

Italian Best Movie Magazine – November 2013

Dwarf outside, giant inside.

Face to face with Thorin Oakenshield, the warrior trying to recover his home from the evil Smaug.

Known to the British audience for his numerous roles in several BBC TV series (i.e. Robin Hood and Spooks), Richard Armitage worked in London theatres, studied music, worked in a circus. The role of Thorin Oakenshield brought him worldwide notoriety but, meeting him in person, he looks anything but a dwarf.

“To be in character I must undergo very complex make-up: face prosthetics and body padding. Then with CGI they make my head bigger and cut a foot in height. A mix of practical, optical and digital tricks”.

What kind of experience did you have on *The Hobbit* set?

“Similar to the one in the movie: I've been far from home for a very long time, but I met some incredible professionals all united towards a single great goal, exactly like the Company of Dwarves.”

How it was returning on set this summer after having seeing the first film?

“*An Unexpected Journey* has filled in many details that filming often on green screen weren't very clear to me. And when I came back in New Zealand I found even stronger trusting relationships.”

Talking about relationships, the one between Thorin and Bilbo is a controversial one. How does it evolve in *The Desolation of Smaug*?

“Thorin finally accepts Bilbo: not only did he save his life, but also the other dwarves. And he finds the door to enter Erebor... At the end of the second film problems seem to be overcome. But at the very end there are some indications of the future madness.”

Which is your favourite scene?

“Without any doubt the confrontation between Thorin and Thranduil. Thorin tells him everything he thinks about him, it's his way of venting his anger and helplessness that he can't direct to Smaug. It's a wonderfully written sequence, without special effects: only two actors face to face.”

Why did Peter Jackson choose you for this role?

“I don't know and I asked him a thousand times. It's really impossible to talk about your character with Peter until he puts the camera on your face. And then he will ask you to do a thousand different things. I think I will only know the answer when I've seen all three films. This is not a franchise, it's only one story: if 20 films were needed to tell it, I wouldn't mind playing Thorin in all 20”.