

THE LORD OF THE RINGS

FAN CLUB OFFICIAL MOVIE MAGAZINE

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DAVID WENHAM

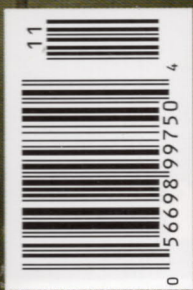
INSIDE FARAMIR

CATCHING UP WITH RENOWNED ARTIST

JOHN HOWE

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EDITOR'S NOTE | WELCOME

MORE to SEE

While a new *The Lord of the Rings* film will not be debuting in theaters this holiday season, fans do have the highly anticipated *The Return of the King* extended DVD to look forward to. With nearly an hour of never-before-seen footage and an additional 300 visual effects shots, this special version is almost a new film in itself—well, almost.

This issue's interviews with Peter Jackson and David Wenham (the Australian actor is featured as the cover story) provide the inside scoop on the soon-to-be-released DVD and the bonus scenes that will be unveiled. The extended DVD is also spotlighted in the product update section of the News from Middle-earth.

Much like the cast and crew's commentary footage included on the films' DVDs, our magazine brings readers interviews with the key participants responsible for making *The Lord of the Rings* films such a masterpiece. This issue's focus is on the amazing artwork created for the trilogy—not only is the artwork beautiful, it comes from true masters of their trades. After more than 50 years of creating pottery with his own bare hands, Mirek Smisek (this issue's "unsung hero") was the perfect person for the task of sculpting the ceramic ware for the films. John Howe, who says he has been drawing for "as long as I can remember," is another remarkable artist featured in this issue. Also, Weta's Peter Lyon offers a brief history lesson on the art of sword making, a craft this experienced swordsmith and his team (including Howe) did not take lightly while forging the films' swords.

In particular, our story on Ben Price, who worked as both a cast and crew member on the films, is one that I think fans will take to heart. As a long-time *The Lord of the Rings* fan, Price fully appreciates the old adage about being in the right place at the right time. Price describes how his involvement behind-the-scenes of the films grew into an unimaginable series of opportunities—though ghoulish as they were—for his career.

So, with cooler weather upon us, treat yourself to a little time indoors to enjoy your favorite DVD, book—or magazine.

Julie Matthews

Julie Matthews
Managing Editor

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Jackson reveals the ultimate responsibility of a director and how he keeps himself motivated during rough times.
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Ben Price was working behind-the-scenes of the film production until the day Weta chief Richard Taylor took notice of his tall height. Since then, Price has played several acting parts on the project—though not necessarily all good characters!
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United Cutlery's stunning weapon replicas for *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy not only include swords but helms, axes, staffs, shields, as well as a soon-to-be-released replica of the crown of King Elessar—just like the one Gandalf places on Aragorn's head.
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The Official Fan Club Message Boards recently sponsored their third visual arts contest. Learn about the winners, the contest details, and the renowned artists who served as the panel of judges. Also, hear about the exciting fan activities going on in North Carolina.
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Mailbaggins

EDUCATED GUESS

I would like to say a big “Thank you” to everyone who has been involved with *The Lord of the Rings*. The films are and always will be amazing, and the Fan Club has been an excellent source of information and merchandise to make me feel closer to Middle-earth. I am a head teacher at a primary school in England, and the power and effect that these films have had on the chil-



dren and their imaginations has been phenomenal.

I have recently enjoyed your interview with Sean Astin. But as I have watched all *The Lord of the Rings* films, I have noticed that Sean Astin always wore his Elven brooch the opposite way of the other members in the Fellowship. Do you know why? Thank you to everyone.

Sharon Marsden

Via email

Editor's note: We posed your question to Peter Jackson's assistant, and we stumped him, outside of a guess that maybe "Sean's dresser was left-handed?" So now we open it up to our knowledgeable readers. If any fans know the answer to Sharon's question, please email us at editor@lotrfanclub.com, and we'll post the information in our next issue. Thanks!

BELIEVERS

I've been a huge fan of Middle-earth for 30 years—since March 1974, a mere six months after the death of J.R.R. Tolkien. Every year since, I celebrate the event now named “Middle-earth Week.” I'm now an independent filmmaker and also own a digital video production business. Growing up, making my own films back in the 1970s, I—as well as many other aspiring film-

makers—dreamed of someday making the ultimate movie: *The Lord of the Rings*. As I got older and attended film school, I thought, it's too big and it's best left to the imagination of the reader. Well, to me this now only speaks volumes as to the monumental obstacles Peter Jackson overcame creating *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy, not just in terms of production, but more importantly, the “connection” that he made with the millions of fans throughout the world. This is truly an amazing feat.

Joe Scotti

North Hanover, New Jersey, USA

My relationship with J.R.R. Tolkien's books started in the beginning of the '80s, and I've been a passionate *The Lord of the Rings* fan ever

since. All these years, I've been quite happy with just the books and never thought any movies would be necessary. Like many other fans of the books, I was a little worried when I first heard about *The Lord of the Rings* films. But when I saw *The Fellowship of the Ring*, I was relieved and very pleased! And when I found this Fan Club, I wanted to join although the three-year charter membership fee was quite a sum to pay.

However, now that the actual sum has been long forgotten, I still receive your beautiful magazines (plus my name permanently on the DVDs), and I'm very happy that I joined the club. I've enjoyed tremendously the articles (especially of all the amazing handicraft people), but also little details like Viggo's and Lawrence's notes to each other here in the Mailbaggins. My special thanks go to the art department of the magazine for such a beautiful layout, typography, etc—I find their work most inspiring.

Kati Bergman

Helsinki, Finland

Editor's note: Thank you very much for your kind words—we'll pass the compliments along! (Incidentally, we are pleased to say that you are not alone in your praise, as the magazine recently won a 2004 Apex Award for excellence in its layout and design.)

FAN CLUB FRIENDSHIPS

Since *The Fellowship of the Ring* came out, I have made more friends through the Fan Club than I had my entire life — and I'm over 30 now. With the release of *The Fellowship of the Ring*, I discovered the Fan Club and began to rediscover the “me” I'd forgotten. I remembered the dreams I'd set aside as unworthy or unattainable and began working towards them again, such as expressing my opinion and writing stories. I have a support system with the Fan Club members that I never thought was possible. Peter Jackson and his films changed things for me as an adult, as

J.R.R. Tolkien and his books changed things for me as a child.

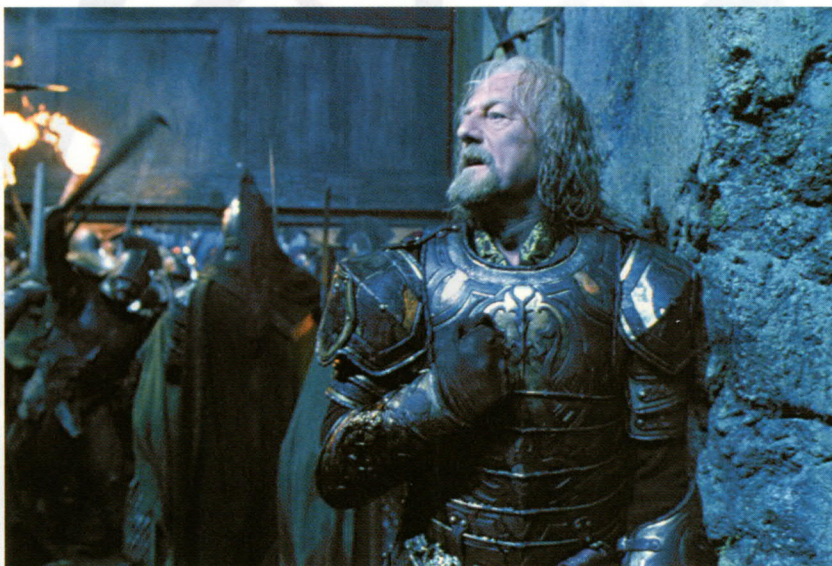
I know each and every one of us has a story of "what *The Lord of the Rings* did for me," but I couldn't help sharing my story with those who have touched my life in such a profound way. I thank J.R.R. Tolkien for his story, Peter Jackson (and the crew and cast) for daring to bring it to life on the movie screen, and this Fan Club, including Decipher for its Internet site and the crew behind the magazine, which has some of the best people in the world as its members. I can't imagine and don't want to imagine what my life would be like today without it all.

Kara Haff
Albany, New York, USA

INTERESTING TALE/TAIL

I am a Fan Club member, Ringer, and loyal fan. I have an interesting story to tell about my beautiful 150-pound Rottweiler, Max. He has heard *The Lord of the Rings* on so much in our house that I guess it has really had an effect on him. One day I was watching *The Two Towers*, and I said, "Look Max, it's Karl Urban, Karl Urban!!!" He held up his head to the sky and let out a howl and a cry. Now whenever we say, "Look Max, it's Karl Urban," he still does it. It is the cutest thing to see.

I would like to add that I never get tired of watching the movies or hearing the commentaries on the extended DVDs. I am very anxiously awaiting the extended edition of *The Return of the King*. I love the movies so very much, and I know they will always be such a part of me. I feel like I know all of the actors personally. It is that touching and emotional a feeling, as so many people can relate. Since I am disabled, I regret that I could not attend any of the parties and the Oscars in Hollywood. Maybe some day I could attend some of the gathering parties, but until then, I will look forward to my Fan Club magazines and any news I



can gather on the Internet. Thanks so much for everything.

Penny Douglas
Phoenix, Arizona, USA

CLASSICS

First, I would like to say that these are the best movies I have ever seen. As soon as I saw *The Fellowship of the Ring*, I knew that these would be my favorite movies. Peter Jackson did a magnificent job adapting the books to the screen. I think it'd be great if he made *The Hobbit*, but I'm certain that there won't be anything quite like *The Lord of the Rings*. These movies are destined to become classics. I would also like to say that the soundtracks for the movies are great. Howard Shore created the perfect score. I really enjoy listening to "Into the West." That song is amazing.

Furthermore, this magazine is great! I enjoy reading about the tricks they used to make the Hobbits and Dwarves smaller than the Elves and men. I enjoyed the article about the scale doubles' jobs, and how the action figures are

made, especially because I collect them. It was cool reading how they make them look just like the actors.

Taylor Birch
Arthur, Illinois, USA

WHERE'S BERNARD HILL?

I am disappointed that King Théoden (Bernard Hill) has not appeared on the cover of the Fan Club magazine. Bernard Hill plays a magnificent Théoden. What would Gondor be without the Rohirrim and Théoden? He is such an important character—why hasn't he been featured on the cover?

Wilma Wright
Bolivia, North Carolina, USA

Editor's note: We agree with your praise of Bernard Hill, and we're pleased to say that, although he has never appeared alone on the cover, he has indeed been featured in an in-depth interview as part of Issue #6, our December-January 2003 edition. For information on ordering this issue, please turn to the back of the magazine or visit lotrfanclub.com.

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!

N^ews

FROM MIDDLE-EARTH

Crew Receives Orders of Merit

As if all those Oscars weren't enough, several members of the *The Lord of the Rings* movie trilogy's production staff earned further accolades on their home turf.



NGILA DICKSON

New Zealander Ngila Dickson, the costume designer for the movies, was made an officer of the New Zealand Order of Merit as part of the celebration of the birthday

of Queen Elizabeth II.

Others to become members of the New Zealand Order of Merit include screenwriter Philippa Boyens, designer Grant Major, and editor Jamie Selkirk.

The New Zealand Order of Merit was instituted in 1996 by Queen Elizabeth II. According to the Royal Warrant issued by the Queen, the Order of Merit will be bestowed on "those persons who in any field of endeavor, have rendered meritorious service to the Crown and nation or who have become distinguished by their eminence, talents, contributions or other merits."

Initially, membership in the Order of Merit served as the first step en route to becoming a knight or dame. In 2000, the use of those titles was eliminated.



as a result of his success as the director of *the Lord of the Rings* films, Jackson recently made a big ticket purchase, exalting New Zealand's place in the film industry.



Jackson Spends Millions on State-of-the-Art Studios

BY MARCUS WOHLSEN

Director Peter Jackson has nearly finished work on a cutting-edge post-production studio that could make New Zealand the world's new movie-making hot spot.

Park Road Post, once a chemical factory, now boasts an array of editing stu-

dios and voice-dubbing stages at a cost of roughly \$35 million.

The facility adds yet another jewel to the crown of what is quickly becoming Jackson's New Zealand-based film production empire. He also co-owns Weta Ltd., which handled digital effects

on *The Lord of the Rings*, and Weta Workshop, which created the trilogy's weapons and suits of armor.

Jackson has also spent \$7 million on a cavernous new soundstage. He now owns three soundstages, all of which have proven useful for Jackson as he con-

tinues production work on *King Kong*.

The \$4 billion in revenue generated to date by *The Lord of the Rings* movie franchise, not to mention the buzz surrounding it, has given the New Zealand economy a visible boost. Along with the development of film production facili-

ties in Wellington, the success of *The Lord of the Rings* has shown the rest of the world that New Zealand has a talented pool of skilled professionals who can take on the massive technical and logistical challenges associated with large-scale filmmaking. 🐉

New Documentary Turns Camera on Fans

You dress up as Gandalf for Dragon*Con—or just a trip to the grocery store. Your wedding ring is inscribed with runes. You have a bumper sticker that says “Frodo lives!” You are a Ringer, a true *The Lord of the Rings* devotee. And aside from some occasional weird looks on the street, you’ve plied your fandom in obscurity—until now.

A new documentary feature film will turn the cameras away from the stars and onto *The Lord of the Rings* fans themselves to explore a subculture that has evolved over the past 50 years from a small cadre of bookworms into a worldwide phenomenon.

Ringers: Lord of the Fans was conceived by, who else, a group of fans who happened to be filmmakers. The crew, which includes well-known Ringers like Cliff “Quickbeam” Broadway and Asfaloth of

über-fansite TheOneRing.net, originally wanted to get footage of themed gatherings to share with other fans online. But the project quickly evolved.

“The filmmakers realized that these very creative and happy fans were more interesting than the events they attended,” the filmmakers say on their Web site (theonering.net/ringers/). “*Ringers* was born out of fans’ love of other fans.”

Since filming began in 2003, production units have sprung up in Los Angeles; San Diego; Atlanta; Salt Lake City; Bonn, Germany; Wellington, New Zealand; and Oxford, England, to capture the international scope of the fan base. The film’s focus will extend well beyond the latest craze inspired by the New Line Cinema films to the embrace of the 1960s hippie counter-

culture, the controversy surrounding the 1978 animated version of the trilogy, and the spread of *The Lord of the Rings* around the globe.

The film will also feature interviews with a dizzying array of noteworthy *The Lord of the Rings* fans, from actor Dominic Monaghan (Merry) to horror movie director Clive Barker, *Kill Bill* star David Caradine, heavy metal rocker Lemmy Kilmister, Royd Tolkien, and fantasy authors Peter S. Beagle, Terry Pratchett, and Terry Brooks.

“[*The Lord of the Rings*] has now become a new mythology for the 21st century,” according to the *Lord of the Fans* Web site. “*Ringers* explores the real foundations of Middle-earth: a community of true fans who share a common bond.” 🐉

RINGERS: LORD OF THE FANS DOCUMENTARY SHOWCASES THE EFFECTS THAT THE FAMOUS TRILOGY HAS HAD ON ITS LOYAL FOLLOWERS.



Celebrity Tracks

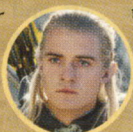
BY MARCUS WOHLSEN

PETER JACKSON has made the latest *Forbes* Celebrity 100 list, where he was ranked 12th among the most powerful people in Hollywood.



The magazine reports that Jackson earned \$35 million last year, which placed him third behind Mel Gibson and Steven Spielberg on the list of Hollywood's highest-paid producers and directors. He also reportedly received a \$20 million up-front fee for *King Kong* and will take home 20 percent of the movie's profits—a record-breaking deal for a movie director.

ORLANDO BLOOM (Legolas) looks ready to take away *Troy* co-star Brad Pitt's title as America's favorite heartthrob. The 27-year-old British actor recently topped *People* magazine's list of Hollywood's 50 most eligible bachelors, and the TV Guide Channel profiled him in its "Summer Movie Hunks" series. To round out the trifecta, Bloom scored a Teen Choice Awards nomination in the "Male Hottie" category. Still, Ridley Scott, who is directing Bloom in his latest project, apparently didn't find Bloom manly enough: He reportedly asked the actor to don a chest wig for shirtless scenes in the Crusades epic *Kingdom of Heaven*.



SALA BAKER (Sauron) will appear in the upcoming documentary *Ringers: Lord of the Fans*, which traces the phenomenon of *The Lord of the Rings* fandom from its early days to the current craze for all things *The Lord of the Rings*. Baker's recent off-screen work has included a stint as production manager on the Tom Cruise flick *The Last Samurai* and a behind-the-scenes gig on *The Long and Short of It*, a short film directed by Sean Astin.



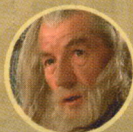
CHRISTOPHER LEE (Saruman) continues work on the third installment of that *other* trilogy as George Lucas wraps up shooting on *Episode III: Revenge of the Sith*, the last installment in his *Star Wars* prequel series. Lee reprises his role as Yoda nemesis Darth Tyrannus. The film is slated to hit theaters MAY 19, 2005.



DOMINIC MONAGHAN (Merry) and BILLY BOYD (Pippin) have teamed up with award-winning Scottish playwright David Greig to pen a buddy picture about two bumbling Brits on a road trip across the United States. Apparently the onscreen chemistry between the two actors developed into a lasting friendship that has kept them excited about working together again professionally. Progress on the script has moved slowly so far, with both actors busy on several other film projects.



SIR IAN MCKELLEN (Gandalf) starred as himself in a television biography that recently aired on British television. The film documents the dramatic changes that have occurred in McKellen's life over the past 20 years as his career has taken him from leading thespian of the London stage to international film star and from closeted homosexual to openly gay activist.



ANDY SERKIS (Gollum) will star as the title character in Peter Jackson's remake of *King Kong*. As he did in his role as Gollum, Serkis once again will appear onscreen masked by a

CGI rendition of the great ape. He will also play Lumpy the Cook, a non-CGI character. In June, Serkis and his wife announced the birth of their third child, a baby boy.



SEAN ASTIN (Sam) took to the stage with DOMINIC MONAGHAN to accept the Best Movie award for *The Return of the King* at the 2004 MTV Movie Awards. Astin will appear as part of a star-studded ensemble cast in the upcoming *Marilyn Hotchkiss' Ballroom Dancing and Charm School* alongside Marisa Tomei, John Goodman, Danny DeVito, and others.

VIGGO MORTENSEN (Aragorn) will star in *A History of Violence*, the latest film from legendary horror director David Cronenberg. Based on a graphic novel, the movie will tell the story of a small-town father, played by Mortensen, who tries not to buckle under the national spotlight after he kills a pair of thugs in self-defense.



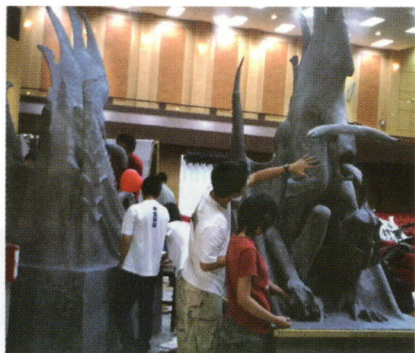
SEAN BEAN (Boromir) will hunt for buried treasure in *National Treasure*, set for a November release. The movie, which also stars Nicholas Cage, tells the story of modern-day treasure seekers on the trail of a war chest that the Founding Fathers supposedly hid somewhere in America after the Revolutionary War.



CATE BLANCHETT (Galadriel) is expected to hit the big screen again as Queen Elizabeth I, the role that first made her a star. Director Shekhar Kapur is putting the finishing touches on the script for the sequel to his hit *Elizabeth*, tentatively titled *The Golden Age*.



Top Taiwan High School Puts on *The Lord of the Rings*-themed Graduation



Forget caps and gowns. Think helmets and swords.

A group of talented and dedicated high school seniors at one of Taiwan's most prestigious high schools deserve extra credit for putting together what may possibly be the first *The Lord of the Rings*-themed graduation ceremony on record.

Organizing themselves into a mini-corporation, students from the Affiliated High School of National Taiwan Normal University designed and built an elaborate reproduction of many sets and characters from the movie trilogy. The most impressive pieces include highly detailed replicas of the Pillars of

Kings (the twin sentinels who guard the entrance to the River Anduin) and a full-sized model of Bag End, complete with a round door.

Students also built eerily accurate gargoyles from Minas Morgul; on stage, the giant claws of the Nazgûl's winged mounts holds back a scarlet curtain.

The students reportedly saw the perseverance and determination displayed by the Fellowship as a powerful

metaphor for the kind of effort needed to reach their academic goals.

The graduation effort was inspired in part by Zhu Xue-hang, author of the international Chinese translation of *The Lord of the Rings*, who helped oversee the student project.

As a further point of pride, many of the structures and creatures built for the ceremony were constructed completely from recycled materials. ♪



just some of the amazing set pieces from a taiwan high school's recreation of middle-earth for their graduation ceremony

Cambridge Charity Hosts Marathon

Before *The Lord of the Rings* was written, the author had a long and accomplished career as an Oxford don. That didn't stop fans from arch-rival Cambridge from organizing their own tribute to their favorite author.

The Cambridge Tolkien Society gathered at the local Borders to put on a marathon reading of the BBC's 13-hour adaptation of *The Lord of the Rings*. On hand for the reading were Brian Sibley and Michael Bakewell, the authors of the adaptation.

A cast of more than 80 donned costumes, wielded weapons, and deployed a host of ingenious sound effects to the great delight of the assembled audience, many of whom stayed for the entire performance.

Though *The Lord of the Rings* fans don't usually need a special reason to revisit their favorite tale of fantasy, the day's event wasn't just for fun. Several hundred dollars raised at the reading will go to benefit the United Kingdom's National Trust, which works to preserve the coastline, countryside, and historic buildings of England, Wales, and Northern Ireland. ♪

PRODUCT UPDATE

BY MARCUS WOHLSEN

NEW LINE HOME ENTERTAINMENT

Have you been good this year? If so, Santa may have a very special present for you come the holidays. The extended edition DVD of *The Return of the King* will hit store shelves in time for Christmas 2004. In the tradition of the first two extended edition DVD sets, the *The Return of the King* four-disc set will feature 50 minutes of additional footage. It will also round out the riveting behind-the-scenes narrative that has made the bonus discs almost as exciting as the movies themselves.

The extended version of the movie reportedly will incorporate Gandalf's final confrontation with Saruman. Other new scenes include the Witch-king and Gandalf in battle; the Mouth of Sauron at Mordor's Black Gate; and Aragorn aiding Éowyn at the House of Healing.



MASTER REPLICAS

Master Replicas has set the standard in fantasy-film memorabilia reproductions. Their two new releases in their *The Lord of the Rings* collection promise to have you decked out in the latest Middle-earth finery in time for the Renaissance Fair.

Master Replicas' Sting sword electronic replica was cast from the same mold used to create the actual movie prop. Its brushed metal finish gives it the look and feel of an actual sword from some distant era. But inside, some sophisticated Orc-sensitive electronics cause Sting to glow blue when the spawn of Sauron come near (or when you flick a switch).

The One Ring of Sauron serves up a unique twist on the numerous replicas of the Ring of Power

already on the market. This electronic version includes a finely detailed golden ring engraved with an ancient script that glows orange when activated.

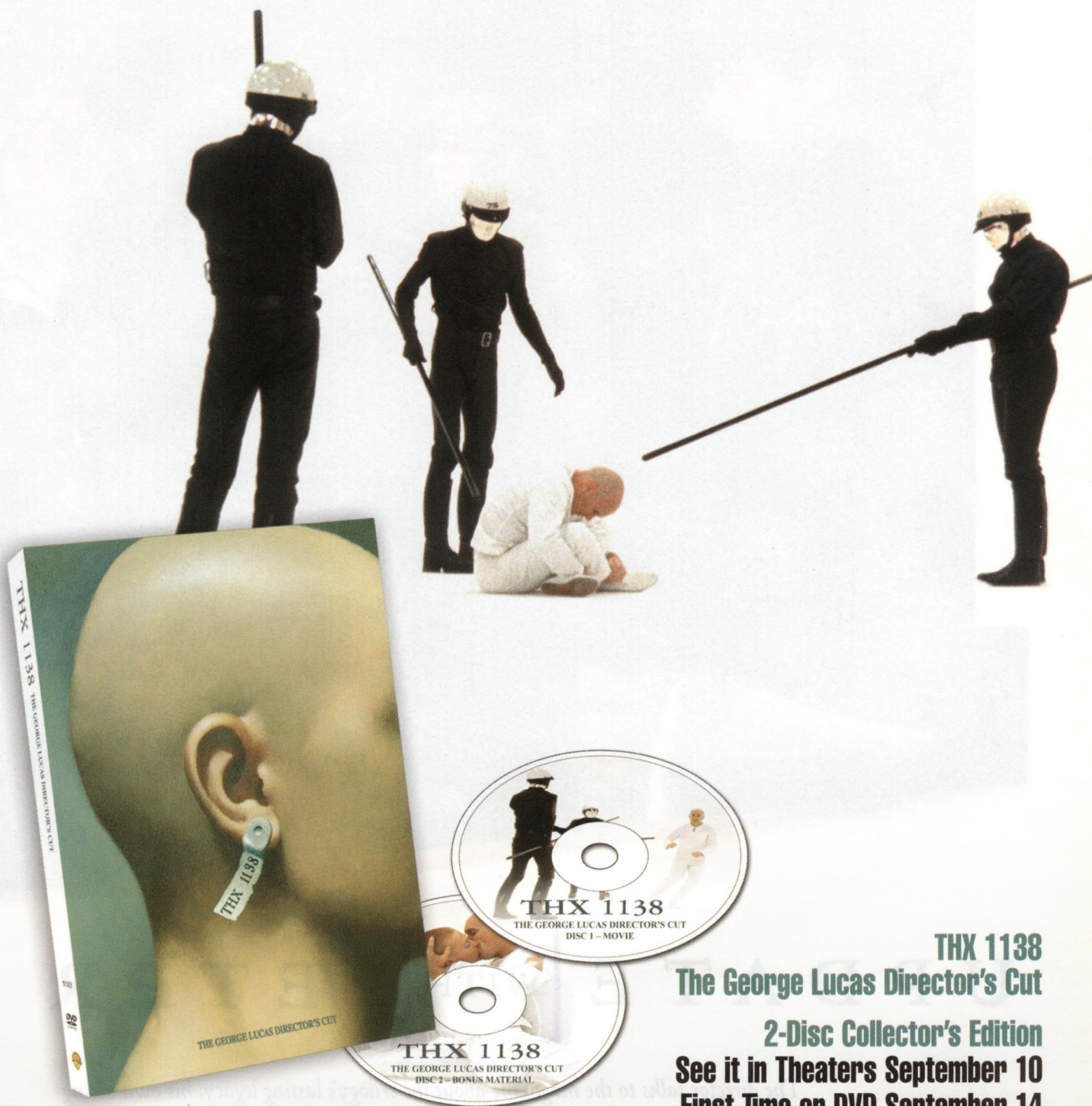
What's more, the Ring is permanently attached to Sauron's armor-clad severed finger, the finger Isildur cut from the Dark Lord's hand at the Battle of the Last Alliance. The One Ring of Sauron sits on a base made to resemble the rocky ground it landed on during the battle.

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 STORY BY GEORGE LUCAS PRODUCED BY LAWRENCE STURHAHN DIRECTED BY GEORGE LUCAS MUSIC BY LALO SCHIFRIN



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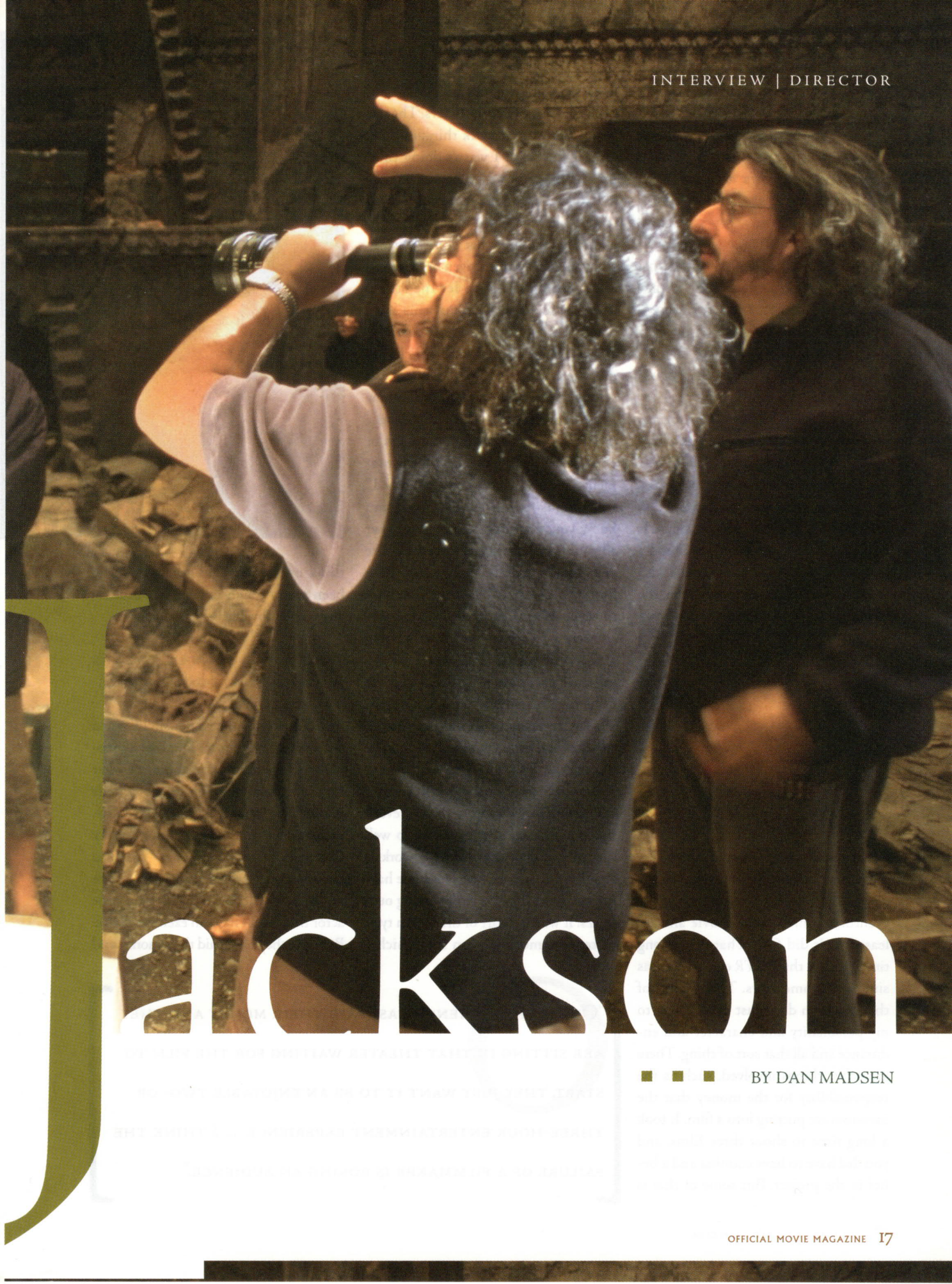




UPDATE [WITH] PETER

The director talks to the magazine about the trilogy's lasting legacy, his own acting prowess, and the words he'd say to J.R.R. Tolkien if given the chance.

INTERVIEW | DIRECTOR

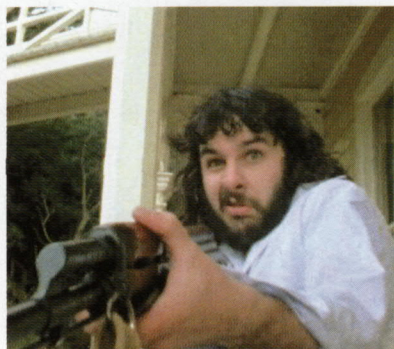


Jackson

■ ■ ■ BY DAN MADSEN

ONE OF THE THINGS THAT IS CONSTANTLY BROUGHT UP BY JOURNALISTS, FANS, AND THE CAST AND CREW IS THAT THEY ARE AMAZED AT YOUR TENACITY AND YOUR ENDLESS STRENGTH TO STICK WITH THIS THING FOR SO MANY YEARS, WITH SUCH PASSION, AND TO HAVE A VISION TO SEE IT THROUGH TO THE END. WHAT KIND OF A PERSONALITY DOES IT TAKE TO ACCOMPLISH THIS KIND OF FEAT? HAVE YOU HAD THE ABILITY ALL YOUR LIFE TO BE DRIVEN AND ACCOMPLISH HARD TASKS?

Yes, it has always been there for me. The very first movie I made was a low-budget horror film called *Bad Taste*. I wasn't a filmmaker; I was working as a photo-engraver at the newspaper. I had to shoot the film on the weekends. It took me four years. Every weekend I worked on it. I wasn't the only one with tenacity—friends of mine from the



newspaper became amateur actors. We just went out there for four years on the weekends and just kept shooting. We eventually finished the movie and released it. It did OK. That was a long time ago, but this *LOTR* experience was similar in some ways. The aspects of that question don't just come down to my personality and character and endurance and all that sort of thing. There are other things involved, such as the responsibility for the money that the investors are putting into a film. It took a long time to shoot three films, and you did have to have stamina and a belief in the project. But some of that is

born from the responsibility that has been thrust on your shoulders. The day that I show up at work thinking, "Oh God, I just wish I wasn't doing this," then, at that point, I am not serving the investors. That's not a responsible thing to do. There is basic human decency and responsibility that comes into it, and you just become driven because you are determined not to let the studio down, since they have put this huge amount of trust in you. I often say—and it has become a bit of a cliché for me when I do press interviews, but it is actually the truth and I don't know how else to describe it—that if there was a moment of depression or tiredness or exhaustion or if I thought for a moment, "I wish I could just stay in bed," I would just say to myself, "Well, you know, you've wanted to be a filmmaker all your life. Is there really anything else you would rather be doing today than filming *The Lord of the Rings*?" You have to stop yourself and say, "No, it is absolutely a privilege, and it is exciting and exactly what I have dreamt of doing since I was a kid. I wanted to make films like this and here I am, doing it! This is amazing." I would pull myself together and get on with it. But, most of the time, it was fun. That was due to the crew we were working with and the cast we were working with. We eventually got to know each other so well that we would be showing up at work to shoot the movie, and we would be having laughs and jokes and enjoying ourselves. It wasn't a sort of draconian type of tense atmosphere on set, which I



think over a year and a half would've been pretty tough to take. It was actually very enjoyable.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER TO BE THE MOST IMPORTANT QUALITY A DIRECTOR MUST HAVE?

Ultimately, your responsibility is to entertain the audience. That's what people go to the movies for, and that's what they're hoping for when they buy their tickets. They want to be entertained. Obviously, they can choose from a variety of movies that are out there—they can choose what genre they want, what type of film, and whether it is a filmmaker or actor they like. They can exercise choice. But once they have paid their money and

"ONCE [THE AUDIENCE HAS] PAID THEIR MONEY AND THEY ARE SITTING IN THAT THEATER WAITING FOR THE FILM TO START, THEY JUST WANT IT TO BE AN ENJOYABLE TWO- OR THREE-HOUR ENTERTAINMENT EXPERIENCE. ... I THINK THE FAILURE OF A FILMMAKER IS BORING AN AUDIENCE."



failure is boring an audience

they are sitting in that theater waiting for the film to start, they just want it to be an enjoyable two- or three-hour entertainment experience. That's what we have to provide. I think the failure of a filmmaker is boring an audience.

ARE DIRECTORS, GENERALLY SPEAKING, GOOD ACTORS?

No, I am not a good actor! I'm a terrible actor! You don't have to be a good actor, and you are certainly working with actors who are far better than you are. The way I work is that I have an imagination; I have a scene that plays in my head, and the acting in that scene is quite good. But if I had to stop and actually do it in front of people, I could never recreate what was in my head. I don't have that skill. I do have the image in my head of what a scene should be. When you are directing your actors, you are watching them use their interpretation of what the scene should be and one or two things happen: It's either not as good as what you imagined, which, in that case, you go and talk to them and try to explain what you are imagining it to be and why their performance is falling

short of what you really want to see. The other thing that often happens is that what the actor does is surprising and fresh and much more exciting than what you had in your head. It is different but better. You don't have to give them notes; you just say, "That's fantastic, that's great. Let's do it again!" Actors work in different ways, but sometimes you shoot repeated takes because you haven't achieved what's in your mind yet, and you are trying to get the actor to go there for you, and so you need to go through five, six, or seven takes in order to slowly get the performance to where you want it to be. Sometimes, it is almost the actor that is driving that. The actor is giving you something really interesting and amazing. You talk to him or her, and they say, "Listen, I would just like to try something else. I have another idea." You say, "Great," and you do another take, and you get a variation and, then, maybe at that point you say, "Well, I've got an idea, too. Let's try this." The actor says, "OK, great," and you do another take. Sometimes you are shooting multiple takes because it is giving you variety and choices, and when you find yourself in

the cutting room and you are trying to put the film together, you have five or six takes, which are different, but all of them in their own way are good. You have an ability to choose which particular read on the line or which moment suits the edit of the film the best. That is always more exciting than just simply shooting six or seven takes because you are trying to get the one good performance that you haven't yet got.

PEOPLE CANNOT IMAGINE ANY OTHER ACTORS PLAYING THE CHARACTERS IN THESE FILMS. THE CASTING SEEMED RIGHT ON. DID YOU KNOW WHEN YOU WERE CASTING THESE PEOPLE THAT EACH OF THEM WAS THE RIGHT ONE FOR THE ROLE, OR DID IT COME DOWN TO SOME TOUGH CASTING DECISIONS?

It comes down to the feeling that you know instantaneously if somebody is right. Most of the examples I am thinking of were ones who we knew straight away they were right for the role. The Frodo story that has been well documented is a good example of that. We had seen 200 or 300 young actors for

“WE SAW A LOT OF PEOPLE FOR LEGOLAS. WE COULDN’T FIND ANYBODY, AND WE GOT WORRIED ABOUT IT. AT ONE POINT, WE PAUSED AND WE LOOKED BACK AT PEOPLE WE HAD MET ... WE SUDDENLY HAD THIS REALIZATION THAT ORLANDO’S FACE WAS VERY ELVEN WITH HIS HIGH CHEEKBONES AND SORT OF CHISELED JAW LINE.”

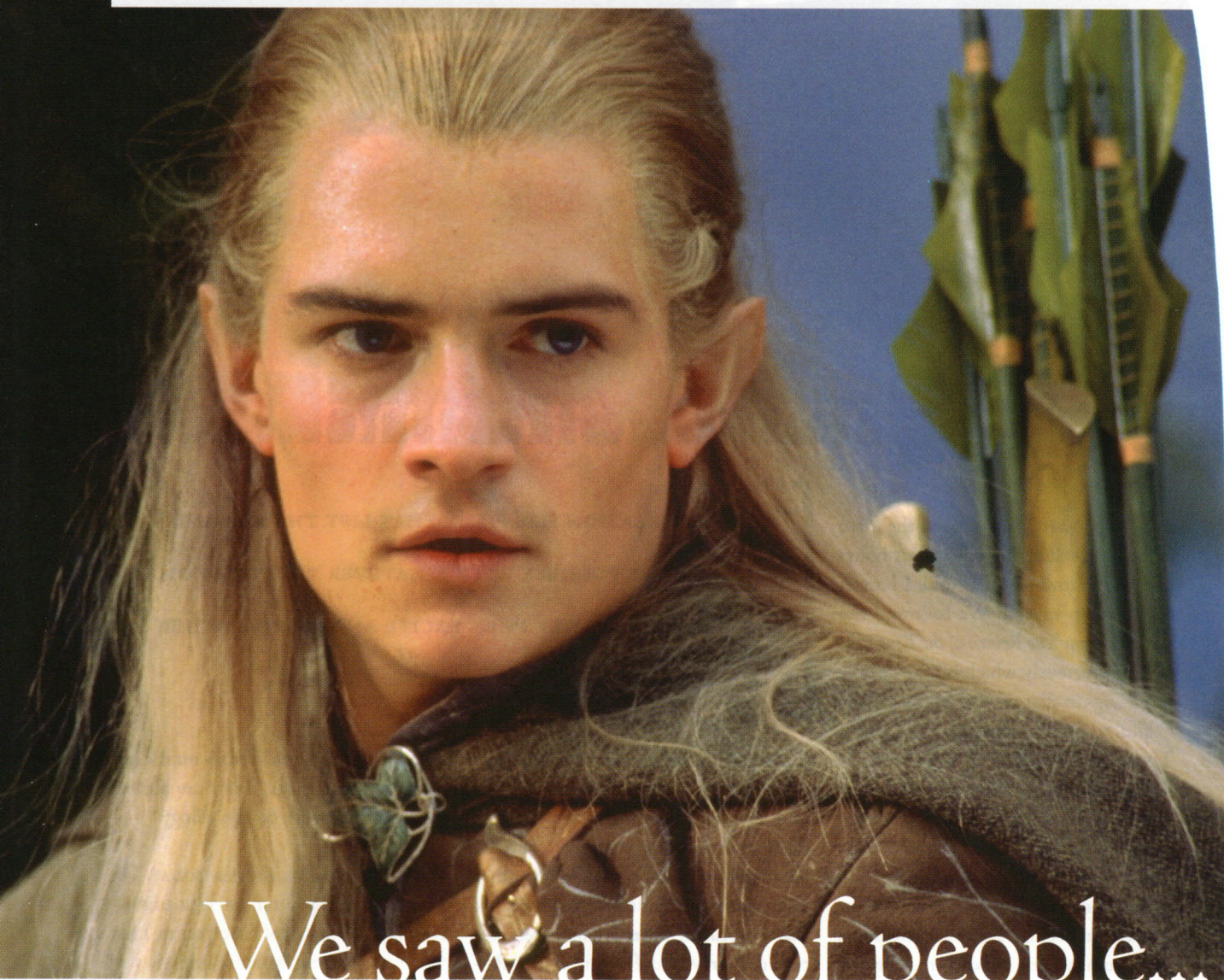
Frodo, and then we put in Elijah Wood’s tape that he had sent us and immediately we said, “He’s got to be Frodo!” He just overwhelmed us and impressed everybody else so quickly and instantaneously that the decision was made at that point. It usually happened like that. Orlando came to it in a slightly different way. When John Hubbard suggested Orlando, it was actually for the Faramir role. The first audition we did with Orlando had him reading Faramir’s lines. We thought, “Wow, he is fantastic! We do want to cast him.” You don’t tell people straight away because you have to go through a whole process, but we certainly said in our mind, “OK, Orlando is Faramir. We don’t need to look for him anymore.” Then we had trouble with the Legolas role, and he proved hard to find. We saw a lot of people for Legolas. We couldn’t find anybody, and we got worried about it. At one point, we paused and we looked back at people we had met, and Orlando jumped out. We suddenly had this realization that Orlando’s face was very Elven with his high cheekbones and sort of chiseled jaw line. Orlando, who we had thought was going to be Faramir, would be perfect for Legolas. We just suddenly decided, “Why don’t we put him in the Legolas role because that is a bigger role and a really hard one since we are having trouble casting it because of the way the Elves have to look. We’ll find somebody else for Faramir.” That’s what we did. Even the way Dominic Monaghan was cast for Merry was a little unusual. Merry was the hardest Hobbit to find. We auditioned a lot of people for

Merry. We really didn’t know who Merry was—that was the problem. Merry is a slightly undefined character in the book. Pippin had that young, cheeky quality, and Billy Boyd was somebody we found rather quickly. As soon as we saw Billy audition, we loved him for Pippin, and there really was never any other actor in mind. But we didn’t have a Merry. We finished our casting, and we had got about 200 different Merry’s on tape. We had not made a decision because we couldn’t. We felt that the perfect Merry hadn’t yet been auditioned. However, we had to cast the movie, and time was running out. We had to make a decision.



That is always awkward because you look at your tapes and there is no one there that is quite right, and you have to choose the best one. At that moment, Fran [Walsh] had a good idea. She said, “Hang on, rather than try to pick the best Merry without being really happy, why don’t we just take a look through the Frodo audi-

tion tapes?” All 300 Frodo auditions! Elijah had already been cast as Frodo, but we had tapes of another 300 actors who had come to read for Frodo. So we looked back on the Frodo tapes. We scrolled through hundreds of actors, and we found Dom. Dominic had come and read for Frodo, not for Merry. He was one of



We saw a lot of people...

those sort of interesting Frodo's. Even though Elijah ultimately grabbed that role, we looked at Dom and suddenly realized that he was much more interesting than any of the Merry's we had on tape. He had a really great quirkiness and originality about him. We thought, "This is an actor that could bring a character and a personality to Merry in a way that would be really helpful to the film." So we offered Dom the Merry role after he had been turned down for Frodo.

DO YOU TAKE A SENSE OF PRIDE WHEN YOU SEE THE ACTORS WHO WORKED WITH YOU ON *The Lord of the Rings* GETTING OTHER MAJOR ROLES

AS A RESULT OF THEIR INVOLVEMENT WITH YOUR FILM?

Yes, I am incredibly proud. Obviously, it is due to the fact that they have earned those roles themselves, but I am very proud of the part we played in it. We love casting films, and one of the joys of casting is to actually find unknown actors and give them their first break. We have done that in the past with Kate Winslet, who had her first role with us 10 years ago. And this time around, on *The Lord of the Rings*, Orlando Bloom was somebody we found during the casting process. Our casting director in England, John Hubbard, deserves credit for both of those. We used him for

the *Heavenly Creatures* casting. I remember him saying, "There is this amazing girl you have to meet. Her name is Kate and I think she is going to be a big star one day, and she would be perfect for your film." When you get this advice from the casting director, you listen to it. John felt that way about Kate Winslet and Orlando Bloom.

WHAT EXCITES YOU MOST ABOUT THE EXTENDED DVD FOR *The Return of the King*?

The extended DVD is 50 minutes of extra footage so the running time of the movie, without credits, comes in at 4 hours and 10 minutes. Apparently, it



They excite and inspire

brings up the running time of the three extended versions together to 11 hours and 26 minutes—so I'm told. I haven't added it up myself. We followed the same rule on *The Return of the King* that we had previously, which is that we only put things in that we thought would be helpful to the story or enhance the story. There is still footage and scenes that we didn't use, [just] as there was on the last two films. We tried to exercise some discretion. I was pleased that there was so much. At the end of the day, I think there are scenes that people will be interested in seeing. There is, obviously, the Saruman scene, which I am delighted is back in, and Christopher has the send-off that we all missed in the theatrical version. There are other scenes from the book that people will be happy to see. One of the ones I like is the sequence in Mordor where Frodo and Sam actually get placed into the Orc army. It was in the theatrical version where they put the Orc armor on and disguised themselves. We actually shot the sequence where they end up in the Orc army marching on the Black Gate just as Aragorn is arriving there himself. Then, they ultimately escape, of course, and make their way to Mount Doom. There are scenes added of Aragorn and the Houses of Healing, which is obviously a nice moment for Aragorn's character. During

“EVERY GENERATION HAS FILMS THAT LIFT THE BAR AND SHOW WHAT IS POSSIBLE WITH WHATEVER THE TECHNOLOGY IS AT THAT TIME. THEY THEN EXCITE AND INSPIRE OTHER FILMMAKERS TO RAISE THE BAR EVEN FURTHER.”

that sequence, we also see the first meeting of Éowyn and Faramir—the beginning of their relationship, which obviously was missing entirely from the theatrical version. There are some other sequences that aren't actually in the book that we created. There is a nice scene between Merry and Éowyn as the Rohirrim are riding towards Minas Tirith just when they are pausing to rest the horses—a quiet little dialogue sequence with those characters. There is a whole bunch of extended action that happens in the Paths of the Dead. There is more detail about how Aragorn and the ghosts actually get hold of the Corsair ships, which they ultimately turn up on at Minas Tirith. There is a little more detail about the relationship between Denethor and Faramir at Minas Tirith; there are scenes between those two by themselves. There is a whole lot of other stuff, too, but that's enough to whet your appetite! By the way, the 50 minutes of footage contains another 300 visual effects shots as well. At the time we are

doing this interview, Weta is on the last week of those shots. They are almost finished their work on the trilogy.

FOR MANY YOUNG PEOPLE TODAY, *The Lord of the Rings* WILL BE THE DEFINING MOVIE MOMENT IN THEIR LIFE THAT THEY WILL REMEMBER, AND IT MAY WELL INSPIRE THEM TO WANT TO MAKE MOVIES THEMSELVES. WHEN YOU LOOK BACK AT YOUR CHILDHOOD, WHICH FILM, FOR YOU, DID THAT?

It was *King Kong*, which I saw on TV when I was 9. Then it was Ray Harryhausen films like *The 7th Voyage of Sinbad*, which I saw when it was in re-release. I was about 14. I was inspired by wanting to do stop-motion animation. I didn't really understand what directing was when I was young; I loved stop-motion, and that was what I wanted to do—become a stop-motion animator. Then I eventually realized that the real joy of filmmaking is not sitting there animating under somebody else's direction, but

it is creating the story and the tales and making the films yourself. That's where the real fun was to be had. What is great about cinema is that there is a sense of continuation. There is a sense that every generation has films that lift the bar and show what is possible with whatever the technology is at that time. They then excite and inspire other filmmakers to raise the bar even further. And, at the same time, young children are out there thinking about what they want to do in life, just as I once was. They see a film that inspires them to want to make filmmaking their career when they grow up. I think every filmmaker in the world would have had those experiences. It's from the movies you've seen. You just sit there in the cinema and think, "This is amazing! I want to do this when I grow up." For me, it was *King Kong* and Harryhausen films. I would love the idea that right now there are 9-, 10-, 12-year-old kids who are getting excited about the idea of making movies because of *The Lord of the Rings* films. That would mean a huge amount to me if that were to happen.

FAN CLUB MEMBER DENNIS BASDEN WANTS TO ASK YOU, "WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNED OR IMPROVED ON DURING THE FILMING OF *The Lord of the Rings* TRILOGY THAT WILL HELP YOU DIRECTLY ON *King Kong*?"

There are a few different factors. One of the things that has helped us is confidence. That is born out of the experience of doing *The Lord of the Rings*, which was the hardest film production any of us had done. When I talk about "us," I am referring to our New Zealand team of designers and special effects people—the team that is also working on *King Kong*. It was the hardest thing that we will probably ever do in terms of filmmaking. Because we got through to the end and had achieved the results we did, we learned a huge amount along the way. We learned a lot of tricks. We taught ourselves techniques that we didn't know before. More importantly, we

did three movies. To now do one film seems not as difficult. I have a context for *Kong* because we were in pre-production on *King Kong* for about eight months back in 1996 before *The Lord of the Rings*. I remember that it seemed like a hugely complicated movie. It seemed daunting. It was so far beyond anything we had done before. There was a certain trepidation we had during those months of pre-production because it was enormous. Yet, now, we have come out of *The Lord of the Rings* and we are back in pre-production on what is essentially the same film, and it just doesn't seem anywhere near as difficult as it used to. We all have a confidence that is going to make for a more enjoyable experience. We also want to push the



bar ourselves. We want to be able to deliver results that are better on different levels than on *The Lord of the Rings*. There is no point in being stagnant. You want to build and improve all the time. It is a lot more fun now. There are less nerves, less fear, and less uncertainty, and there is much more confidence. Therefore, as a result of that, it is much more enjoyable. There are practical things we have learned, but the main thing is this level of confidence. The other thing, which is a more creative part of the answer, is that the big lesson we have taken from *The Lord of the Rings* that we are going to be applying to *King*

Kong is to make the story as truthful and real as possible. We made that decision very early on for *The Lord of the Rings* to not really be overwhelmed by the fantasy of the story. We tried to treat it as history and to give it both a physical truthfulness and an emotional truth. We now want to apply that lesson to *King Kong*, which is what really is going to make our version of *King Kong* different to what we would have made back in 1996. Had we made it back then, it would've been a much more *Indiana Jones* sort of Hollywood, bubblegum-type of movie. But, now, it won't be like that. This version of *King Kong* we're doing today is going to be much more intense and seem much more real. We are really downplaying the fantasy

of it and bringing the reality of the situation into the way we are going to tell the story.

FAN CLUB MEMBER MARY KEESLING ASKS, "IF YOU COULD ASK J.R.R. TOLKIEN ANY QUESTION ABOUT THE MEANING/PLOT LINES, ETC. IN *The Lord of the Rings*, WHAT WOULD YOU ASK HIM?"

Well, I think his book is so complex and varied and intricate that it would be hard to pick one question to ask. The question I really would like to ask him is has he got 11 1/2 hours, because I have a film I would like him to see! 🐉



LIVING IN THE SHADOW

*David Wenham on his role as
the younger sibling, Faramir*



BY DAN MADSEN



Growing up in a large family, actor David Wenham (known simply as “Uncle David” at home) knows a few things about family dynamics. The busy Australian recently took some time to speak with us about the complicated relationships between the characters Faramir, Boromir, and Denethor, as well as what it was like to be involved with *The Lord of the Rings* films, an opportunity that almost didn’t happen.



“the denethor factor—

DAVID, WHEN DID YOU FIRST REALIZE THAT YOU WANTED TO BE AN ACTOR?

As a young child, I always enjoyed entertaining. I loved making people laugh. I had puppets at a very young age, and I would put on puppet shows for the family. In terms of when I realized I could make a profession and a living out of it, I actually didn't [recognize that] for a long time. I wanted to become an actor, but I didn't think I seriously could make a career out of it. It has become a wonderful surprise in a way!

HOW OLD WERE YOU WHEN YOU BECAME SERIOUSLY INTERESTED IN ACTING?

As soon as I finished school, I secured a job in an insurance firm. It was while I was working there that I found out I had been accepted in acting school. I said yes to that offer. My mother, at the time, thought that it was a silly thing to do because I probably had more chance of being successful in life if I had stayed at the insurance company.

WELL, YOU PROVED THAT WRONG!

Yes, indeed.

HOW HAS YOUR FAMILY REACTED TO YOUR SUCCESS?

I come from a rather large family. I am the last of seven kids. I have lots of nieces and nephews. It is something that we actually never talk about. It is sort of just something unspoken within the family of what Uncle David does. I don't get much feedback from my family members. At family get-togethers, we talk about the children more than anything else. Hardly ever do we talk about anything that I have done. It is refreshing in a way.

DO ANY OF YOUR NIECES OR NEPHEWS HAVE AN UNCLE DAVID/FARAMIR ACTION FIGURE?

Well, that's something I don't know. I know they have seen the films, but I actually don't know if they collected any of the merchandise or cut-out articles, etc. I don't know that I have ever actually questioned them about that.

HOW IS FATHERHOOD TREATING YOU? I KNOW THAT YOU HAVE A BABY GIRL.

It is brilliant! It is a wonderful, wonderful thing that just gets better with each day.

CAN YOU TELL US HOW YOU GOT THE ROLE IN *The Lord of the Rings*?

I screen-tested rather late in the process. My agent had asked me to put

WHERE YOU HAVE
A FATHER HAVING
PREFERENCE OVER
ONE SON THAN THE
OTHER—WOULD
CERTAINLY HAVE AN
EFFECT ON SOMEONE
LIKE FARAMIR.”



down something much earlier in the process, but I couldn't because I was engaged in other employment. I just couldn't physically find the time to do something else. For the screen-testing process, I put something down on a Saturday morning and off it went. I was informed



relatively soon after that [they] reacted very positively to the test and were considering me for the role of Faramir. The offer came through not long after that.

HAD YOU BEEN AUDITIONING FOR THE ROLE OF FARAMIR FROM THE START?

It wasn't specifically for the role of Faramir. It was more of a general test to see where they thought I would fit into the scheme of things.

WERE YOU FAMILIAR WITH THE BOOKS PRIOR TO BEING CAST IN THE ROLE?

I was only familiar in so much that I had heard of them. I knew how successful and loved they were around the world, but in terms of having read them myself, I hadn't. So it was embarking on something completely new for me, which was wonderful. Some of us came into the project with a long-held love for the novels, and others, like myself, came in as new people and discovered the novels for the very first time. We had a child-like enthusiasm embarking on the world of *The Lord of the Rings* for the first time.

HOW DID YOU PREPARE TO PLAY THE ROLE OF FARAMIR?

The first thing I did was read the books. I think you have to. I can't see how you could actually be involved in the project and not read the books—that is obviously the main source, the primary source. I had a read and went back and earmarked all the pages that Faramir was involved in. In combination with discussions with Philippa, Fran, Peter, and the script, it was left for us to imagine the character and realize the character. There were all the practicalities of it as well, which came about through all of the physical preparation, the fight training, and the vocal work that was involved.

HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE FARAMIR TO SOMEONE WHO KNOWS NOTHING ABOUT HIM?

I think it is important to note that he is a younger brother. There were two brothers, Boromir and Faramir, and they were slightly different. Boromir is a strong warrior and much more impetuous than Faramir. Faramir is the thinker. He is also a great warrior, but he is a thinker and gentler in nature. He is probably much more well-read than his brother. The way the family relationship works, I think, is very important. The Denethor factor—the bizarre triangle where you have a father having preference over one son than the other—

would certainly have an effect on someone like Faramir, knowing that his father favors his brother.

THE FARAMIR IN THE BOOKS IS SOMEWHAT DIFFERENT THAN IN THE FILMS. THE EXTENDED VERSIONS OF THE FILMS HAVE ADDED MORE FLESH TO THE CHARACTER—DO YOU AGREE WITH THAT?

Undoubtedly. The character is different in so far as in this second film you have Faramir tempted by the Ring, which didn't occur in the book. It was a decision by Peter and the writers, and I think it was a wonderful decision. I think it grounded the whole story and the characters in a reality that was so believable. The changes or extra scenes in those films go a long way in helping the audience accept and understand those decisions. Certainly it makes the character much more complex, but it also makes the story more complex as well.

THE SCENE ADDED TO THE EXTENDED DVD EDITION OF *The Two Towers* OF BOROMIR, FARAMIR, AND DENETHOR WAS A NICE ADDITION BECAUSE IT ADDED MORE DEPTH TO THE RELATIONSHIP OF THE FAMILY.



“YOU WOULD HARDLY
CALL IT WORK. IT
WAS LITERALLY
each day.”

Yes, I think it gives you an insight into the family dynamics. You see firsthand that Faramir—at least from his father’s point of view—is really on the out. As far as Denethor is concerned, he really only has one son who is useful. The other one is really a bit of an impediment. That, obviously, has to have some form of psychological effect on someone.

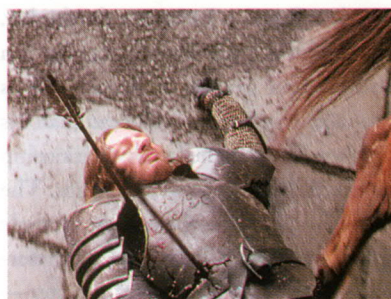
WHAT CAN FANS LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING IN THE EXTENDED VERSION OF *The Return of the King* WITH REGARDS TO FARAMIR?

I think some fans were slightly disappointed that we didn’t see the Houses of Healing in the theatrical version. Well, the Houses of Healing does appear in the extended version. There is a nice little scene between Faramir and Éowyn, which is, I suppose, the coming together of those two characters. I think it is very satisfying for the fans. There is another scene with Faramir and Denethor, which I think is really terrific, and one of my favorite scenes is between Faramir and Pippin before both of them enter into the Great Hall with Denethor. It is a lovely scene that helps give weight and understanding to Pippin’s concern for Faramir, when [Faramir’s] father wants to basically burn him alive later on in the film. Pippin goes a long way to help save his life.

DAVID, WHAT ARE SOME OF THE BEST MEMORIES FOR YOU ON THIS FILM?

There are many actually. I do remember one day when we were filming the scene where Faramir is essentially riding out to his death on the suicide mission. We had all the horses riding across the field, and there were rows built for a tracking shot of that sequence. I remember spending the whole day filming that. It did feel pretty special. I think the scenery that surrounds that particular sequence added to it as well. That stands out. Enduring images for me would be of Peter Jackson standing behind the bank of monitors absolutely focused and intent on what he was doing. That image is burned indelibly in my memory. There are so many different memories. The project was so monumental. It is very hard to compress it down to a couple of images. I remember Orlando Bloom had a camera, and he used to take a photo every day so he could remember something from every day of the filming. It was an amazing idea.

DO YOU RECALL THE FIRST DAY OF SHOOTING FOR YOU?



Yes. I thought that working on these films was going to be an enormous experience. Even though I thought that, I wasn’t prepared for the absolute enormity of the project. It surpassed anything that my imagination could come up with. The very first thing that I ever filmed was a scene that occurs in the extended version of *The Return of the King*. It is a scene with Faramir and Éowyn on the balcony. It was the very first thing I ever did, which was a bit bizarre, but [it’s] not particularly unusual to go in and film one of your last things first. I was extremely nervous on that first day because I was one of the last characters to be brought into the filming process. There had been a very close-knit community there for nearly a year, so I really did feel like a new boy coming on the lot there. It was nerves and adrenalin and a huge deal of excitement as well.

TELL US ABOUT HOW YOU FILMED THE SCENE WITH JOHN NOBLE WHERE YOU ARE BEING BURNED. I UNDERSTAND THE OIL USED IN THAT SCENE KIND OF BURNED YOUR EYES.

Yes, that is true actually. If somebody asked me what was my most uncomfortable moment on the films, it was probably that time. After all the nicks, cuts, and bruises from the fight sequences, I was totally fine. That particular sequence, where supposedly Faramir is coming in and out of consciousness, the oil that was



poured onto my face did make its way very easily into my eyes. It was very difficult to maintain a sense of supposed consciousness there when I felt like my eyes were burning away to nothing.

HOW HAVE PEOPLE REACTED TO YOUR ROLE IN THESE FILMS?

People don't always recognize me because I did look different in the films. Every now and then there is a surprise. I did wear a wig, and the period costume didn't help, so I think I can maintain a degree of anonymity. But recognition does occur through the day, and sometimes in the most surprising places as well.

WAS IT DIFFICULT FILMING THE SCENES WITH GOLLUM?

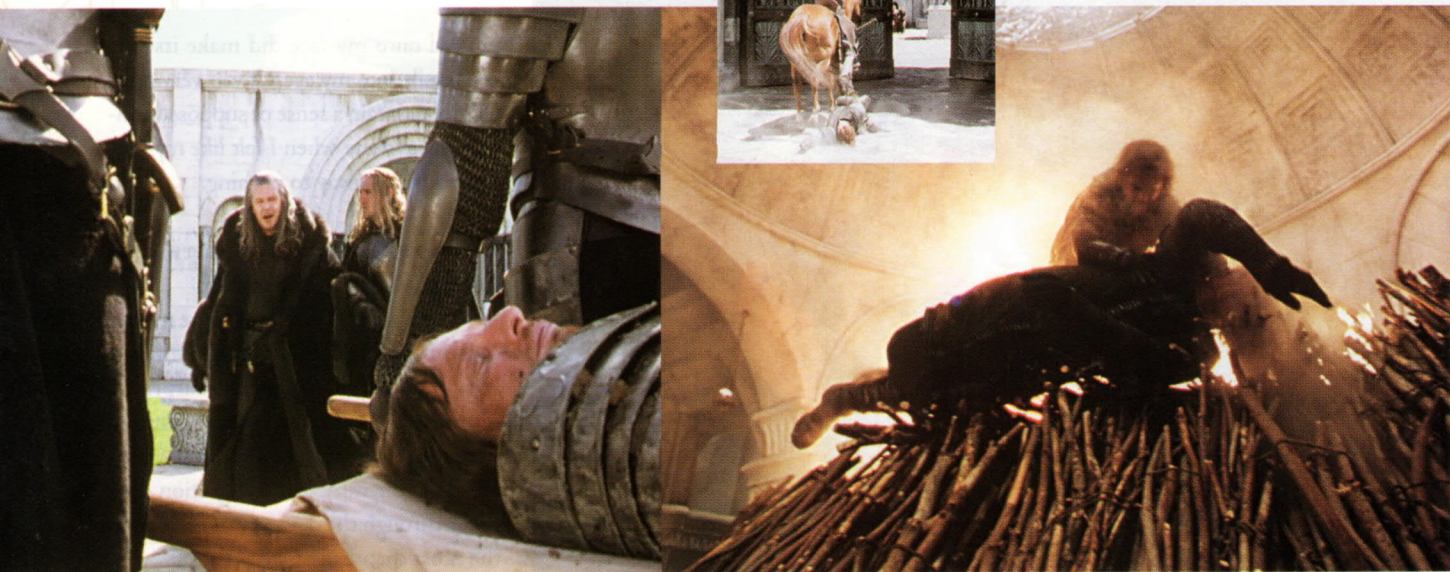
It is something you are not really trained for in acting school—to essentially act with nothing. Once Andy Serkis was taken out of the equation, you really were left to your own devices to remember exactly what Andy was doing and exactly what position he was in in relation to other things on the set. It was hard. You felt slightly schizophrenic because you were trying to maintain a character, but at the same time, you were trying to piece together exactly what Andy was doing for you before so you could pretend to act to nothing.



FAN CLUB MEMBER JENNIE ROWLAND ASKS, "HOW DO YOU THINK THE EXTENDED DVD SCENES HELP TO ALLEVIATE SOME FANS' FEELINGS THAT FARAMIR IS TOO DIFFERENT FROM THE BOOK, AND

WHAT WOULD YOU MOST LIKE AUDIENCES TO UNDERSTAND ABOUT FARAMIR'S CHARACTER?"

I think some fans' biggest concerns from the theatrical version of *The Two Towers* were that they thought he didn't seem the noble gentleman that a lot of people imagined from the books. I think the scene added in *The Two Towers* gave



an understanding as to the situation that Faramir was in. He had a brother who he got on with tremendously well. They had a great love and respect for each other. Faramir, like his brother, was a wonderful fighter, but yet he didn't have the recognition and respect from his father. He also lost his mother when he was very young, and he was given the task of defending parts of his territory when he was essentially undermanned and under-armed. So when the opportunity for this Ring comes along that could actually help the situation, I don't know anybody who wouldn't be tempted by that situation. The decision by Peter and the writers to tweak that and have the man be tempted by the Ring helped to ground the character in a reality. Then eventually, when Faramir realizes what it does and lets it go, I think you gain an utter respect for the man. To let that go and know what that is going to mean for his father and for Faramir's future is an incredible thing to do. I think it should actually raise Faramir up in people's esteem.

FAN CLUB MEMBER EDWARD ALBANESE COMMENTS: "THERE HAVE BEEN NUMEROUS COMMENTS THAT YOU AND SEAN BEAN COULD ACTUALLY HAVE BEEN BROTHERS. HOW

WAS YOUR ON- AND OFF-SCREEN RELATIONSHIP WITH MR. BEAN?"

The interesting thing about that question is that during principal photography, Sean had actually shot his scenes as Boromir before I even arrived on the set. I never got to meet Sean before I started filming. The scene that you saw in the extended version of *The Two Towers* was part of the pick-ups for the second film. It was only after we had finished principal photography that we actually met and filmed that scene. Peter and Fran always wanted to do that scene, but it was just a matter of orchestrating it, so we could actually do it. That didn't occur until we went back for pick-ups, when availability was such that Sean could come back and we could do that scene. It was such a wonderful thing to do as well—for the brothers to finally be together. Meeting Sean didn't actually affect my portrayal. However, after having said that, I had access to all of Sean's scenes. I could go into the editing suite any time I liked and have a look at the scenes that Sean had shot, so I knew what my brother was doing or what he was like so it wouldn't be completely foreign to me. It was great, though. Sean is a wonderful man.

WHAT WAS THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE FOR YOU ON THESE FILMS?

Physically, dealing with that oil was hard, but that's a hard question because there really wasn't anything that I would describe as a challenge because it was such an honor to be involved in. You would hardly call it work. It was literally play each day. To be involved with such an incredible group of people—from Peter all the way down through the cast—was great. It was an honor and a joy. I suppose one of the hardest tasks was getting people to understand the slight change to Faramir's character from the book to the film. I always knew that that was going to be slightly contentious in some circles. I was ready to defend that position because I thought that it was for the best.

WERE YOU AT THE WORLD PREMIERE IN WELLINGTON FOR THE LAST FILM?

Yes, I was. It was so amazing. Looking back at it now, it nearly feels like an out-of-body experience. It was so monumental. There were 100,000 people on the streets. That's a huge percentage of that city's population. That would be like 7 million people in Los Angeles turning up on the streets—that's what we are talking about. It was unbelievable. It was really an experience I will never forget. It was very humbling as well just to be aware of the incredible support, generosity, acceptance, and love of the people of New Zealand for the project.



do view myself as very lucky indeed to have been involved in the capacity I was. I would have been happy to have been a featured extra in the films. It is a landmark piece of cinema. Every now and then, you do have to pinch yourself.

YOU GAVE A GREAT PERFORMANCE IN *Van Helsing*. WAS IT DIFFICULT TO GO FROM A LEADING MAN SUCH AS FARAMIR TO PLAYING A RATHER HUMOROUS FRIAR IN *Van Helsing*?

IT IS LIKELY THAT AS YOU CARRY ON THROUGH YOUR CAREER *The Lord of the Rings* WILL FOLLOW YOU WHEREVER YOU GO.

I am sure that is true. I feel extremely privileged to have been involved in this project. It is something that I will always be delighted to talk to people about. I

One of the great things about acting that I love is that you get to play a diverse range of roles. That's what makes it constantly stimulating for me—to be attracted to roles that are going to challenge me in different ways. The element of surprise is very important to me as an actor—to surprise people as well as [surprise] myself.


WHAT'S NEXT FOR YOU?

I finished a film a little while ago called *Three Dollars*. It is an independent Australian film based on a novel over here. It is a great little story about a man who has gotten to a stage in his life where he is married [and has] a little girl who is rather ill. He finds himself one day realizing that he has got only \$3.00 to his name. He goes back through his life and tries to assess how he got to this point. It is a really beautiful story, and hopefully it will get a release in the United States next year.

IS THERE ONE FILM IN *The Lord of the Rings* TRILOGY THAT YOU ARE MOST FOND OF?

That is really hard. It is like picking your favorite child. It is difficult. I honestly couldn't pick one. I love them all!

DAVID, THANK YOU FOR TAKING THE TIME TO TALK TO US.

It has been terrific. Thank you very much! 







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THE MANY [GHOULISH] FACES OF BEN PRICE

*Weta Workshop's Ben Price on how his
tall stature has opened significant career doors for
him on The Lord of the Rings films*



BY DAN MADSEN



Just working behind-the-scenes of *The Lord of the Rings* films was monumental for longtime fan Ben Price. But when he was invited to perform on-camera, he was over the moon. Thanks to his long limbs, the 6'8" Price was asked to fill various roles, including playing a White (Twilight) Ringwraith and doubling for the Witch-king. The part of Witch-king was actually almost Price's, but he had an even bigger life-altering role to prepare for, as he reveals in one of his favorite stories relating to *The Lord of the Rings*. While his time spent on the trilogy was "worth every single minute that I put into it," he is now hard at work on another mega movie being shot in New Zealand—not too shabby for someone who is still a relatively new face in the film industry.

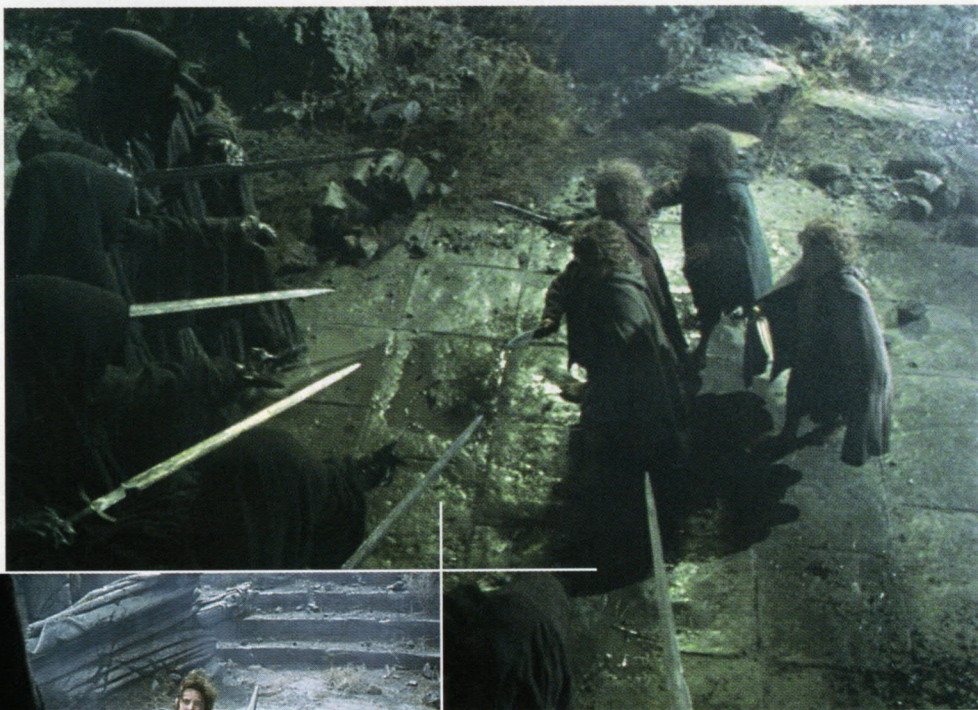
BEN, TELL US WHAT INVOLVEMENT YOU HAD ON *The Lord of the Rings* FILMS.

Well, to clarify, I didn't actually play the Witch-king—I doubled him. I played one of the White Wraiths that stood to his right, though. Originally, I was working at Weta Workshop, and [Weta chief] Richard Taylor walked through one morning. They were looking for another Wraith from casting. He took one look at me—I am 6'8" and pretty skinny, and I have some pretty messed up teeth—and he said, "You're the one." I was shaving my head that day [for the part].

PRIOR TO *The Lord of the Rings*, HAD YOU WORKED ON ANY OTHER FILMS?

No, I had not. It was my first film. It started me off on a whole new career.

WHAT WERE YOUR FIRST THOUGHTS WHEN YOU FOUND OUT YOU WOULD BE DOUBLING FOR THE WITCH-KING?



"THEY WERE LOOKING FOR ANOTHER WRAITH FROM CASTING. He took one look at me—I am 6'8" and pretty skinny, and I have some pretty messed up teeth—AND HE SAID, 'YOU'RE THE ONE.'"

Oh, it was amazing! I have been a huge fan of the books for years. I read the first one when I was about 10. I've read them dozens of times since. To get to actually do the stab on Frodo, which is a pretty pivotal point, was absolutely stunning. I did the stab shot with Frodo on top of Weathertop. He is in the twilight world with the Ring on, and he sees the White Witch-king. I knew the role of the Witch-king pretty well since I had read the books so many times.

SO WHEN THE WITCH-KING STABS FRODO, IS THAT YOU IN THE WHOLE SCENE?



It is actually three different people. I am the hand. That was my role. The person in the actual prosthetic makeup was mostly Brent MacIntyre. They actually went through about four of us. I was the White Wraith just to the Witch-king's right in the same scene. I was the prosthetic-applied Wraith.

DESCRIBE FOR US WHAT WENT INTO GETTING THE COSTUME ON.

Well, for the Witch-king part, it was an application of a prosthetic hand with finger extensions—that took about an hour to paint up. [I wore] five thimbles on the end of my fingers to extend them out and make them even more skeletal. There was a wardrobe element of about six layers of really beautiful embroidered

silk costuming. It was very flowing, dangling, and white. They effectively matched the black robes to the white robes because that is what was closest to what they might have looked like when they were kings, before they became Wraiths. From there, it was just on-set applications.

DID YOU HAVE THE FACIAL APPLICATIONS?

I didn't have the facial thing for the Witch-king, but I did have it for the White Wraith. I had the whole facial [application]. I was a hand double for the Witch-king.

WHAT KIND OF WEAPON WERE YOU USING IN THE WITCH-KING SCENE?

It was called a Morgul knife. It was about a foot and a half of sharp and rusty steel. It was fairly light. There wasn't a lot of weight to it. We had multiple daggers. We had the retractable [kind], which had a little tip that would slide up and down so that you could see it penetrating.

WHEN YOU DID THE SCENE WHERE YOU STAB FRODO, WHAT KIND OF DIRECTION DID PETER JACKSON GIVE YOU?

We did that scene many times. Unfortunately, because it was such a close shot, we had to use the original steel dagger. Even though [Frodo] hadn't been given it [yet in the film], Elijah Wood was actually wearing his Mithril chain mail shirt under his costume at the time. It was out of sequence, but he felt safer and I felt safer.

DID YOU HAVE MUCH INTERACTION WITH ELIJAH?


Yes, I did. I was also his standby, so I worked directly with him. I've known him for a couple of years.

WHAT KIND OF REACTION DID YOU GET FROM PEOPLE WHEN YOU WERE IN THE COSTUME OF THE WHITE WRAITH?

In reality, it is a very regal costume. It feels very kingly. To be wearing it feels like you've got that history that is all embodied in the costume. It had heaps of beautiful embroidery, and it was disheveled like they had broken it down a lot. You got that sense of the royalty crashing down.

HOW LONG DID IT TAKE YOU TO PUT ON THE FULL MAKEUP FOR THE WHITE WRAITH?

The makeup took five hours. It left me with a hole about the size of a straw in my mouth to breathe through. My nose was totally blocked off. One eye was open very small. It was pretty limited on the vision and the movement.



“The [White Wraith] makeup took five hours. It left me with a hole about the size of a straw in my mouth to breathe through. My nose was totally blocked off.”

HOW LONG WERE YOU FILMING THE WHITE WRAITH SCENE?

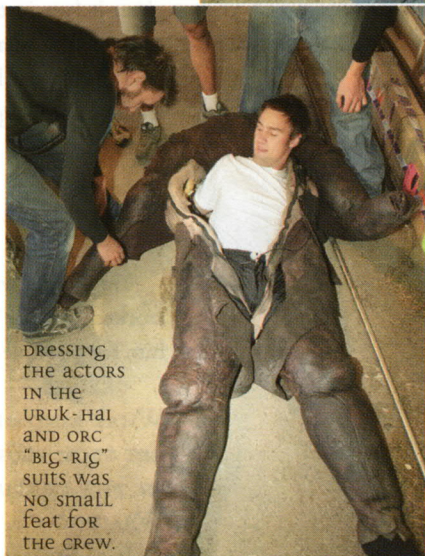
I personally did two days in full makeup. I think they did three or four days on that scene.

WHAT DID YOU LIKE MOST ABOUT YOUR ROLES IN *The Lord of the Rings*?

It was pretty amazing. It is all slightly blurred now. One of the things that happened during those five years I worked on *The Lord of the Rings* is that I met my current partner, and we now have a 3-year-old, [who was born] during the time of the filming. It was a long journey, but it changed my life, literally. I think, though, my favorite story is that at the time I was doing the Witch-king doubling, and they wanted to put me in the full makeup, the reason in the end that they didn't apply that full face makeup on me was because my wife was due to have our first child. Richard Taylor, of course, was extremely excited about the option that I might show up at the birth of my first child as the Witch-king! We couldn't really take the risk, so they had someone else do the full makeup work. I did the hand doubling, which I could pull off in a taxi if I had to run away!

WHAT IS IT LIKE TO WATCH THE FILMS AND KNOW THAT IT IS YOU IN PARTS UP THERE?

It is a huge blast! Coming from being a fan at such a young age, it is pretty amazing to me to know that [it] is my hand. It wasn't a huge part, but it was me, nonetheless.



DRESSING THE ACTORS IN THE URUK-HAI AND ORC "BIG-RIG" SUITS WAS NO SMALL FEAT FOR THE CREW.



"IT IS ACTUALLY BLOWING ME AWAY
how much we continue to
grow as a company AND HOW THE
PRODUCT CONTINUES TO GET BETTER."

WE TALKED ABOUT *The Fellowship of the Ring*, BUT DID YOU DO ANY ON-SCREEN WORK FOR *The Two Towers* AND *The Return of the King*?

When I started with Weta, I first worked in the leather room for about a year and a half assembling costumes. But then I landed the role of the puppeteer

for the "big rig" suits, which were the oversized, scale suit versions of the Orcs and Uruk-hai to put the lead Hobbits into scale. When Merry and Pippin get snatched by the Uruk-hai, a lot of that is "big rig" suit work. I would look out the chest of the suit, which was

about 8'4" to the top of the head. I was sort of inside of that suit looking out of the chest. It would make the actors playing the Hobbits look very small. It was another way we dealt with the scale issue when the small-scale doubles were not available, or they had to have a straight "in the face" shot of Billy Boyd or Dominic Monaghan. I did that very briefly in *The Return of the King*. One funny shot [was] one day in the pick-ups, they said, "We need an Orc dummy to be rolled out of the way," so I played a dead Orc on the field that gets pushed off of Pippin by Merry. It was in the end battle scene.

IT SOUNDS LIKE THERE WAS A LOT OF CAMARADERIE ON THE SET.



Absolutely! You don't work 18 hours a day with people for three years and not sort out any difficulties that you have. By the end of it, you are a very tight little unit. It is quite a pleasure actually.

I UNDERSTAND YOU DID SOME MODELING FOR THE DECIPHER CARDS.

Yes, I did. I played a Barrow-wight and the Witch-king again for all of his weapons shots.

WHAT DO YOU DO MOST OF THE TIME FOR A LIVING?

I have worked for Weta for about five years. Right now, I am a costumer for *The Lion*, *The Witch and the Wardrobe*, and I hope to [be] on-set technician as well.

WILL YOU BE DOING ANY PERFORMANCE WORK ON *The Lion*, *The Witch and the Wardrobe*?

I don't think so. It is a bit of a contradiction of interests because my job is to look after how the costumes look on the actors, so if I am in one of those costumes,

it makes my job very difficult.


IS THAT FILM LOOKING GOOD?

Absolutely! It is actually blowing me away how much we continue to grow as a company and how the product continues to get better. It is an ongoing road, and what was once top-of-the-line is now becoming run-of-the-mill. It is what we do on a regular basis.

BEN, WHAT WILL BE YOUR LASTING MEMORY OF WORKING ON *The Lord of the Rings*?

I would have to say it was definitely the hardest and most amazing time of my life. It was five years of really solid work. It is harder than I have ever worked before. It was amazing all the way—and worth every single minute that I put into it!

BEN, THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME.

My pleasure. Thank you! 



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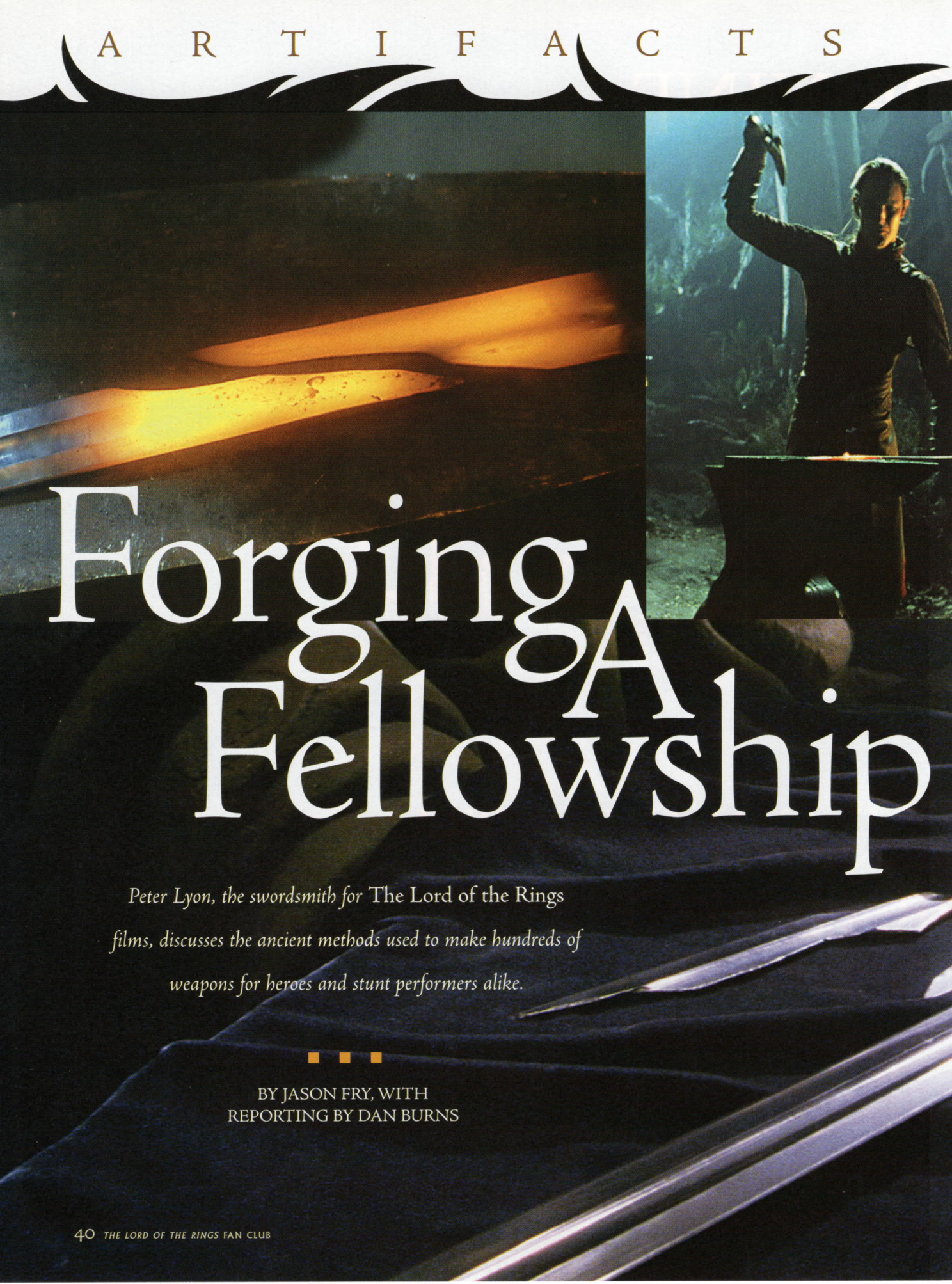
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WORLDS
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Forging A Fellowship

Peter Lyon, the swordsmith for The Lord of the Rings films, discusses the ancient methods used to make hundreds of weapons for heroes and stunt performers alike.

■ ■ ■
BY JASON FRY, WITH
REPORTING BY DAN BURNS



In centuries past, one imagines a wise swordsman carefully sizing up the artisan who would make his blades. After all, back then the quality of one's sword could well mean the difference between life and death: Own a well-made, carefully balanced sword that was both strong and flexible, and you had a better chance of surviving a battle than a warrior whose blade was too heavy or couldn't stand up to the rigors of combat. Given that, one also imagines few things put a warrior more at ease than knowing he'd found a smith who could wield a sword as well as forge it, cut it, and grind it.

The warriors of those long-gone times would have relaxed after getting to know Peter Lyon. As the swordsmith for Weta Workshop, Lyon made most of the steel "hero" swords wielded by the stars of *The Lord of the Rings* in close-ups, as well as hundreds of aluminum stunt blades used in other fight scenes. Anduril, the blade of Aragorn, is Lyon's work. Same with Narsil, Elendil's blade shattered by Sauron—and the weapon whose recovered shards would be preserved and remade to form Anduril. Lyon forged Sting, the graceful Elf blade found by Bilbo Baggins in a Troll hoard and handed down to Frodo—though it was Samwise Gamgee who would wield it with the most devastating effect. Gandalf's Glamdring is a Lyon creation, as is the heavy blade carried into combat by the star-crossed Boromir. And Lyon's work wasn't just limited to swords—Théoden's spear is Lyon's creation, as is Gil-galad's spear Aiglos and the daggers wielded by the traitorous Wormtongue; as well as many, many others, all hand-crafted.

BACKING IT UP

That's an impressive body of work, to be sure. But what would have reassured medieval warriors—and men of Gondor and Rohan, no doubt—is that

Lyon knows how to use a sword, too. He's belonged to the Wellington Medieval Guild since 1987 and presently



serves as its combat instructor, helping the group study and perfect combat techniques from the 14th and 15th centuries. Nor is Lyon solely an earthbound warrior: He's a member of New Zealand's Order of the Boar, a jousting group, and has been jousting since 2000.

The New Zealand-born Lyon recalls always being interested in history, but he became particularly intrigued by medieval Europe during his university days in the mid-1980s. There, Lyon became an avid player of fantasy role-playing games, from which sprang a curiosity about the actual physical combat that existed only in the players' minds and in the outcome of rolls of the dice. Lyon says he began practicing sword fighting with a club in Hastings, which led to an interest in military history and how fighting men of the time lived their lives.

It also led him to make his own blade—the first in a very long line of Lyon creations. It was an invention in-

spired by necessity, as inventions so often are: "I started off making equipment for myself because I couldn't afford to buy anything good from overseas, and basically there was nothing being made in New Zealand at the time," Lyon recalls. He describes his first sword as a polished, very heavy two-handed sword, and he freely admits that today it serves as evidence of how far he's come as a smith: The blade is quite thick, he says, and owes more to images of swords in movies than historical realities.

Nevertheless, it was a start. Lyon recalls that he bought some tools and began making practice swords for the Hastings club and himself, educating himself about design, history, and the smith's techniques. Nor, he recalls, did his growing skills escape the notice of his fellow re-enactors. "I started making bits and pieces, and people started asking me to make things for them," he says.

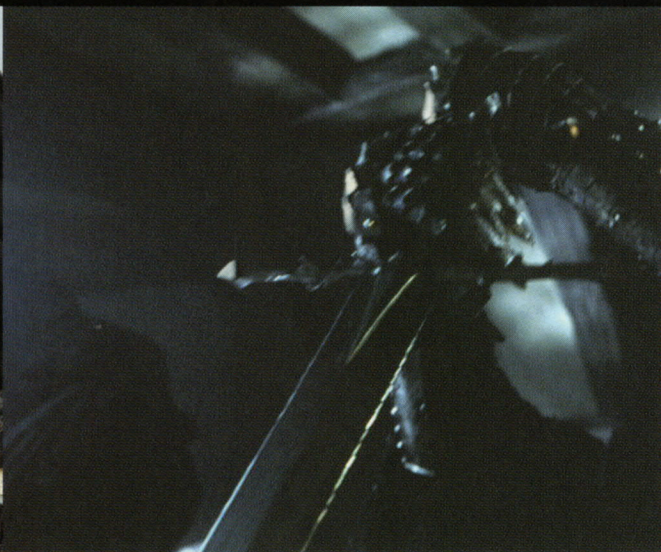
Lyon notes that making swords for people who will actually use them, instead of just hanging them on a wall, is great training. "The advantage of making swords for re-enactors is that they're using them all the time," he says, "so it's a very good way of learning the techniques that work best."

With more and more re-enactors asking Lyon if he was for hire, the smith found that his hobby had grown to take up all his spare time. "Eventually, I decided to have a stab at making a full-time job of it," he offers in an apt turn of phrase for a swordsmith. He took the plunge into self-employment in 1994 and describes the next couple of years as difficult. But he endured, and soon his fortunes turned. In early 1998, Lyon was living in Wellington and making swords in his workshop just down the road when he was asked to ply his trade for *The Lord of the Rings*—a huge break for his career, to be sure, but also a project that would dominate some three years of his life.

TO BUY...THERE WAS NOTHING BEING MADE IN NEW ZEALAND AT THE TIME."



"I'VE MADE SWORDS AS PRIVATE COMMISSIONS FOR PEOPLE AND THEY'VE WANTED



Hired in April 1998, Lyon began working in earnest late that year. Though today he's more involved in the design of weapons, things were different then. "Because I was totally new to the film industry, and I didn't know how things worked, basically I was given finished designs and told, 'Here you are—make this, like this, this size,'" he recalls, adding that he was asked to refine a design "to make it the most useful weapon within those parameters."

MORE THAN FANTASY

The history of fantasy movies is littered with ludicrously designed swords that no one could have wielded in real life—sword aficionados often deride blades inspired by such flights of fancy as SLOs ("sword-like objects"). But it was quickly clear that Lyon wouldn't be asked to make any SLOs. Instead, he inherited solid, historically sound designs from *The Lord of the Rings*' designers, some of whom knew a thing or two about swordplay themselves. Conceptual artist John Howe, for instance, is not only a renowned J.R.R. Tolkien illustrator, but also a very experienced re-enactor, giving the two men a shared body of knowledge that helped ensure they worked well together.

"A lot of the hard work was done because I was given well-developed designs," Lyon says. "Some things, like Sting for example, probably went through about 20 or 30 different drawings before Peter [Jackson] got one that he actually said, 'That's the one.'"

Lyon did have some work to do before it came time for the actual cutting and grinding, though.

"Usually it was little things like modifying a blade so maybe it was a little bit lighter," he says. "Sometimes designs end up having big-looking blades, but of course steel gets heavy very quickly. So I just took the design and made it as usable as possible."



Making hundreds of swords by hand is a task that would daunt all but a very few people on the planet—fortunately for Jackson, Lyon wasn't one of them. But Lyon notes that the designers' hard work and organization was very helpful, keeping him from periods in which he had to crank out weapons very quickly.

"I was actually quite lucky because I was able to be given designs and get started on making swords early enough, even though there's a lot to get done," he says, adding that "it worked out pretty well. There were times when it got a bit pressured, but I wasn't working through weekends except a couple of times."

So how do you make a sword? It starts with the blade, Lyon says, describing the process as "get the blade finished, and then get everything I need to put the hilt—you know, all of the dimensions obtained. For the blade itself, it depends on whether it's a straight or curved blade—whether I forge it, or just cut and grind. I do forging when I have to, but most of the time I'll cut and grind something, because with most steel there's no great advantage to hand-forging anything."

Not that cutting and grinding is a simple process. The first step with a straight blade, Lyon explains, is to form a fuller in the sword. A fuller is a shallow central groove or channel on a blade, whose purpose is to lighten the blade while simultaneously improving its strength and flexibility. (The opposite of a fuller is a riser, which is used when a smith wants to make a sword more rigid.) In cutting the fuller, Lyon would hold on to the tang, which is the part of

THEM SHARP. I GENERALLY QUIZ THEM PRETTY INTENSIVELY ABOUT WHY.”



the sword that fits into the handle and is hidden by it and the pommel. Next comes tapering the sword to its tip, after which Lyon roughs out the edges of the blade. Any little problems with the blade can be eased out by tapping with a hammer.

Lyon says the majority of the hero weapons seen in close-ups were steel. (Aluminum photographs as a slightly different color.) But he adds that a few hero weapons were made out of aluminum, and that was the normal material for the stunt weapons. There are a number of reasons aluminum is a better choice than steel for fight scenes. For one thing, it's lighter—a definite plus when spending days shooting monumental scenes like the Battle of Helm's Deep in *The Two Towers* or the conflict before Mordor's Black Gate in *The Return of the King*. It's also much safer for battles than steel (rubber stunt weapons also were used), though even an aluminum sword without an edge is nothing to take lightly when it's moving very fast in close proximity to actors.

Speaking of safety, one thing Lyon did very rarely in his work for *The Lord of the Rings* movies was to make a blade that was actually sharp. “There were a couple of sharp blades made, but people on set

would get very paranoid with sharp things, so they had things like wooden guards put on these with warnings about the sharp blade,” adding that only “a where sharp

One of the scenes with an edge, if you will, comes in *The Fellowship of the Ring*, when the Ringwraiths assault what they think are the sleeping Hobbits in the inn at Bree. “We took an existing sword and got the tip really sharp so that they could actually stab through the pillows and do it cleanly,” Lyon says.

But as a swordsmith, the lack of an edge doesn't bother Lyon. In fact, it's more the opposite.

“These days, I'm a little bit wary about making sharp swords for people,” he says. “When I've made swords as private commissions for people and they've wanted them sharp, I generally quiz them pretty intensively about why they want a sharp sword. If they want to hang it on the wall, well, all that's going to happen is that somebody will come along and grab it and ask, ‘Is it sharp?’

he says,

there were

couple of scenes

they really needed a blade.”

Generally, there are not really many reasons why people would want sharp blades. There are a few martial-arts people that do cutting tests on wood and things like that, but very few people have a real need for sharp blades.”

MADE TO SCALE

Multiple copies of many hero weapons were needed, including bigger and smaller copies for the movies' various scale doubles. Lyon did it all, a process he described as “basically, take the sword and scale it up or scale it down as needed,” he says. “It was just a matter of making sure I kept the proportions correct.”

And scale and different materials weren't the only reason multiple copies of hero weapons were needed. Sometimes the issue was a simple one of logistics. “You might have needed the same hero sword on two sets simultaneously—that avoided conflicts there,” Lyon says. “There were a few stunt swords and maybe swords in various states of being broken, or cut-off blades for the visual-effects people. Quite often, one sword would end up requiring six to eight duplicates.”

One weapon that particularly needed multiple copies was Narsil, the shards of which lay in Rivendell until remade as Aragorn's Anduril. *The Lord of the Rings*

"ANYTHING THAT'S PRACTICAL AS A WEAPON HAS BEEN DONE SOMETIME IN THE PAST.



buffs know, of course, that Narsil is commonly referred to as the blade that was broken. It's certainly something Lyon came to know as well.

"I made five blades for being broken in the scene" where Sauron steps on Narsil, he says, adding that "it was quite tricky" to break the swords.

"I made spring-steel blades, and then to make sure they broke in exactly the right way, I cut into the face of the blade and then super-glued it back together," Lyon says, adding that "because sometimes I didn't put it together absolutely perfectly, [I would] have to go back and machine it a little bit to make sure there were no slits between the fragments, and then very, very carefully pack them and put them aside until they were needed."

If that sounds like a lot of work, it was. And unfortunately, when Narsil got its big close-up, the payoff wasn't what had been hoped for.

"That particular scene didn't quite make it on film" for various technical reasons, Lyon says. "Which was a shame, because from the monitor on the set, it looked very spectacular—seeing it displayed and lifted ... and then shattered in mid-air as Sauron's foot comes down on it."

Lyon also did the etching on the blades—which was a new challenge for

him. "That was actually a skill I had to learn," he says. "I hadn't done any etching before I started all of this, and I was just lucky I was able to learn."

The actual etching, he says, is the easy part. "The hard part—or the most time-consuming part—is getting the blade prepared for the etchings," he says. "The thing with acid is that it will etch everything that isn't masked off, even if you intended it or not. So that's where the trick comes into it, and I've developed a few techniques for different ways of etching."

Naturally, any smith who makes hundreds of weapons has to have a few particular favorites.

"The one sword that I would most like to have in my own collection is Anduril, because it is a very nice sword," Lyon says. "I like thick, two-handed swords—I prefer using large swords, because I've got the bulk to swing them around. One of the things I really like about Anduril is that even though it's basically a traditional-looking sword, the cut-out in the pommel is very different. I've never seen those on anything before. And it's just a very elegant weapon."

Remember the thrilling scene in *The Return of the King* in which Elrond watches

as Aragorn draws the reformed Anduril from its scabbard? You may be surprised to learn from Lyon that while Anduril is large compared with the other swords in *The Lord of the Rings*, the fabled blade is "actually on the small size for a two-handed sword. ... The blade itself is about 105 centimeters, the whole sword is about 130 centimeters long." (And if you're wondering, Lyon says, "Yes, any large sword is always a bit of a hassle to carry around. A really big sword is generally carried across somebody's back or just carried in the hand." Fortunately, Anduril is still small enough for a scabbard.)

Lyon also praises the "very nice design" of the fabled Sting. The ability to glow in the presence of Orcs is a good thing, too—even if it only exists on-screen. "It's like a lot of the swords on *Rings*," he says. "You look at them and think, 'Well, they're just simple weapons,' but then looking at, say, with Sting how the blade flows into the cross and even the grip, it shows what the real design process is."

Sting's design is not just a series of components put together. It's far more intricate. "For example, the hitch on the blade continues across one arm of the cross guard," Lyon says, "and the way that the cross guard has a slit in the middle, from one side to the other—just little things like that."

SEEN ON SCREEN

Whether it was because of a scene that didn't quite work technically, a decision made in the editing room, or just the filmmakers' well-known attention to even the smallest details glimpsed in the corner of a shot, not all of Lyon's swords got the screen time a connoisseur of spring steel might have liked.

"Théoden's you see a bit of," Lyon says. "Denethor's sword you see in the scabbard. I actually ended up making that as a complete sword, just in case of the day they decided that he was going to draw the sword. So he had a blade there, but you never see that. And there are a few others."

Two of those others were Worm-tongue's daggers and some wild-looking arms wielded by Sauron's corsairs.

"The daggers were interesting because they were made to be concealed up the sleeves," Lyon says. "I had to make the blade with a curve, so I could put a curve across the arms. So these were quite interesting, but because they were only going to be made of polyurethane, I made the original of aluminum."

Unusual weapons, Lyon says, are a problem from a design perspective because, frankly, people have been in the blade business for thousands of years. "Anything that's practical as a weapon has been done sometime in the past," he says. "So to try to make something that's unique, yet functional and believable, was always a bit of a challenge."

It may seem unfair that weapons that required so much labor to create are barely glimpsed on-screen—or not seen at all. Beyond understanding that it's all part of the business, Lyon knows there are other chances for weapons such as Théoden's and Denethor's to enjoy a turn in the spotlight. "Because we can do things like the DVDs, photo galleries, magazines, and publicity photos, that means probably nothing would go to waste, even if it ended up being cut out of the films," he says.

So what was the toughest weapon to bring to life? Again, you wouldn't guess from its brief appearance on the screen in the prologue of *The Fellowship of the Ring*. "The most challenging weapon was actually not a sword," Lyon says. "It was the spear head for [Gil-galad's] Aiglos. That was quite a challenge, because it's got a socket that leans into a curved spring-steel blade. It's very complicated. It's beautiful."

The actors came to appreciate that beauty; Lyon says a number asked to keep the arms they wielded on-set after filming wrapped. "Viggo [Mortensen] got his sword," he says, adding that Elijah Wood got Sting. "I can't remember which ones now, because they all tend to blur in with each other."

With *The Lord of the Rings* on his résumé, Lyon has been busy—so busy that he's had to cut back on the private commissions that were once such a big part of his livelihood. "These days it takes me a long time," he says of making a sword for a collector. "I've actually avoided taking on private commissions for a while now. I've got a few lined up, but it takes me a very long time to get much done."

Should you ever be lucky enough to be able to hire Lyon's services, he says that "a very simple sword might be 10 hours of work, but a more complicated sword

could end up being 60 hours of work. It really comes down to how much they want to spend." On that subject, a nice sword with no embellishments could be \$500 to \$600, with the price going up from there. (An important note: As he states politely

on his Web site, Lyonesse Armoury—which you can visit at swords.co.nz—Lyon must refuse any requests for copies of swords from *The Lord of the Rings*.)

And what about the swordsmith's real-world favorites?

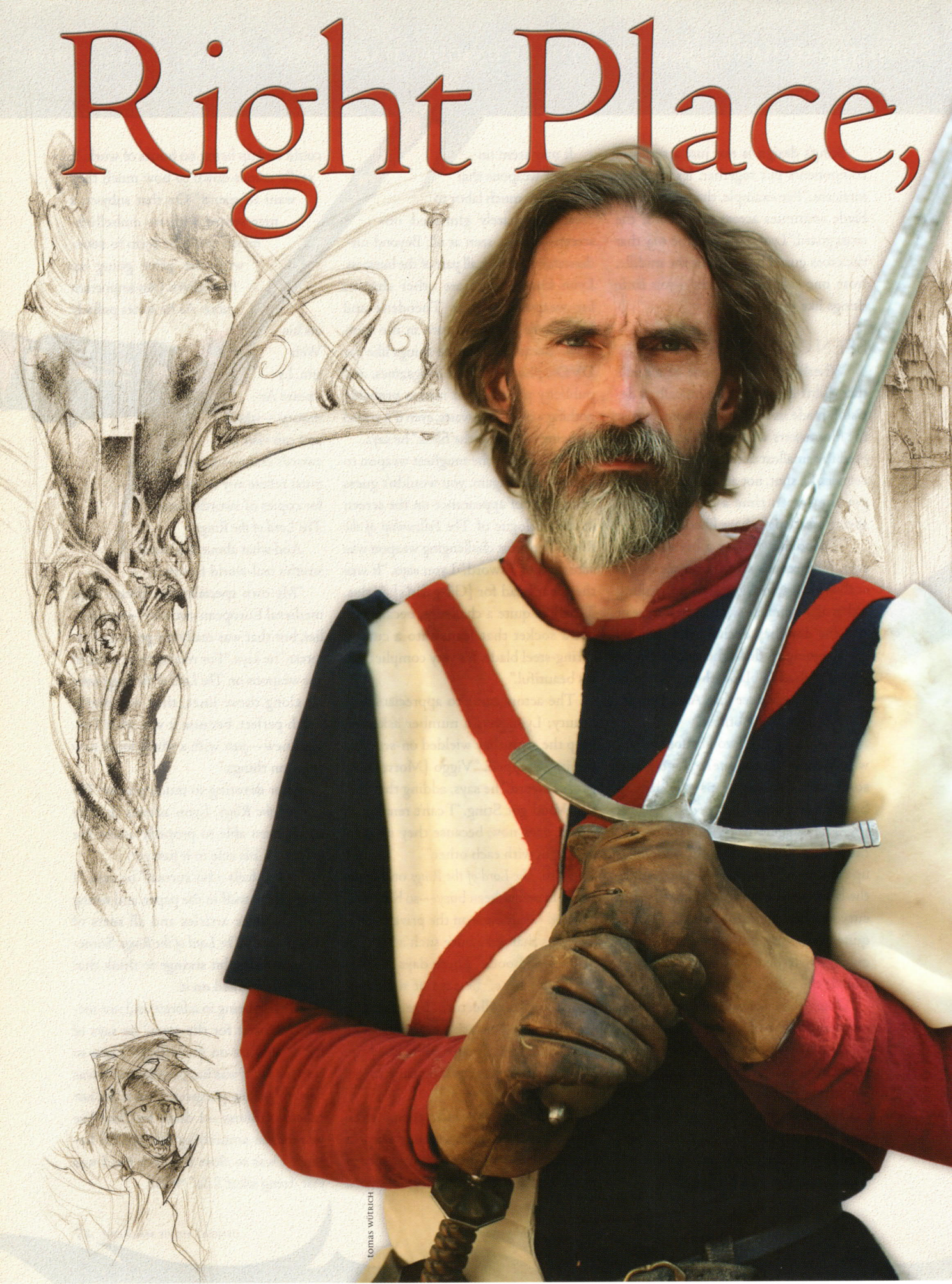
"My own specialty has always been medieval European swords—some earlier, but that was really my period of interest," he says. "For me, because most of the weapons on *The Lord of the Rings* were all along those lines, that was pretty much perfect, because it was what I really knew—just with a whole lot of new spins on things."

After devoting so much time to *The Lord of the Rings*, Lyon admits that he hasn't been able to properly assess the project or his role in it just yet.

"It still feels a bit surreal," he says. "I keep seeing stuff in the paper, and seeing fan magazine articles and all sorts of things about *The Lord of the Rings*. Sometimes it feels a bit strange to think that I actually worked on it."


"It's like being in a forest and not seeing the forest for the trees," he says of his experience on the trilogy. "I was so close to what was happening that it was hard to get any perspective on it. It's not exactly sadness—I don't feel like I've worked on something that special because I was so close to it. For me, I was just doing what I do." 🐉

Right Place,



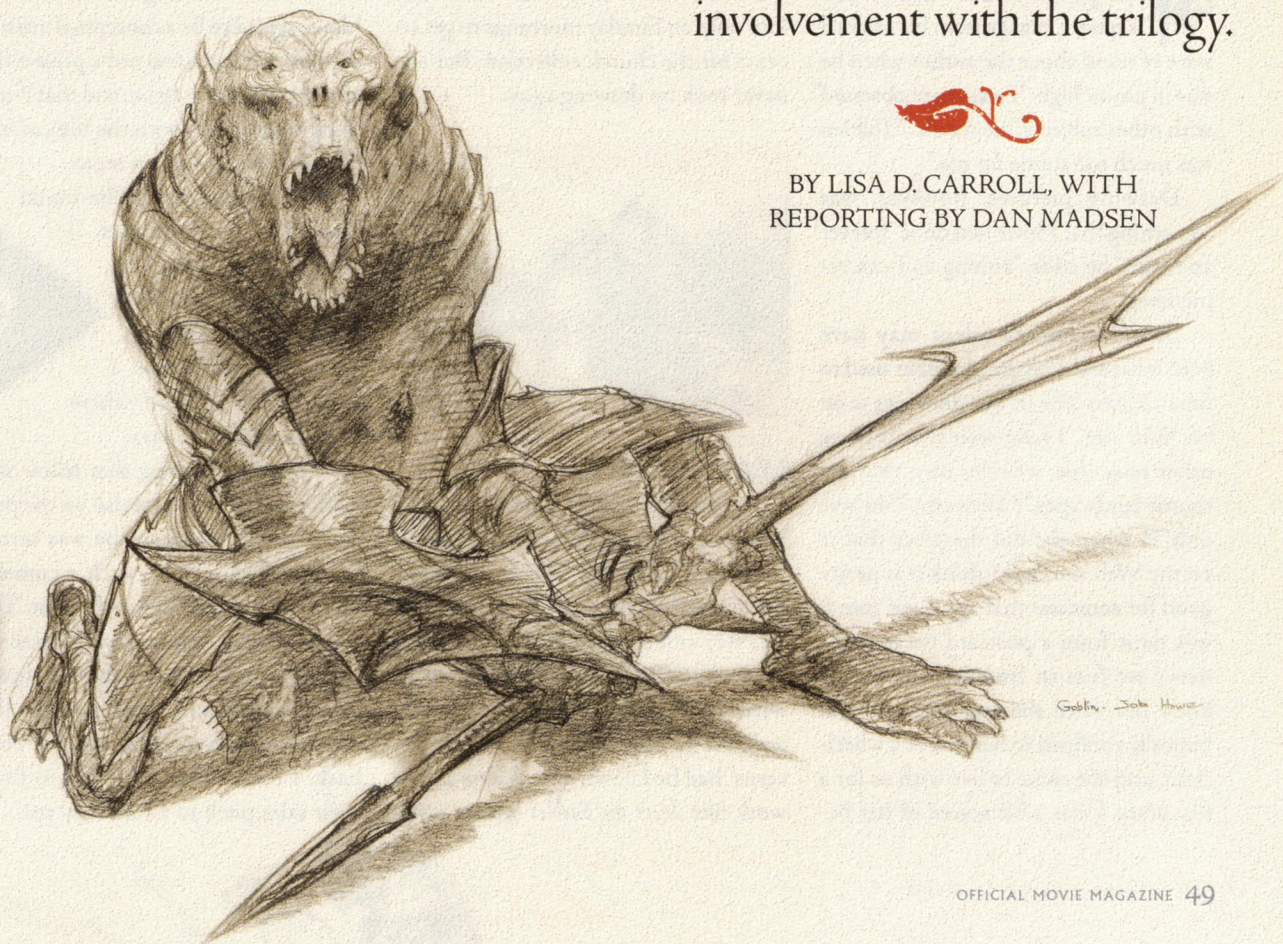
Right Time

CONCEPTUAL ARTIST JOHN HOWE

After the fame of *The Lord of the Rings* films, it's been nonstop work for conceptual artist John Howe. Nevertheless, he kindly managed to take some time out and talk about one of his favorite subjects in the world, and to reflect a bit on his involvement with the trilogy.



BY LISA D. CARROLL, WITH
REPORTING BY DAN MADSEN





John Howe's preoccupation—and occupation—with Middle-earth is quite a change from his original state of mind about the author when he was in junior high. "I was more obsessed with other subjects," he recalls. "Tolkien was much too subtle for me."

Drawing pictures, however, was something that Howe had done "forever and ever," he adds, "as long as I can remember."

Some of Howe's talent may have been inherited. His grandmother used to draw; in fact, one of her drawings is on his Web site. "I have seen two or three other ones that relatives own that are mostly landscapes," Howe says. "She was only 16 when she did the piece that is on my Web site, and I think it is pretty good for someone that age. I am sure it was done from a postcard because she never set foot in Switzerland. I only knew her when she was quite old and basically confined to her bed or a wheelchair, and she came to live with us for a few years. I was a bit scared of her be-

cause she was a venerable old lady, and I was 6 or 7. Her room was the one I went into only on Sunday mornings to get 50 cents for the church collection. But she never took up drawing again."



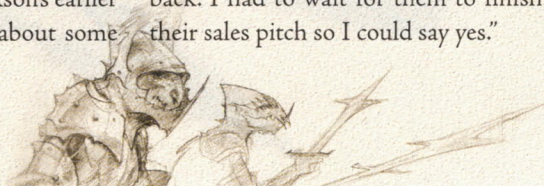
LEAP OF FAITH

As for the trilogy, Howe may have been one of the few people in the world that didn't know that there were plans for a new film brewing. First of all, he was very embarrassed that he had "not a clue" who director Peter Jackson was or what he had done—which was just as well. Howe might have had a "few concerns" had he known of Jackson's earlier work like *Meet the Feebles* (about some

violent puppets), or that Jackson had never directed a large-scale film. But Howe agreed to be a conceptual artist on the film, feeling it was not a project that would come along again, and that if anything went wrong with the film, at least his work would remain intact.

Also, he thought the film would take place in California. "I thought, 'Gee, great, L.A. here we come! Beaches and warm sun!' Then we got out the atlas and I thought, 'Oh my God, where is Wellington?'" he says.

However, knowing that fellow illustrator Alan Lee was also on the project was comforting, as he was certain Lee would not make such a commitment without careful forethought. "I felt very confident," Howe says. "There was no risk involved because they send you a return ticket and away you go. If it doesn't work out, then you just come back. I had to wait for them to finish their sales pitch so I could say yes."



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IT'S SOMETHING
OF WHICH AN
ILLUSTRATOR MUST
KNOW THE INNER
WORKINGS.



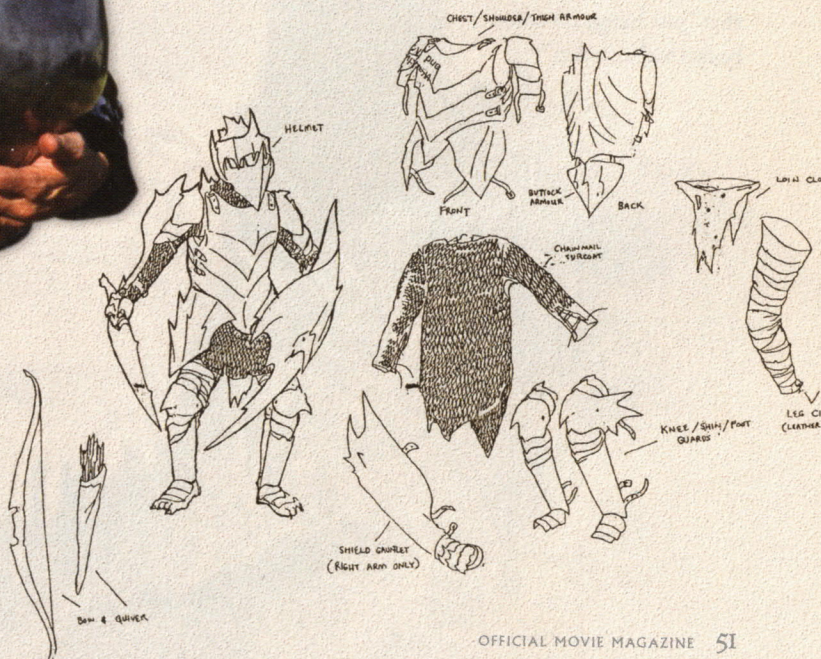
As for interaction with the director, it was truly a case of feast or famine. Howe and Lee would sometimes have several meetings a week with Jackson—or else not see him for several weeks. They read the scripts and knew the books by heart, and they also had discussions about the environment involved. Jackson would go through what he wanted from the two and what he was looking for. Then Howe and Lee would draw some scenes.


When they saw Jackson again, they would review all the work, some-

times going to a small maquette and perhaps making changes on a sketch board.

“During this time [production designer] Grant Major would be drawing up plans and elevations and supervising and keeping track of everything,” Howe says. “Grant basically did architectural rendering and archiving for months and months. These sketches were all very well, but you had to be able to hand them to a team of carpenters who can make sets with them.

“We just went on like that,” he adds. “As we plowed our way from one area to the next, we were basically following the



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same route that the Ring takes from Hobbiton all the way to Mount Doom.”

PERFECT BLEND

Throughout the trilogy's illustration process, Howe's considerable interest in historical architecture, costumes, and weaponry proved invaluable. From the swords and armor to the weapons of the Uruk-hai, he incorporated a great deal of historical references into everything he worked on for the films. Armor, Howe explains, cannot be invented; it's something of which an illustrator must know the inner workings. A sword should look like a sword, he says, not something that “just hangs on somebody's wall in a den.”

It follows, then, that Howe particularly enjoyed illustrating the weaponry, including the armor for the Moria Orcs.

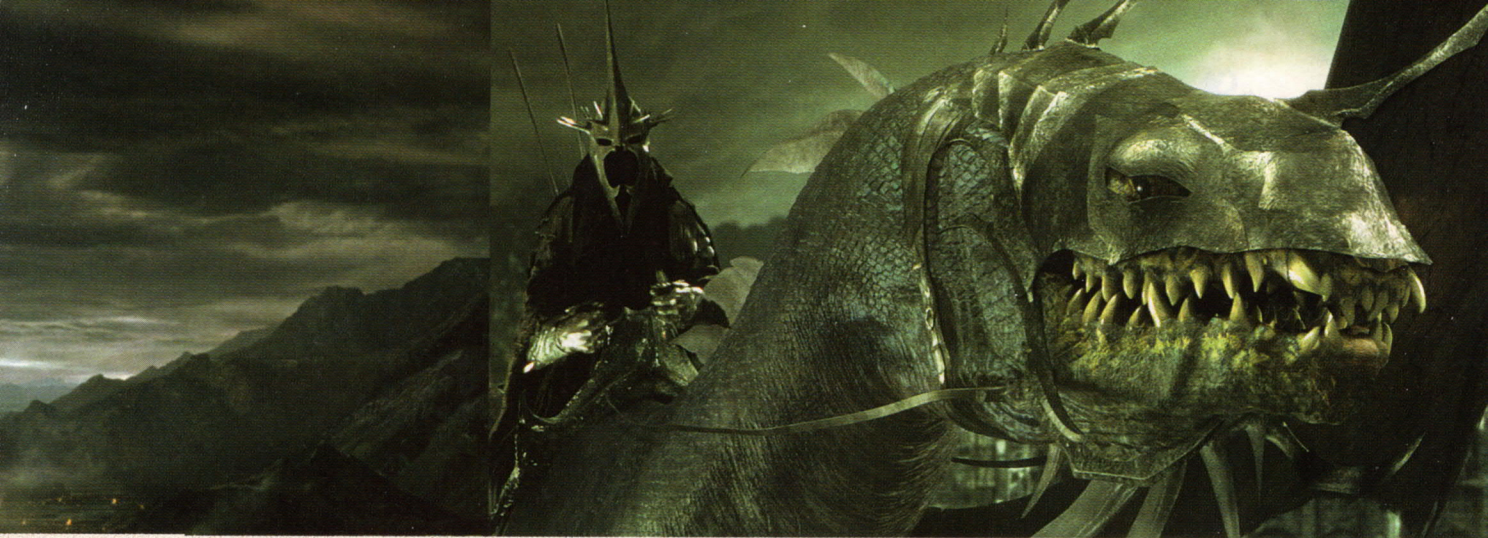
He also liked many of the creatures and praised the Weta Workshop in “pinning those down.” Howe was also involved in sketching much of the prologue Elven armor. Other items he enjoyed creating included the Balrog and the Fell Beast.

But those illustrations were not the bulk of his assignments. “Since we were employed by production and not Weta Workshop, our job was to stick to landscapes really,” he recalls. “But because we were working in a little office next to this other crowd, all of these people that you have met from Daniel Falconer on down, working away

on Orcs, Uruk-hai, weaponry, or whatever, I felt so outnumbered. I thought, ‘Gee, there is a subject I really like.’ You quickly draw some Orcs so you can get in on the thing and participate in the discussions.

“That was the most exciting part,” Howe continues, “the totally democratic policy that was implemented because anyone could draw [anything]. The Weta Workshop people steered fairly clear of landscapes because they were too busy with creatures and weapons and armor. But if somebody had an idea, up





it went on the board, and it was there with everything else."

It seemed that most of Howe's illustrations prior to the film went directly to the sculpting process. For instance, there were already many drawings of the Balrog; however, Jackson had decided on the Balrog he had seen in pictures Howe had designed before the film. "It was so exciting to see this thing taking shape: first as a sculpt and then watching it get painted and then watching it start to grow in the computers," Howe says. "The Balrog, itself, I don't know originally where that comes from. I think there is something about these films, that so many of the images have this kind of archetypal quality to them, that it seems it is more a question of digging something up and discovering it than actually creating it. It is very personal and objective because all of this is an instinctive process that you try to put into words."

Howe also felt he had a very strong feeling about what fit into *The Lord of the Rings* and what didn't. He admitted he didn't have enough imagination to re-think his concepts from the beginning to end every year. "I have this tendency to sort of go with what has become familiar to me, and I have always drawn the Balrog like that," he says. "I only put wings on the thing because I think they looked cool! But they do have wings. But there is still this great debate on whether it would have wings or not. It is a bit disturbing and amusing at the same time."

As a result, Howe was "stunned" when he saw the final result of the Balrog in the film, saying it was "far beyond" anything he had done. Because Howe had gone back to Switzerland with his family after pre-production, the Balrog was still being formed on the computer and had not had any flames or extras added.

As for the Fell Beast, he drew the first picture of one back in the 1970s—a great, green pterodactyl. Then he tore it up and threw it out. Howe had lengthy discussions with other designers about drawing the beast, such as whether the creatures actually had a spike on their elbows or not.

"One of the designers who studied biology said it was impossible," he says. "But since that time, I have received many emails and letters from people who study bats and eagles and who say it is fine. I turned it into something a little more reptilian. I am actually drawing one now; as a matter of fact, it is on my drawing board as we speak. It is for an Italian



board game in Middle-earth. There is also one on my Web site in the unpublished section."


Howe did most of the work almost entirely in pencil on big sheets of paper. Most of what Howe and Lee drew were trees, stones, and landscapes. They tried to generate as many clear ideas as possible, not worrying about eventually producing publishable materials. "I have the impression that a lot of concept art that is done for films, that in the back of each concept artist's mind is the 'Art of' book," Howe says, "such as how many pictures can he get in and he better finish these off a bit more polished so they will go in the book. We were just basically drawing to the edge of the page and then starting on a new sheet when we got to the edge."


Some things were harder to figure out and draw than others, such as the Uruk-hai. "Peter wanted to create these three species of Orcs: the Uruks, the Goblins, and the Mordor Orcs," Howe says. "He wanted something very special for the Uruk-hai. It took the full team ages and ages to get them right. I also distinctly remember Alan Lee visiting Rivendell—I don't know how many times—until he got it right."

Of course, not everything required such repeated revisions. "Some things went very well from a drawing that was done prior to the films," he says, "to something that only required one or two pieces of artwork."

Jackson had the final word on everything, which Howe says was all that was





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needed, just “one boss.” The director had an incredible memory and never forgot anything he had seen. And Jackson’s reliable feedback was something that ensured the project stayed on track and that the end results were just right.

“Peter had this knack of complimenting everything he liked, but if he didn’t feel it was really there, he wouldn’t give the final OK,” Howe says. “He would say, ‘This is really very nice, and I like that and this is good.’ He would leave it hanging, and everyone would return to their tables with a vengeance to try to pin down what he wanted. It was very stimulating. At no point did he ever say, ‘This is no good. I don’t like that. This is all junk. Go back to your tables and do something right.’ It was all very encouraging. You just didn’t get that final nod that everyone was hanging on their chairs waiting for. This was not only wise directing, but I think it was also in his nature to be like that.”

Howe is particularly pleased with creating Bag End, Barad-Dûr, and the “odd

things in-between.” He enjoyed working on a project that had the elements of a real working world, comparing Bag End to “the quintessential 19th-century Paradise Lost of England” and Barad-Dûr to a “black megalomania that is unimaginable.”

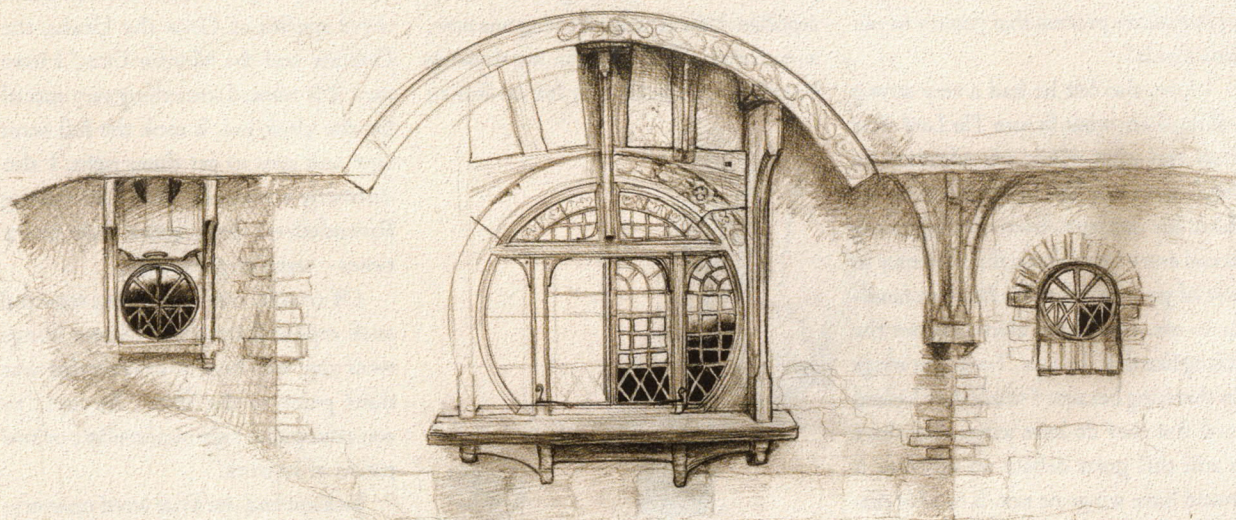
A LOT TO LOVE

The one character that Howe had the most fun with was Gandalf, and he takes great pride in the wizard’s look, “because I managed to get it right to a certain extent,” he says. “Other than that, I would happily spend a couple of years drawing Elves just to try and reach something. All of the wonderful things that are in the wings in these stories are fun to do. There is so much that takes place offstage that I would love to illustrate; I would love to do the sort of exogenesis of *The Lord of the Rings*, all the bits that you know that happened but aren’t in the actual book. It is so rich. Obviously, I am even more attracted to other books like *The Silmarillion* and *Unfinished Tales* because they are even grander and vaster and more tragic.”

Howe found that the landscape of New Zealand also greatly influenced his work. His art is now “peppered” with New Zealand landscapes. He felt very fortunate to live and work there, as it was such a visually rich, unique country. He now owns a full library of books on New Zealand landscapes. Also, Howe and Lee have files and files of photographs, having invested a “fortune” on developing prints.

In fact, Howe now couldn’t imagine the films being shot in the United States—and feels that Europe would have been “logistically” impossible. To Howe, it’s like New Zealand had been awaiting the films to be made there ever since the land “split off from Australia and floated out into the ocean.”

And the illustrator did quite a job in capturing this majesty. Peter Jackson has stated that he loved Howe’s art for its ability to evoke vast landscapes as well as battles. Perhaps this result is due to Howe’s philosophy of concentrating on certain moments. “The best way to



PARLOUR

depict any kind of action scene is to try to capture that moment just before it happens, when everything is still possible," Howe explains. "The equilibrium is already gone, the actual action can't be stopped, but it is not in the middle of the action."

"On the other hand," he continues, "I really enjoy trying to place [the action] in a landscape as well as I can. The landscape shouldn't be just a backdrop; I think it should participate in some way to what is happening in front."

Likewise, Howe believes that there ought to be a "large amount of movement" in any landscape. "It is alive in the sense that it is submitted to change," he says, "whether it is a rock that weathers or a mountain that grows or a tree or a wave."

For the creator himself, some of Howe's favorite designs include Minas Morgul. "I was just tickled by things like those creepy statues on the bridge in




front of Minas Morgul," he says. "I was happy with all the little bits in Bag End—the furniture and things like that, the homey feel it portrayed."

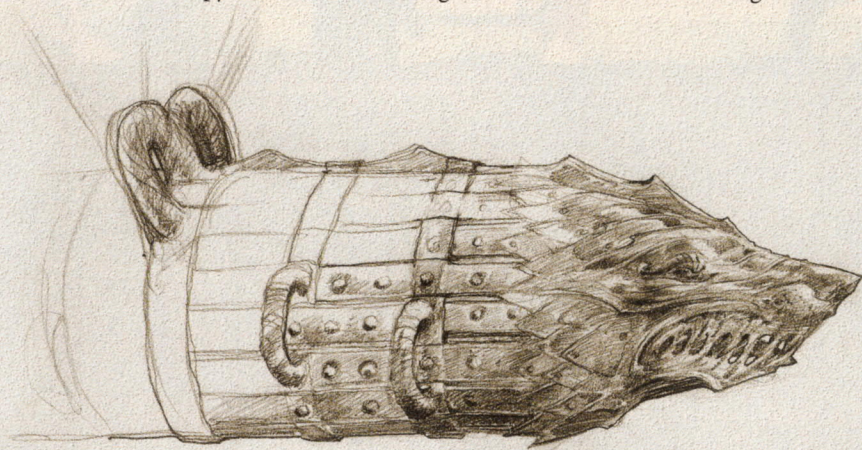
Howe also liked working on the top of Barad-dûr. He actually made the tower a lot higher than originally planned in an effort to leave its exact appearance to the audience's wild imagination.

And he was happy with the Elven arrows, so much so that he had one made up by a friend in England: nearly getting his wife arrested at the airport! "My wife had brought it into New Zealand [on her way] back from Switzerland," he recalls. "You don't walk through the airport with an arrow in your hands these days! They picked it up on the x-ray machine and said, 'What's this?' She said, 'Well, it is for the film.' And they said, 'Oh, you mean *The Lord of the Rings*? Go ahead then!' It was really very sweet."

Not all of his designs made it to the screen, however. For instance, there was the omission of a human-sized room that had been converted for Hobbit use at the Prancing Pony. And Howe had drawn a fortress for Sauron intended for use during the prologue battle, but that wasn't to be.

Still, nothing could detract from Howe's overall experience, which was fantastic. He was not able to make the world premiere in New Zealand but felt proud of the country because of the films. "There is this Kiwi attitude about impossible tasks that I find to be very similar to what I would like to think Canada is capable of," says Howe, who grew up in Vancouver, British Columbia. "It has put New Zealand on the map and deservedly so."

And it's put Howe on the map, too, as a much-in-demand artist known across the world, thanks in no small part to his great contributions to the films. 



UNSUNG HEROES

Creative Art

Master Potter MIREK SMÍŠEK



a very spry mirek smisek dances with wellington's footnote dance company at a recent outdoor exhibition of his pottery.

Relying on more than a half-century of experience, master potter Mirek Smisek worked behind the scenes to ensure that the pottery featured in The Lord of the Rings was a perfect complement to scenes and surroundings in the films themselves. The results—much like the entire trilogy—were something to behold.

■ ■ ■ BY MARCUS WOHLSEN, WITH REPORTING BY DAN MADSEN



You may not have noticed Mirek Smisek's handiwork the first time you saw *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy. You were too busy watching Gandalf urge Bilbo to give up The One Ring to notice the teapot on the table or the mugs from which the Hobbit and the Wizard drank. All of which actually stands as a testament to Smisek's talent.

To fully immerse moviegoers in this epic world of fantasy, director Peter Jackson worked with unprecedented commitment to create a seamless cinematic vision of Middle-earth. If the crockery at Bag End hadn't seemed like the perfectly natural dinnerware for Bilbo to own, the fantasy's spell would have been broken.

Instead, thanks to the skill and vision of master potter Smisek, you didn't have to wonder whether they had IKEA in the Shire. Solid, simple yet refined—and utterly appropriate for the fictional time and place in which the story of *The Lord of the Rings* unfolds—Smisek's pottery makes the illusion complete.

To create a look suited for a world of Dwarves, Elves, Wizards, and Orcs, Smisek turned to the same period of history that inspired the story itself. "For the pottery, people on the staff brought me photos of old medieval pots—French, Portuguese, Italian, and Czechoslovakian," he says.

The last of these Smisek knows particularly well. Born in Czechoslovakia, he emigrated to Australia in 1948. The



first time he read *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy, he read it in a Czech translation.

"[When I] arrived in Canberra, the Australian capital in 1948, [I was] determined to pursue and begin a creative life," he says. "I worked in brickworks—tons and tons of clay passed through my hands to build Canberra, the Australian capital territory. I had potters classes in the evening. That was 53 years ago."

Smisek has pursued his passion for clay ever since. Now a well-known potter in New Zealand, he made an 18-piece dinner set for producer Barrie Osborne. It attracted the attention of the films' management team, which approached Smisek about creating pottery for the movie trilogy.

Along with historical references,

Smisek relied on his own creativity to craft designs that fit *The Lord of the Rings* aesthetic. (He describes his ideas as 30 percent historically inspired and 70 percent the product of

his own personal vision.) The end result: an original style that feels authentically grounded in the past yet from a world not quite our own—a world touched by magic.

The first prominent views of Smisek's pottery appear in the opening scenes of *The Fellowship of the Ring* at Bag End in Hobbiton, when Bilbo discusses his plan with Gandalf to leave the Shire. Minutes later, Brandybucks and Took, Bagginses and Proudfoots ("Proudfeet!") can be seen hoisting Smisek-designed flagons of ale to toast Bilbo at his 111th birthday celebration.

Smisek's pottery next appears back in Bag End as Frodo gets his first inkling of the grim task that lay before him. "Gandalf, the bearded chap, and Frodo were drinking tea from my mugs," Smisek says. "The teapot is behind an apple. Drinking scenes in the first movie used my mugs a lot."

Later, the tankards used to serve beer at the Prancing Pony ("I didn't know it came in pints!") reflect the wonderful synthesis of history and innovation that underlies Smisek's work. "The tankards were first made by German potters over 4,000 years ago," he says. "Mine are reflections of those."





LAY OF THE LAND

All in all, from innocent Shire festivities to the celebration in the Golden Hall of the Rohirrim to Denethor's grotesque final meal as his son Faramir rides to certain death in defense of Minas Tirith, Smisek designed some 600 different kinds of pottery for the trilogy. To survive that arduous process, Smisek relied on his deep faith in the power of personal creativity, the touchstone that has guided him throughout his career. Creativity in Smisek's pottery extends even to the clay itself. A more commercial artist might order clay from an art supply wholesaler. Not Smisek—he likes to get his hands dirty.

"You will find a deposit of clay in the countryside," he explains. "You will decide what kind of pottery you will

create. This can be quite fun [to] see nature's part in the clay: Mix it to a liquid, and then allow it to dry to the point where the clay can be used. Now you need to consult your spirit, and then decide how to play with the clay. Love it, and it will respond to your touch. [For inspiration,] look around at the clouds, the trees, flying birds, spiders and webs, blades of grass, and the wind."

The influence of landscape on Smisek's work, and his attachment to the New Zealand terrain in particular, made him the ideal candidate for the movie trilogy, in which landscape plays such a crucial role.

"New Zealand has some of the most beautiful scenery anywhere in the world, and that influences my pottery, which I hope can be appreciated everywhere," he says.

Smisek never actually visited the set of *The Lord of the Rings* during production. But Peter Jackson did come to visit Smisek in his New Zealand studio, which has a glorious view of the sea and mountains.

Surrounded by so much natural beauty, it seems a little ironic, yet somehow fitting, that the task of creating the simplest pieces for the movies proved to be Smisek's hardest task. "A humble mug—one that is frequently used by people and for them to look comfortable using it—was the most difficult to create," he says. "I take delight in the shape of a piece like that."

Delight infuses all the work Smisek does. The sets on *The Lord of the Rings* often demanded the replication of many props on different scales to create the illusion of small Hobbits or giant beasts, and Smisek never let the artistry in his work slip. Though replications had to meet certain technical specifications to work in a shot, he refused to simply make the same piece twice.

"Trying to be exact, you will take the life away from the pot," he says. "It is always dead. You must allow some freedom within some control."

"You can't destroy the life within the clay itself," he adds. "It is a kind of discipline, as well as freedom of movement within the discipline. You have to know what you are doing."

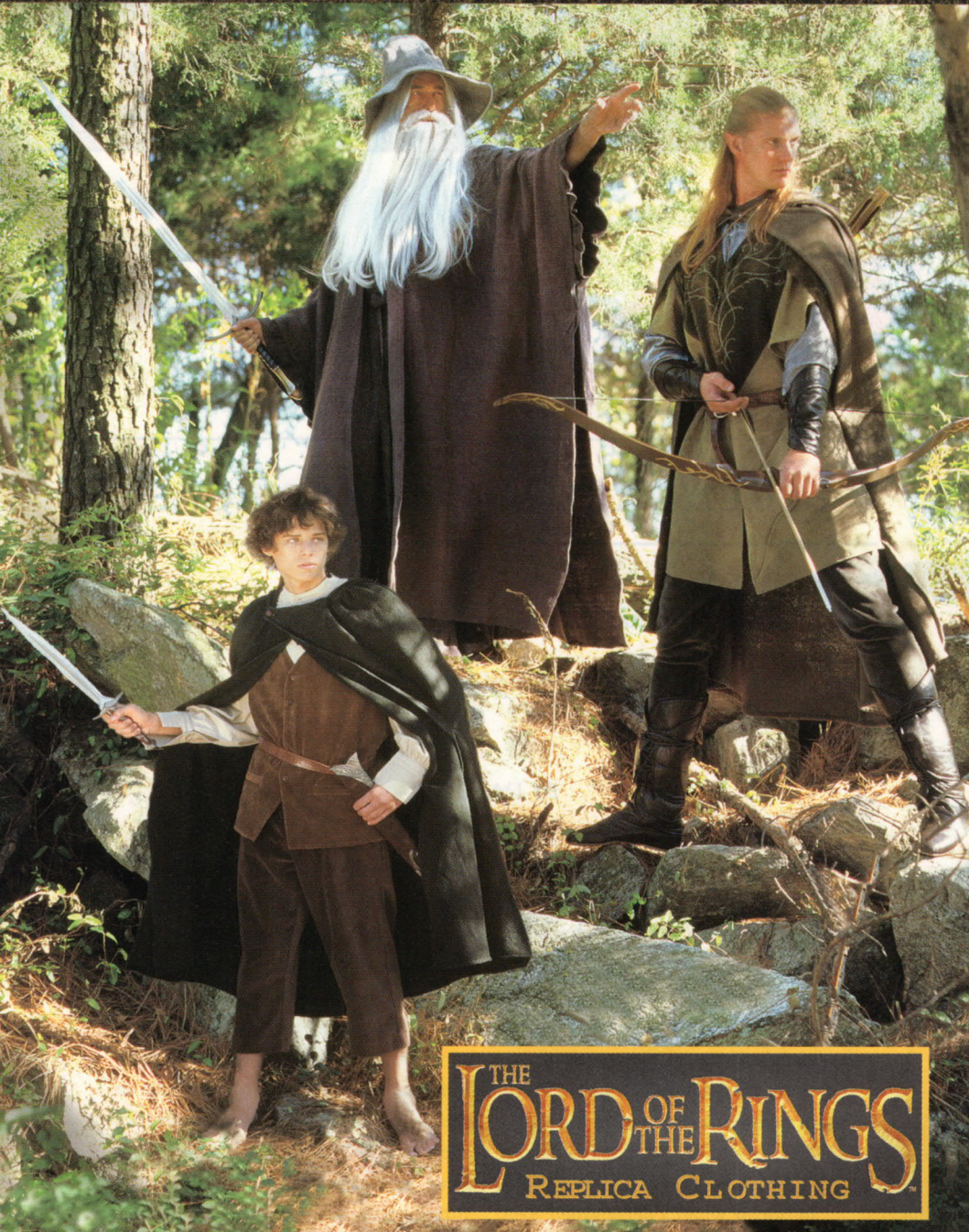
Fortunately for trilogy fans, he does. And he hopes that the exposure his work has received thanks to *The Lord of the Rings* encourages others to learn the art of pottery themselves. "Clay invites you to liberate the spirit of creativity—to let the imagination soar and to love nature," he says. "It is a great inspiration for our children and to teach them how to be creative."

Which is no small thing, according to Smisek's artistic credo.

"Creativity is one of the most important, positive values for friendship among the people of the world," he says. "Creativity can save the world."



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wordplay

LEGENDARY MOVIE REPLICAS

United Cutlery was honored to be granted the rights to produce weapon replicas for The Lord of the Rings film trilogy.

■ ■ ■
BY DAVE JOY

HACK! The black hand that bears The One Ring is cut off by the furious stroke of Isildur (with the shattered blade of Narsil).

SWISH! Off flies the head of Lurtz, the fearful captain of Saruman's Uruk-hai, at the grim hand of Aragorn (holding a well-worn Ranger Blade).

STAB! A surprised Shelob shrieks in horror when a determined Sam Gamgee sends her fleeing back to her dark tunnels (defeated by the small but powerful Elven crafted sword called Sting).

The legendary swords of *The Lord of the Rings* play vital roles throughout the unfolding epic history of

Middle-earth. Not just swords but all manner of noble weaponry and armament are inextricably tied to the main characters of the trilogy—so much so that it is difficult to imagine them without their signature armament.

In quiet contrast, many of the most touching moments in the films occur in the presence of swords as holy relics and symbols of honored lineage rather than as deadly blades with almost supernatural killing power. In Rivendell, Aragorn respectfully replaces the Shard of Narsil dropped by Boromir; a Gondorian soldier's dignity is regained as Aragorn places a sword back into the hands of Boromir as he dies; as the rightful heir to the throne of Gondor, Aragorn receives a sword from Elrond, reforged from the Shards of Narsil, and now called Anduril, Flame of the West.



Make no mistake about it—these are not your typical hand-me-down family heirlooms, but rather the stuff of which great legends are born.



AN INSTANT HIT

Not long after United Cutlery was granted a license from New Line Cinema to manufacture what has become an impressive array of *The Lord of the Rings* movie replicas, Kit Rae and his crew at United Cutlery got right to work on designing replicas to match the film versions, both in full-size as well as in miniature. Demand for sword replicas was high from the beginning, so it's not surprising that United Cutlery's *The Lord of the Rings* product line grew rapidly after the debut of *The Fellowship of the Ring*. Now, with the trilogy complete and its core product line selling very well, United Cutlery has just unveiled a slew of new products, while announcing yet more on the drafting board.

The United Cutlery crew of Kit Rae, Adam Hall, and Gregory Bates have all been instrumental in the process of transforming legendary movie props into stunning

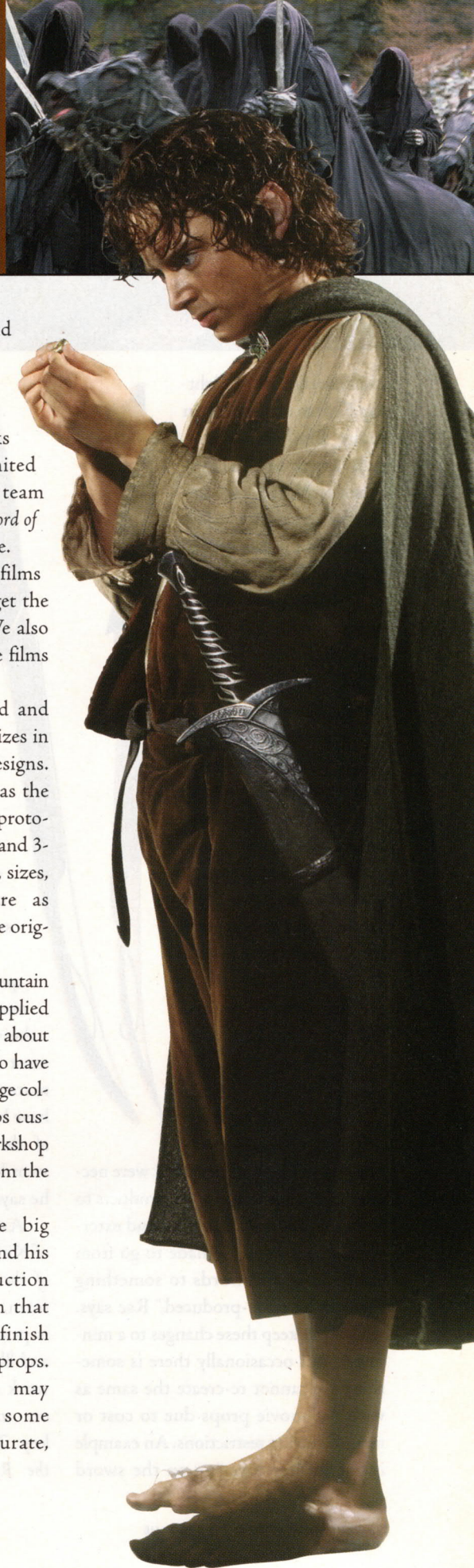
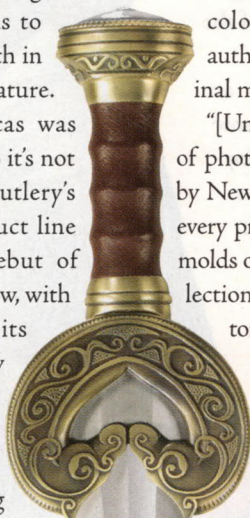
replicas. But chief designer and master artisan Kit Rae has supervised all of United Cutlery's *The Lord of the Rings* items from the beginning. Rae works closely with the entire United Cutlery product development team before determining which *The Lord of the Rings* products are to be made.

"This involves watching the films repeatedly to see which pieces get the most screen time," Rae says. "We also talk to collectors and fans of the films about their favorite weapons."

Rae, a veteran of the sword and knife industry since 1985, specializes in medieval and fantasy-related designs. He oversees the design as well as the final manufacturing process of prototypes to ensure that the drafting and 3-D modeling of designs, shapes, sizes, colors, and textures are as authentic as possible to the original movie props.

"[United Cutlery] has a mountain of photographic reference supplied by New Line Cinema for just about every prop," Rae says. "We also have molds of some props and a huge collection of actual movie props custom-built by Weta [Workshop in New Zealand] from the original molds."

Of course, the big challenge for Rae and his design and production team is making certain that the correct color and finish actually match the movie props. "As surprising as this may sound," Rae admits, "in some cases, we are too accurate,





adam hall, product drafting and illustration



UNITED CUTLERY'S *LOTR* team, l to r, ken stone, adam hall, kit rae, marty french, michael fletcher, greg bates

as in the case of the Fighting Knives of Legolas. In many film scenes, the grips appear to be a light, blonde-colored wood, but the actual prop color is more of a yellow color. We went for the color of the actual prop while many people were expecting the blonde color. The same is true about the blue color of the leather grip on Glamdring [Gandalf's sword] and the green color of the leather on Strider's Ranger Sword. In certain scenes, either sword may appear to have the correct or lighter shade of the color—or in some scenes appearing as black. It all depends on the lighting of a scene and the color-grading used to set the mood of the scene."

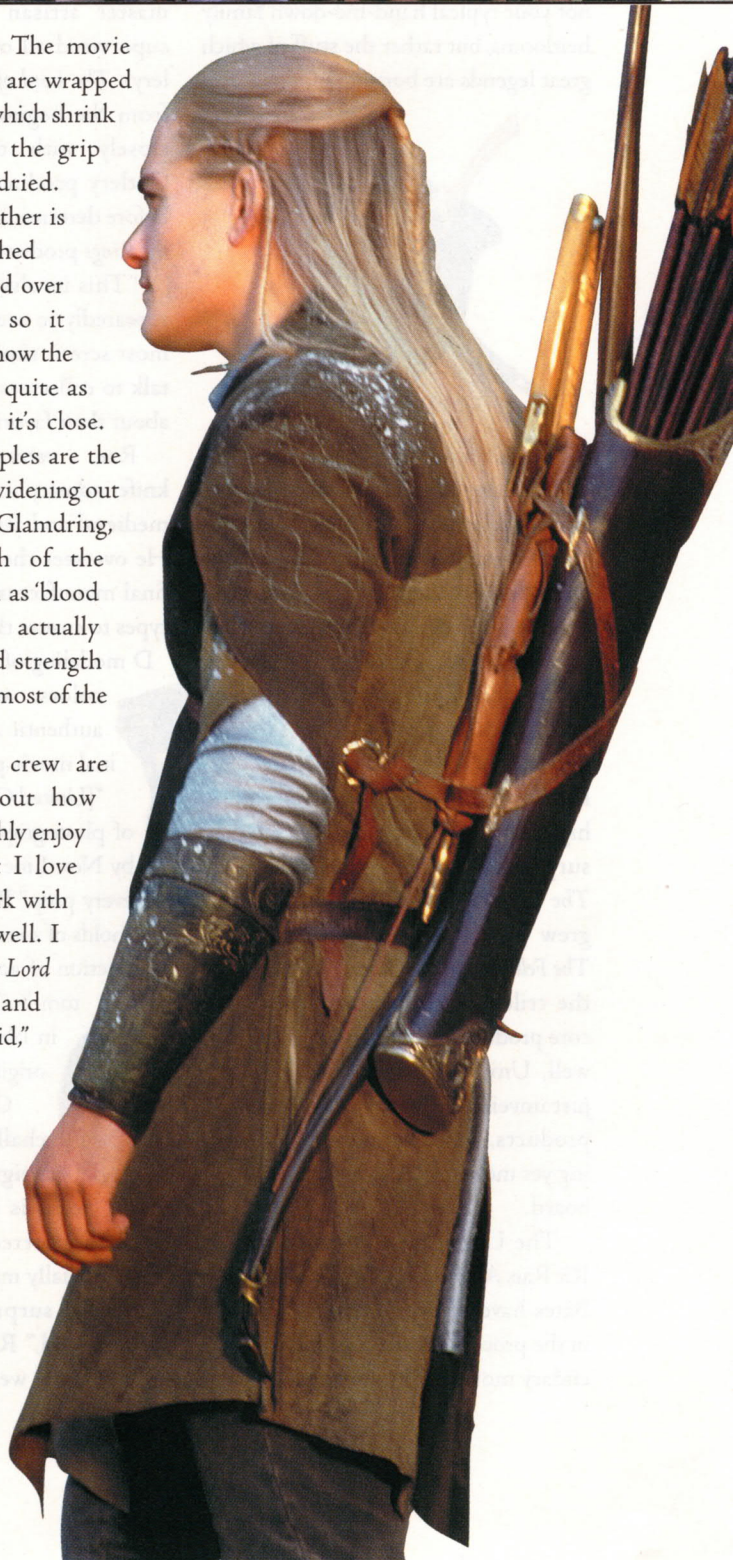
Perhaps an equally daunting challenge was caused by design changes that were necessary in order to allow the products to be mass-produced. "Internal and external changes must be made to go from the hand-made swords to something that can be mass-produced," Rae says. "We try to keep these changes to a minimum, but occasionally there is something we cannot re-create the same as with the movie props due to cost or manufacturing restrictions. An example is the leather covering on the sword

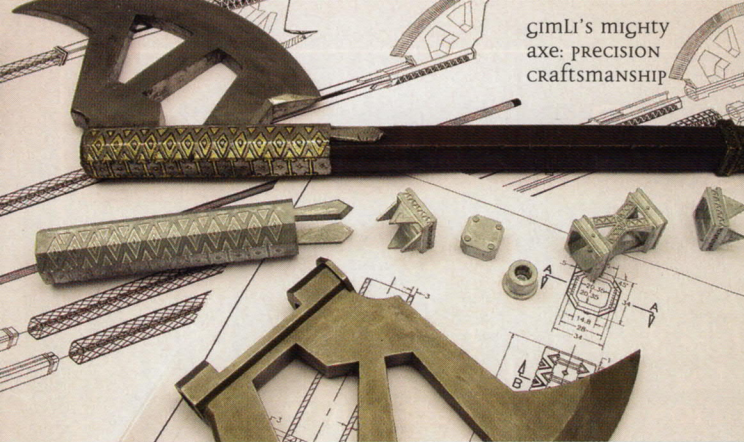


grips. The movie props are wrapped wet, which shrink to fit the grip when dried. Our leather is dry-finished and pulled over the grip so it does not show the grip-shape quite as tightly, but it's close. Other examples are the fuller grind, widening out at the hilt on Glamdring, or the depth of the fullers [known as 'blood grooves' but actually designed to add strength to the blade] on most of the sword blades."

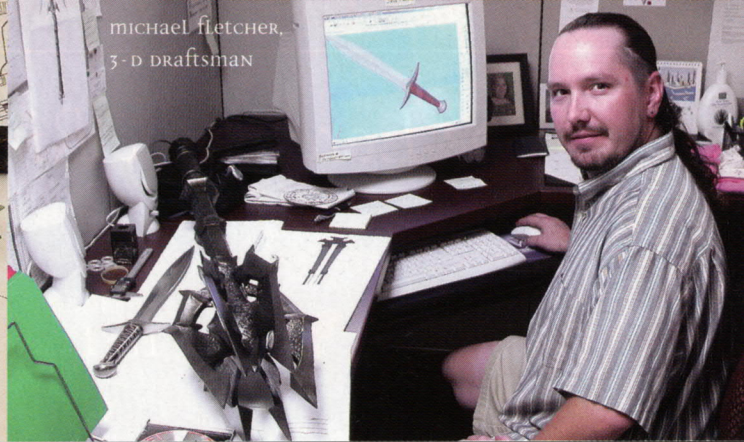
Rae and his crew are quick to point out how much they thoroughly enjoy their work. "What I love most is getting to work with material I know so well. I have been a fan of *The Lord of the Rings* books and swords since I was a kid," he says.

As a key member of Kit Rae's *The Lord of the Rings* design team, Adam Hall is product designer and illustrator. Hall's work can be found on most of the key *The Lord of the Rings* items





gimli's mighty
axe: precision
craftsmanship



michael fletcher,
3-D draftsman

including Sting, Glamdring, the Witch-king's sword, the Ringwraith's sword, Strider's Ranger Sword, Narsil (and the Shards of Narsil), Anduril (Aragorn's sword), Strider's Elven Knife, the Uruk-hai Scimitar, the Staff of Gandalf the White, and all of the miniatures offered by United Cutlery.

Hall admits that just being a part of something as big as *The Lord of the Rings* has been a privilege. "We are a small part of the world of *The Lord of the Rings*, but just being involved with the project in our own way has been great," he says. "The weapons that each character carries are as unique as the characters themselves. Their weapons are more than just a means of defense, they are part of who they are."

When urged to comment on his favorites, Hall is quick to respond. "All of Strider's weapons are my favorite

products," he says. "I had to be particular with all the *The Lord of the Rings* projects, but when working on any of Strider's stuff, I really treated those as my 'babies.'"



THE NEXT BEST THING

While none of the staff has visited New Zealand, it hasn't been entirely necessary since Weta sent everything that they needed directly to United Cutlery in Tennessee. "Not that I don't want to go there someday and look around the archives!" Rae says. "The people at Weta have been really good at getting all of these beautiful props to us. We really appreciate their hard work.

[Weta chief] Richard Taylor e-mailed me a few years back basically saying he was glad to hear that [United Cutlery] had been granted the license to reproduce their weapons. He had heard of us before from some of our other movie products. We have worked with John Howe on a few projects."

Regarding the replica-production process, Rae points out how difficult it can be when a compromise must be made in order to make it possible for an original prop design to be faithfully mass-produced. "We really wanted to make the Sauron and Elf helmets in real metal, like our other *The Lord of the Rings* helmets," he explains, "but they would have been too expensive, too limited, and the intricate shapes would have been compromised." The United Cutlery *The Lord of the Rings* team ended up using fiberglass resin finished in the exact colors as



The Lord of the Rings COLLECTIONS

Kit Rae comments on United Cutlery's various collections in *The Lord of the Rings* product line:



ISILDUR'S HELM

"We already have Elendil's Helm out, and we thought this would make a good match with it. We may do the Numenorian infantry helm as well at some point in the future. We are big fans of these helms."

HIGH ELVEN WARRIOR COLLECTION

"These are from the prologue of *The Fellowship of the Ring*, and fans have been screaming for this stuff for a few years now. The collection will include the Elven Helm, the Elven Shield, and the Elven Sword. The Helm and Shield will be made of fiberglass resin, like the real movie props. We looked at making these in metal, but it would have been next to impossible to make them look 100 percent correct. In resin, we can get the intricate shapes and colors to match the props exactly."



The Lord of the Rings MUSEUM COLLECTION

"All the details have not been finalized yet, but we are looking at making a series of fully functional, limited-edition prop reproductions of some of the most popular swords. These will have tempered carbon steel, full tang blades, and will be weathered and



distressed exactly like the props. The grinding and finish on the blades will be much truer to the props. They will be even more accurate than the standard UC-issue swords, with all of the pitting and tarnish that the movie props had, giving them that aged-look, appearing as though they have a history behind them. Each will be serial-numbered and come in a glass-topped wooden display case. We are planning on bringing Sting out first and others will follow. We will provide our concept art of the Museum Collection Sting in its case."

THE DARK LORD SAURON COLLECTION

"These are actor-scale reproductions of Sauron's Helm, Gauntlet with The One Ring, and his mace. We did not go with movie-scale of these items

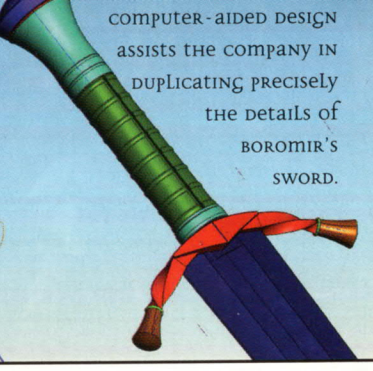
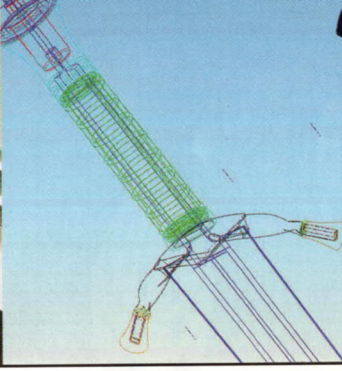
as we have with everything else; otherwise they would have been too large. The helm and mace are already massive as is. Our Sauron Helm is an exact copy of the movie prop, but we enlarged it slightly to fit a variety of head sizes, as we have done with all of our helms. Our One Ring will be the enlarged version that Sauron wears on his gauntlet, just like you see it in the film before it shrinks in Isildur's hand. It's about twice the size of the normal ring."

THE ROHAN COLLECTION

"We already have Herugrim, King Théoden's sword, on the market. We plan on making Éowyn's and Éomer's swords as well. They will make a nice set to display. We are also planning to make Éomer's helmet."

SWORD OF BOROMIR

"Fans of this sword will finally see it on the market this year."



computer-aided design assists the company in duplicating precisely the details of BOROMIR'S SWORD.

the props—but, interestingly enough, that's the exact same way the original Weta Workshop props were made.

Rae begins the design and manufacturing process by cross-checking the actual movie props against the prop-master photos, as well as how the props show up on the screen.

"Sometimes there are differences in all three," Rae says, "due to the props not being exactly the same or changes that were made after the molds were taken. Herugrim [the sword of King Théoden], for example, had a different pommel on the hero sword seen in the film. Our prop has the original pommel, which is not as comfortable. We went with the correct film-version for our reproduction."

Elaborating further on the prototype process, Rae says he designs and engineers the assembly of United Cutlery's version of the prop, incorporating any necessary changes for the manufacturing process, as well as working out how to finish the individual parts of the piece to match the metals and natural material colors of the original props. During the design phase, in which individual parts are tooled and molds are made, 3-D models are computer-drafted. In some cases, United Cutlery makes wooden models of some of the parts. When the finished parts are com-

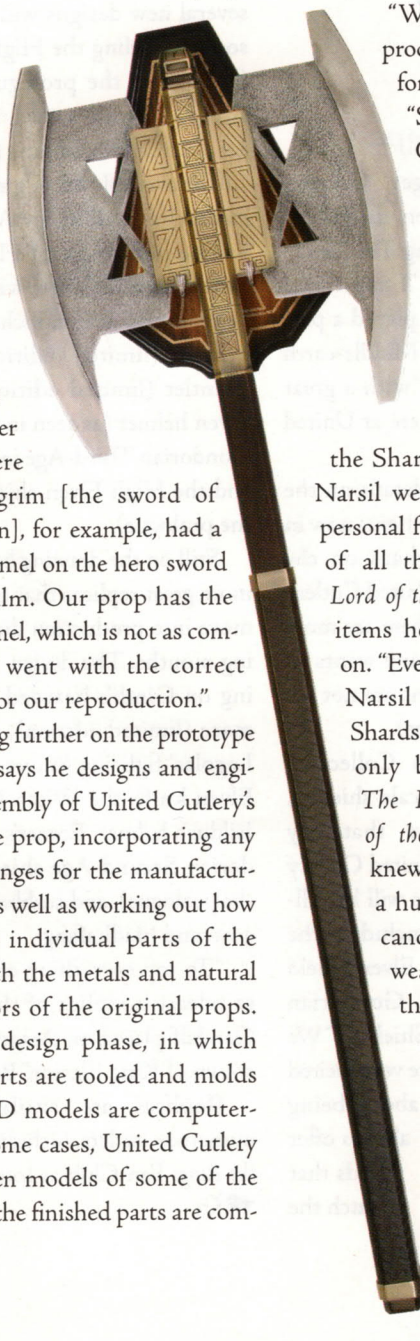
pleted, they are carefully compared against the movie props provided by Weta, and changes are made at this time, if necessary, to create a perfect match against the original movie prop. Displays of the products are also designed at this stage of the process.

"We then send the final product to New Line Cinema for approval," Rae explains.

"Sometimes New Line Cinema will request a change, but most of the time our samples are approved with no changes."

Rae says that Narsil and

the Shards of Narsil were his personal favorites of all the *The Lord of the Rings* items he worked on. "Even though Narsil and the Shards were seen only briefly in *The Fellowship of the Ring*, I knew there was a huge significance of these weapons to those of us

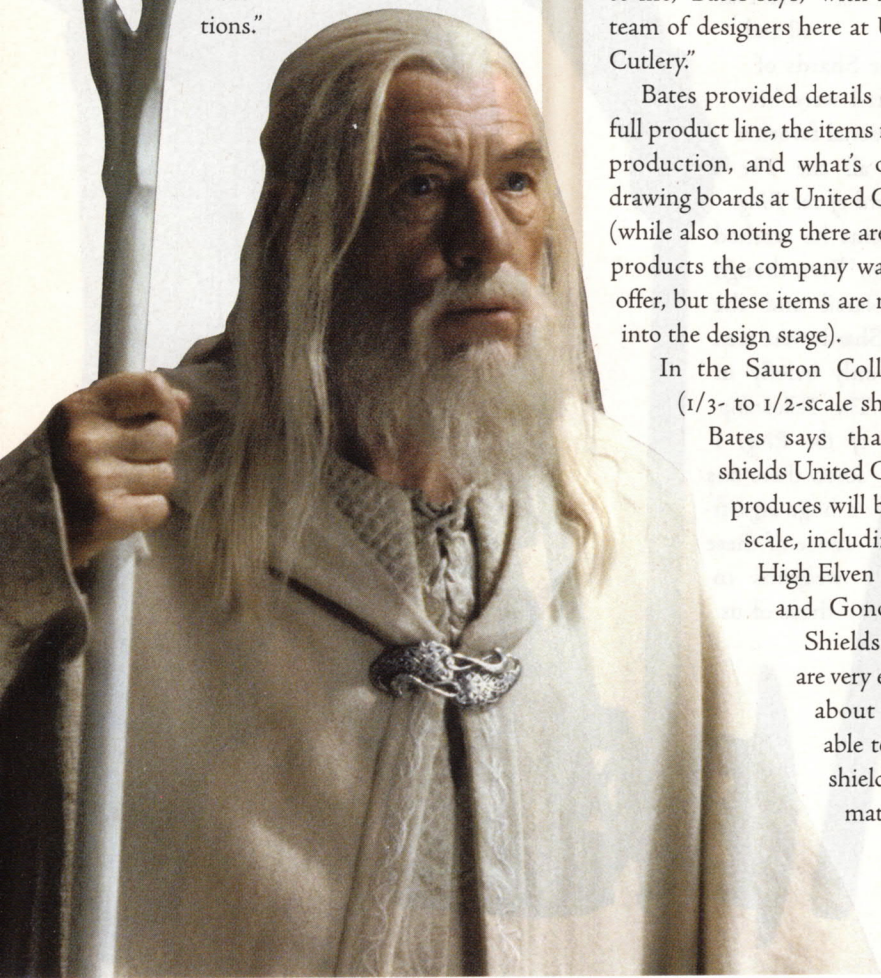




that are fans of the books, even more so than Sting," he says. "We had always planned on doing Anduril for the third episode of *The Lord of the Rings* movies, but I knew there were people who would want all three versions, so I pushed hard to get those made.

"People are very passionate about that sword," he adds with a smile.

And Rae is very excited about the current designs of Sauron's Helm and Sauron's Gauntlet with The One Ring, from the Dark Lord Sauron Collection. "Those are going to be fantastic!" he says. "We can barely tell the difference between the actual movie props and our reproductions."



DOWN THE PIPE

Product manager Gregory Bates has also been intimately involved in managing *The Lord of the Rings* products. "I appreciate the fact that I have played a part in bringing some of Middle-earth to life," Bates says, "with a great team of designers here at United Cutlery."

Bates provided details on the full product line, the items now in production, and what's on the drawing boards at United Cutlery (while also noting there are more products the company wants to offer, but these items are not yet into the design stage).

In the Sauron Collection (1/3- to 1/2-scale shields), Bates says that any shields United Cutlery produces will be full-scale, including the High Elven Shield and Gondorian Shields. "We are very excited about being able to offer shields that match the

size of the characters that are using them in the films," he says.

Bates notes that several new designs will come out soon, including the High Elven sword (as seen in the prologue), Boromir's sword, Éowyn's sword, Gimli's battle axe, and Gimli's walking axe. Scabbards will be available for Glamdring (in blue leather) as well as for Anduril. There will be miniatures of Hadhafang and Strider's sword. There will also be more helmets and armor, including Sauron's helmet (limited edition), Sauron's gauntlet (limited edition), the High Elven helmet (as seen in the prologue), Gondorian Third-Age infantry helmet, and the High Elven shield (as seen in the prologue).

Still on the drawing board are many more great replicas that are expected to move into production during the coming months. The design team is working on Gimli's bearded axe, Sauron's mace (limited edition), miniatures of Legolas' fighting knives and Strider's Elven knife, the Witch-king's helmet, Isildur's helmet, Éomer's helmet, Gondorian Second-Age shield (as seen in the prologue), and scabbards for Herugrim and Hadhafang.

"To top everything off, we're about to release a replica of the crown that Gandalf placed on Aragorn's head: the crown of King Elessar," Bates says.

Replicas are available through numerous outlets, including *The Lord of the Rings* Fan Club at lotrfanclub.com.



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.

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FAN focus

The Results Are In

For three consecutive years, The Official Fan Club Message Boards have sponsored a thrilling visual arts contest. This year, the contest was particularly exciting, as the esteemed panel of judges featured several renowned artists, including Ted Nasmith, Tim Kirk, and Colleen Doran. With more than 160 entries, the task of selecting winners proved to be a difficult but rewarding one. Collections of Weta busts were offered by Decipher for the winners. Taking first prize in the adult category was Reafor Walker for "The Battle of Pelennor Fields," while first place in the youth category went to Elisa D'Alessandro for "Shadowfax."

The artwork itself, as well as the entire judging process, left quite an impression on those involved. "Being asked to act as a judge of artwork is a great privilege," Nasmith says. "Whether it is a younger child's first serious attempt to capture a scene or idea, an up-and-coming talent displaying a potential for a career, or an accomplished adult's elaborate expression, each asks the judge to carefully consider the work and sensibilities that went into their creation."

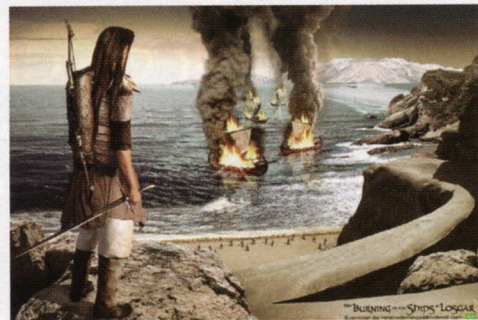
And each judge has his or her own philosophy on how to evaluate contributions and entries to such a contest. "I tried to put myself into the heart of the

artist, looking not only at technical prowess but also at the emotion and nuance of whatever vision they have been inspired by," Nasmith says. "The decisions made are intended ultimately to encourage all the participants and to celebrate the joy of making art."

And the judges offered nothing but praise for their fellow artists. "I believe that the final choices showed real creativity and unique vision," Kirk says. "My congratulations to all of the participants—keep at it!"

To view the entries and winners of this year's contest, please visit lotrfan-art.net/fanclub2004/home.html.

~ Rosie Gagnon



RENALTO



GUY GONDURIN



BRANÇORN



KIM KINCAID



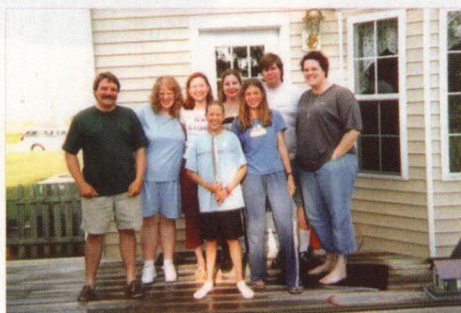
ELISA D'ALESSANDRO



REAFOR WALKER

Fellowship News

Many members of the Fan Club Message Boards took advantage of the DVD release of *The Return of the King* to get together with friends to enjoy the film in the comfort of home. (Ringers are like Hobbits that way—they enjoy friends and comfort!) One example of



this was a small group, Tennessee Ringers, who gathered together June 12 to watch the entire trilogy. They dubbed their party a “Buttnumbathon,” as they met around 10 in the morning and pushed on through to the bitter-sweet end. While sitting in rapt amazement, they dined on a Hobbit-feast of hummus, crackers, blackberry cobbler, green bean casserole, scones, chicken, chips, and spicy queso—a true blend of Middle-earth and the South! They had a wonderful time letting their lower extremities lose consciousness, talking, laughing, and watching all three films.

While busy summer activities are well underway for Ringers, including Howard Shore concerts, Renaissance Fairs, and an upcoming *The Lord of the Rings* Museum of Science exhibit in Boston (mos.org), many are simply just enjoying the new Message Board format that has been provided by Decipher. While the look is different, the wonderful Fellowship of the *The Lord of the Rings* Fan Club community continues to flourish!

To find out more about these activities, please visit the new Message Boards at forums.decipher.com/index. ~ Rosie Gagnon



Fellowship Spotlight

NORTH CAROLINA

The North Carolina Fellowship was founded Feb. 6, 2002, with only three charter members—Ellen Wilborn (Rayvah), Stephanie Newsome (StefBrandybuck), and Lynne Machie (Lithilien Quicksilver)—but has grown to include more than 65 members spread out over the state of North Carolina, with a few fans from Virginia and South Carolina as well. They have enjoyed meeting over the past two-and-a-half years, especially for viewings of *The Lord of the Rings* films at the theater and DVD parties at the homes of various members.

Thirty members attended Trilogy Tuesday together in Raleigh this past December. Several members have also attended the Renaissance Festival in Charlotte as a group—in a costumed

“Middle-earth invades the Middle Ages” sort of way! The group is dedicated to keeping the fun alive by continuing events such as the celebration on Saturday, May 29, when a few members of the NC Fellowship met at the home of Fan Club member and message board moderator, Lynne Machie, to watch the DVD of *The Return of the King*, enjoy a Hobbit buffet, and have a good cry. The only thing more plentiful than food at that party was the Kleenex! Members of this group of *The Lord of the Rings* fans and Official Fan Club members say the best thing about

belonging to this “Fellowship” is that not only do they get to enjoy the films with like-minded folk, but that many of them have made lifelong friends. It’s just



another way in which *The Lord of the Rings* has changed lives for the better.

If you want to become involved with the NC Fellowship, you can email them at NCFellowship-subscribe@yahoo-groups.com. ~ Rosie Gagnon

THE LORD OF THE RINGS

FAN 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!

SCALE 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
Member Price	\$22.50

ENVIRONMENTS

[C] Helm's Deep • 105081	\$125
[D] Meduseld, The Golden Hall • 105082	\$125
Member Price	\$112.50
[E] The Mines of Moria • 105237	\$200
Member Price	\$180

NEW FROM MASTER REPLICAS

Are there Orcs near? This exquisite replica of the Baggins family Elven sword, Sting, includes a rather surprising talent, just as the film version did: It glows with a high intensity pale blue light! This full-scale replica sword has a metal hilt, pommel, and hand guard. The 27-inch blade is polycarbonate, having the necessary durability for some active roleplaying. Once activated, the blade glows blue, and during use motion sensors are activated so the weapon emits the sound of a swordfight in progress! This light and sound replica is like no other you've seen. Beautiful and a delight to play with!

[F] Sting Sword Electronic FX Edition • 105251	\$119.00
Member Price	\$107.10



REPLICA HERO SWORDS AND PROPS FROM UNITED CUTLERY

Breathtaking detail and stunningly accurate realism are the hallmarks of this incredible range of official *The Lord of the Rings* replica weapons and accessories. Carefully duplicated from official film props and New Line Cinema photo archives by the master blade crafters at United Cutlery, these are the most accurate reproductions you will find. Settle only for the best!

FULL SIZE REPLICAS

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.

[A] Andúril, Sword of King Elessar • 105039	\$348.99
Member Price	\$314.09
[B] Hadhafang, Sword of Arwen • 105036	\$310.99
Member Price	\$279.89
[C] Sword of the Witch-king • 104882	\$348.99
Member Price	\$314.09
[D] Fighting Knives of Legolas • 105031	\$323.99
Member Price	\$291.59
[E] Staff of Gandalf The White • 105037	\$223.99
Member Price	\$201.59
[F] Ltd. Edition Helm of Gimli • 105035	\$498.99
Member Price	\$449.09

SCALE MINIATURES

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
Member Price	\$40.49

[G,H,I] Collector's Set of Three Miniatures 104894	\$123.99
Member Price	\$111.59



Fan Club members receive a 10% discount on all merchandise purchases. For information on joining The Lord of the Rings Fan Club, visit www.lotrfanclub.com.

To order, go to www.lotrfanclub.com

To find your item in our online store, simply enter the six-digit item number into the search box.

THE LORD OF THE RINGS FAN CLUB STORE

This 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.

NAVEL JEWELRY

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

[A] Arwen Jewelry Motif on Banana Barbell
(5mm Bottom Ball) • IO5168

Member Price

\$40

\$36

[B] Rohan Motif on Banana Barbell
(5mm Top Ball) • IO5170

Member Price

\$40

\$36

[C] Hanging Sting Motif on Banana Barbell
(5mm Top Ball, 8mm Bottom Ball) • IO5174

Member Price

\$40

\$36

[D] Hanging Fellowship Brooch on Banana Barbell
(5mm Top Ball) • IO5347

Member Price

\$45

\$40.50

[E] One Ring Sliding Motif on Straight Barbell
(6mm End Balls) • IO5173

Member Price

\$30

\$27



ONE RING PENDANT IN BLACK TITANIUM

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.

IO4857

Member Price

\$144

\$129.60



INSIGNIA JEWELRY BOX

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

IO4710

Member Price

\$24.90

\$22.41



ARAGORN'S RING - IN STERLING SILVER

Now you can own an heirloom of the House of Isildur. A gift to Barahir for saving another's life, this ring has been passed down by his descendants for thousands of years and now finds itself worn by Aragorn, heir of Isildur. Imported from Germany (not Gondor), this exquisite replica is quality manufactured from sterling silver and is a perfect recreation of the beautiful filming prop. The ring comes complete with a velvet drawstring bag marked with the German *The Lord of the Rings* movie logo.

[F] Aragorn's Ring • IO4842-IO4877

Member Price

\$173.00

\$155.70



View our full range of One Ring replicas in silver, titanium, gold, and platinum at www.lotrfanclub.com.





GALLERY EXPRESSIONS® BOOKMARK RANGE

This distinctive range of *The Lord of the Rings*-themed bookmarks feature unique and functional bookmarks that will liven up any reading!

- [A] Red Heraldry Fabric Banner
Looped on Wooden Rod • 105141 \$5.99
- [B] Green Heraldry Fabric Banner
Looped on Wooden Rod • 105142 \$5.99
- [C] Rohan Leather Bookmark
with Metal Medallion • 105143 \$5.99
- [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
- [G] The One Ring Laser
Cut-Out Bookmark • 105147 \$5.99
- [H] Gollum Laser
Cut-Out Bookmark • 105148 \$5.99
- Member Price \$5.39

IMPORTED ALUMINUM BOOKMARKS WITH RING

A bookmark like no other that will outlast all others! These all-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".

- [I] Arwen • 104657 \$6.95
- [J] Gollum • 104659 \$6.95
- [K] Legolas • 104660 \$6.95
- [L] One Ring • 104661 \$6.95
- [M] Sauron's Eye • 104662 \$6.95
- Member Price \$6.25

WELCOME TO MIDDLE-EARTH DOORMAT

Your guests have never felt so welcome! Imported from Europe, these high-quality 100% polyester doormats have a rubberized, non-slip backing and are printed with amazingly vibrant long-wearing colors. Includes official *The Lord of the Rings* movie logo in German. Can be machine-washed.

- [N] Middle-earth Doormat • 104713 \$38.00
- Member Price \$34.20

To order, go to www.lotrclub.com

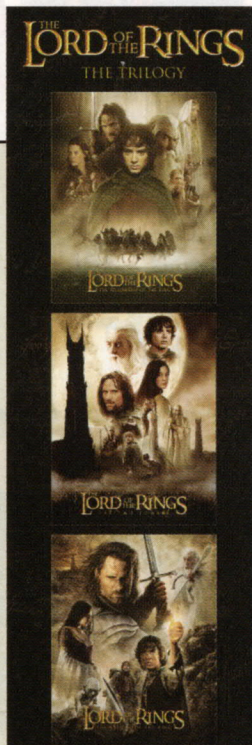
To find your item in our online store, simply enter the six-digit item number into the search box.

THE LORD OF THE RINGS

FAN CLUB STORE



A



B



C



D

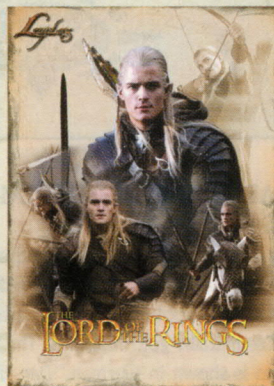


E

Check our online store at
www.lotrfanclub.com to see our
 full range, which also includes mini-posters
 and postcards!



F



G



H

BEST
SELLER

DOOR POSTERS (21" x 62")

[A] Aragorn on Horseback • 105029

\$12.99

[B] Trilogy • 105257

\$12.99

Member Price

\$11.69

WALL POSTERS (25" x 35")

[C] The Two Towers Gollum • 103834

\$8.99

[D] The Return of the King One Sheet • 105025

\$8.99

[E] The Return of the King Legolas Golden Clouds
 105027

\$8.99

Member Price

\$8.09

FOIL 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 hand-sketched 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 shipped flat between two layers of cardboard for safe protection.

[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



3D PUZZLE

Combining award-winning Puzz-3D® technology with fantastic designs from *The Lord of the Rings*, this unique 3-dimensional puzzle will provide the whole family hours of fun as well as beautiful art for you to display.

[A] The Citadel of Minas Tirith • 104450

\$25.99

Member Price

\$23.39

POSTER PUZZLES

These innovative poster puzzles are exquisite as well as entertaining. Each puzzle consists of 500 Perfalock™ pieces, which interlock to make a finished poster that's a full 2' x 3' in size! Perfalock™ pieces lock sturdily together in such a way that your finished poster will stay together as long as you wish. Puzzle posters can even be wall-mounted without gluing!

[B] Aragorn, King of Gondor • 104452

\$14.95

Member Price

\$13.45

[C] Gollum "Journey to Mordor" • 104453

\$14.95

Member Price

\$13.45

DELUXE 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

\$49.99

Member Price

\$44.99

COLLECTOR'S EDITION CHECKERS GAME TIN

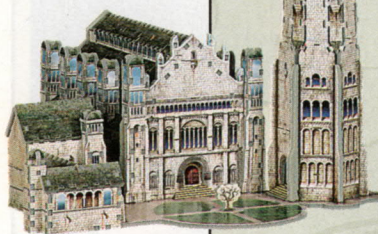
Hand-sculpted ring "checkers" and a richly decorated game board make this checkers set great for fans and players. Packaged in a collectible tin, the 24 game "ring" pieces are colored in gold and silver with an engraved Elven inscription.

[E] 104341

\$14.99

Member Price

\$13.49

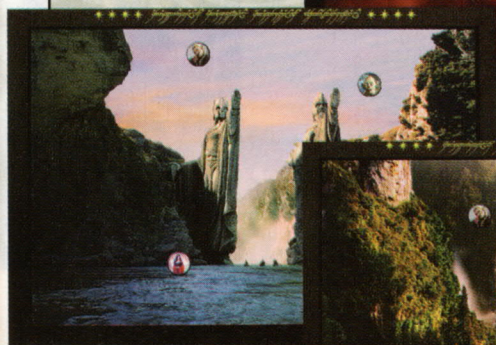


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THE LORD OF THE RINGS™

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FRAMED 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. Official German film logo also shown.

[A] Three Hunters • 104731	\$59
[B] You Shall Not Pass • 104728	\$59
[C] Argonath Metallic • 104726	\$59
[D] Rivendell • 104725	\$59
Member Price	\$53.10

LIFE-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] Gandalf the White • 104387	\$29.95
[F] Arwen in Red Dress • 105117	\$29.95
[G] Éowyn • 105119	\$29.95
Member Price	\$26.95
[H] Talking Sméagol • 104389	\$27.95
Member Price	\$25.15

"Rock and pool is nice and cool, so nice for feet! My only wish, to catch a fish, so juicy sweet!"



FUN 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. Rub-on stickers are decals that adhere to glass or mirror surfaces.

FABRIC PATCHES

[A] Aragorn • I05205	\$3.49
[B] Movie Logo • I05206	\$3.49
[C] Frodo & Sam • I05207	\$3.49
[D] Treebeard • I05208	\$3.49
[E] Cave Troll • I05214	\$3.49
[F] Legolas • I05216	\$3.49
[G] Legolas Logo • I05217	\$3.49
Member Price	\$3.14

PICTURE MAGNET SETS

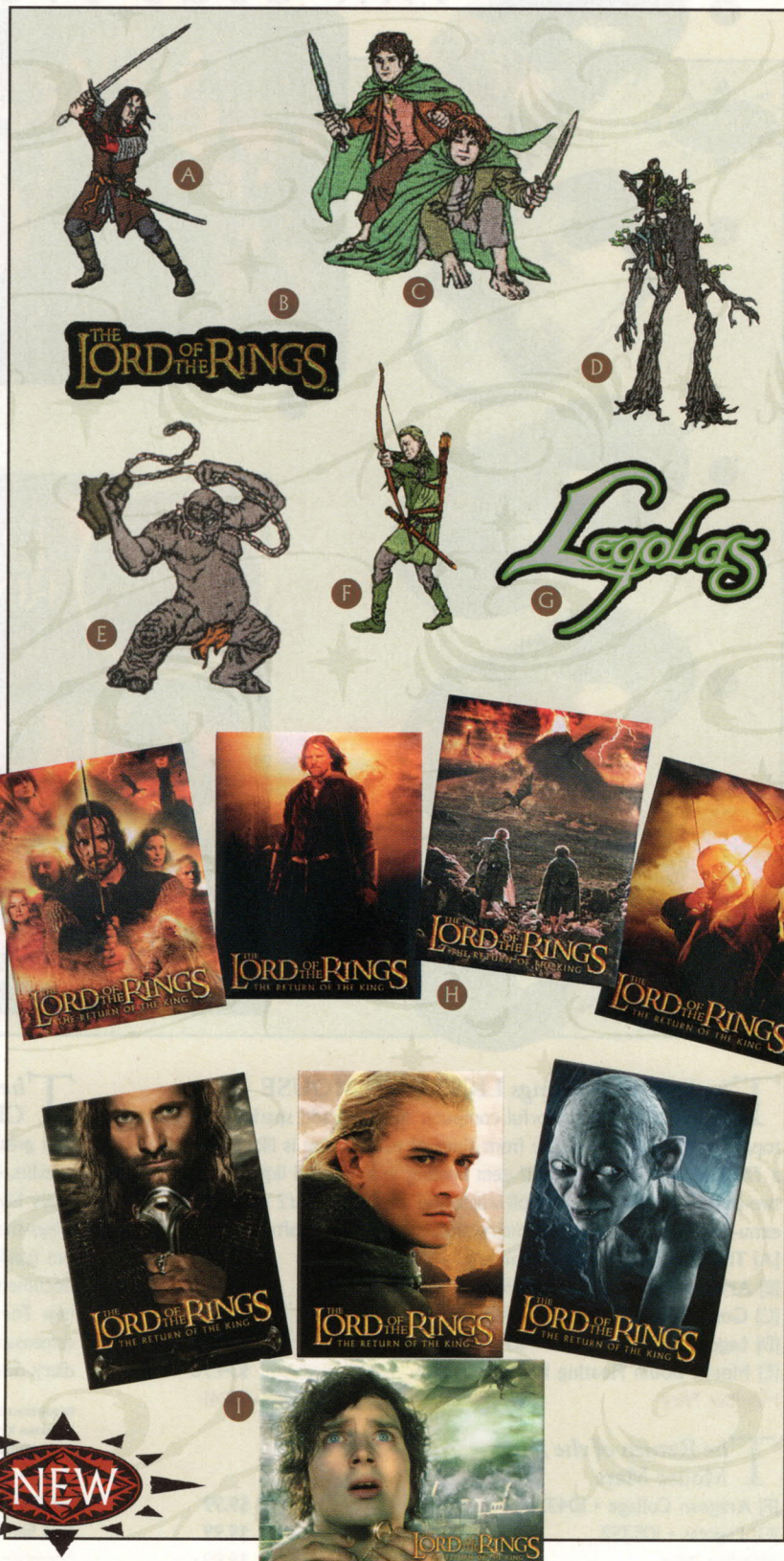
Popular official magnets now bring *The Return of the King* to your locker, filing cabinet, or refrigerator! Provided in a set of four, each picture magnet is 2.5" x 3.5", with a stain-resistant front and a large magnetic back.

[H] <i>The Return of the King</i> Set 1 I05043	\$14.99
Member Price	\$13.50
[I] <i>The Return of the King</i> Set 2 I05044	\$14.99
Member Price	\$13.50

LEGOLAS NITE LITE

Let Legolas, with his drawn bow, light your way in the dark of night. Lamp turns on and off automatically with a built-in light sensor. Nite Lite provides a soft yellow glow as it illuminates this favored Legolas image.

[J] Legolas Nite Lite • I05389	\$9.95
Member Price	\$8.95



To order, go to www.lotrfanclub.com

To find your item in our online store, simply enter the six-digit item number into the search box.

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The 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] The 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 Floating Mouse • 104712	\$34.90
Member Price	\$31.41

The Return of the King Mouse Mats

[F] Aragorn Collage • 104353	\$9.99
[G] Legolas • 105352	\$9.99
Member Price	\$8.99

The Two Towers Souvenir CD-ROM and Mouse Pad Set

This great value gift pack combines a selection of goodies that will be loved by any of your computer-savvy Elves! It includes a heroes of *The Lord of the Rings*-themed mouse pad, a CD-ROM packed full of fun family goodies, and a handy reusable glossy document folder. Full contents of this completely new *The Two Towers*-themed CD-ROM include a screensaver, interactive desktop calendar and diary, desktop puzzle, and desktop wallpapers.

Requirements: Works with all non-networked Windows 98, Me, 2000, NT4 and Windows XP operating systems. Minimum Specification: P300, 32MB RAM, 16 speed CD-ROM.

[H] The Two Towers Souvenir CD-ROM and Mouse Pad Set • 105167	\$12.99
Member Price	\$11.69





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.

The Two Towers ANTHOLOGY

Drawn from the sets of *The Two 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 *The Two Towers* block starter deck, two 11-card booster packs from each of the three *The Two Towers* expansions, and a comprehensive card list of the first three sets.

[A] 104671 \$36.00
Member Price \$32.40

TWO-PLAYER QUICKSTART

All you need for two players! This is the perfect starting place to learn all about one of the most popular games! It contains a rulebook, two 60-card decks, *The Two Towers* booster pack, two-player playmat, Learn How to Play CD-ROM (which includes basic and advanced play tutorials), and collection management and deck building software.

[B] 2-Player QuickStart TCG • 103668 \$19.95
Member Price \$17.95

[C] Mount Doom - Frodo Starter Deck • 104653 \$10.99
Member Price \$9.89

[D] Mount Doom - Sam Starter Deck • 104654 \$10.99
Member Price \$9.89

[E] Mount Doom Booster Pack • 104650 \$3.29
Member Price \$2.96

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.

SOURCEBOOKS

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. Each sourcebook is a full-color hardcover tome featuring a wealth of resources for the player, narrator, or scholar.

[F] Core Book • Hardcover, 304 pages
100266 \$39.95
Member Price \$35.95

[G] Fell Beasts & Wondrous Magic
Hardcover, 96 pages • 103584 \$29.95
Member Price \$26.96

MAPS 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.

[H] 103374 \$29.95
Member Price \$26.96

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

To order, go to www.lotrfanclub.com

To find your item in our online store, simply enter the six-digit item number into the search box.

THE LORD OF THE RINGS

FAN CLUB STORE

BACK ISSUES

While stocks last, Fan Club members can purchase back issues of the exclusive and rare *Official Movie Magazine*. This item is not available at newsstands or through any other retail channels. It is a specialist publication that is manufactured in small print-runs, and no issue will be reprinted. Don't pay hundreds of dollars on Ebay when you can complete your collection from the very source!

Premiere Issue

Member Price: \$45.00

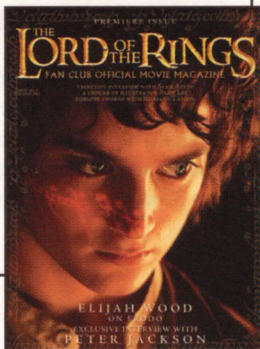
All other issues

Member Price: \$30.00

PREMIERE ISSUE

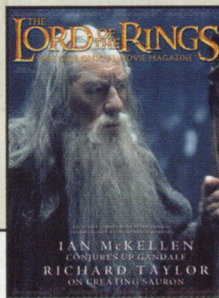
(Feb/Mar 02) • 100045

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 Jackson.



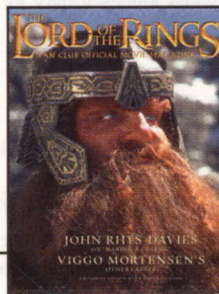
ISSUE 2 (Apr/May 02) • 100046

Ian 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 Marjory Hamlin gives us a glimpse into the world of makeup effects.



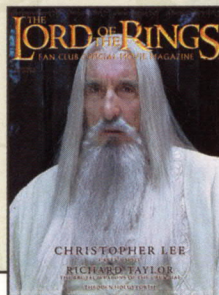
ISSUE 4 (Aug/Sept 02) • 100048

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.



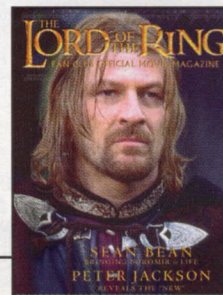
ISSUE 6 (Dec/Jan 03) • 100050

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 jobs.



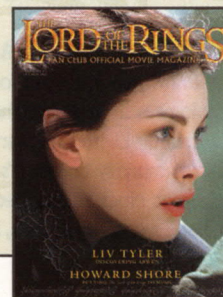
ISSUE 3 (Jun/Jul 02) • 100047

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.



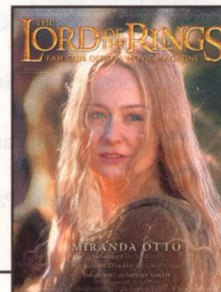
ISSUE 5 (Oct/Nov 02) • 100049

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.



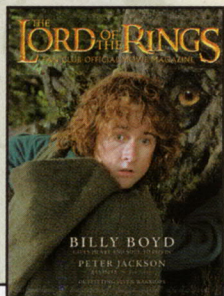
ISSUE 7 (Feb/Mar 03) • 100051

Miranda Otto on Éowyn and stabbing an Orc • Calligrapher Daniel Reeve and The One Ring inscription • Brian Massey on being the greens master of Middle-earth • Working with the horses of *The Two Towers*.



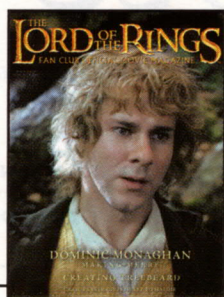
ISSUE 8 (Apr/May 03) • 100052

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.



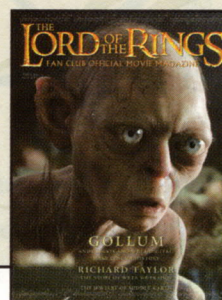
ISSUE 9 (Jun/Jul 03) • 100053

Making Merry with Dominic Monaghan • Peter Jackson on Shelob-induced arachnophobia • Craig Parker contemplates cult-fame as Haldir • The challenge of creating Treebeard • The props of Middle-earth.



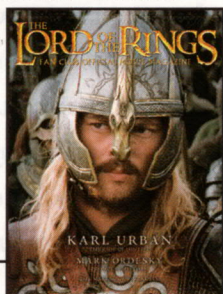
ISSUE 10 (Aug/Sept 03) • 100054

Andy Serkis and the team at Weta Digital talk about bringing Gollum to life • Richard Taylor recalls the origins of Weta Workshop • Jasmine Watson discusses jewelry design.



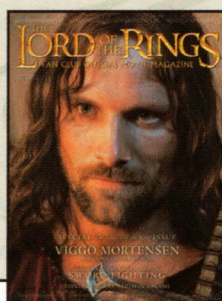
ISSUE 11 (Oct/Nov 03) • 100055

Karl Urban (Éomer) 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.



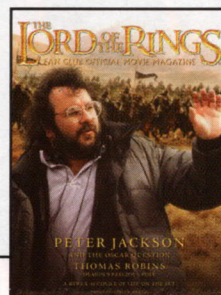
ISSUE 12 (Dec/Jan 04) • 100056

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.



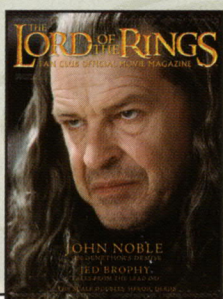
ISSUE 13 (Feb/Mar 04) • 100057

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 Jamie Selkirk and makeup artist Nancy Hennah.



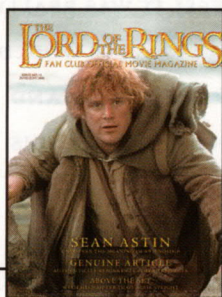
ISSUE 14 (Apr/May 04) • 100058

John Noble discusses Denethor's demise • Inside the Orc's world with lead Orc Jed Brophy • Transforming paintings into visual effects with artist Jeremy Bennett • LOTR's scale doubles share their experiences acting in place of the main cast.



ISSUE 15 (Jun/Jul 04) • 100059

Sean Astin makes plenty of new friends from the trilogy • Chris Hennah kept the art department moving • Peter Jackson elaborates on *The Hobbit* • A helicopter flight above the set.



ISSUE 16 (Aug/Sept 04) • 100060

Bruce Hopkins on Gamling becoming a major character in the films • Part II of the Sean Astin interview, including the defining moments of the trilogy as seen through his eyes • Carl Payne on the next thing in fashion: chain mail.



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LORD OF THE RINGS
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all components included in sets and kits. Please include a copy of the invoice with any product you send back to us. Sorry, shipping and handling charges cannot be refunded unless the product was damaged, defective, or misshipped. New shipping and handling charges will be applied to exchanges.

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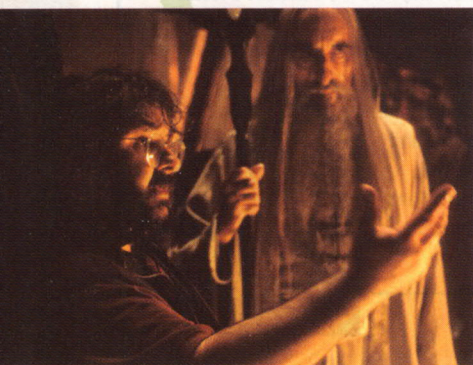
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Quoteworthy

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

"HE ALSO LOST HIS MOTHER WHEN HE WAS VERY YOUNG, AND HE WAS GIVEN THE TASK OF DEFENDING PARTS OF HIS TERRITORY WHEN HE WAS ESSENTIALLY UNDERMANNED AND UNDER-ARMED. SO WHEN THE OPPORTUNITY FOR THIS RING COMES ALONG THAT COULD ACTUALLY HELP THE SITUATION, I DON'T KNOW ANYBODY WHO WOULDN'T BE TEMPTED BY THAT SITUATION." [David Wenham, Faramir]



"IF THERE WAS A MOMENT OF DEPRESSION OR TIREDNESS OR EXHAUSTION OR IF I THOUGHT FOR A MOMENT, 'I WISH I COULD JUST STAY IN BED,' I WOULD JUST SAY TO MYSELF, 'WELL, YOU KNOW, YOU'VE WANTED TO BE A FILMMAKER ALL YOUR LIFE. IS THERE REALLY ANYTHING ELSE YOU WOULD RATHER BE DOING TODAY THAN FILMING *The Lord of the Rings*?' YOU HAVE TO STOP YOURSELF AND SAY, 'NO... IT IS EXCITING AND EXACTLY WHAT I HAVE DREAMT OF DOING SINCE I WAS A KID. I WANTED TO MAKE FILMS LIKE THIS AND HERE I AM, DOING IT!'" [Peter Jackson, Director]

"PETER HAD THIS KNACK OF COMPLIMENTING EVERYTHING HE LIKED, BUT IF HE DIDN'T FEEL IT WAS REALLY THERE, HE WOULDN'T GIVE THE FINAL OK. HE WOULD SAY, 'THIS IS REALLY VERY NICE, AND I LIKE THAT AND THIS IS GOOD.' ... AT NO POINT DID HE EVER SAY, 'THIS IS NO GOOD. I DON'T LIKE THAT. THIS IS ALL JUNK. GO BACK TO YOUR TABLES AND DO SOMETHING RIGHT.' IT WAS ALL VERY ENCOURAGING." [John Howe, Conceptual Artist]



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