specifically administered "trauma" acting. I think of "M.A.S.H." - you know, the trauma unit. My mother administered those kind of acting lessons when we were doing our first show together when I was 8. My dad [John Astin is well-known for such roles as Gomez on The Addams Family] worked with me a lot, too, about preparing for auditions for The Goonies and other movies I was in. They networked with casting directors and directors and pro-

ducers and promoted me to them. You just can't understate the impact they have had on my life.

I WAS READING THE OTHER DAY THAT YOUR MOM. PATTY DUKE, WAS SAYING THAT SHE HAS GOTTEN MORE RECOG-NITION AND MORE ROLES LATELY BE-CAUSE PEOPLE HAVE RECOGNIZED HER AS "SEAN ASTIN'S MOM."

Well, she is great for saying that! That was also said a little tongue-in-cheek. I would add that that is not a permanent state of affairs. She flew all the way to Washington, D.C., a couple of weeks ago to present me with an award from the Creative Coalition. There were some very respectable names there as well. Congresswoman [Mary] Bono, Congressman Harold Ford, Chris Matthews, and I all received the Spotlight Award that night. Chris Matthews was funny. He was saying how the Oscars kind of sucked this year. I was like, "Wait a minute!" He left before I got to give my little speech. He didn't get to hear me defend them. I don't even think he knew I was in the room. I think he was just

making a general comment. My mom flew back there for this event though. It was really special for her to present me with that award. She cried, and she made me cry. I was filtered through the Capitol building the next day, and we did a lot of our activism work on behalf of Arts Advocacy in Education. A lot of people were coming up to her and addressing her as my mom. She got a taste of her own medicine! I got a little uncomfortable because there was so much at first, and then I just realized that it was just a moment in time when there is all this attention because of The Lord of the Rings. She wants to work more now. I think I am happier with the state of affairs where she is more famous than me!

SEAN, THANK YOU FOR TAKING THE TIME TO TALK WITH US.

It has been a real pleasure.



Don't miss Part II of our interview with Sean Astin in the next issue of the magazine, where he will reveal his thoughts on the films' defining moments, his relationships with the other Hobbits, and more!



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ON SALE JULY

NEW LINE CINEMA

How Art Department Manager Chris Hennah Motivated The Lord of the Rings Crew with Her Unbreakable Spirit

BY DAN MADSEN

hris Hennah is a perfect example of the positive attitude and friendly disposition that New Zealanders are increasingly becoming known for. In her role as art department manager on The Lord of the Rings films, Hennah not only provided continual support to her own department but she boosted morale for other departments that she interacted with as well, reassuring the crew that no job was too big for them to handle. Her team spirit showed through in her close relationships with her coworkers and especially in her work partnership with her husband, Dan, the supervising art director. (The films were clearly a family affair for the Hennahs, as even their

daughter, Nancy, was part of the crew—see Issue 13 for the article on her duties as makeup artist.) Hennah always made it a priority to keep her door open for those needing a sounding board for their dilemmas, even if this sometimes required her to work around her own daily responsibilities such as budget reports and purchase orders. Despite the tight deadlines and the enormous projects bestowed on the art department, Hennah maintained a healthy perspective throughout it all and remembered to enjoy her experience working on the films. Discover her favorite set, which actor she calls "gorgeous," and why The Lord of the Rings took her and her husband to France—not once but twice.





going. The best



CHRIS, TELL US WHAT YOUR JOB AS ART DEPARTMENT MANAGER ENTAILS.

My job has been to look after all the people and the budget and to make sure all the things are delivered on time and that there are no conflicts in the schedule because we had more than one unit working in a group. We had to work up, with the help of our extremely competent heads of departments, what was going to clash and if a prop was needed on one set but then wouldn't be available for another. More often than not, we had multiples of each prop.

WHAT, FOR YOU, HAS BEEN THE GREATEST CHALLENGE OF WORKING ON The Lord of the Rings FILMS?

I think the greatest challenge for the art department, in general, is when we had so many studios to fill. I am not quite sure how many it was in the end, but I think it was around nine. Having multiple units working was a challenge in that you had to have enough people to complete sets on time. I mean big sets-sets that required completing a forest or filling a whole studio with Rivendell. But, we got pretty slick at it in the end. We started off a little bit slower because it was the pace you are used to building sets at. Because of the pressure and the need to have them ready, everybody just got behind Peter Jackson, and we never said, "No, we can't do that." We just said, "OK." Even if one of our heads would say, "That's really hard. I don't think we can do that." We would say, "Right, well, what can you do?" We would work back from the shoot day and determine how many days we would need for set finishing. Once we did that, then they discovered that they could actually do it. More often than not, they just needed a bit of guidance.

When did you first hear about THIS PROJECT?

When we first heard about it. Dan and I were both very excited. Dan has been a total J.R.R. Tolkien fan for years and years. I read the book years ago and I loved it, but I didn't keep re-reading it like Dan did. He started in November 1998, and I started in February 1999. I was just so excited, and that was even before we knew it was going to be a success or not. We got right behind it. You could feel that it was going to be good because you had Alan Lee and John Howe, and they just came up with the best stuff. It was just what you would imagine when you first read it.

It is amazing how these movies HAVE APPEALED TO BOTH THE HARD-CORE FANS AND NEW FANS AS WELL.



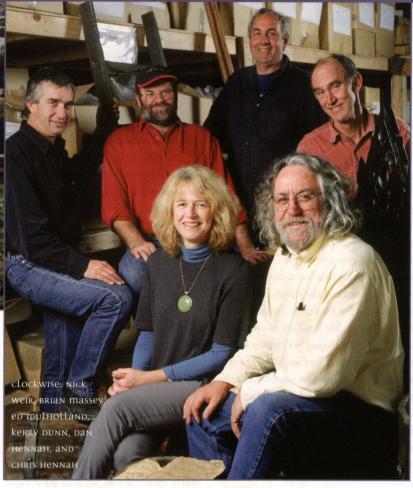
Yes, it is amazing. It is a feat. Dan and I just went to Christchurch last night and did a lecture at an art gallery. There were 400 people there, and they were fascinated! They couldn't get enough of what we were saying. We showed them a few visuals, and they just couldn't get enough of it. They were all J.R.R. Tolkien fans, and [they] had no criticism of anything. They were just

WHAT PART OF YOUR JOB DO YOU LIKE THE MOST?

I love dealing with people. I find it is a challenge when everybody is exhausted and, at times, feeling like they can't keep going. People like [greens master] Brian Massey and [supervising set finisher] Kerry Dunn take responsibility for quite a large department. The best part for me was keeping them buoyed up and keeping their spirits up. I also enjoy juggling numbers as well and keeping the budgets on track.

How closely do you work with PETER JACKSON?

I don't personally have a lot to do with him. Dan does a lot more than me. I started off at night doing design meetings but actually got too busy, and I had a coordinator that started to take over



"When people would have problems, we would tend to be the ones that would have to sort them out ... like orders, budgeting, cost reports. ... I really never have an ordered day. It is pretty much take it as it comes.' Each day is unique."

that area. Peter is a friend, so I actually see more of him after work than during work.

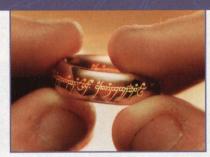
HAVE YOU AND DAN ALWAYS WORKED WELL AS A TEAM?

Yeah, we've always had a good relationship. When the kids grew up a little bit, it was either not see him, because his job always involved long hours, or join him. The answer was to join him. We've worked together closely ever since then. It has worked really, really well on The Lord of the Rings.

PLEASE DESCRIBE A TYPICAL DAY FOR YOU ON THESE FILMS.

It starts pretty early. Even if you don't have to be here by a certain time, there is almost like a mechanical thing whereby you wake up in the morning, get out of bed, have a shower, and come to work. The day starts with making sure each unit has got what they need and seeing to everybody's tasks. Nick Weir, the props master, used to be responsible for the props that have to be on-set each day. At the beginning of the day, it is just sorting out [and making sure] that each unit is happy. We might get a cup of coffee after that and talk. If you sat in our office during a workday and timed it with a camera, there would be a procession of people that would come through. When we are really busy, we get [concerns] like, "I don't know how we are going to do this." There is always something that has to be sorted out. At times on the main shoot, Dan and I shared an office on Stone Street, and we would have people lined up to meet with us. "The buck stops here" was a saying that was true for our office. When people would have problems, we would tend to be the ones that would have to sort them out. There was all the usual stuff like orders, budgeting, cost reports, and all that stuff that had to happen. I really never have an ordered day. It is pretty much "take it as it comes." Each day is unique.

What kinds of obstacles did you FACE ON THESE FILMS?



We had things happen that you wouldn't normally have happen on a picture—like having to get helicopters to lift up a roof. We couldn't lift it, it was on a bush, so we had to get a helicopter to lift it. That was quite an exciting day.

Is there a prop that you are FOND OF?

It always amazes me at the effect The Ring has on people when they hold it. It is "The" Ring, although there is more than one [copy] of The Ring. People still get a thrill from it and want to touch it.

I AM SURE YOU HAVE HAD SOME EXCITING EXPERIENCES ON THESE FILMS, TOO?

I think one of the things that was pretty exciting was we had gone right through a shoot, and we knew we were coming right back to work after Christmas to start pick-ups on film one, and the first email that we received, when we got back in the office, was asking Dan and I to go away and do promotional work. There was an email from someone at New Line Cinema I had never heard of asking if we would go to Cannes to look at the design for a party. I just thought, "Oh, they can't mean us!" They want little ol' us from New Zealand? By the end of January, we had gone once, and in March we went again. That was quite a big thrill actually. Dan and I did the design together. Working in a foreign country is not easy either, but somehow it all pulled together. We had all these difficulties getting it together because there were these big press days where there were hundreds of photographers and such, and we were trying to pull this thing together in five days. We did it, and it really was a very magical night. I will always remember that.

I UNDERSTAND YOUR WALL HAD THE "GIANT CALENDAR." WHAT WAS ITS SIGNIFICANCE?

That giant calendar is the everchanging schedule. You can see that it gets bigger and bigger. There are so many things happening on each day. That might look busy for the on-set crew, but



what it means for us is that we have to provide sets and props for them. Brian Massey, our [greens master], built Fangorn Forest, I think, six times. That was mostly due to actor availability. When they needed a set, we would build it for them. But poor Brian had to turn things around sometimes overnight for them. It wasn't always easy, but they would do it with a smile. I just take my hat off to our construction department because Ed Mulholland had it running like a well-oiled machine. They've built things on wheels and moved sets in and out in a matter of days.

IT SEEMS TO BE THE WAY OF NEW ZEALANDERS THAT WHEN YOU ARE FACED WITH AN OBSTACLE, YOU SEEM TO OVERCOME IT WITH A GOOD ATTITUDE.

I believe these films could not have been made anywhere else. We've worked in countries overseas, and they somehow don't seem to have the same work ethic. Maybe it is just passion. I think that everybody on this job was passionate. They really wanted to do it and do it right. Now, with the film having done so well, it has inspired them. They actually realize that what they've done is fantastic, and they are pretty determined to carry on with that.

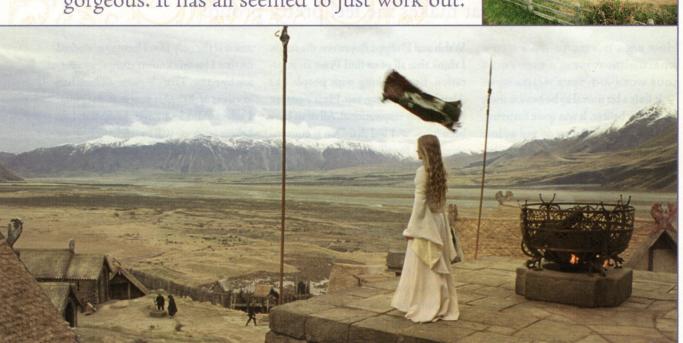
WAS THERE MORE PRESSURE ON YOU WORKING ON The Two Towers AND The Return of the King knowing the TREMENDOUS SUCCESS THE FIRST

Absolutely. You also know that we can provide the best sets in the world. I really was absolutely amazed all the way through this film at how beautiful our sets were. I know that the process we went through to get to that every time was just painstaking. I would walk into the studio and say, "My God, this is absolutely beautiful." No matter what we did, we still depended on editing and visual effects as well to make it look good. To see it all come together and work so well on-screen was a real buzz. I knew that it was a pretty good film right from

WHICH SET IS YOUR FAVORITE?

I always thought it was going to be Rivendell, but [when] I went down to the Edoras set, it was just beautiful. The shot of Éowyn standing on the front of Edoras is just the million-dollar shot of the film. The other thing that impressed me is that they always seem to find the

"The casting has been absolutely impeccable. The locations have been right on the money. Edoras was spectacular; Hobbiton was fabulous; Rivendell was so pretty and gorgeous. It has all seemed to just work out."



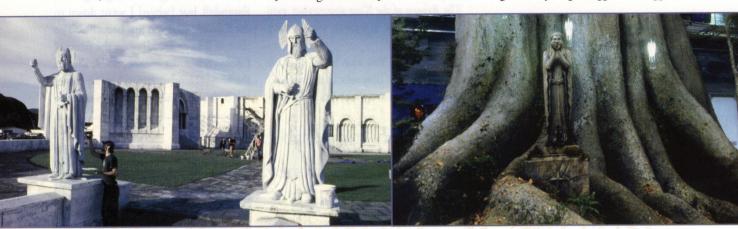
right locations. The casting has been absolutely impeccable. The locations have been right on the money. Edoras was spectacular; Hobbiton was fabulous; Rivendell was so pretty and gorgeous. It has all seemed to just work out.

Do you have a favorite character from the films?

Yeah, I quite like Sam. Even though his character is a little bit wimpy, he's loyal and he hangs in there. I am often tempted to say Boromir because I think Sean Bean is so gorgeous! He is such a nice man, too. jobs as well. Maybe one day Dan will get this great offer that we can't refuse, but at the moment we have no plans. We're pretty happy with what we've got. We'll be working on Peter's next production [King Kong]. Every time you take on a new job, it is nerve-racking. You just hope that your skills will not desert you.

Where do you and Dan get your inspiration?

I think this film is very different from most others in that we are working with such wonderful material. Then, [there is] working with Peter Jackson and Fran sic. I suspect that it is going to be around for a long time. The films will be like the books—they will be around forever, and that makes me feel pretty proud! I feel very proud of all these people that we have working for us. There have been groundbreaking filmmaking advances on these films, and we've—in the construction department—developed techniques that have never been used, too. It wasn't our intention to do so, but we did it out of necessity. It has been interesting how it has evolved. Normally, I wouldn't have any coordinators—I would just do everything. But, it just got bigger and bigger,



"The films will be like the books—they will be around forever, and that makes me feel pretty proud!"

How does it feel to have had a worldwide audience recognize your work and your names now?

It feels a bit unreal to be honest and a bit hard to believe. It was quite flattering, but also it is just what we do and we love it. It's why we do it. We're not doing it because we are ambitious or because we've got aspirations to go and work overseas. Dan has done jobs overseas. We might do something away from New Zealand someday—I don't know. We're pretty happy here though. Working in New Zealand is so easy. We have such a beautiful country as well. Where else in the world can you take five minutes to drive to work on such a fantastic job? It is kind of nice just going away and doing short

Walsh and Philippa Boyens on the script. I think that all of us find Peter an inspiration. But, working with people like Alan Lee is amazing, too. He is a genius. He is totally inspirational. All of us have been inspired. I feel that Dan is quite inspirational for all of the people that are doing stuff for us. He's got a skill of bringing out the best in people. I don't know what it is, but we have just had the most talented bunch of people working for us.

Chris, what will be the lasting memory of working on these films for you?

I think the absolute amazement that we in New Zealand have made one of the biggest pictures of all time. It is a clasand it is the only film I have ever worked on that I haven't known every single person by name. That's because we have had in excess of 400-plus people at one point. I just couldn't know everybody. But, I do believe students will be studying how we made these films 100 years from now. You know, how do you make bark look more real than bark? I believe our work has longevity. And, it is all being done with blood, sweat, and tears—and many tired bodies. We all look like we've aged about 10 years!

Chris, thank you for your time and all the hard work you and Dan have put into these films.

It's a pleasure. Thank you.

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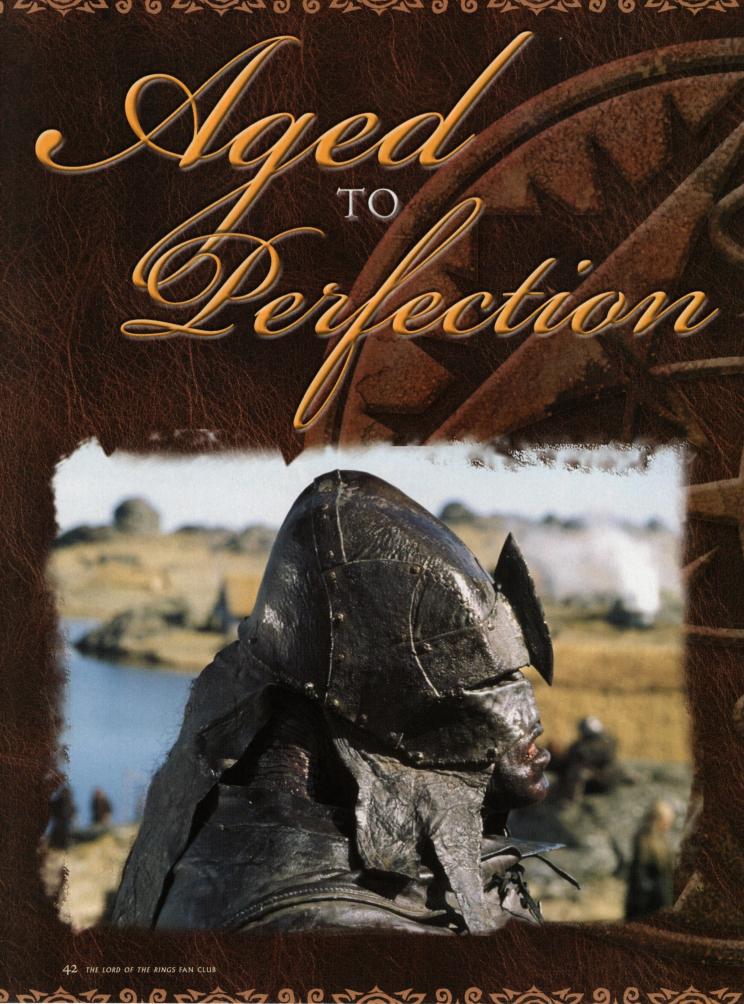
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Senior leather master Mike Grealish reveals trade secrets, both old and new.

Leather is one of those materials in everyday life that people tend to take for granted. It is available in so many products we consume: jackets, belts, purses, and shoes, just to name a few. Throughout The Lord of the Rings films, leather is viewed everywhere in the form of straps, saddles, wardrobes, bags, and detailing on weaponry. In an epic tale such as this trilogy—where Hobbits and Rangers roam Middle-earth and kings and armies battle over land—leather is an essential fabric in telling the historic story in a believable way. Without leather, these films probably would not have been quite as convincing if a synthetic material was used in place of the real thing. According to The Lord of the Rings senior leather master Mike Grealish,

leather is a one-of-a-kind material. "There's nothing like leather," he says. "It has strength and durability. You can wet it, mold it, throw heat at it, and it won't distort. Synthetic [leather] only has one particular use—you can't change its look, you can't stamp it, you can't color it." And Grealish and the rest of the leather team definitely put a lot of work into giving the leather just the right look. In this article, Grealish shares his team's best-kept secret for "aging" leather, and he reveals off-the-cuff inventions that they created along the way out of sheer necessity. Also, discover his favorite leather artifact in the films—surprisingly not a horse saddle, as it might be assumed after hearing about Grealish's family history in the saddlery trade.

BY PETER LOBRED, WITH REPORTING BY DAN BURNS



leather conjures up a great aroma that can be equal parts intoxicating and overwhelming. But that was not the case for the leather workers on *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy. "I can't smell leather now," says senior leather master Mike Grealish, who has devoted his life to the trade. "People come in here and they say, 'Oh, I just love the smell of leather.' But I can't [smell it]. It's completely lost on me. You just get used to it. I suppose like bakers—they don't smell the bread."

Growing overly accustomed to the material is understandable for Grealish, who operated his own leather shop producing briefcases, handbags, saddles, and fishing gear prior to joining the efforts on the films. Though working on leather might not strike the casual fan as a cru-

cial element in bringing the films to life, a second look at the unrivaled detail of the costumes and weaponry proves that these efforts did not merely represent just another day at the office. Indeed, one might be surprised at how early in the trilogy's process that leather workers were needed.

Grealish began his work on the movies at the time when director Peter Jackson pitched the concept to Miramax (before ultimately signing on with New Line Cinema). Weta Workshop needed to produce the look of the Uruk-hai, and that's when Grealish got the call—at just the right time, as luck would have it. "I was going to close [my business] because I couldn't get enough work coming through the door," he says.

Out of the blue, the lack of activity quickly ended, thanks to an unlikely—

and unknown—source. "My wife rang up [the shop] one day and said that a guy called and wants you to ring him," he says. "I said, 'Who is he?' because I had never heard of him. She said, 'Well, he worked at a place called Weta,' and I had never heard of it. So I came over, and within that afternoon, I started straight away. And from that point, I was just full on."

The leather-making process on the trilogy, as Grealish quickly discovered, involved much more than meets the eye. To begin with, Grealish's commitment to the films meant that he was on location with the other craftsmen, rather than completing projects on his own. Though most artifacts began as Grealish and the other leather workers being handed a simple photocopy of the object's design, the final product could go through nu-





merous revisions. "We'd look at it and have to interpret it and bring it to life," he says.

Of course, the creative freedom did have its limits. In producing his very first "tangible" movie item, the bolt bags (arrows that are used in crossbows) for the Uruk-hai army, Grealish worked closely with conceptual artist John Howe, who at times could be very particular in instructing the leather workers. "John Howe spent a lot of time in the workshop then," Grealish says of the initial projects. "He did a lot of conceptual design work, but he would come down here and sit down and draw up things and would make them. He had a lot of input in the development of the products. One of his favorite sayings was-if you'd make something—he would just look at it and say, They wouldn't have done it that way; they wouldn't have made it that way.' He was very specific about what the look was or how functional it was of that time."

LESSONS LEARNED

Even once Howe's standards were met, the process remained far from com-

plete. In fact, it was the next step that was unlike any other that Grealish, a third-generation saddle crafter, had ever undertaken. "When I came here," he says, "I'd make a product, and then you'd start knocking it about, scratching it, carving it, kicking it around, sandpapering it to make something look really old," he says. "To me, that was one of the hardest skills to learn. ... It's the complete opposite of what you were ever taught."

And when Grealish discusses what he was taught in the saddle and leather trade, he isn't simply referring to a brief apprenticeship or some cursory on-the-job training. "I am a third-generation saddle and harness maker," he says. "My great grandfather was a leather merchant in Galway, Ireland, in 1840. My dad was apprenticed to his father, and I was apprenticed to my dad. My parents came to New Zealand after spending five years in London, [where my father] worked in Buckingham Palace, preparing the state coach for the 1953 coronation of the current queen."

Clearly, it wasn't in Grealish's blood to turn out a product that was in less than

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mike grealish displays a round knife that he inherited from his crandfather.

"There was so much involved. It was like a chain gang of cutting, stamping, coloring, and then aging back. It wasn't just one person doing one specific thing; 1t would be a huge, team.

"One of the best parts of the process was the Pelennor Fields battle charge that was awesome.... Whenever you get a huge number of horses and they're galloping, the noise [is] like the ground is boiling. That was spectacular, it was just amazing."





mint condition. But, drawing on his impressive knowledge of the trade, he produced some genuine-looking pieces. "I knew what aged stuff looked like—I had worked on enough old saddles and harnesses that people would bring in to be repaired over the years—but to make it look like that, that took a lot," he explains. "The best I ever got was I made some items, and [Weta chief] Richard [Taylor] came in one day, and he said, I can't compliment you enough on how much you've aged these and made them

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look credible.' After that point, I knew I had achieved. It was a milestone."

Milestones were plenty for the leather shop, which at its height employed a crew of 35. "It was wall-to-wall leather and people producing stuff," Grealish says. "People [were] just detailing the stamping into the leather—that's all they were doing. There was so much involved. It was like a chain gang of cutting, stamping, coloring, and then aging back. It wasn't just one person doing one specific thing; it would be a huge team. It was a team effort.

"It was really a good atmosphere," he adds. "There were a lot of diverse backgrounds of people who came into the leather room. There are a lot of skills to pass on, which is good." Along the way, the workers not only learned a few tricks of the trade, they invented some new techniques for the challenges they faced, including achieving that sought-after aged look. The crew discovered that if they took the leather outside and pressed it against the asphalt in the parking lot, they could obtain the perfect distressed texture, making the leather appear old and worn. "When leather gets old, it gets puckered and hollowed and scratched," Grealish says. "One of the best techniques we found was gently turning the good side of leather down and tapping it from the back. It picks up all of the indentations of the concrete—beautiful! It was a good discovery."

Such discoveries led Grealish to be assigned the task of finishing items "to make things look credible," he says. His widespread responsibility resulted in lending a hand to a great variety of the films' leather projects. In completing the Witch-king scabbard—a sheath for a sword, dagger, or bayonet—more ingenuity was needed on the spur of the moment. "The detailing was like a double leaf repeating, so we had to make tooling," he says, explaining that a metal stamp had to be filed down and heated over a gas bottle flame, and then the stamp was pressed into the leather. "We invented the stamping. Things like that we had to invent."

FAVORITE THINGS

The unique nature of their efforts definitely enhanced the sense of ownership for the leather crew with regard to the projects that the team completed. And there are certain pieces that quickly come to mind as Grealish recalls their results. Among his favorite items was Théoden's costume, produced principally by leather worker Darrin Gordine. "It was beautifully done," Grealish says. "That's a breastplate overlaid with layers

of leather cut out. He even lined the inside of breastplate."

In a testament to the extraordinary detail and care displayed by the leather workers, cast members were known to swing by the shop to shower accolades. The nuances of Théoden's outfit were not lost on Bernard Hill during filming and wardrobe sessions. "That's one thing that Bernard Hill commented on." Grealish says. "He said, Even the inside of the costume was embellished.' That's all he saw when it went on: he didn't see the front obvi-

ously. Putting on that costume, he felt important getting into it. He could feel the strength of the armor."

Battle gear

John Rhys-Davies was another cast member who took a special interest in the efforts of the leather shop—for professional as well as personal reasons. "Gimli used to come in here a lot and chat. ... I did a lot of finishing work helping out Darrin Gordine on Gimli," Grealish says. "John Rhys-Davies was fascinated with New Zealand leather for some reason. He came in to pick his own leather and make some tiles for a new house he was building. [With] all of the leather around, he got the idea that he would cover his new library floor in leather tiles from New Zealand."

Indeed, some of the leathers were quite unique, including the rather unusual New Zealand Murano, used fre-

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although seen only briefly in the film, théodred's costume exemplifies the refined quality of the lord of the rings' leather work, which, unlike many other films' artifacts, can hold up under close scrutiny in appearing to be the genuine article.

quently in adorning the Uruk-hai. "If you get a chance to look at the traveling Uruk-hai, New Zealand Murano looks like something that's come out of a museum that's been buried in mud for a thousand years," Grealish says.

In addition to items of armor—including swords—the leather room devoted much of its time to faceplates and quivers (carrying cases for arrows). "We made an endless amount of quivers," he says, adding that he was particularly pleased with the faceplates for the Rohan horses. "I really enjoyed making those. Most were polyurethane, but we made the hero ones. We spent a lot of time making sure we got those right. We were sent out to the horse place a half a dozen times to make sure we got the fit perfect. Watching the movie now, I enjoy that."

For Grealish, the added excitement from his part in producing the face-plates was the fact that he had the opportunity to work with horses again—at times working very closely. "One of the best parts of the process was the Pelennor Fields battle charge—that was awesome," he says. "Whenever you get a huge number of horses and they're galloping, the noise [is] like the ground is boiling. That was spectacular, it was just amazing."

Ironically for a man who has devoted much of his life—not to mention the lives of his father and his father's father—to crafting saddles, that was one item not found regularly in the leather room. "The only thing that wasn't done here was a lot of the saddlery," he says, adding that a budget oversight resulted

in the workshops of 3f00t6 making the saddles, "which was disappointing because that is why I was employed as a saddle maker, to produce all of that."

Like any member involved in the trilogy, Grealish handled the change of plans in stride and with enthusiasm. "I probably ended up doing more leather work here with the costumes than perhaps just doing the saddlery," he says. "So in that respect, I had much more variety of work."

"TOO VAST"

His was an experience unlike any other, Grealish says, while also applying such sentiments to the entire trilogy as it comes to a close. "I don't think there will ever be anything like it," he says. "I'm sad from that point of view. It's very ful-

filling to have done it but sad that it is coming to an end—even though I know in some way it probably will never end. There will be stuff continuously on show around the world...so it will always keep surfacing back this way."

As a prime example, consider the many items on display at New Zealand's Te Papa Museum. "[Before] I went to the museum display at Te Papa, I had never actually stopped and looked at a lot of the stuff; you'd make it and the chance to admire it was gone," Grealish says. "You'd make stuff one minute, and then it would be gone on the truck. So I had never actually seen it beautifully displayed with a caption and some of the pictures from the movie. You really appreciate it."

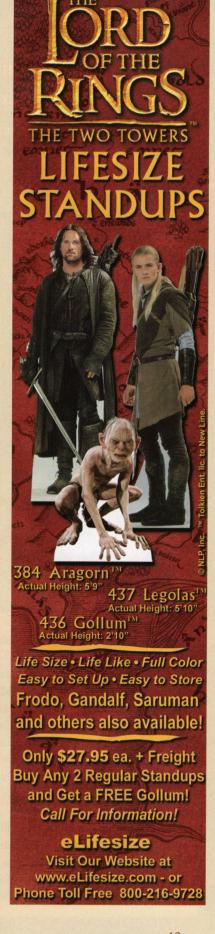
Grealish was not alone in his appreciation, as he had the opportunity to witness other museum-goers' reactions firsthand. "People almost had a reverence for it," he says. "I never realized how potent *The Lord of the Rings* books were in some people's lives. It's almost like a religious reverence being brought to life."

Though he didn't come into the project as a devoted J.R.R. Tolkien fan, the experience is in no way lost on Grealish. "You see how successful the movies are or how much acclaim there is given, and then you realize it's something bigger than just a few buckles and straps—it's too vast to comprehend sometimes," he says. "I still consider myself very lucky to have been a part of it. There were times that we were tired and grumpy, but at the same time, looking back, it's very fulfilling.

"I don't think anyone here realized quite what they were getting into when it started—it grew and grew and grew," he says, adding that it never crossed anyone's mind to be intimidated by the daunting tasks at hand. "That's one thing about Kiwis—a Kiwi can—the can-do attitude. A lot of very short notice stuff happened, but everyone in the workshop would just say, 'Yep, we can do it.'"

It's a refrain that has been seen and heard on many occasions from the trilogy's contributors. Come to think of it, we all witnessed a similar message in the theaters.





ecipher and Weta Workshop partner to create exclusive The Lord of the Rings trading cards for several beloved book characters that didn't appear in the films.

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BY MARK TUTTLE, WITH REPORTING BY DAN BURNS

n November 2001, Decipher released the first of many sets for its The Lord Lof the Rings Trading Card Game, which recreates the excitement of Middle-earth with stunning game cards containing photographic images from the trilogy. Since then, Decipher has created more than 2,000 game cards, featuring the amazing visuals from director Peter Jackson's Oscar-winning The Lord of the Rings films.

Anticipating that fans would still be thirsty for Middle-earth after all three films were released, Decipher came up with the idea to use The Lord of the Rings Trading Card Game to introduce some

of the well-loved characters and items from the books that didn't make it into the films. For help with this, Decipher turned to the artists and technicians behind the films' prosthetics and effects, New Zealand's Weta Workshop.

Weta Workshop senior designer and long-time The Lord of the Rings fan Daniel Falconer jumped at the opportunity to work on the cards. "It gives us a chance to go back and expand the world of the making of the movies," he says. "It's really cool to be able to do stuff that happens in the novels that for whatever reason didn't make it to screen. It's nice to go back in and build on them, and also I

feel I have learned so much making the films and want to be able to apply that. I like Middle-earth so much, I don't really want to leave it anyway, so it's a nice excuse to stay in it a bit longer!"

Bombadi

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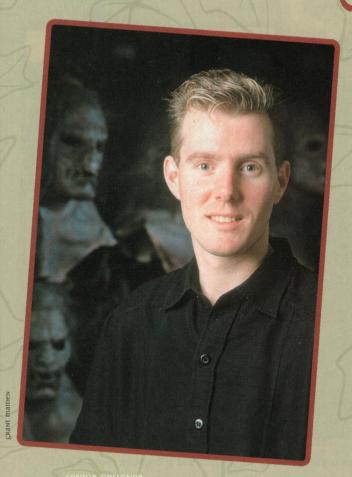
Bounder Mat w

Bree brown shakspear style short worn bree to front

extra piece of brown follows

new trim.

The first names that came to everyone's mind for the exclusive "book" cards were forest master Tom Bombadil and his wife Goldberry, the beautiful goldenhaired daughter of the river. In The Fellowship of the Ring book, Bombadil is a jolly character that saves the Hobbits shortly after they leave the Shire on their way to Bree. Many fans were hoping to see these characters in the film, so they were obvious choices for the cards. An-



ccess to the film's storeroom of props and costumes was definitely helpful in photographing the card images."We had to think of ways to creatively reuse props and costumes that were either barely glimpsed on screen or could be digitally altered."

Daniel Falconer



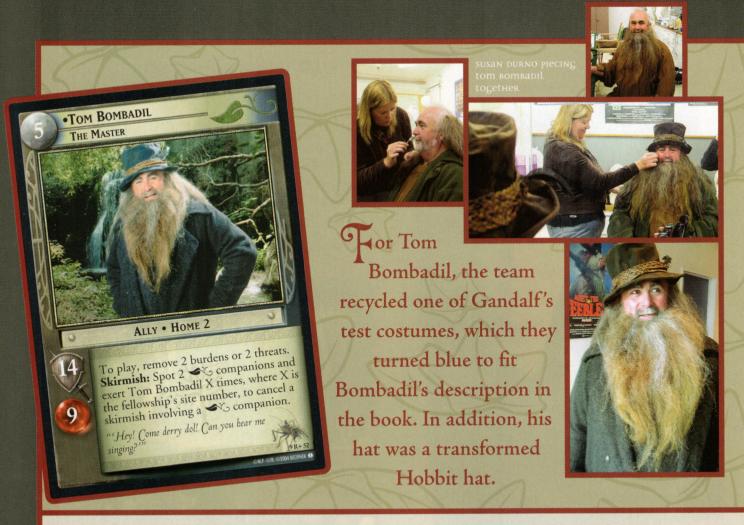
other key book character was the Wizard Radagast the Brown, who under Saruman's evil spell aided the capture of Gandalf. Lastly, when Jackson expanded the part of Arwen in the films, it was done at the expense of Glorfindel, the literary character that brought the injured Frodo to Rivendell. After these first four literary characters were selected, the list was eventually expanded to include more than 20 characters not pictured in the films.

Early in the process, it was determined that these new cards needed to equal the existing game cards' high-quality imagery, which was taken from movie

stills. In collaboration with Decipher's own artists, Weta Workshop began creating these literary characters visually, which according to Falconer was a process that proved to be a bit easier than fans might expect. "For a while, there was talk about Radagast the Brown making an appearance [in the films], if only just in the background of a scene," he says. "A costume was made for him, and of course we never ended up shooting it, so this was a nice chance to use it. And interestingly enough, the guy who is our Radagast in these cards, Weta's own John Harding, was actually going to be Radagast for the film as well."

Aside from Radagast, it had to be decided who would portray the rest of the characters. Fortunately, the team didn't have to look far. "As much as possible—simply for access reasons and also just for the fun of it-we tried to cast many of the characters from within the workshop and within The Lord of the Rings crew," Falconer says. "These are people who really wanted a chance to be in the movies and that worked on them for so long, so now they have their own little moment to have some fame."

The popular character Tom Bombadil was actually played by Falconer's cousin, Harry Wellerchew, and the pro-



ject's wardrobe coordinator Amanda Neil posed as the lovely Goldberry. Glorfindel was represented by Yarl Benzon, who played an Elf extra on the trilogy during all seven years of filming. "You don't need to coach that guy in any way," Falconer says. "He can walk right on the set, and he knows exactly how he should stand and how he should look, so he's an ideal choice for that part."

The team's strong familiarity with Middle-earth did result in several amusing moments during the photo shoot. Falconer recounts with a laugh how one time the photographer said to Benzon, "Lean forward a little bit please," and [Benzon] replied, "Elves don't lean."

A sampling of the Weta Workshop crew that posed as models for the cards include: senior leather master Mike Grealish (see this issue's "Artifacts" section for an interview with Grealish) as Erkenbrand; prosthetic technician and digital

compositor Norman Cates as the Hobbit Fredegar "Fatty" Bolger; and senior designer Warren Mahy (who along with Falconer was responsible for the look of much of the armor, weaponry, and creatures in the films) and armor and weapons supervisor Gareth McGhie (who also spent time as a third assistant director) as rangers.

Like the film trilogy, Falconer viewed this project as a group effort that relied on the skills of many different talents, especially the expertise of the crew from The Lord of the Rings films. "Emily-Jane Sturrock came aboard to production-manage the project, which was great because no one knows our in-

ventory better," he says.

"Emily-Jane was a keystone member of Weta's on-set crew and had the perfect attitude, knowledge, and familiarity to bring to bear on the process of assembling what we would need for these new cards." Falconer continued by explaining that Emily-Jane planned the entire shoot process, including signing on experienced costumer Amanda Neil and makeup

> artists Susan Durno and "Frankie" to work on the set. "These people have all worked together for years," Falconer says. "They know each other well, they know each other's capabilities, and they have a confidence with each other that they can walk in and trust each other to do their jobs."

he project's wardrobe coordinator Amanda Neil posed as the lovely Goldberry, the beautiful golden-haired daughter of the river.



Also, photographer Grant Maiden, who shot the card images, was not a newcomer to Middle-earth. He photographed much of the films' work for several Harper Collins books. "Shooting the trading cards was great; it was a chance to be involved with some new [The Lord of the] Rings characters and the wonderful team from Weta again," Maiden says. "I personally love the amazing weaponry from LOTR, so this was great fun for me!"

Having access to the films' storehouses of props and costumes was definitely helpful in photographing the card images. Time, Falconer explains, was another matter. "We didn't have a lot of time, so we had to think of ways to creatively reuse props and costumes that were either barely glimpsed on-screen or could be digitally altered," he says. "We tried not to have to make too much new stuff. Radagast's staff was one of the only



Gt's a frozen moment from something that in an ideal world would be in the big nine- or 10-hour version of The Fellowship of the Ring or The Two Towers. Our hope is that you could step sideways in any point of the movie, step out of the main story, and you could actually go find these characters living somewhere in Middle-earth." Daniel Falconer

things that we started from scratch and completely made because we didn't have anything really appropriate."

According to Falconer, Sturrock uncovered some "real gems." By recoloring or redressing wardrobe pieces from the films, the crew was able to reuse various articles of clothing, particularly several of the Rohan items, including Théodred's (the son of Théoden) armor. Specifically for Tom Bombadil, the team ended up

recycling one of Gandalf's test costumes, which they turned blue to fit Bombadil's description in the book. In addition, his hat was a transformed Hobbit hat.

After finalizing casting, costuming, and makeup, the next stage was determining the conceptual imagery. Falconer refers to director Peter Jackson's genius of putting a face to J.R.R. Tolkien's characters as the "PJ filter." Throughout the process of trying to bring the literary char-







ne time the photographer said to Yarl Benzon, who portrays Glorfindel. "Lean forward a little bit please," and Benzon replied, "Elves don't lean."

acters to life, Falconer and the team used this filter as their guide. "Looking at the movies, you get something that is in most cases adhering to what is described in the book but also with the touch of something else," he says. "It's a little flavor, a taste of something else. We try to fuse them all with a taste that runs through the movies. It's an enormous thing to try to put your finger on, but [we have tried] to bring that to these cards."

Along with following the "PJ filter," Falconer and the team developed a process for trying to capture the perfect emotional moment for each image. The process involved finding a book passage for each character, pitching the concept to Decipher's creative director Dan Burns, and then Decipher and Weta Workshop together determining the concept for that scene. "Dan's emphasis has been on the storytelling, which I think is totally appropriate,"

Falconer says. "In each little image, we try not only to catch a moment in time but actually tell a little story and put it in context. It's a frozen moment from something that in an ideal world would be in the big nine- or 10-hour version of The Fellowship of the Ring or The Two Towers. Our hope is that you could step sideways in any point of the movie, step out of the main story, and you could actually go find these characters living somewhere in Middle-earth. [It's like] we just didn't go there with our movie cameras."

Bringing all of the book characters to life has not been easy. Falconer admits that the Barrow-Wights have been a challenge to create. "Even after we shot them, I wasn't completely sure exactly how they were going to look," he says. "It's something that will come together as we look at it, work on it, and try a few different things out. They are very hard characters to do without crossing into the Ringwraith territory."

Another challenge the team faced was attempting to ensure that characters appear the way most fans might imagine they would look from the descriptions in the books. Falconer knows they run the risk of fans visualizing characters another way entirely. "In the same way as in the movies, you never can please everybody," he says. "You aim to please most of the people most of the time, and at the very least even if they disagree with you, you'd hope they would go, 'Oh well, that's not how I imagined it, but it's kind of cool-I don't mind it."

The one person that Falconer particularly hopes is impressed is Jackson. "We know that PJ is probably going to see these cards at some point, so we hope that he'll look at them and say, 'Cool!'"

Falconer and the team are very pleased with the outcome of the book









Interestingly enough, the model who is Radagast in these cards, Weta's own John Harding, was actually going to be Radagast for the film as well.

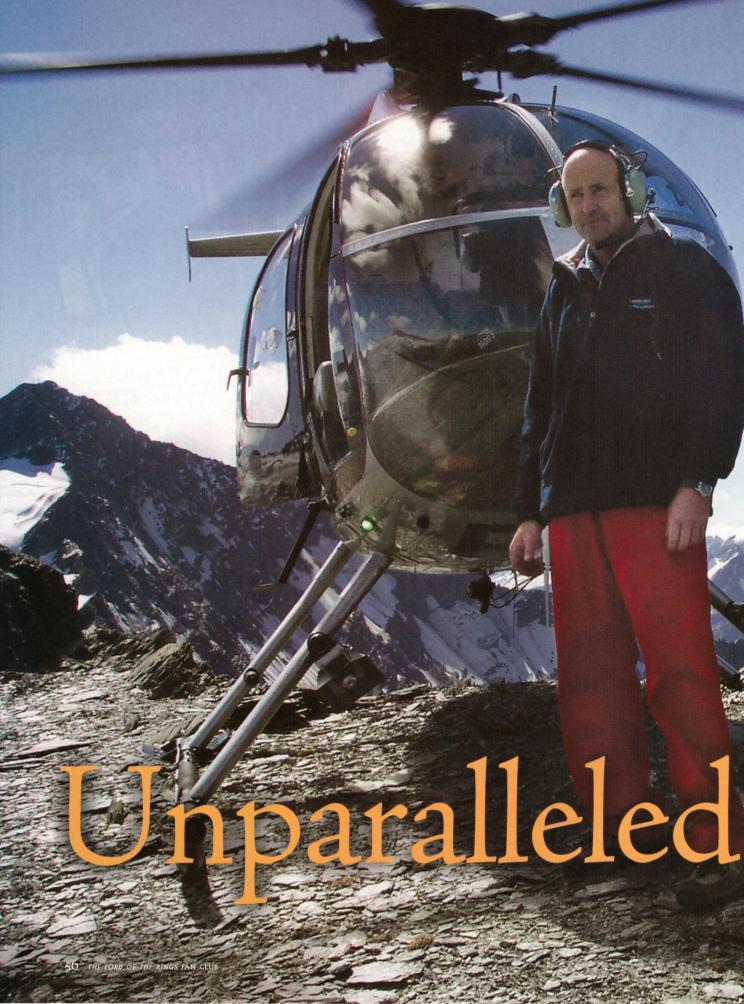
cards so far. "We're certainly open to the possibility of doing more," he says. "One area I'm keen to explore is some of the other creatures of Middle-earth, like the other Trolls in Moria. In the movie, we only saw one, but there are more. I'm looking forward to the prospect of pushing around some images to try and make them into new Trolls and other creatures that audiences never got to see in the theaters."

At present, Falconer and the rest of Weta Workshop are hard at work on Jackson's next project, the remake of the classic King Kong. But this "self-confessed Middle-earth junkie" hesitates to say he has completed his work on The Lord of the Rings. "It's never really finished," Falconer says with a laugh. "Every time I think I'm done on it, there's always something else—in this case these cards, which to me is actually even more exciting because we're making new stuff as opposed to

re-creating what we already made. We're actually coming up with new characters and expanding the world. Hopefully, we give the fans something to be excited about in some small way with these cards, and hopefully it looks like they stepped straight out of the same world as the rest of the characters in the movie."

Decipher will be releasing the cards for Tom Bombadil, Goldberry, Radagast, and Glorfindel as part of a retail redemption package called "Countdown to the King" and again in The Lord of the Rings Trading Card Game expansion "Reflections" on May 12. Additional book cards will be released over the summer of 2004 as retail incentive packages for hobby gaming stores. To learn more about Decipher's The Lord of the Rings Trading Card Game, visit decipher.com.





Unsung Heroes

While it is commonly known that New Zealand's beautiful landscapes can be seen throughout The Lord of the Rings trilogy, most movie viewers are probably unaware of the research and responsibility behind capturing such scenic backdrops on film. The key person responsible for delivering the stunning shots was helicopter pilot Alfie Speight. Not only was he entrusted to fly the cast and crew from one remote location to another—whether it was on top of a mountain in a national park or to the bottom of a gorge—Speight also did most of the aerial camerawork as well. Whatever shots director Peter Jackson had in mind, Speight was up for the task. His vital role combined with his incredibly humble personality more than qualifies him as this issue's "unsung hero."

BY MARCUS WOHLSEN,
WITH REPORTING BY DAN MADSEN

Elghts"

In the Sky with Helicopter Pilot ALFIE SPEIGHT

"I TAKE A LOT OF FILM CREWS AROUND. THEY travel around the world

SHOOTING IN SO MANY LOVELY PLACES, THERE ARE OTHER NICE PLACES IN THE WORLD, BUT

New Zealand has got the most wonderful views."

n one of the many fascinating behind-the-scenes interviews contained in the extended DVD edition of The Fellowship of the Ring, Sean Bean (Boromir) recounts a hair-raising helicopter ride he shared with Orlando Bloom (Legolas), Billy Boyd (Pippin), and Dominic Monaghan (Merry) en route to a remote mountain location. While the younger actors were thrilled with flying so close to the scenery, asking the pilot to make daring swoops to get closer to the mountains, Bean sat in white-knuckled silence. After they landed, he announced that this was his last helicopter ride. From then on, Bean had to wake up hours earlier to climb the mountain and reach the location in time.

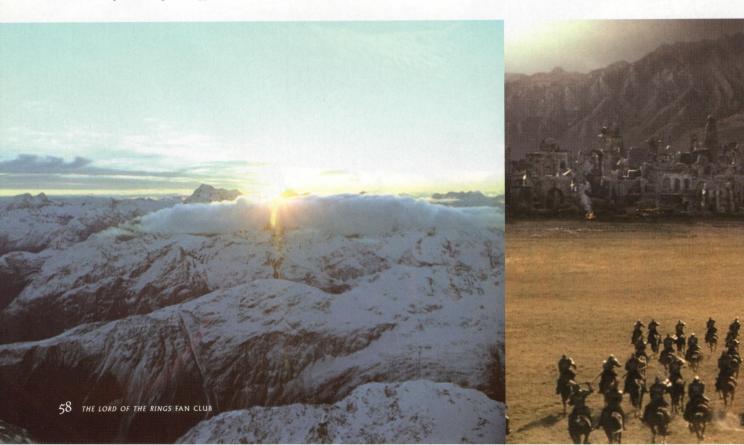
What Bean perhaps didn't know at the time was that he had no reason to fear flying. Throughout the filming of The Lord of the Rings trilogy—where helicopters were a regular part of the production effort from start to finish—the cast and crew flew with one of the best whirlybird pilots in New Zealand. Not only did helicopter pilot Alfie Speight carry people from place to place, he also had to fly with immense precision to capture the sweeping aerial camera shots that are among the most gorgeous in the whole trilogy.

Of course, this was not without its challenges, says Speight, who was involved with *The Lord of the Rings* project from the earliest days of location scouting and did most of the aerial camerawork on all three films. "You have to just have the helicopter where the camera wants to be," he says. "You always have to remember where the camera is pointing in order to keep the director or the camera operator happy. You have to keep the camera pointing

in the right direction and keep it steady. First and foremost, though, you don't want to cause any damage to anything or scare the horses."

However, this is not always easy to do in a six-passenger A-Star helicopter with Peter Jackson issuing directions and four excited Hobbits clambering around the cockpit for a view. Because of the importance of helicopters in traveling to the many remote locations throughout New Zealand where filming took place, as well as the crucial role they played in capturing key shots, Speight had plenty of opportunities to interact with The Lord of the Rings executive crew, especially Jackson.

Speight describes the Oscar-winning director as a model passenger. "He is what you see when he is up on the stage with his collar not quite straight," Speight says. "He is that way with us



filming. He is standing there in his shorts and his T-shirt, and he never raises his voice. [He] never changes from picking up a prize in front of a huge stage to directing some people in the rain. I think that is why the whole project was so successful because Peter had so much enthusiasm and so much drive and was so passionate about it. He had such a love for it that he worked eight days a week, and everyone just fell in behind him. Barrie Osborne and Zane Weiner were his right-hand men, and they are good guys who have worked on a lot of movies. Between those two, what you see is what you get as well. Peter had some good help. None of them yelled or screamed. That starts from the top."

Speight also flew with most of the cast at one time or another. Like Bean, Sean Astin (Sam) also felt "a bit uncomfortable" up in the air. "I think he walked from the end of the road one time," Speight says. However, the rest of the actors just enjoyed the ride. Some even relished it.

"Ian McKellen was great—he loved the countryside and loved looking down



at everything," Speight says. "John Rhys-Davies loved flying as well. They all loved going to these various locations because they were so beautiful."

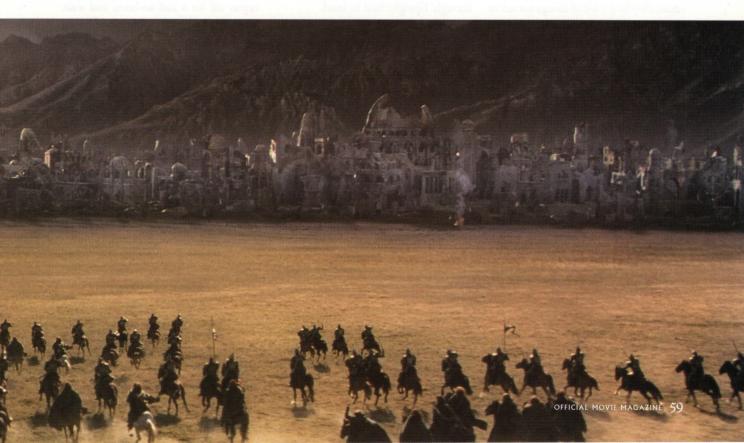
HOW IT BEGAN

Speight first hooked up with Jackson through Dave Comer, a location scout that the director had been working with from the earliest stages of *The Lord of the Rings* project. Speight had already been flying helicopters for nearly 20 years, often to remote locations in search of deer. He had worked as a pilot filming several television commercials, but nothing he had ever been involved with even began to approach the scale of *The Lord of the Rings*.

"I was involved with the production years before they started shooting," Speight says with a grin of pride. In fact, he began working with Jackson some five years before the final reel of film was shot.

Though Speight knows the New Zealand backcountry well, Comer and Jackson had a good sense of the kinds of locations they were looking for. During the scouting phase of the project, Speight's main responsibility was flying from place to place.

"Somebody like Dave Comer, who is a good, internationally known film scout, knew where to look," Speight says. "He has a great knowledge of the countryside, plus he knows all the sun





WHILE THE YOUNGER ACTORS WERE thrilled with flying so close to

the scenery, asking the pilot to make daring swoops to get closer to the

MOUNTAINS, Bean sat in white-knuckled silence.

angles and what a film crew wants and what the weather is going to do. He has a vast knowledge. Between him talking and driving around and Peter Jackson's ideas, they had a lot of things sorted so that they could put a few dots on the map and off we would go."

After making the airborne journey, Jackson and Comer would typically need to spend time on the ground figuring out the logistics of how to turn remote wilderness locations into fully functional film sets—

often involving a cast and crew of hundreds—without leaving lasting damage on the local environment. Before they could do any of this, though, Speight had to land.

"Generally, landing is not that hard," Speight says, although anyone who's seen the movies can imagine that it took the wisdom of Gandalf and the patience of an Ent to land a helicopter on jagged mountain summits, with blowing snows and not a square foot of level ground in sight.

Speight and Jackson crisscrossed New Zealand for almost two years doing preliminary location scouting. "At the main sites, we would land, turn the helicopter off for a half-an-hour, and walk around and take a few photos and have a few discussions," Speight says. "Some we would just fly over, but the serious ones you would have to land. We would go back two or three times. We would go back in the summer, the winter, and the spring. Some of these trips would take two days, or some would just take a cou-



ple of hours. The farthest we went scouting would have been half way up the South Island of New Zealand."

The most remote location Speight had to scout was the largest national park in New Zealand, Doubtful Sound in Fiordland National Park, a rugged landscape of mountains and glaciers—and a good 40-minute flight from the nearest road.

"I take a lot of film crews around," Speight says. "They travel around the world shooting in so many lovely places. There are other nice places in the world, but New Zealand has got the most wonderful views."

THE NEXT STEP

After the scouting work was completed, Speight's job grew more challenging. No longer would he primarily act as a chauffer carrying a few scouts from place to place. When the actual filming began, Speight became the goto pilot for most of the aerial shots, which are so important to the energetic, epic feel of the films. In a very real way, he became an artist.

To do most of the aerial camera work, a steady cam—known in the film industry as a "space cam"—was mounted externally to the nose of the helicopter. The space cam was then connected to a monitor inside the cockpit that the pilot could not see but that the camera operator watched as the pilot flew.

The cameraman Speight worked with most was Phil Pastuhov, who

along with Jackson was Speight's most constant companion during filming. "Quite often it was just I and Phil and Peter, if he was around," Speight says. "Barrie Osborne came with us a bit. We would occasionally have one technician, but otherwise, if we were just filming close by, we would have just two people onboard—the operator and the director."

SCENE-SETTING

At the beginning of *The Two Towers*, viewers are treated to a soaring aerial shot of the mountains as the rising sun casts an orange-golden glow over the landscape. (Actually, Speight doesn't remember whether that shot was taken at sunrise or sunset, but he does know he was at the controls that particular day.) To capture such shots, Jackson would sometimes accompany Speight and Pastuhov into the air. But with his heavy workload, Jackson couldn't always be along for the ride.

"If Peter couldn't be with us, he would have a meeting with the operator and say what he wanted," Speight says. "If he were busy, we would go and shoot it, come back, and show him what we shot. He would tell us what we had done wrong, and then we would go and do it again. Or, he would say, 'Yeah, that's good. On to the next.'"

Speight's work would often involve doing several shots per day. The harder work came when the aerial shots involved actors or horses. The horse scenes Speight helped to shoot included large group shots of horses leading up to the massive battle scenes in *The Return of the King.* "To see such a large group of horses with all of their costumes on was incredible," he says. "How anyone can ever do that on such a mass scale, I still don't know!"

Speight also filmed the Ringwraiths chasing Arwen on horseback in what has to be one of the most riveting horse chases ever caught on celluloid, especially since skittish animals like horses don't always react well to giant helicopter blades whirling sometimes just yards behind. "[Jackson and Pastuhov] would want to get closer and do this and do that, but the horses hated us being behind them," Speight says. "You had to be out of their sight or slightly in front of them." When watching the Ringwraiths chase Arwen on her horse, not once does a horse's mane or Liv Tyler's hair appear to be even slightly ruffled by wind from a closely following helicopter, a testament to Speight's deft hand.

However, it takes more than dexterity to perform aerial maneuvers with the precision required of Speight. It takes a keen mind and the wisdom gained from years of experience to know just what risks a pilot can take to fulfill a director's artistic vision. "People can yell or scream at times and say 'get lower' or 'get closer,' but you have to know your limits and work from there," he says. "Generally, a good director and a good operator know what a helicopter





can do, so before they ask any silly questions they already know the answers.

"We would all have a little general discussion before we went up in the helicopter to discuss what we were going to do," he adds. "They would say, 'Is it possible?' And we would say, 'Yes,' and everyone would work it all out together. You look at the area, and check it out for any wires or anything that might cause trouble-noise or things you can't get close to. You check it out first, and then you go and do your shot. That is especially important if you are around buildings or close-up areas. If you are flying around mountains, where there are no obvious wires, you are just free to roam. The space cam has good lenses and a zoom, so sometimes you don't even have to get close."

Speight's favorite set was "Edoras," which viewers of The Two Towers extended DVD edition know was one of the most elaborate sets on the entire project. "Filming around that Edoras set was amazing," he says. "That set was just beautiful with an amazing background. Everything there now is gone. It is just a bit of weeds and green grass. When the buildings were there, it made it look a lot bigger than it is."

Speight also remembers with special fondness filming the Fellowship paddling downstream from New Zealand's Rangatahi Gorge to the rivers running into Lake Manapouri. Still, when it comes to combining deep cinematic beauty with sheer technical challenge, nothing can match the lighting of the beacon fires in The Return of the King. To be an effective shot, the weather and the timing had to be just right—and capturing that perfect moment wasn't easy.

"The first fire was real," Speight says. "A lot of work went into that one. They had to set it all up, and we had to have the right weather. I was just used for the actual filming of that scene. A couple of other helicopters took the gear and people to the top of the mountain. It took nearly a week to do that shot because of the weather. We couldn't get a permit anywhere else on the South Island apart from that one spot, which was a place that often got a lot of clouds."

Whether it was filming the beacon fires or ferrying some Hobbits five minutes up a hill, Speight found himself cherishing his experience working on The Lord of the Rings.

"The days with Peter sitting in the back, you would learn a lot from him," Speight says. "We went right through New Zealand a couple of times filming-we covered the country twice. It was fun being a part of it. I was very lucky to be involved."

The Lord of the Rings fans who weren't able to be a part of the films can now experience some of the excitement themselves. Speight is now offering scenic aerial tours of many of the locations he scouted and filmed. "We'll take visitors on helicopter flights on some of the same helicopters we flew Peter and the cast on and take them to these beautiful locations," he says. "We land and they get to walk around." The flights last from half an hour to three hours and take off from Speight's base at Heliworks Queenstown Helicopters (heliworks.co.nz).

These days, with The Return of the King's sweeping win at the Academy Awards and enthusiasm for all things The Lord of the Rings-related continuing to grow. Speight's business has been brisk. As he flies enthusiasts from around the world to the fields of Rohan and across the Misty Mountains, he marvels at the impact the movies have had on his home country and around the world.

"I never thought about [The Lord of the Rings] affecting New Zealand tourism, which it has," he says. "I never, ever thought anything about that. It is amazing, and it will carry on for a long time. The kids love it, and all these games have come out. Kids sit down and watch these DVDs at home, and then they learn more and more. And each time I watch it, I learn more, too."

The main photographer of the on-location images in this article is Ian Brodie, who is also the author of The Lord of the Rings Location Guidebook Revised Edition published by Harper Collins Publishers (NZ). Expanding on the best-selling earlier edition, the revised edition contains new location information, new cast and crew interviews, new location photographs and movie images, and much more from the third installment of the trilogy, The Return of the King. The book can be ordered by clicking on lordoftheringslocations.com.

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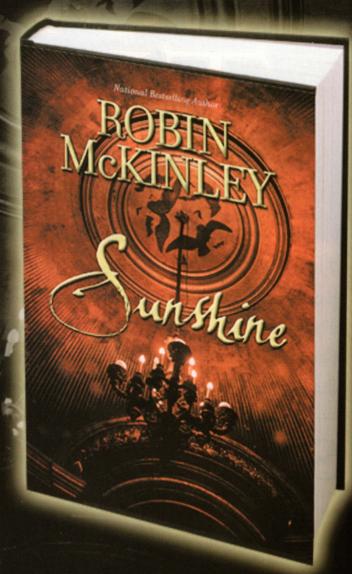
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GERMAN COMPANY STRIKES GOLD WITH ITS THE LORD OF THE RINGS PRODUCT LINE.

A Fairy Tale COME TRUE

BY LISA BOOTH

There is no longer an urgency to toss The One Ring into hot coals to evoke the glowing inscription nor is there a need to brush up on Elvish to be able to decipher The One Ring's message—all thanks to master craftsman Oliver Nöll. His German companies are definitely making their mark in the world of The Lord of the Rings collectibles by successfully bringing the elements of fantasy to life.

Schwalmstadt, a small German town nestled along the Schwalm River, is claimed to be the birthplace of one of the world's most popular fairy tales, *The Little Red Riding Hood* by Gebrüder Grimm. The quaint town is now also the home of another sort of fairy tale.

Oliver Nöll, who has been producing quality jewelry for the last 20

years, established a successful jewelry design company, Schmuck-Uhren Nöll, in 1984. In addition to his commitment to quality over the years, he has always had a passion for the unique. So when he heard that *The Lord of the Rings* movies were going to be produced, he quickly began working toward securing a license to produce his own line of products

inspired by the trilogy. When Schmuck-Uhren Nöll first launched their *The Lord of the Rings* product line, Nöll became so overwhelmed by the huge response to his jewelry that he called upon two other master craftsmen to help manage the workflow. Together with master bookbinder Peter Albert and master carpenter Sven Lohrey, they estab-







lished a co-operation partner company called POS Schwalm merchandising GmbH, which strategically combines the group's advanced craftsmanship, strong business sense, and steadfast vision. Within one year of manufacturing and marketing their products to the masses, they now find themselves living every entrepreneur's dream. They are enjoying the achievements of a business that has doubled in both sales and staff its first year. In fact, the company recently had to relocate to another facility to accommodate the unimaginable growth.

Nöll and company work diligently to create high-quality products, utilizing the latest technology to add an extra "kick" to the final product. This "kick," as they refer to it, is quite evident in their most unique product, their special version of The One Ring. When held under a black light, the inscription emits a fiery glow. The One Ring-by far Schmuck-Uhren Nöll's best seller—comes in a wide variety of styles, including gold, silver, stainless steel (matte and polished), titanium (bright and black), and platinum.

So what is the secret to such rapid success? The extensive experience that the staff brings to the co-operation surely has played some role. Sven

Lohrey, who manages the workshop, has 20 years experience as a carpenter. With 24 years of experience as a bookbinder, Peter Albert is responsible for graphic transfers, development of design and

layout, and the printing process. And Nöll manages The Lord of the Rings jewelry line, as well as ongoing new developments and special effects for both current and future collections.

But Nöll feels that there is no real secret to their quick growth—just the unified belief that the three craftsmen share. "We are successful because we understand the symbio-



arwen's evenstar pendant

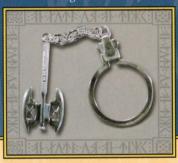
sis of tradition and modernity," Nöll says. Indeed, that meshing of old traditions and new and unique ideas is a true testament to their success.

When developing a new product, Nöll, Lohrey, and Albert discuss the product's marketability and the production processes that will be needed. The production plan is mapped out, and the necessary machines and parts are bought, converted, or built. Samples are created, and then it is decided whether they will handle the entire manufacturing process in-house or if part of the work will be delegated to their partner companies. When opting to outsource part of the production process, Nöll always chooses companies in the local region so that they can keep a close watch over quality control.

It was Nöll's love for The Lord of the Rings books that inspired him to pursue a license for the products. "When I was 14 years old, I was the only one in my grade at school who read The Lord of the Rings books, and because I was looking for someone to discuss the books with, I had to talk to 17- to 20-year-old guys who were about to do their school-leaving examination," he says. "And that is how I received another perspective on the books, which broadened my knowledge and appreciation. After I heard of the film version, I contacted New Line to introduce my creations. I had to manufacture The Ring. It was just the call of fantasy." And Nöll couldn't be happier about their great collaboration with New Line Cinema.

Although no one from the co-operation of Schmuck-Uhren Nöll and POS Scwhalm has ever actually made a trip to Middle-earth (a.k.a. New Zealand), you couldn't tell from viewing their pieces. The incredible attention to detail gives the products a look as though they were plucked right out of the epic fantasy films. Employee Silvia Fromm says her favorite piece is Arwen's Evenstar. "We are so proud of

L and R: navel **Jewelry**







our Evenstar pendant," Fromm says. "It genuinely captures the beauty of the Elven princess. The pendant is made of sterling silver and is a symbolic reminder of her timeless love for a mortal man." And Nöll adds: "The gemstones are mounted in the settings and not glued. You can only remove them with brute force."

Under the license Schmuck-Uhren Nöll, Nöll produces many collectibles, including an extensive line of jewelry, magnetic boards, and doormats. They also create products for Spider-Man 2, Underworld, Elf, Back to Gaya, (T)Raumschiff Surprise (a German movie), Charmed, Das Schwarze Auge (a German role-playing game), Magic, and Garfield.

As for a trip to New Zealand, it doesn't look like it will happen anytime soon for anyone at the cooperation. "It is a trip that we would all love to take, but we are far too busy to get away," Fromm says. However, don't be fooled into thinking

they are complaining. They are over the moon with the realization of how much *The Lord of the Rings* fans are enjoying their products.

To see Schmuck-Uhren Nöll's latest creations, log on to www.mechanische-uhren.de or www.posgm bh.de. (There is a link to POS Schwalm's English Web site on its home page.) The Lord of the Rings Official Fan Club (www.thelotrfanclub.com) also sells the company's products.



A home for 'those who would wander with friends in Middle-earth'

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Founded in 1969 with the author's approval, the society was formed to further interest in the life and works of J.R.R. Tolkien.

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President in perpetuo J.R.R. Tolkien CBE

"The Ring Goes Ever On"

2005 sees fifty years in print of The Lord of the Rings. In celebration of this, The Tolkien Society, in conjunction with other societies around the world, is arranging a week-long conference 11-15 August at Aston University, in Birmingham, UK.

Photograph of JRR Tolkien © The Oxford Times.

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HEARKEN!

AS FOR ONCE I APPEAR BEARING TIDINGS

naught of despair and ill news, but of joy and determination that our trials of this age of perilous Trading shall herefore be banished and pass beyond these mortal shores until they are known to none but the mists of time.

AND BEHOLD! As we have wrought in secret for many months a trading and buying and selling system for those who hold dear that which is good in the world. And even tho it has not yet the polish and wisdom that the years may bring, I have chosen now and here to unveil to you this hope beyond hope.

PERHAPS A DAY WILL COME when the toils of the few are heralded by all, but until then let it be known that their labors were long and their trials great and their work not yet finished. For it is our accepted task to listen to your needs and improve this marketplace until your fears of trading today are but a distant echo in your deepest dreams.

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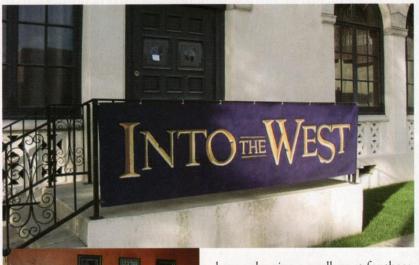
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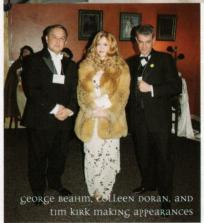
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FAN tocus

RINGER REPORT





Cunday, Feb. 29 is not a day that will be soon forgotten by The Lord of the Ring's fans! Sharing elation, members of the Official Fan Club, along with other Ringers, gathered together at the Hollywood Athletic Club to cheer Peter Jackson and The Return of the King's wins at the Oscars, where they snatched all 11 Academy Awards for which they were nominated.

In the six weeks leading up to the Oscars, Fan Club members Amy Buckles, Kristi Fotjik, and Rosie Gagnon

began planning a small event for those who wanted to be in Hollywood on Oscar night but were unable to obtain tickets to TheOneRing.net's Oscar Extravaganza (see this issue's News from Middle-earth section for a report on TheOneRing.net's party). The "Into the West" Oscar party for The Lord of the Rings fans was organized thanks to the donations and advertising provided by various fan organizations, including The Official Fan Club, Ringbearer.Org, War of the Ring, Council of Elrond, Tolkien Online, The Lord of the Rings Fan Club Scrapbook, and Tolkien Forever. As a result, all of these different threads were weaved into an incredible and loving expression of fandom-a party by fans for fans.

On the night before the Academy Awards, the Hollywood Athletic Club lit up for the "Rivendell Hall of Fire" event. Guests packed in to listen to poetry, story, and song. Musician Kevin Henry made a lasting impression with his Hobbit-inspired songs, and the Brobdingnagian Bards added sparkle to the night with their lively tunes. The evening also included an art show featuring renowned J.R.R. Tolkien artists Tim Kirk and Colleen Doran. It was a rare and wonderful treat for fans to see Kirk's artwork, which has not been on display for over two decades, as well as view the large collection of donated prints and originals on display by Doran. The artists were on hand to sign pictures and books, shake hands, and mingle with guests. In addition,





the entertaining George Beahm was there to autograph his latest book, The Essential J.R.R. Tolkien Sourcebook.

No one could have guessed upon entering the "Into the West" Oscar party the next day that there would be such a cause for revelry later that night. Fans began arriving at the Hollywood Athletic Club around 4 p.m. While the previous night was a spectacle of elegant

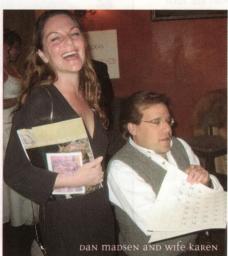
costumes, dresses, and suits, it was nothing compared to the stunning array of Elven robes, polished chain mail, courtly finery, glittering gowns, and stately tuxedoes that graced the numerous rooms of the club on Sunday night.

The excited crowd—including Fan Club founder Dan Madsen and his wife. Karen-met in the bannered and decorated halls, where nearly 300 fans gathered around screens to watch the Academy Awards. The anxious group became quiet as categories in which The Return of the King was a nominee were announced, and then the silence was jubilantly broken each time the film was announced as a winner! When Peter Jackson was announced as the winner for Best Director, there was a frenzy of cheers. For many fans, this was the most important and most deserved award of the evening. The reaction was topped only by the overwhelming joy when The Return of the King made a complete sweep. After the award show was over, fans partied the night away.

In the spirit of continuing to use The Lord of the Rings fans' collective influence to do good things for the community, the profits from the "Into the West" party went to the Southern California Chapter of Reading is Fundamental, a children's literacy charity. Donations were also raised privately for Project Last Stand, which supports groups who are actively buying unprotected forests, planting trees, and making a positive change around the world.

Oscar night was a wonderful time for The Lord of the Rings fans to celebrate together with friends—both new and old-from all around the world. Fans will never forget the fevered excitement that led up to this historic moment, nor the hard-working people who made it possible.

~ Rosie Gagnon and L. Lara Sookoo





Fellowship Spotlight

HAWAII

The Hawaii Tolkien Society group, I Tol Andúnë (meaning "island of the sunset"), was created in 2002 by Fan Club members Shalane Sambore. Barbara Kahana, and Linda Brogan. The three J.R.R. Tolkien fans formed a club as a result of their common appreciation for Peter Jackson's work, adapting The Lord of the Rings into films.

Since the group started, Tol Andúnë has sponsored several events, including an initial meeting where they presented a short biography of J.R.R. Tolkien and two "pubmoots" where they celebrated his birthday. However, the crowning events have been fabulous premiere parties for each film's release. The parties each hosted approximately 50 people, many of whom arrived in costume.

Not surprisingly, the group's The Return of the King line party (a festive gathering of fans before a movie is shown in theaters) was their biggest event to date. The party included a buffet of Hobbit food, a costumed harpist, raffle drawings-including a chance for fans to win a replica The One Ring-and many The Lord of the Rings-related games.

To find out about upcoming Tol Andúnë events, please visit their Web site at www.tolandune.net.

~ Rosie Gagnon 🤝

CLUB STORE

NEW PRODUCTS FROM SIDESHOW

The quality artisans and sculptors at Sideshow/Weta have broadened their incredibly successful The Lord of the Rings range with brand new lines, new materials, and new selections of statues and busts. The selection shown here is just a fraction of the full range available at lotrfanclub.com. These pieces sell out fast, and many have limited-edition production runs, so don't delay!

CCALE MINIATURE HELMS

Re-created in metal, these 1/4-scale helms are fashioned after The Lord of the Rings props, and are hand cast and painted. Each is around 6" in height and includes a presentation stand for convenient display.

[A] Uruk-hai Scout Helm • 104195	\$25	-
[B] Uruk-hai Berserker Helm • 104196	\$25	
[C] Easterling Helm • 104199	\$25	
Member Price:	\$22.50)

POLYSTONE PLAQUES

These 15 3/4" x 9 1/2" wall plaques are sculpted by Virginia Lee, daughter of renowned J.R.R. Tolkien artist Alan Lee. Each piece comes with a description of the scene on the back as well as the signatures of Virginia Lee and multi-Oscar winner Richard Taylor. The plaque has two keyhole wall mounts and rubber bumpers on the back for easy display.

rabber bampers on the base is any map of	
[D] Escape Off The Road • 100272	\$150
[E] Meeting of Old Friends • 105086	\$150
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ENVIRONMENTS

EITTIMETTIE	
[F] Helm's Deep • 105081	\$125
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Member Price:	\$112.50
[H] The Mines of Moria • 105237	\$200
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Sword blades are made from 1/4" tempered stainless steel with solid metal hand guards and pommels. Included is a wooden mounting plaque of appropriate motif. Sword lengths are up to 55". See online descriptions for full details

full details.		
[A] Andúril, Sword of King Elessar • 105039	\$348.99	
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Member Price:	\$201.59	
[F] Ltd. Edition Helm of Gimli • 105035	\$498.99	
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Scale replicas suitable for the smaller Hobbit holes! Miniatures vary in length from 9"-13" and come with a stand bearing the film logo.

[G] Sting, Bilbo's Sword • 104879	\$44.99
[H] Narsil, Sword of Kings • 104885	\$44.99
[I] Glamdring, Sword of Gandalf • 104881	\$44.99
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[G,H,I] Collector's Set of Three Miniatures 104894 \$123.99 Member Price: \$111.59



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71



his exquisite collection of *The Lord of the Rings* jewelry has been gathered by the Fan Club from official licensees chosen by New Line Cinema. Incredible quality and beautiful craftsmanship are all combined here with precision engraving and fine precious metals.

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This unique collection of belly-button jewelry is manufactured from bars of high quality surgical-grade stainless steel, with rhodium-plated or acrylic decorations.

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[B] Rohan Motif on Banana Barbell	
(5mm Top Ball) • 105170	\$40
[C] Hanging Sting Motif on Banana Barbell	
(5mm Top Ball, 8mm Bottom Ball) • 105174	\$40
Member Price:	\$36
[D] Hanging Fellowship Brooch on Banana Barbell	
(5mm Top Ball) • 105347	\$45
Member Price:	\$40.50
[E] One Ring Sliding Motif on Straight Barbell	
(6mm End Balls) • 105173	\$30
Member Price:	\$27



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A flat circular pendant with laser-etched ring-script, this piece is made from glossy-black titanium, the same metal found in meteorites and aircraft alloys. It has the strength of steel at the weight of aluminum and is almost impervious to wear. This is the gift that will remain unchanged for a lifetime! Includes a modern-design 17" [43cm] black stretch necklace with a silver-metallic push-twist clasp.

104857 \$144 \$129.60 Member Price:

BRACELET WITH RING-SCRIPT
This wrist-shaped oval bracelet in resilient and lustrous stainless steel features The One Ring inscription precision laser-engraved on two exterior sides. The bracelet opens from a single steel hinge, and the clasp is a strong overlapping clip design that does not rely on springs. Available in two widths.

Women's (7mm) • 104856 \$144 Member Price: \$129.60 Men's (11mm) • 104855 \$144 Member Price: \$129.60





NSIGNIA JEWELRY BOX

Imported from Germany, this wooden jewelry box has a book-like appearance with gilt-metal corners and a goldstamped film logo. Inside is padded for protection and includes small loop for holding spectacles.

104710 \$24.90 Member Price: \$22.41













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[D] Mordor Leather Bookmark	-
with Metal Medallion • 105144	\$5.99
[E] Map of Middle-earth	
Foldout Bookmark • 105145	\$5.99
[F] Guide to Middle-earth	
Foldout Bookmark • 105146	\$5.99
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A bookmark like no other that will outlast all others! These all-aluminium (aluminum) bookmarks from Europe have a vibrant full-color design enhanced by a lustrous metallic finish. Each bookmark includes a brightly colored cloth tassel with a removable metallic-gold replica of The One Ring. As an extra touch, the movie logo is shown in German, "Der Herr der Ringe".

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[]] Gollum • 104659	\$6.95
[K] Legolas • 104660	\$6.95
[L] One Ring • 104661	\$6.95
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Member Price:	\$26.99

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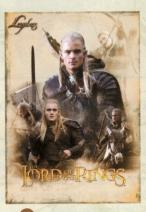






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\$12.99

\$12.99

\$11.69



he Return of the King DOOR POSTERS (21" x 62")

[A] Legolas Door Poster • 104456 [B] Heroes of The Return of the King • 105028 Member Price:

he Return of the King WALL POSTERS (25" x 35")

[C] The Return of the King Trio Poster • 104412 \$8.99 \$8.99 [D] The Return of the King One Sheet • 105025 \$8.99 [E] Mount Doom • 105026 \$8.09 Member Price:

OIL DUFEX WALL POSTERS (25" x 35")

These spectacular posters have to be seen to be believed. Made utilizing a completely different method from the usual four-color print process, the image is printed onto a 260 grams-per-square-meter silver foil lined board using UV transparent inks. The print is then enhanced using various handsketched engraving textures to give an element of movement and a shimmering 3-dimensional effect in normal light. The product is then trimmed to size and shrink wrapped onto a backing board. Poster is shipped flat.

[F] The Two Towers One Sheet • 104418	\$24.99
[G] Legolas Montage • 105030	\$24.99
[H] Middle-earth Map • 103828	\$24.99
Member Price:	\$22.49







TRADEABLE MINIATURE GAME

Finally an easy-to-learn miniature game that does not sacrifice playability! Boasting a starting set of over 120 unique model variations sculpted in an extra large 1.5" (40mm) format, this innovative game uses the trademarked Combat Hex game system. All figures are pre-painted and include a special base that tracks the figures' game statistics. Easy to learn, fast to play, and a joy to collect!

TWO-PLAYER STARTER SET

Everything you need for two players, with eight pre-painted figures (including Aragorn, Lurtz, and Frodo), four dice, a full-color 2' x 2' double-sided hex map, and instructions in six languages.

[A] 104644 \$19.99 Member Price: \$17.99

EXPAND YOUR GAME

Army Booster

Contains random assortment of four pre-painted figures (including one rare) and a blood-red die with Sauron's Eye in place of the one-pip.

[B] 104645

\$2.99

Member Price: \$8.99

Expansion Map Set I

Includes four exciting new battle maps pre-ruled with 40mm hexes and new terrain rules.

[C] 105094 \$7.99 Member Price: \$7.19

ELUXE COLLECTOR'S BACKGAMMON
This exquisite *The Lord of the Rings* Backgammon Game is featured in a rustic, handmade wood case, which opens into a game board revealing the map of Middle-earth. Antique gold and silver die-cast metal ring game pieces are engraved with the Elven inscription to provide the ultimate backgammon experience.

[D] 104340

[D] 104340 \$49.99 Member Price: \$44.99

OLLECTOR'S EDITION Checkers Game Tin Hand-sculpted ring "checkers" and a richly decorated game board make this checkers set great for fans and players. Packaged in a collectible tin, the 24 game "ring" pieces are colored in gold and silver with an engraved Elven inscription.

[E] 104341 \$14.99 Member Price: \$13.49







RAMED MAGNET BOARDS

Perfect for home or office, each magnet board is 25 1/2" x 17 1/2" and displays a vibrant photorealistic image directly on finished sheet steel. A black wooden frame surrounds the board, and includes The One Ring script etched across the top frame and highlighted in gold paint. Each board comes with four strong round magnets and matching stickers of movie characters to decorate them with. Official German film logo also shown.

[A] Welcome to Middle-earth • 104721	\$37	
[B] Mt. Doom • 104724	\$59	
[C] Gollum • 104727	\$59	
[D] Aragorn • 104729	\$59	
Member Price:	\$53.10	

IFE-SIZE STANDUPS

Stare your hero in the eye! Quality cardboard standups are 3' to over 6' (dependent on character). They are securely packaged and easily assembled. Talking versions have a switchable motion detector that requires three AA batteries (sold separately).

[E] Strider • 103292	29.95
[F] Arwen (in Green Gown) • 105118	29.95
[G] Éowyn • 105119	29.95
Member Price:	26.95
[H] Talking Gollum • 104386	27.95
Member Price:	\$25.15

"You filthy little thieves!" "You stole my precious, and we wants it!"







UN STUFF!

This great selection of patches, buttons, and stickers are just the ticket for filling out your favorite fan's gift package or thank you card. Patches can be sewn or ironed on. Buttons are metal with safety-pin style back and full-color gloss finish. Rubon stickers are decals that adhere to glass or mirror surfaces.

FABRIC PATCHES

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[B] Movie Logo • 105206	\$3.49
[C] Frodo & Sam • 105207	\$3.49
[D] Treebeard • 105208	\$3.49
[E] Cave Troll • 105214	\$3.49
[F] Legolas • 105216	\$3.49
[G] Legolas Logo • 105217	\$3.49
Member Price:	\$3.14

RUB-ON STICKERS

[H] My Precious • 105226	\$2.99
[I] Elven Leaf • 105227	\$2.99
[]] Legolas Logo • 105228	\$2.99
[K] Orc Spider Motif • 105229	\$2.99
[L] Middle-earth Logo • 105230	\$2.99
Member Price	\$2.49

BUTTONS

20110	
[M] Gollum Art • 105188	\$0.99
[N] Legolas & Quivver • 105190	\$0.99
[O] Aragorn with Blade • 105192	\$0.99
[P] Frodo with Phial • 105194	\$0.99
[Q] Merry & Pippin • 105200	\$0.99
Member Price:	\$0.89







he Lord of the Rings LIQUID PC MOUSE

These unique and colorful computer mice will add sparkle to any desktop, at work or at home! The front third of each mouse is like a fish tank, with a The Lord of the Rings motif item floating in a colorful liquid. The mouse is a two-button version with a scroll wheel and a standard PS/2 connector on an extra-long 52" cable. Includes instruction sheet and PC software on floppy disk.

[A] One Ring Floating Mouse • 104705	\$34.90
[B] Arwen's Evenstar Pendant Floating Mouse • 104711	\$34.90
[C] Gollum Floating Mouse • 104706	\$34.90
[D] Legolas Floating Mouse • 104707	\$34.90
[E] Mount Doom Mouse • 104712	\$34.90
Member Price:	\$31.41

he Return of the King Mouse Mats \$9.99 [F] Aragorn • 104617 \$9.99 [G] Arwen • 104618 \$8.99 Member Price:

he Return of the King ACTIVITY STUDIO PC CD-ROM

This superb collection of nine different The Return of the King titles is a dragon's hoard of family fun! CD-ROM includes software modules to let you print out your own posters, calendars, flyers, bookmarks, party invites, place settings, address labels, greetings cards, stationery, door hangers, and special shaped labels from beautiful film images. Also included are an interactive map of Middle-earth, desktop puzzles, movie trivia, a paint studio using line drawings of film characters, a scene creator, a screen-saver selector, and more!

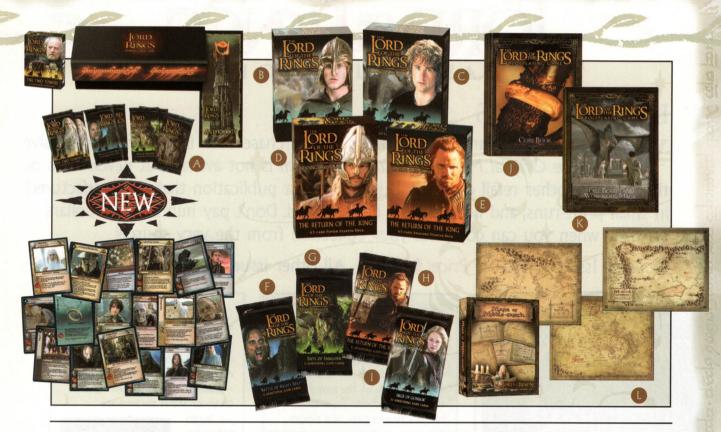
PC only. For system requirements, refer to Web site item description.

[H] 104616	\$19.99
Member Price:	\$17.99









The Lord of the Rings TRADING CARD GAME

This award-winning card game features a dazzling array of full-color cards, including many images never seen in the theater. The game plays equally well in two-player or multi-player formats, and provides infinite variety for the player as well as a treasure trove for the collector.

he Two Towers ANTHOLOGY

[4] 104471

Member Price:

Drawn from the sets of the Towers block, the highlight of this Anthology is 18 new cards hand-lettered by film calligrapher Daniel Reeve in the authentic Elvish 'Tengwar' alphabet. Packaged in a beautiful and sturdy 600-card capacity collector's box, the Anthology also includes: a 63-card Towers block starter deck, two 11-card booster packs from each of the three Towers expansions, and a comprehensive card list of the first three sets.

[A] 1040/1	\$36.00
Member Price:	\$32.40
STARTER DECKS (includes 63-card deck and rulebook)	
[B/C] Siege Of Gondor Merry/Pippin • 104595/6	\$10.99
[D/E] The Return of the King Éomer/Aragorn • 103994/5	\$10.99
Member Price:	\$9.89
BOOSTER PACKS (II cards per pack, including one rare of	ard)
[F] Battle of Helm's Deep • 103443	\$3.29
[G] Ents of Fangorn • 103450	\$3.29
[H] The Return of the King • 103991	\$3.29
[I] Siege Of Gondor • 104592	\$3.29

The Lord of the Rings ROLEPLAYING GAME

Experience the rich universe of characters, lore, locales, and adventures by running your very own campaign in Middle-earth. Step into the shoes of your own hero and change the destiny of all races.

COURCEBOOKS

Now you and your friends can enter Middle-earth and take on the roles of any hero you desire. Experienced gamers can leap right into this beautiful full-color book, and newcomers will appreciate the in-depth playing guide. Hardcover, 304 full-color pages. Each sourcebook is a full-color hardcover tome featuring a wealth of resources for the player, narrator, or scholar.

[]] Core Book • Hardcover, 304 pages

100266	\$39.95	
Member Price:	\$35.95	
[K] Fell Beasts & Wondrous Magic • Hardcover, 96 103584	pages \$29.95	
Member Price:	\$26.96	

APS OF MIDDLE-EARTH Volume 1 (BOXED SET)

Drawn by renowned illustrator Daniel Reeve-the official cartographer for The Lord of the Rings films-these six 17" x 22" archival-quality folded maps cover The Shire, West Gondor, East Gondor, Rohan, Eregion, and Mordor. Includes a 32-page guide to the lands of Middle-earth. [L] 103374 \$29.95 Member Price: \$26.96

For full lists, images, strategy, and discussion go to www.decipher.com.

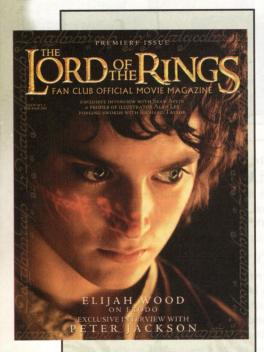
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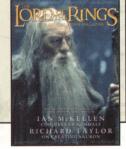
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PREMIERE ISSUE

(Feb/Mar 02) • 100045 Interviews with Elijah Wood, Sean Astin, conceptual artist Alan Lee, and Weta-wizard Richard Taylor, as well as the first installment of our regular monthly updates with director Peter lackson.

ISSUE 2 (Apr/May 02) • 100046 lan McKellen conjures up Gandalf • Lawrence Makoare shows us what it takes to be the Uruk-hai leader Lurtz · Weta's Daniel Falconer delves into the inscriptions on the movie weapons • Prosthetic supervisor Mariory Hamlin gives us a glimpse into the world of

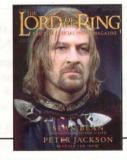


ISSUE 3 (Jun/Jul 02) • 100047

Sean Bean on bringing Boromir to life . Acclaimed fantasy illustrator and LOTR conceptual artist John Howe • Visual effects photography expert Alex Funke

· Academy Award nominee Ngila Dickinson shares the intricacy

and beauty behind the movie costumes.

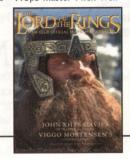


ISSUE 4 (Aug/Sept 02) • 100048

John Rhys-Davies looms large as the stalwart Dwarf, Gimli • Viggo Mortensen shares his artistic passions • Casting director Liz Mullane on finding Elves in New Zealand • Props master Nick Weir

 Costume designer Ngila Dickinson Interview Part II.

makeup effects.



ISSUE 5 (Oct/Nov 02) • 100049

Liv Tyler discusses bringing to life one of the trilogy's most controversial characters · Academy Award Winning composer Howard Shore • Veteran producer Barrie Osborne reveals the enormous challenges of filming a trilogy • Lesley Earl-Templeton

provides rare glimpses into the films' beautiful fabrics, flags, and banners.









ISSUE 6 (Dec/Jan 03) • 100050 Legendary actor Christopher Lee talks about not playing villains • British actor Bernard Hill shares the experience of playing Théoden • Weta-maestro Richard Taylor shows us what's behind the

weapons of the Uruk-hai Matt Cooper proves that even lawyers get dream iobs.



ISSUE 9 (Jun/Jul 03) • 100053 Making Merry with Dominic

Monaghan • Peter Jackson on Shelobinduced arachnophobia • Craig Parker contemplates cult-fame as Haldir • The

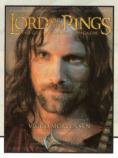
challenge of creating Treebeard • The props of Middleearth.



ISSUE 12 (Dec/Jan 04) • 100056

Part I of our exclusive interview with Viggo Mortensen • Kirk Maxwell on training the cast in swordfighting .

Kerry Dunn speaks about Middle-earth set painting • Production Sound Mixer Hammond Peek.



ISSUE 7 (Feb/Mar 03) • 100051

Miranda Otto on Éowyn and stabbing an Orc • Calligrapher Daniel Reeve and The One Ring inscription • Brian Massey on being the greens master of

Middleearth • Working with the horses of The Two Towers.



ISSUE 10 (Aug/Sept 03) • 100054

Andy Serkis and the team at Weta Digital talk about bringing Gollum to life • Richard Taylor recalls the origins

of Weta Workshop • lasmine Watson discusses iewelry

design.



ISSUE 13 (Feb/Mar 04) • 100057

Thomas Robins (Déagol) shares his excitement on landing this small yet significant role • Viggo Mortensen interview, Part II · Publicist Melissa Booth's private on-set journal • Tricks

of the trade with film editor lamie Selkirk and makeup artist Nancy Hennah.



ISSUE 8 (Apr/May 03) • 100052

An interview with the delightful Billy Boyd • Sala Baker on playing the screen's biggest bad guy, Sauron • Author Brian Sibley on his long time involvement with The Lord of the

Rings . Richard Taylor guides us through thousands of years of Elvish armor and weaponry design.



ISSUE 11 (Oct/Nov 03) • 100055

Karl Urban (Eómer) tells us how The Lord of the Rings changed his life • Conceptual designer Alan Lee reveals the secrets of Rivendell . Executive

producer Mark Ordesky shares his tales • Sculptor Ra Vincent and carver Sam Genet.



ISSUE 14 (Apr/May 04) • 100058

John Noble discusses Denethor's demise · Inside the Orc's world with lead Orc led Brophy • Transforming paintings into visual effects with artist leremy

Bennett • LOTR's scale doubles share their experiences acting in place of the main cast.



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oteworthy A sampling of our favorite quotes from this issue..

"JUST BENEFITING FROM MY ASSOCIATION WITH ALL OF [MY PARENTS'] LIFE EXPERIENCES AS PROFESSIONAL ACTORS HAS SEEPED INTO MY CONSCIOUSNESS. You can't help but learn from everything they have gone through. ... It has HELPED ME MORE THAN I CAN POSSIBLY STATE IN AN INTERVIEW." [Sean Astin, Sam]

"I just couldn't imagine what it would be like to man the beacons! You have to live in this LITTLE HUT ON TOP OF A MOUNTAIN WITH SOME MATCHES—PRESUMABLY A FLINT. AND YOU JUST HAVE TO WAIT. I AM ASSUMING THAT the beacons haven't been lit for hundreds of years, so IT IS A Job that has been passed down from father to son. I can imagine an old father retiring and

SAYING. WELL, YOU NEVER KNOW SON, DURING YOUR LIFETIME, YOU MIGHT HAVE TO LIGHT THIS BEACON SO KEEP YOUR EYES PEELED! Don't take your eye off the horizon, You NEVER KNOW WHEN YOU MIGHT HAVE TO DO IT. I WAS HERE



FOR 60 YEARS, AND IT DIDN'T HAPPEN TO ME, BUT YOU NEVER KNOW, IT MIGHT HAPPEN TO YOU! THE JOB IS PASSED DOWN FROM FATHER TO SON, AND THEY SIT THERE WITH THEIR MATCHES IN HAND JUST IN CASE THEY HAVE TO DO IT. I THOUGHT TO MYSELF, What an incredibly boring job being a beacon keeper!" [Peter Jackson]

COMING UP

- More from Sean Astin Cinematographer Andrew LESNIE'S PERSPECTIVE BEHIND THE LENS
 - THE TOP 10 EXPERIENCES ON THE LOTR SET



TOM BOMBADIL WILL PLAY AT WORLDS.

ALLY • HOME 2

9

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Skirmish: Spot 2 companions and exert Tom Bombadil X times, where X is the fellowship's site number, to cancel a skirmish involving a companion.

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