The lord of the rings: the making of the movie trilogy

Brian Sibley

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New Book Takes Readers Behind the Scenes as Filmgoers Await Second Tolkien Film

About the Book

As the clock ticks down to the December 18 release of the second installment in the epic *Lord of the Rings* film trilogy, an insider takes readers behind the scenes to witness the talented team of artists, craftspeople, actors, and crew as they create a modern film classic.

Beginning November 6, Brian Sibley gives fans the rare opportunity to visit the movie set and see firsthand how a movie phenomenon of the twenty-first century was built on the landmark fantasy work of the twentieth century: J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings*. Reading *The Lord of the Rings: The Making of the Movie Trilogy* is like being part of this filmmaking phenomenon.

*The Lord of the Rings* film trilogy was history in the making; never before had the production of three major movies been undertaken at the same time. Brian Sibley's definitive account showcases the extraordinary innovation and dedication of the people who accomplished this incredible feat.

Sibley interviewed more than 150 people associated with every aspect of the production, including director Peter Jackson. These conversations reveal exactly how the magic of Middle-earth was brought to cinematic life — from the direction, scripting, and acting, to the creation of sets and landscapes, to makeup, wardrobe, miniatures, music, and special effects.
Readers will discover that

• director Peter Jackson preferred to have the miniatures built directly from the original sketches provided by conceptual designers Alan Lee and John Howe, rather than from a draftsperson's scale plans work, so as not to lose any of Alan's and John's artistic interpretations.

• 48,000 pieces of armor were designed and made for the film trilogy. Four people worked ten-hour days just to make chain mail. Two thousand weapons were also produced, including swords, spears, pikes and maces, longbows, crossbows, daggers, knives, and axes. And no fewer than 10,000 arrows were made. Legendary sword master Bob Anderson, the man who taught Darth Vader how to wield a light saber, says, "Weta [Workshop] made better swords than anybody I've ever worked with."

• attention to authenticity went into every detail of the film, even to things that would never be seen on camera. For example, Weta Workshop head Richard Taylor explains that "engraved on the inside of King Théoden's breastplate is the horse motif of the king of Rohan. I wanted it to be the last thing that Bernard Hill saw as he put on his armor and took on the persona of the king."

Accompanying the exclusive interviews with Peter Jackson and the cast and crew are more than 300 stunning photos from all three films, many unique to this book.

As the second film in the trilogy nears release, cast members and crew are willing to share more of their secrets than ever before. The Lord of the Rings: The Making of the Movie Trilogy provides readers with truly privileged insights into the most ambitious film project of all time.

About the Author

Brian Sibley is a writer and broadcaster with a lifelong interest in fantasy books and cinema. His fascination with J.R.R. Tolkien and the myths and history of Middle-earth led to his critically acclaimed BBC radio dramatization of The Lord of the Rings, in which the role of Frodo was played by Ian Holm, who now portrays Bilbo in Peter Jackson's The Lord of the Rings Trilogy. Sibley's subsequent radio dramas included several of Tolkien's short novels, collected under the title Tales from the Perilous Realm, C. S. Lewis's The Chronicles of Narnia, two series of Tales of the Bizarre by Ray Bradbury, and Mervyn Peake's Titus Groan and Gormenghast, which won him the prestigious Sony Radio Award. His books include Three Cheers for Pooh, Chicken Run: Hatching the Movie, Cracking Animation, The Disney Studio Story, The Land of Narnia, and Shadowlands, as well as the New York Times bestseller The Lord of the Rings Official Movie Guide.
• Weta Workshop (the production company) is named after the weta, an ancient cricket-like species native to New Zealand that is practically indestructible and can grow to be one of the heaviest bugs in the world. "We like to think that the product we produce aspires to the complexity, beauty and, occasionally, even the monstrousness of the weta," said Richard Taylor.

• Respect for the natural environment was a critical part of the filming process. "All that we ever leave behind are footprints" was the motto on set. But a painstaking level of postfilming restoration assured that even the footprints weren't left! The respect for the landscape was especially fitting on this film, since Tolkien himself witnessed the devastating effects of industrialization on the English countryside.

• Four hundred artists and crafts people designed and built a total of three hundred sets. At any given time there were three sets under construction, three being used for filming, and three being torn down.

• Finding the right materials in sufficient quantities was always a challenge in remote New Zealand. Since real trees on a set have a maximum "leaf life" of five days (due to the intense heat of studio lights), millions of silk leaves had to be imported from China to help foliate the woods of Middle-earth.

• The Miniatures Department found interesting uses for Ping-Pong balls, paper doilies, even tea bags. Ping-Pong balls cut in half made perfect bowls or — the other way up — small domes for buildings. Doilies made for wonderful architectural detailing. The stuff inside herbal tea bags made perfect peat litter for miniature forest floors.

• The array of costumes used on the film trilogy was staggering — 10,800 pieces for the extras alone.

• Viggo Mortensen surprised the Wardrobe Department with an unusual request: he asked to take care of his own costume. "Perhaps it was because he washed and repaired Aragorn's clothes himself that he so perfectly came to inhabit them," says costume designer Ngila Dickson.

• The four lead Hobbits alone managed to go through 1,600 pairs of feet!

• The sounds of several thousand Uruk-hai chanting Black Speech as they march in Helm's Deep in The Two Towers was actually recorded at a New Zealand-versus-England cricket match! Peter Jackson directed the crowd in stomping, chest-beating, cheering, hissing, whispering, and chanting during half-time.

• The proprietary software program developed by Weta Digital for The Lord of the Rings is called "Massive." It enables thousands of artificial characters — or agents — to react to their situation and each other, employing a "brain" to use, in real time, more than 250 body movements.
An adaptation of J. R. R. Tolkien's The Lord of the Rings into a film trilogy directed by Peter Jackson. The movies were filmed together and released one after the other: "The Ring was made in the fires of Mount Doom. Only there can it be unmade. It must be taken deep into Mordor and cast back into the fiery chasm from whence it came!" "It began with the forging of the Great Rings. Three were given to the Elves; immortal, wisest and fairest of all beings. Seven to the Dwarf Lords, great miners and craftsmen of the mountain halls. And nine. Nine Rings were gifted to the Race of Men, who above all else desire power. For within these Rings was bound the strength and will to govern each race. But they were all of them deceived...for another Ring was made. The Lord of the Rings film series consists of three epic fantasy adventure films directed by Peter Jackson and based on the eponymous novel written by J. R. R. Tolkien. The films are subtitled The Fellowship of the Ring (2001), The Two Towers (2002) and The Return of the King (2003). The trilogy was a joint New Zealand-American venture, produced and distributed by New Line Cinema with the co-production of WingNut Films.

Now onto return of the King. Personally I preferred the isenguard thing from the movies point blank. The meeting with the companions was funny and well executed, Saruman was defeated, I think having the Saruman and Gandalf debate would have been nice but I canâ€™t say I missed it. Now as for his death Iâ€™m glad it happened, not exactly in the way it was done, I still would have preferred him to die at Isenguard just in a better way. What is the worst change Peter Jackson made in his LOTR movies in relation to Tolkien's plot in The Lord of the Rings? Why didnâ€™t Tolkien just rewrite the sequel to the Lord of the Rings in a more pleasant manner instead of abandoning it altogether? Zeb Mattey. Reading Tolkien since I was 7. Peter The official inside story on the making of the award-winning movie trilogy. The Lord of the Rings: The Making of the Movie Trilogy is a lavishly illustrated, behind-the-scenes, definitive account of the creation of an epic film experience. Hailed by critics worldwide, part one of the movie trilogy was a box-office smash, one of the most successful films of the decade. Peter Jackson's "fierce, imaginative movie takes high-flying risks and inspires with its power and scale," wrote Newsweek. I am an avid lover of The Lord Of The Rings and really enjoyed reading all these behind the scenes interviews about making the trilogy. This only took me so long to read because the size of the book made it impossible to carry with me anywhere and so other novels took precedent.