The book cover features a composite image of Gandalf the White on the left and Galadriel on the right, both with their characteristic long beards. In the center background, the dark, spire-like architecture of Minas Morgul is visible. At the bottom, a scene of battle is depicted with soldiers and a large fire.

# THE LORD OF THE RINGS

TM  
THE MAKING OF THE  
MOVIE TRILOGY

BRIAN SIBLEY  
FOREWORD BY SIR IAN MCKELLEN

THE LORD  
OF THE RINGS  
THE MAKING OF THE  
MOVIE TRILOGY

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THE LORD  
OF THE RINGS  
THE MAKING OF THE  
MOVIE TRILOGY

*Brian Sibley*



Houghton Mifflin Company

BOSTON NEW YORK 2002

Vertical text in a decorative border on the right side of the cover, likely in a fictional script.

For

IAN HOLM

whom I first encountered when he was Frodo  
and we were setting out together on a radio journey

*There and Back Again.*

Twenty-one years later, he is now Bilbo  
and we are still exploring Middle-earth!

With admiration and affection,

B.S.

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# Foreword



The day *The Lord of the Rings* opened at the Embassy Cinema in New Zealand's capital, Wellingtonians woke to discover that overnight their city had been renamed by government decree. To honor the achievement of their local film industry, Wellington was for one unique day exchanged for Middle-earth on signposts and public buildings. By the evening a red carpet stretched the length of Courtenay Place in front of the Embassy, scene of multitudinous celebrations as the audience crowded in to the premiere. Those of us who couldn't be there had already caught the Kiwis' excitement when we saw that Tolkien's characters were on the end-of-year postage stamps, advertising New Zealand's enterprise worldwide. When a film employs more workers than any other industry in the country, there is reason for celebration.

For those of us who were drafted in from abroad to participate in the filmmaking, this local identification was a real encouragement. A year away from home was less daunting when everyone hearing the British accent knew at once, "Oh, you are here for *The Lord of the Rings*!"

We also encountered an obsessive concern for the outcome of Peter Jackson's translation of novels into cinema, and not only in New Zealand. The Internet was buzzing with questions, half-answers, guesses, hopes and fears from Tolkien's admirers. My response to this enthusiasm was to set up my own public journal, "The Grey Book" (on [www.mckellen.com](http://www.mckellen.com)). Reading this book now, I realize how inadequate my observations were, so if you want to experience what it was really like making *The Fellowship of the Ring*, *The Two Towers* and even 2003's *The Return of the King*, you have the most authoritative source in your hands.

When Peter Jackson and his partner Fran Walsh first talked to me about their project, I was a Tolkien ignoramus (as I don't consider a single reading of *The Hobbit* as a teenager to count very much!). They came to my home in London some months before shooting with a file of Middle-earth images and the trilogy's initial screenplay. They left behind a sense that a great journey was <sup>电影剧本</sup> afoot and that my ticket to <sup>进行中</sup> ride was the chance of a lifetime. Brian Sibley's book captures the excitement perfectly.

Ian McKellen



PROLOGUE

NEW LINE CINEMA AND  
ENTERTAINMENT FILM DISTRIBUTORS  
CORDIALLY INVITE

MR. BRIAN SIBLEY

TO THE WORLD PREMIERE  
AND TO THE PARTY AFTERWARDS

THE  
**LORD OF THE RINGS**  
THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE RING

# Prologue

## The Long-Expected Party



It is like a scene out of a movie. To be specific, it's like a scene from one of those Battle of Britain films of the 1950s in which the intrepid young airmen are being given a last, stiff-upper-lip briefing prior to scrambling to their planes.

True, the setting and characters are rather different – we are in a sumptuous suite at the Dorchester Hotel in London and those being briefed are stars – but the *mood* is just right.

It is lunchtime on Sunday, December 9, 2001, and New Line Cinema's Tracy Lorie is taking the cast of *The Fellowship of the Ring* through the schedule for the next day's world premiere at the Odeon, Leicester Square.

Around the table sit Christopher Lee, Ian Holm, Orlando Bloom and Weta Workshop's Richard Taylor and Tania Rodger. Everyone is more or less exhausted from two days of nonstop media interviews – as many as fifty a day – and far too tired to do more than pick at the generous spread of fruit, cheese and pastries. At the other end of the room, Elijah Wood and family are lounging on sofas and armchairs along with Dominic Monaghan and Billy Boyd.

The rest of the cast – Liv Tyler, John Rhys-Davies, Viggo Mortensen and the two Seans (Astin and Bean) – are still at it in other suites up and down the corridor: attempting to answer the same questions over and over as if they've never heard them before; trying to think in those much-desired sound bites; remembering to

smile. Ian McKellen is somewhere above the Atlantic on the Concorde, en route from New York; and, as of now, no one is sure whether Cate Blanchett – who gave birth to her son, Dashiell, only three days ago – will be attending the premiere or not.

For those who have made it to the briefing, there is much to take in: the times of departure by car from the Dorchester and arrival in Leicester Square; arrangements for partners, relatives and guests; and the procedure to be followed once at the Odeon Theatre: “You'll make your way along the red carpet, past the press corps in the pen to your right, but *please* do not stop –”

With a perfectly straight face, Elijah asks if it is permitted to wave. “By all means acknowledge them,” he is told, “but please don't stop and *don't* go across to the public barriers on the other side –”

“Oh, I was just going to ignore *them!*” jokes Elijah: a jest that is rewarded with a headmasterly frown from



## THE MAKING OF THE LORD OF THE RINGS

Christopher Lee: "It's actually *very* important that we don't stop to chat or sign things, or we'll be there literally all night!"

"After all," continues Tracy, making sure that the point has gone home, "the film *is* three hours long and so *must* start no later than 7:45." More instructions follow: once inside the cinema, everyone is to make their way upstairs for a round of television interviews: "The cameras will be arranged in a large semicircle and you will be divided into two groups: one moving left to right, the other, right to left..."

Ian Holm sits, saying nothing, with his hands together, the fingertips pressed thoughtfully to his lips.

"After the interviews," Tracy goes on, "everyone will go back down onto the staircase for a cast photograph before being escorted to the front of the stalls so that Peter can bring you onstage and introduce you to the audience." Richard Taylor grins at me across the room with the obvious relief of someone feeling glad not to be a star! "And, when *that's* over, you will be conducted to your seats and the film will begin. Afterward –"

"The party!" someone interjects. But the infinitely patient Tracy has one or two further instructions: about the order and timing of cars from the cinema to the reception at Tobacco Dock in London's East End.

Here there's another interruption as Orlando Bloom raises a question about how he is going to meet up with his mates who are coming as guests.

Once that has been settled: "And so we come to what happens when you arrive at the party –" At which point, Elijah remarks hopefully: "Well, it's just a party, isn't it?" Not quite, it seems! There is to be *another* press lineup and *more* interviews. Altogether, it sounds as if it is going to be a long, tiring and possibly stressful evening.

A quiet finally descends on the room. And it is only then that Ian Holm looks up and says in a soft voice that drops like a stone into the well of silence: "Hmmm... and the rehearsal is – *when?*"

As it turns out, the event – even *without* a rehearsal – goes like clockwork. It is a bitterly cold December evening, but the crowds have turned out in force, shunning the blaring music, garish lights and dizzying rides of Leicester Square's Christmas Fair in order to applaud the stars as they make their way along the red carpet to the theater.

The Hobbits are in snappy suits and stylish open-neck shirts (smart-casual with the accent on smart); the wizards, as befitting their status, have opted for a more conservative look with collars and ties. And while – not too surprisingly perhaps – Cate Blanchett isn't there, Liv Tyler most certainly is, wearing a scarlet Alexander McQueen trouser suit with a fiery lace train. The photographers are ecstatic and Liv looks calm and unflustered, though she later confesses to having spent most of the day in fittings for the ensemble and to feeling, in consequence, decidedly nervous.

Peter Jackson, either in deference to the occasion or because of the weather, has spurned his customary attire of shorts in favor of a



Elijah



purple shirt and black trousers. Never totally at ease with being on show, Peter nevertheless strides confidently along with the beaming smile of a man who, for all his modesty, suspects that his movie is about to become a hit on a fairly phenomenal scale!

The fans, many of whom have been loyally waiting for hours, seem oblivious to the icy winds whipping across the square and whistling round the statue of Shakespeare. They are too busy identifying who's who ("That's Viggo! He's Aragorn"), feverishly snapping photos, cheering and screaming: "We love you, Elijah!"

Interspersed with the filmmakers, who are largely unidentified by the crowd (but courteously clapped nonetheless), is a sampling of British celebrities – comedians, soap opera stars, TV presenters and the like. Among those rumored to be on the guest list are Bob Geldof, Claudia Schiffer, Richard E. Grant, Jude Law, Sir Richard Branson and Sir Cliff Richard. Some are spotted, others are not.

Sean Bean (contrary to instructions, but then he *had* missed the briefing) happily works his way along the line of fans, shaking hands and giving autographs until – to the groans of those still further off – his publicist finally shepherds him resolutely toward the theater entrance.

Above the doors to the Odeon is the legend ONE

RING TO RULE THEM ALL and a row of large hoops – symbolic rings – that burst into flame and flare dramatically in the night air.

Inside, the cast members carry out their duties to perfection and, eventually, the waiting audience (already well steeped in popcorn) gives them a rapturous welcome onstage along with Executive Producers Bob Shaye, Michael Lynne and Mark Ordesky, Producer Barrie Osborne and the man whose night this truly is, Peter Jackson.

For those who might have wondered, Peter explains the choice of London as the venue for the world premiere. A classic of modern English literature – *the* book of the twentieth century, according to some – the epic was the work of a British writer who had talked of creating a new mythology for his homeland. "*The Lord of the Rings*," says Peter, "was written here, and it is right that the movie which we based on that book should be shown here first."

There is more applause, the lights go down, the curtains open and the film begins.



# THE MAKING OF THE LORD OF THE RINGS

The voice of Galadriel comes drifting out of the darkness: "The world is changed, I feel it in the water, I feel it in the earth, I smell it in the air. Much that once was, is lost – for none now live who remember it..." The mournful, yearning notes of Howard Shore's opening composition, "The Prophecy," swirl around the cinema, carrying us back to that lost age, to a time before history became legend and legend became myth. And so the spell is cast. A hush of anticipation falls over the fifteen hundred privileged guests gathered in the cinema.

As an audience we give an exceptional performance: we respond to everything, we miss nothing! We laugh at the antics of Merry and Pippin, shudder at the hiss of the Ringwraiths, are on the edge of our seats during the flight to the Ford. We recoil in horror when Bilbo makes <sup>make a bid for</sup> an unexpected bid for the Ring, jump when the cave troll appears suddenly from behind a column, weep at the fall of Gandalf and the passing of Boromir. Though it's extremely un-British of us, we even find ourselves cheering as Aragorn decapitates the leader of the Uruk-hai with one deadly sweep of his sword!

Nearly three hours later, the film reaches its almost downbeat conclusion, with Frodo and Sam making their way down the stony slopes toward the shadow-filled realm of Mordor: "Sam, I'm glad you're with me."

There is a moment's silence, and the cinema becomes a maelstrom of delighted whoops, yells and roars that

almost drowns Enya's closing rendition of "May It Be" and repeatedly punctuates the fifteen minutes of closing credits.

By midnight we have been shuttled across town to Tobacco Dock, to be greeted with glasses of Mulled Cider & Orange and bags of Hot Chestnuts as well as the spectacle of rustically attired chefs roasting a pig on a spit and the prospect of a never-to-be-forgotten party. But for the stars there is another walk along another acre of red carpeting, through another lightning storm of flashbulbs...

It's back to work for Peter Jackson and the cast: giving interviews, mixing and mingling, somehow managing to find new quotes for the press. Christopher Lee observes: "We made three remarkable books into three remarkable films"; Ian McKellen says: "It's like a Fritz Lang epic!"

The young members of the cast work as hard and tirelessly as anyone, and hours later Elijah is still moving among the guests, chatting away as if the party were one of Frodo's own gatherings at Bag End and he were the host.

The former tobacco warehouses – now converted into a vast, retro-chic venue – have been magically transformed by Dan and Chris Hennah (shown opposite), of the film's Art Department, into various Tolkienesque locations. We wander through Rivendell and Lothlórien sampling a Middle-earth menu that includes Baked River Anduin Salmon, Barliman Butterbur's Famous Sausage and Mash, Gandalf's Secret Recipe of Pan-fried Guinea Fowl and (alarming thought) Hot Hobbit Pies!

There is a bar from the Hobbit's inn, the Green Dragon, constructed to a three-foot-six scale and requiring patrons to stoop in order to reach their beer, and another, inspired by the Prancing Pony at Bree, built from a Hobbit's perspective, so that even the tallest guests have their noses well below the level of the counter! There are stacks of corn, baskets overflowing with apples, and trees hung with lanterns recalling the homely Shire. But there is also the monstrous trio of



grimacing stone trolls beneath which the Hobbits camp on their way to Rivendell and, surrounded by billowing smoke and illuminated by multicolored lights, the towering figure of a mounted Ringwraith that looms high above the dance floor.

For the throng of guests it is an evening of unalloyed fun. What else could it be with plenty of good ale on hand as well as second helpings of Rosie Cotton's Chewy Treacle & Honey Tarts with Clotted Cream?

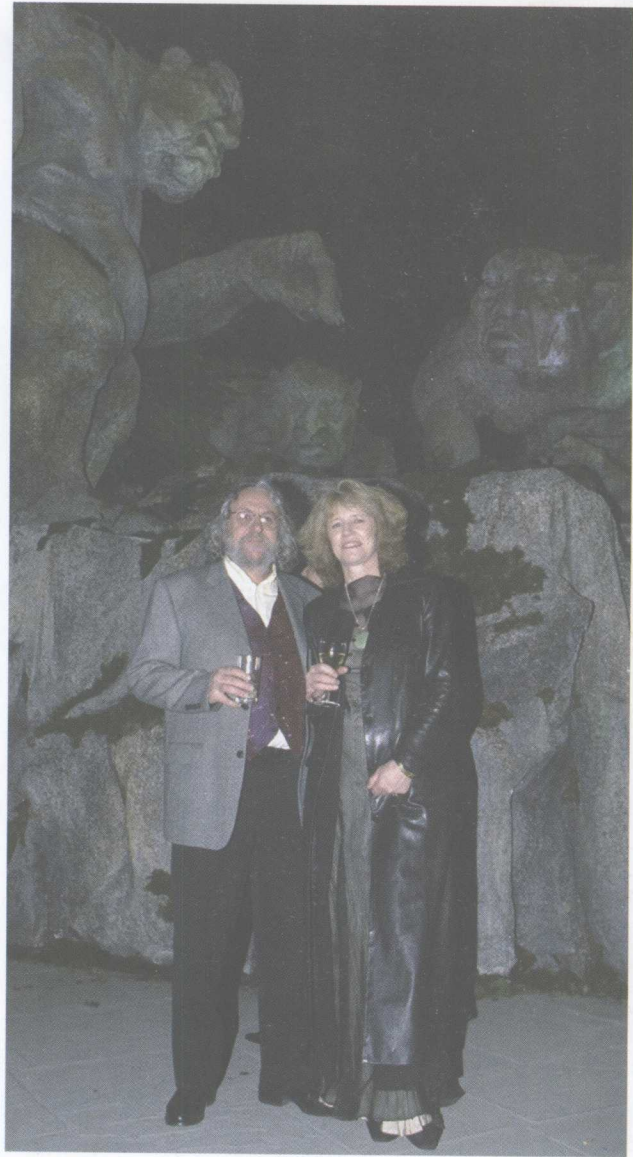
But for those who have been working on the project: cast and crew, writers, craftspeople, technicians and producers – and, most significantly, for director Peter Jackson – it is far more than just a party: it is a milestone on a journey that began almost six years earlier.

True, it is a journey that is still far from over – three more premieres (in New York, Los Angeles and Wellington) and, after that, two more films to be completed – but it is a day, an evening, a night and a party that have been anticipated with as much enthusiasm and, perhaps, a degree of anxiety, for even longer than the Hobbits of Hobbiton had awaited Mr. Bilbo Baggins' eleventy-first birthday party.

It is scarcely an event that has allowed much time for reflection, but there have been moments, Peter confides, when he has looked back to an ordinary – yet extraordinary – Sunday morning in November 1995: “I was lying in bed thinking about what to do next. At the time I was working on *The Frighteners*, but whenever you're making a movie, half your mind is thinking about what you're going to do when this one's over.

“And of course the first thing I thought of was *The Lord of the Rings*! Why not make a film along those lines?” He pauses, gives an incredulous shake of the head and laughs. “I never for a moment thought I'd end up filming the book itself – and yet that's exactly what we went and did!”

How that passing idea took form and eventually became one of the most startlingly ambitious projects in the history of cinema is a tale for another book: the tracking down and acquiring of the rights to Tolkien's novel; the process by which Peter and his co-



scriptwriters, Fran Walsh and Philippa Boyens, crafted a trilogy of compelling screenplays from the thousand-page epic; the enlisting of established Tolkien illustrators Alan Lee and John Howe to work with the Wellington special-effects house Weta Workshop in shaping a film vision of Middle-earth; and, last but not least, the finding, in New Line, of a studio willing to give financial backing to this inspired, if wildly insane, undertaking!

Meanwhile, in the pages that follow, we embark on a creative journey that, like the quest in the original book, has demanded determination and endurance, as well as an openness to the happy quirks of serendipity!



# Lucky Man

I am somebody who really loves what I'm doing!" Peter Jackson is reflecting on what he sees as his fortunate lot in life: "I grew up with parents that were doing a job of work because that's what you had to do in order to earn money."

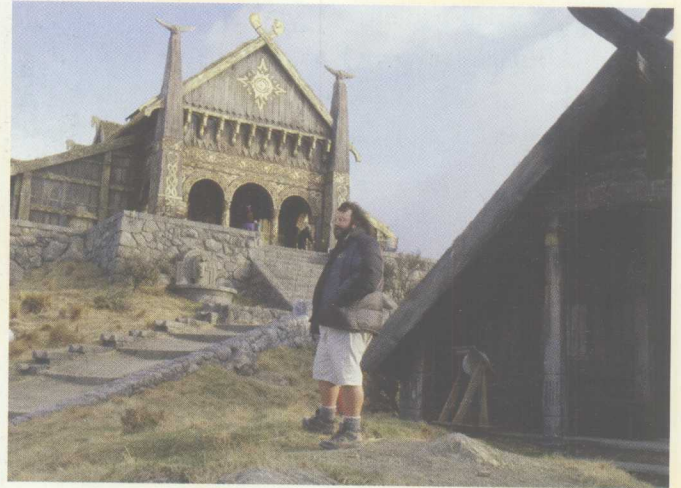
Peter's father was a wages clerk with the Wellington City Council; his mother worked in a factory. "In that situation," says Peter, "your only real joy in life comes from your weekends and your three-week annual vacation. The rest of the time, it's about working to pay your twenty-year mortgage. That's why I feel incredibly lucky every day that I am doing something that I really love doing."

Peter was born on October 31, 1961, Halloween, at Pukerua Bay, on the North Island of New Zealand. He took his first steps toward his film-career when, at an early age, he borrowed his parents' Super-8 movie camera and started making his own experimental home movies. Inspired by stop-motion animation of the kind used in the films of Ray Harryhausen, Peter made his first short film, featuring a cast of animated clay dinosaurs.

By the time he reached the age of sixteen, Peter's fascination had extended to live-action horror films, and he was heading up a film crew comprising his school-mates and making his very own vampire movie!

At twenty, he was working as an apprentice photo-lithographer, but – still dreaming of a career in movies – had saved the money for a 16mm camera and was devoting all his spare time to making his first amateur feature film.

The result, completed a few years later in 1987, was *Bad Taste*. Screened at the Cannes Film Festival, it won awards and



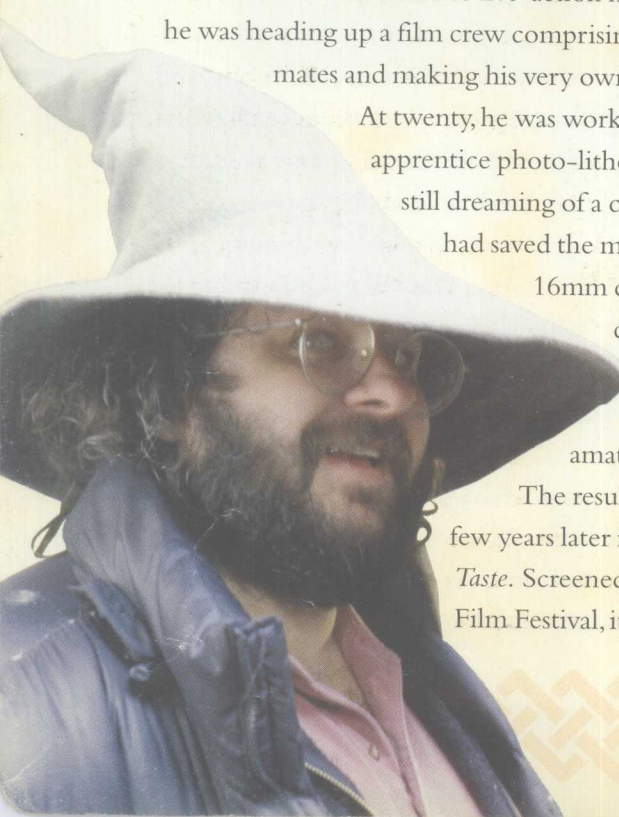
accolades and became the launching pad for his career.

*Bad Taste* was followed, in 1989, by *Meet the Feebles*, a backstage drama on the set of a TV puppet show that could be read as an outrageous lampoon of the ever-popular *Muppet Show*.

In 1992 came *Braindead*, a spectacularly grisly zombie flick splattered with a superabundance of gore and guts. While *Braindead* quickly achieved cult status, it was an unlikely precursor to Peter's next film, *Heavenly Creatures*.

Released in 1994, *Heavenly Creatures* was based on the Parker-Hulme murder case, the story of two schoolgirls (played by Kate Winslet and Sarah Peirse) whose obsessive relationship and constant retreat into their private fantasy realm eventually leads them to murder one of their mothers. An art house movie that widened public awareness of Peter as a filmmaker, *Heavenly Creatures* earned him and his partner Fran Walsh an Oscar nomination for Best Screenplay Written Directly for the Screen.

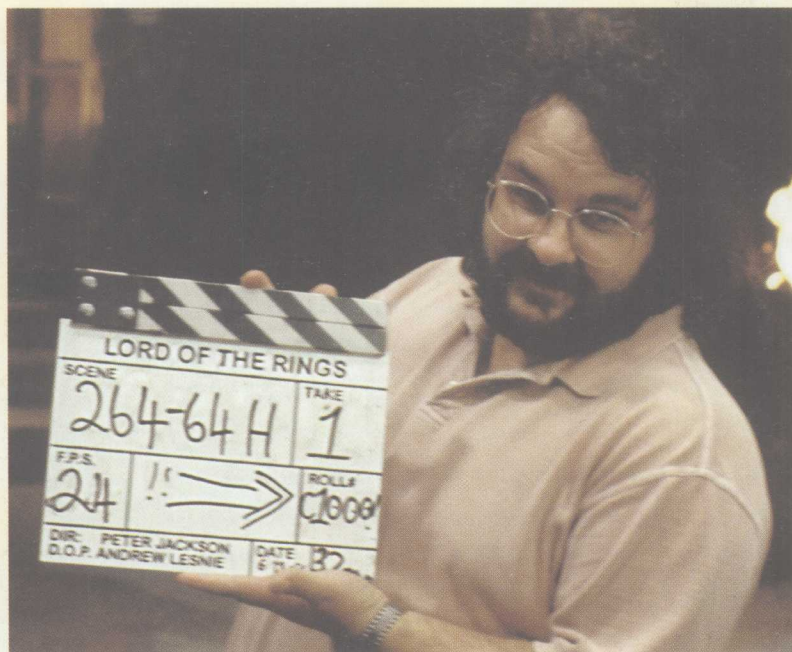
Peter's next ventures, both in 1996, were *Forgotten Silver*, a spoof documentary on the "lost" career of a pioneering New Zealand director of the silent-movie era; and *The Frighteners*, a psychic detective story starring Michael J. Fox. Producing the innovative computer-generated special effects for *The Frighteners* was to spur Peter's



imagination in the direction of making a fantasy film – a road that would, eventually, lead him to Middle-earth.

“Making *The Lord of the Rings*,” says Peter, “is something that is quite amazing! It’s a special book and a special project, and there’s never a day goes by when I don’t think it’s a real honor to be doing it!”

This belief in his good fortune, coupled with his affection for his late parents who – despite the constraints of their own hardworking lives – always gave Peter their unstinting encouragement, resulted in the director’s moving dedication in the closing credits of *The Fellowship of the Ring*: “For Joan and Bill Jackson: Thank you for your belief, support and love...”



## The PJ Philosophy

Peter Jackson is not just a passionate filmmaker: he is also proud of being a New Zealander, a Wellingtonian and, in particular, a resident of Wellington’s Miramar region, as evidenced by a letter he wrote to the city’s mayor, Mark Blumsky, in September 1998: “As you know, I am a Wellingtonian through and through and I am proud to have been able to bring this project not only to New Zealand but to our own Miramar. It is clearly international recognition of how good the Wellington brand of Kiwi is. And people from all over New Zealand are going to come here and experience our best-guarded secrets: our city and our great way of life.

“Filmmaking is very much a cooperative activity. It is a business which mixes together many people from a wide range of backgrounds into a creative melting pot, and out at the end of the process there

eventually pops a movie. Everyone involved, in that sense, “owns” part of the movie, whether they have acted in it, filmed it, built or dressed the sets, donated or allowed props or locations to be used, or even just given the project their goodwill to proceed.

“We have always been lucky that people have got behind us, as individuals, businesses, local bodies – even central government. Without this ongoing goodwill and willingness to help make things work, we couldn’t do half as good a job.

“Maybe it’s because the film industry in New Zealand has always been a ‘roll your sleeves up and get on with it’ sort of industry that we get such assistance. Maybe it’s because people like helping others who are so blatantly doing what they love doing. Maybe it’s because we deal in dreams. Or maybe it’s because Wellington is just a better sort of place!”







# In the Cannes

Please bring your medallion. You will not be permitted to pass security checkpoints without it.” The medallion is, in fact, a cardboard disk, threaded on a piece of string and carrying the words “*The Lord of the Rings* ★ Media Event ★ May 13, 2001 ★ Cannes,” encircled by the Ring verse. Its face value aside, this medallion is, nevertheless, the only means of access to what is expected to be the coolest party of the 2001 Cannes Film Festival.

Candles flickering in terracotta bowls flank the drive up to the Chateau de Castellaras, which has been transformed by Dan and Chris Hennah of *The Lord of the Rings* Art Department into a microcosmic representation of Middle-earth. Where better to begin the tour than at Bag End: up the little garden path and duck through the round doorway into a maze of tiny rooms with low, head-banging ceilings and Hobbit-scale furnishings; nearby, the façade of the Green Dragon inn conceals ranks of portable lavatories, the cubicles of which are wired for sound to provide the seriously disquieting experience of being in the path of a furious Orc attack!



Bilbo’s Happy Birthday banner flutters bravely across a party field dotted with Hobbit marquees and stalls serving food: spit-roasted joints, corn-on-the-cob and great hunks of crusty bread.

Gondorian Guards stand sentry duty on the broad steps leading up to the main entrance of the chateau and through to the courtyard beyond, which is decked out with shields and pennants from the fortress city of Minas Tirith.

