

= The Lord of the Rings (film series) =

The Lord of the Rings (also promoted as The Lord of the Rings : The Motion Picture Trilogy) is a film series consisting of three high fantasy adventure films directed by Peter Jackson . They are based on the novel The Lord of the Rings 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) . They were distributed by New Line Cinema .

Considered to be one of the biggest and most ambitious film projects ever undertaken , with an overall budget of \$ 281 million (some sources say \$ 310- \$ 330 million) , the entire project took eight years , with the filming for all three films done simultaneously and entirely in New Zealand , Jackson 's native country . Each film in the series also had special extended editions released on DVD a year after their respective theatrical releases . While the films follow the book 's general storyline , they do omit some of the novel 's plot elements and include some additions to and deviations from the source material .

Set in the fictional world of Middle @-@ earth , the films follow the hobbit Frodo Baggins (Elijah Wood) as he and a Fellowship embark on a quest to destroy the One Ring , and thus ensure the destruction of its maker , the Dark Lord Sauron (Sala Baker) . The Fellowship becomes divided and Frodo continues the quest together with his loyal companion Sam (Sean Astin) and the treacherous Gollum (Andy Serkis) . Meanwhile , Aragorn (Viggo Mortensen) , heir in exile to the throne of Gondor , and the wizard Gandalf (Ian McKellen) unite and rally the Free Peoples of Middle @-@ earth in the War of the Ring .

The series was a major financial success , with the films collectively being among the highest @-@ grossing film series of all time . The films were critically acclaimed and heavily awarded , winning 17 out of 30 total Academy Award nominations . The final film in the series , The Return of the King , won all of its 11 Academy Award nominations including Best Picture , which also tied it with Ben @-@ Hur and Titanic for most Academy Awards received for a film . The series received wide praise for its innovative special and visual effects .

= = Development = =

Director Peter Jackson first came into contact with The Lord of the Rings when he saw Ralph Bakshi 's 1978 animated film The Lord of the Rings . Jackson " enjoyed the film and wanted to know more . " Afterwards , he read a tie @-@ in edition of the book during a twelve @-@ hour train journey from Wellington to Auckland when he was seventeen .

In 1995 , Jackson was finishing The Frighteners and considered The Lord of the Rings as a new project , wondering " why nobody else seemed to be doing anything about it " . With the new developments in computer @-@ generated imagery following Jurassic Park , Jackson set about planning a fantasy film that would be relatively serious and feel real . By October , he and his partner Fran Walsh teamed up with Miramax Films boss Harvey Weinstein to negotiate with Saul Zaentz who had held the rights to the book since the early 1970s , pitching an adaptation of The Hobbit and two films based on The Lord of the Rings . Negotiations then stalled when Universal Studios offered Jackson a remake of King Kong . Weinstein was furious , and further problems arose when it turned out Zaentz did not have distribution rights to The Hobbit ; United Artists , which was in the market , did . By April 1996 , the rights question was still not resolved .

Jackson decided to move ahead with King Kong before filming The Lord of the Rings , prompting Universal to enter a deal with Miramax to receive foreign earnings from The Lord of the Rings while Miramax received foreign earnings from King Kong . It was also revealed that Jackson originally wanted to finish King Kong before The Lord of the Rings began . But due to location problems , he decided to start with The Lord of the Rings franchise instead .

When Universal cancelled King Kong in 1997 , Jackson and Walsh immediately received support from Weinstein and began a six @-@ week process of sorting out the rights . Jackson and Walsh asked Costa Botes to write a synopsis of the book and they began to re @-@ read the book . Two to three months later , they had written their treatment . The first film would have dealt with what

would become *The Fellowship of the Ring* , *The Two Towers* , and the beginning of *The Return of the King* , ending with Saruman 's death , and Gandalf and Pippin going to Minas Tirith . In this treatment , Gwaihir and Gandalf visit Edoras after escaping Saruman , Gollum attacks Frodo when the Fellowship is still united , and Farmer Maggot , Glorfindel , Radagast , Elladan and Elrohir are present . Bilbo attends the Council of Elrond , Sam looks into Galadriel 's mirror , Saruman is redeemed before he dies and the Nazgûl just make it into Mount Doom before they fall . They presented their treatment to Harvey and Bob Weinstein , the latter of whom they focused on impressing with their screenwriting as he had not read the book . They agreed upon two films and a total budget of \$ 75 million .

During mid @-@ 1997 , Jackson and Walsh began writing with Stephen Sinclair . Sinclair 's partner , Philippa Boyens , was a major fan of the book and joined the writing team after reading their treatment . It took 13 ? 14 months to write the two film scripts , which were 147 and 144 pages respectively . Sinclair left the project due to theatrical obligations . Amongst their revisions , Sam is caught eavesdropping and forced to go along with Frodo , instead of Sam , Merry , and Pippin figuring out about the One Ring themselves and voluntarily going along after confronting Frodo about it , as occurs in the original novel . Gandalf 's account of his time at Orthanc was pulled out of flashback and Lothlórien was cut , with Galadriel doing what she does in the story at Rivendell . Denethor attends the Council with his son . Other changes included having Arwen rescue Frodo , and the action sequence involving the cave troll . The writers also considered having Arwen absorb Éowyn 's role entirely by having her kill the Witch @-@ king .

Trouble struck when Marty Katz was sent to New Zealand . Spending four months there , he told Miramax that the films were more likely to cost \$ 150 million , and with Miramax unable to finance this , and with \$ 15 million already spent , they decided to merge the two films into one . On 17 June 1998 , Bob Weinstein presented a treatment of a single two @-@ hour film version of the book . He suggested cutting Bree and the Battle of Helm 's Deep , " losing or using " Saruman , merging Rohan and Gondor with Éowyn as Boromir 's sister , shortening Rivendell and Moria as well as having Ents prevent the Uruk @-@ hai from kidnapping Merry and Pippin . Upset by the idea of " cutting out half the good stuff " Jackson balked , and Miramax declared that any script or work completed by Weta Workshop was theirs . Jackson went around Hollywood for four weeks , showing a thirty @-@ five @-@ minute video of their work , before meeting with New Line Cinema 's Mark Ordesky . At New Line Cinema , Robert Shaye viewed the video , and then asked why they were making two films when the book was published as three volumes (this was later corrected : New Line only made this choice out of economical reasons) ; he wanted to make a film trilogy . Now Jackson , Walsh , and Boyens had to write three new scripts .

The expansion to three films allowed much more creative freedom , although Jackson , Walsh , and Boyens had to restructure their script accordingly . The three films do not correspond exactly to the trilogy 's three volumes , but rather represent a three @-@ part adaptation . Jackson takes a more chronological approach to the story than did Tolkien . Frodo 's quest is the main focus , and Aragorn is the main sub @-@ plot , and many sequences (such as Tom Bombadil) that do not contribute directly to those two plots were left out . Much effort was put into creating satisfactory conclusions and making sure exposition did not bog down the pacing . Amongst new sequences , there are also expansions on elements Tolkien kept ambiguous , such as the battles and the creatures . During shooting , the screenplays continued to evolve , in part due to contributions from cast members looking to further explore their characters . Most notable amongst these rewrites was the character Arwen , who was originally planned as a warrior princess , but reverted to her book counterpart , who remains physically inactive in the story (though she sends moral and military support) .

To develop fight and sword choreography for the series , the filmmakers employed Hollywood sword @-@ master Bob Anderson . Anderson worked directly with the talent including Viggo Mortensen and Karl Urban to develop the film 's many sword fights and stunts . Bob Anderson 's role in *The Lord of the Rings* series was highlighted in the film *Reclaiming the Blade* . This documentary on sword martial arts also featured Weta Workshop and Richard Taylor , *The Lord of the Rings* illustrator John Howe and actors Viggo Mortensen and Karl Urban . All discussed their roles and work on the series as related to the sword .

== Production design ==

Jackson began storyboarding the series with Christian Rivers in August 1997 and assigned his crew to begin designing Middle-earth at the same time. Jackson hired long-time collaborator Richard Taylor to lead Weta Workshop on five major design elements: armour, weapons, prosthetics / make-up, creatures, and miniatures. In November 1997, famed Tolkien illustrators Alan Lee and John Howe joined the project. Most of the imagery in the films is based on their various illustrations. Production designer Grant Major was charged with the task of converting Lee and Howe's designs into architecture, creating models of the sets, while Dan Hennah worked as art director, scouting locations and organising the building of sets.

Jackson's vision of Middle-earth was described as being "Ray Harryhausen meets David Lean" by Randy Cook. Jackson wanted a gritty realism and historical regard for the fantasy, and attempted to make the world rational and believable. For example, the New Zealand Army helped build Hobbiton months before filming began so the plants could really grow. Creatures were designed to be biologically believable, such as the enormous wings of the fell beast to help it fly. In total, 48,000 pieces of armour, 500 bows, and 10,000 arrows were created by Weta Workshop. They also created many prosthetics, such as 1,800 pairs of Hobbit feet for the lead actors, as well as many ears, noses, and heads for the cast, and around 19,000 costumes were woven and aged. Every prop was specially designed by the Art Department, taking the different scales into account.

== Filming ==

Principal photography for all three films was conducted concurrently in many locations within New Zealand's conservation areas and national parks between 11 October 1999, and 22 December 2000, a period of 438 days. Pick-up shoots were conducted annually from 2001 to 2004. The series was shot at over 150 different locations, with seven different units shooting, as well as soundstages around Wellington and Queenstown. Along with Jackson directing the whole production, other unit directors included John Mahaffie, Geoff Murphy, Fran Walsh, Barrie Osbourne, Rick Porras, and any other assistant director, producer, or writer available. Jackson monitored these units with live satellite feeds, and with the added pressure of constant script rewrites and the multiple units interpreting his envisioned result, he only got around four hours of sleep a night. Due to the remoteness of some of the locations, the crew would also bring survival kits in case helicopters could not reach the location to bring them home in time. The New Zealand Department of Conservation was criticised for approving the filming within national parks without adequate consideration of the adverse environmental effects and without public notification. The adverse effects of filming battle scenes in Tongariro National Park meant that the park later required restoration work.

== Cast ==

The following is a list of cast members who voiced or portrayed characters appearing in the extended version of The Lord of the Rings film series.

== Post-production ==

Each film had the benefit of a full year of post-production time before its respective December release, often finishing in October or November, with the crew immediately going to work on the next film. In this period's later part, Jackson would move to London to supervise the scoring and continue editing, while having a computer feed for discussions to The Dorchester Hotel, and a "fat pipe" of Internet connections from Pinewood Studios to look at the special effects. He had a Polycom video link and 5.1 surround sound to organise meetings, and listen to new music.

and sound effects generally wherever he was . The extended editions also had a tight schedule at the start of each year to complete special effects and music .

= = = Editing = = =

To avoid pressure , Jackson hired a different editor for each film . John Gilbert worked on the first film , Mike Horton and Jabez Olssen on the second and longtime Jackson collaborator Jamie Selkirk and Annie Collins on the third . Daily rushes would often last up to four hours , with scenes being done throughout 1999 ? 2002 for the rough (4 ½ hours) assemblies of the films . In total , 1828 km (six million feet) of film was edited down to the 11 hours and 23 minutes (683 minutes) of Extended running time . This was the final area of shaping of the films , when Jackson realised that sometimes the best scripting could be redundant on screen , as he picked apart scenes every day from multiple takes .

The first film 's editing was relatively easygoing , with Jackson coming up with the concept of an Extended Edition later on , although after a screening to New Line they had to re @-@ edit the beginning for a prologue . The Two Towers was always acknowledged by the crew as the most difficult film to make , as " it had no beginning or end " , and had the additional problem of inter @-@ cutting storylines appropriately . Jackson even continued editing the film when that part of the schedule officially ended , resulting in some scenes , including the reforging of Andúril , Gollum 's back @-@ story , and Saruman 's demise , being moved to The Return of the King . Later , Saruman 's demise was cut from the theatrical edition (but included in the Extended edition) when Jackson felt it was not starting the third film effectively enough . As with all parts of the third film 's post @-@ production , editing was very chaotic . The first time Jackson actually saw the completed film was at the Wellington premiere .

Many filmed scenes remain unused , even in the Extended Editions . Promotional material for The Fellowship of the Ring contained an attack by Orcs from Moria on Lothlórien after the Fellowship leaves Moria , replaced with a more suspenseful entrance for the Fellowship . Also cut were scenes from the book , including Frodo seeing more of Middle @-@ earth at Parth Galen and an extended Council of Elrond , and new scenes with an attack upon Frodo and Sam at the river Anduin by an Uruk @-@ hai . The major cut to The Two Towers featured Arwen and Elrond visiting Galadriel at Lothlórien , with Arwen then leading the Elven reinforcements to Helm 's Deep . This scene , and a flashback to Arwen and Aragorn 's first meeting , was cut during a revision of the film 's plot ; the Elves ' appearance was explained with a telepathic communication between Elrond and Galadriel .

Éowyn was to have a greater role in defending the refugees in the Glittering Caves from Uruk @-@ hai intruders , while in Osgiliath , Faramir was to have a vision of Frodo becoming like Gollum , with Frodo and Sam having an extended fight sequence . Filmed for The Return of the King were two scenes present in the book ; Sam using the Phial of Galadriel to pass the Watchers at Cirith Ungol , and further epilogue footage , with endings for Legolas and Gimli , Éowyn and Faramir 's wedding and Aragorn 's death and funeral . Sauron was to fight Aragorn at the Black Gate , but with Jackson deciding the scene was inappropriate , a computer @-@ generated Troll was used instead . To give context for Wormtongue killing Saruman , and Legolas in turn killing Wormtongue , it was to be revealed Wormtongue poisoned Théodred . The final scene cut was Aragorn having his armour fitted for the Battle of the Black Gate by the trilogy 's armourers , which was the final scene filmed during principal photography . Peter Jackson has stated that he would like to include some of these unused scenes in a future " Ultimate Edition " home video release , also including out @-@ takes .

= = = Music = = =

Howard Shore composed , orchestrated , conducted , and produced the trilogy 's music . He was hired in August 2000 and visited the set , and watched the assembly cuts of The Fellowship of the Ring and The Return of the King . In the music , Shore included many leitmotifs to represent various characters , cultures , and places . For example , there are leitmotifs for the hobbits as well as the Shire . Although the first film had some of its score recorded in Wellington , virtually all of the trilogy

's score was recorded in Watford Town Hall and mixed at Abbey Road Studios . Jackson planned to advise the score for six weeks each year in London , though for The Two Towers he stayed for twelve . As a Beatles fan , Jackson had a photo tribute done there on the zebra crossing .

The score is primarily played by the London Philharmonic Orchestra , and many artists such as Ben Del Maestro , Enya , Renée Fleming , James Galway , Annie Lennox and Emiliana Torrini contributed . Even actors Billy Boyd , Viggo Mortensen , Liv Tyler , Miranda Otto (extended cuts only for the latter two) , and Peter Jackson (for a single gong sound in the second film) contributed to the score . Fran Walsh and Philippa Boyens also wrote the lyrics to various music and songs , which David Salo translated into Tolkien 's languages . The third film 's end song , " Into the West " , was a tribute to a young filmmaker Jackson and Walsh befriended named Cameron Duncan , who died of cancer in 2003 .

Shore composed a main theme for The Fellowship rather than many different character themes , and its strength and weaknesses in volume are depicted at different points in the series . On top of that , individual themes were composed to represent different cultures . Infamously , the amount of music Shore had to write every day for the third film increased dramatically to around seven minutes . The music for the series turned out to be a success and has been voted best movie soundtrack of all time for the six years running , passing up Schindler 's list , Gladiator , Star Wars (1977) , and Out of Africa respectively .

== Sound ==

Sound technicians spent the early part of the year trying to find the right sounds . Some , such as animal sounds like those of tigers and walruses , were bought . Human voices were also used . Fran Walsh contributed to the Nazgûl scream and David Farmer the Warg howls . Other sounds were unexpected : the fell beast 's screech is taken from that of a donkey , and the mûmakil 's bellow comes from the beginning and end of a lion 's roar . In addition , ADR was used for most of the dialogue .

The technicians worked with New Zealand locals to get many of the sounds . They re @-@ recorded sounds in abandoned tunnels for an echo @-@ like effect in the Moria sequence . 20 @,@ 000 New Zealand cricket fans provided the sound of the Uruk @-@ hai army in The Two Towers , with Jackson acting as conductor during the innings break of a one @-@ day international cricket match between England and New Zealand at Westpac Stadium . They spent time recording sounds in a graveyard at night , and also had construction workers drop stone blocks for the sounds of boulders firing and landing in The Return of the King . Mixing took place between August and November at " The Film Mix " , before Jackson commissioned the building of a new studio in 2003 . The building , however , had not yet been fully completed when they started mixing for The Return of the King .

== Special effects ==

The first film has around 540 effect shots , the second 799 , and the third 1 @,@ 488 (2 @,@ 730 in total) . The total increases to 3 @,@ 420 with the extended editions . 260 visual effect artists began work on the series , and the number doubled by The Two Towers . The crew , led by Jim Rygiel and Randy Cook , worked long hours , often overnight , to produce special effects within a short space of time . Jackson 's active imagination was a driving force . For example , several major shots of Helm 's Deep were produced within the last six weeks of post @-@ production of The Two Towers , and the same happened again within the last six weeks on The Return of the King .

== Releases ==

== Theatrical ==

The trilogy's online promotional trailer was first released on 27 April 2000, and set a new record for download hits, registering 1 @. @ 7 million hits in the first 24 hours of its release. The trailer used a selection from the soundtrack for *Braveheart* and *The Shawshank Redemption* among other cuts. In 2001, 24 minutes of footage from the series, primarily the Moria sequence, was shown at the Cannes Film Festival, and was very well received. The showing also included an area designed to look like Middle @-@ earth.

The *Fellowship of the Ring* was released 19 December 2001. It grossed \$ 47 million in its U.S. opening weekend and made around \$ 871 million worldwide. A preview of *The Two Towers* was inserted just before the end credits near the end of the film's theatrical run. A promotional trailer was later released, containing music re @-@ scored from the film *Requiem for a Dream*. *The Two Towers* was released 18 December 2002. It grossed \$ 62 million in its first U.S. weekend and out @-@ grossed its predecessor with \$ 926 million worldwide. The promotional trailer for *The Return of the King* was debuted exclusively before the New Line Cinema film *Secondhand Lions* on 23 September 2003. Released 17 December 2003, its first U.S. weekend gross was \$ 72 million, and became the second film (after *Titanic*) to gross over \$ 1 billion worldwide.

= = = Home media = = =

Each film was released on standard two @-@ disc edition DVDs containing previews of the next film. The success of the theatrical cuts brought about four @-@ disc Extended Editions, with new editing, added special effects and music. The extended cuts of the films and the included special features were spread over two discs, and a limited collector's edition was also released. The *Fellowship of the Ring* was released on 12 November 2002, containing 30 minutes more footage, an Alan Lee painting of the Fellowship entering Moria, and the Moria Gate on the back of the sleeve; an Argonath @-@ styled bookend was included with the Collector's Edition. *The Two Towers*, released on 18 November 2003, contained 44 minutes extra footage and a Lee painting of Gandalf the White's entrance; the Collector's Edition contained a Sméagol statue, with a crueller @-@ looking statue of his Gollum persona available by order for a limited time.

The Return of the King was released on 14 December 2004, having 51 minutes more footage, a Lee painting of the Grey Havens and a model of Minas Tirith for the Collector's Edition, with Minas Morgul available by order for a limited time. The Special Extended DVD Editions also had in @-@ sleeve maps of the Fellowship's travels. They have also played at cinemas, most notably for a 16 December 2003 marathon screening (dubbed "Trilogy Tuesday") culminating in a late afternoon screening of the third film. Attendees of "Trilogy Tuesday" were given a limited edition keepsake from Sideshow Collectibles containing one random frame of film from each of the three movies. Both versions were put together in a Limited Edition "branching" version, plus a new feature @-@ length documentary by Costa Botes. The complete series was released in a six @-@ disc set on 14 November 2006.

Warner Bros. released the trilogy's theatrical versions on Blu @-@ ray Disc in a boxed set on 6 April 2010. An extended edition Blu @-@ ray box set was made available for pre @-@ order from Amazon.com in March 2011 and was released on 28 June 2011. Each film's extended Blu @-@ ray version is identical to the extended DVD version; the running time includes an added credit sequence listing the names of "Lord of the Rings fan @-@ club members" who contributed to the project.

In 2014, brand new Blu @-@ ray steelbook editions of the five @-@ disc Extended Editions were released. The first, *The Fellowship of the Ring*, was released on 12 May 2014. The discs are identical to those found in the previous five @-@ disc Blu @-@ ray set.

= = Reception = =

= = = Box office performance = = =

= = = Public and critical response = = =

Unadjusted for inflation , The Lord of the Rings film series is the highest grossing film trilogy worldwide of all time , higher even than other film franchises such as the original Star Wars trilogy and The Godfather trilogy . The film series grossed a total of \$ 2 @. @ 92 billion and also tied a record with Ben @- @ Hur and Titanic for the total number of Academy Awards won for a single film , with The Return of the King receiving eleven Oscars .

The majority of critics have also praised the series , with Kenneth Turan of the Los Angeles Times writing that " the trilogy will not soon , if ever , find its equal " . Some were critical of the films ' pacing and length : " It 's a collection of spectacular set pieces without any sense of momentum driving them into one another " according to Philadelphia Weekly .

On Rotten Tomatoes , the films received approval ratings of 91 % , 96 % , and 95 % respectively . Metacritic , based on its ratings for each film (92 , 88 , and 94 respectively) , lists the series as one of the two most critically acclaimed trilogies of all time . Every film is placed in the top 100 of the ' Metacritic Best @- @ Reviewed Movies ' list . In CinemaScore polls conducted during the opening weekend , cinema audiences gave the films an average grade of A- , A , and A + respectively on an A + to F scale .

The series appears in the Dallas @- @ Fort Worth Film Critics Association 's Top 10 Films , Time magazine 's All @- @ Time 100 Movies , and James Berardinelli 's Top 100 . In 2007 , USA Today named the series as the most important films of the past 25 years . Entertainment Weekly put it on its end @- @ of @- @ the @- @ decade , " best @- @ of " list , saying , " Bringing a cherished book to the big screen ? No sweat . Peter Jackson 's trilogy ? or , as we like to call it , our precioussssss ? exerted its irresistible pull , on advanced Elvish speakers and neophytes alike . " Paste Magazine named it one of the 50 Best Movies of the Decade (2000 ? 2009) , ranking it at No. 4 . In another Time magazine list , the series ranks second in " Best Movies of the Decade " . Empire magazine voted the films at # 1 on the ' 32 Greatest Film Trilogies ' . In addition , six characters and their respective actors made the list of ' The 100 Greatest Movie Characters ' , also compiled by Empire , with Viggo Mortensen 's portrayal of Aragorn ranking No. 15 , Ian McKellen 's portrayal of Gandalf ranking No. 30 , Ian Holm 's portrayal of Bilbo Baggins (shared with Martin Freeman for his portrayal of the same character in The Hobbit films) ranking No. 61 , Andy Serkis ' portrayal of Gollum ranking No. 66 , Sean Astin 's portrayal of Samwise Gamgee ranking No. 77 , and Orlando Bloom 's portrayal of Legolas ranking No. 94 .

= = = Academy Awards = = =

The three films together were nominated for a total of 30 Academy Awards , of which they won 17 , a record for any movie trilogy (the three nominations for The Hobbit : An Unexpected Journey and The Hobbit : The Desolation of Smaug along with the single nomination for The Hobbit : The Battle of the Five Armies brings the series ' total to 37 nominations) . The Fellowship of the Ring earned thirteen nominations , the most of any film at the 74th Academy Awards , winning four . The Return of the King won in every category in which it was nominated , setting the current Oscar record for the highest clean sweep , and its 11 Academy Awards wins ties the record held by Ben @- @ Hur and Titanic (though both of those films had additional nominations that they ultimately lost) . The Return of the King became only the second sequel to win the Oscar for Best Picture (after The Godfather Part II) and the first and only fantasy film to receive this honor , though this has been widely perceived as an award by proxy for the entire series (the first two films were also nominated for Best Picture) . No actors in any of the three films won Oscars , and Ian McKellen was the only actor in the trilogy to receive a nomination , for his work in The Fellowship of the Ring .

The Fellowship of the Ring ? Nominations : 13 , Wins : 4

The Two Towers ? Nominations : 6 , Wins : 2

The Return of the King ? Nominations : 11 , Wins : 11

As well as Academy Awards , each film in the series won the Hugo Award for Best Dramatic

Presentation , the MTV Movie Award for Best Movie , and the Saturn Award for Best Fantasy Film . The first and third films also won the BAFTA Award for Best Film . The soundtrack for The Two Towers did not receive a nomination because of a rule prohibiting a soundtrack including music from a previous soundtrack to be eligible for nomination . This rule was changed in time for The Return of the King to receive the Oscar for Best Music Score . The New York Film Critics Circle awarded The Return of the King its Best Picture Award at the 2003 Awards Ceremony , hosted by Andrew Johnston , chair of the organization at that time , who called it " a masterful piece of filmmaking . "

= = = Reactions to changes in the films from the books = = =

The film series provoked both positive and negative reaction from fans and scholars of the novels , and was sometimes seen as changing parts Tolkien felt thematically necessary in terms of characters , themes , events and subtlety . Some fans of the book who disagreed with such changes have released fan edits of the films such as The Lord of the Rings : The Purist Edition , which removed many of the changes to bring them closer to the original .

Various changes to characters such as Gandalf , Aragorn , Arwen , Denethor , Faramir , Gimli , and Frodo , when considered together , were seen by some to alter the tone and themes found in the books . Several critics contend that the portrayal of women , especially Arwen , in the films is thematically faithful to (or compatible with) Tolkien 's writings despite some differences . Wayne G. Hammond , a Tolkien scholar , said of the first two films that he found them to be " travesties as adaptations ... faithful only on a basic level of plot " and that many characters had not been depicted faithfully to their appearance in the novel . Other critics have argued that Tolkien 's characters were weakened and misinterpreted by their portrayal in the films .

Changes to events (such as the Elves participating at the Battle of Helm 's Deep , Faramir taking the hobbits to Osgiliath , and the deletion of the chapter " The Scouring of the Shire ") are also seen as changing Tolkien 's themes .

Janet Brennan Croft criticized the films using Tolkien 's own terms " anticipation " and " flattening " , which she used in critiquing a proposed film script . She contrasts Tolkien 's subtlety with Jackson 's tendency to show " too much too soon " .

Supporters of the series assert that it is a worthy interpretation of the book and that most of the changes were necessary . Many who worked on the series are fans of the book , including Christopher Lee , who (alone among the cast) had actually met Tolkien in person , and Boyens once noted that no matter what , it is simply their interpretation of the book . Jackson once said that to simply summarize the story on screen would be a mess , and in his own words , " Sure , it 's not really The Lord of the Rings ... but it could still be a pretty damn cool movie . " Other fans also claim that , despite any changes , the films serve as a tribute to the book , appealing to those who have not yet read it , and even leading some to do so . The Movie Guide for The Encyclopedia of Arda (an online Tolkien encyclopedia) states that Jackson 's films were exceptional since filming the whole story of The Lord of the Rings was probably impossible . This notion is partially supported by a review published in 2005 that otherwise criticized a lack of " faithfulness to Tolkien 's spirit and tone . " Douglas Kellner argues that the conservative community spirit of Tolkien 's Shire is reflected in Jackson 's films as well as the division of the Fellowship into " squabbling races " .

= = = Legacy = = =

The release of the films saw a surge of interest in The Lord of the Rings and Tolkien 's other works , vastly increasing his impact on popular culture . It was rumored that the Tolkien family became split on the series , with Christopher Tolkien and his son Simon Tolkien feuding over whether or not it was a good idea to adapt . Christopher has since denied these claims , saying , " My own position is that The Lord of the Rings is peculiarly unsuitable to transformation into visual dramatic form . The suggestions that have been made that I ' disapprove ' of the films , even to the extent of thinking ill of those with whom I may differ , are wholly without foundation . " He added that he had never " expressed any such feeling " . In 2012 , however , he described the films as having " eviscerated "

the book , and criticized the resulting " commercialisation " of his father 's work .

As a result of the series ' success , Peter Jackson has become a major player in the film business (sometimes called a mogul) in the mold of Steven Spielberg and George Lucas , in the process befriending some industry heavyweights like Bryan Singer and Frank Darabont . Jackson has since founded his own film production company , Wingnut Films , as well as Wingnut Interactive , a video game company . He was also finally given a chance to remake King Kong in 2005 . The film was a critical and box office success , although not as successful as The Lord of the Rings series . Jackson has been called a " favourite son " of New Zealand . In 2004 , Howard Shore toured with The Lord of the Rings Symphony , playing two hours of the score . Along with the Harry Potter films , the series has renewed interest in the fantasy film genre . Tourism for New Zealand is up , possibly due to its exposure in the series , with the country 's tourism industry waking up to an audience 's familiarity .

In December 2002 , The Lord of the Rings Motion Picture Trilogy : The Exhibition opened at the Te Papa museum in Wellington , New Zealand . As of 2007 , the exhibition has traveled to seven other cities around the world . A musical adaptation of the book was launched in Toronto , Ontario , Canada , in 2006 , but it closed after mostly poor reviews . A shortened version opened in London , United Kingdom , in the summer of 2007 . The success of the films has also spawned numerous video games and many other kinds of merchandise .

The legacy of The Lord of the Rings is also that of court cases over profits from the trilogy . Sixteen cast members (Noel Appleby , Jed Brophy , Mark Ferguson , Ray Henwood , Bruce Hopkins , William Johnson , Nathaniel Lees , Sarah McLeod , Ian Mune , Paul Norell , Craig Parker , Robert Pollock , Martyn Sanderson , Peter Tait and Stephan Ure) sued over the lack of revenue from merchandise bearing their appearance . The case was resolved out of court in 2008 . The settlement came too late for Appleby , who died of cancer in 2007 . Saul Zaentz also filed a lawsuit in 2004 claiming he had not been paid all of his royalties . The next year , Jackson himself sued the studio over profits from the first film , slowing development of the prequels until late 2007 . The Tolkien Trust filed a lawsuit in February 2008 , for violating Tolkien 's original deal over the rights that they would earn 7 @. @ 5 % of the gross from any films based on his works . The Trust sought compensation of \$ 150 million . A judge denied them this option , but allowed them to win compensation from the act of the studio ignoring the contract itself . On 8 September 2009 , a settlement of this dispute between the Trust and New Line was announced , clearing a potential obstacle to the making of a new film based on The Hobbit .

= = Video games = =

Numerous video games have been released to supplement the film series . The releases include : The Two Towers , Pinball , The Return of the King , The Third Age , The Third Age (GBA) , Tactics , The Battle for Middle @-@ earth , The Battle for Middle @-@ earth II , The Battle for Middle @-@ earth II : The Rise of the Witch @-@ king , Conquest , Aragorn 's Quest , War in the North , Lego The Lord of the Rings , Guardians of Middle @-@ earth and Middle @-@ earth : Shadow of Mordor .

= = The Hobbit = =

Peter Jackson also directed three films based on Tolkien 's 1937 novel The Hobbit , a prequel to the Lord of the Rings novels . The first film , The Hobbit : An Unexpected Journey , was released on 12 December 2012 , the second film , The Hobbit : The Desolation of Smaug , was released on 13 December 2013 , and the third film , The Hobbit : The Battle of the Five Armies , was released on 17 December 2014 . Several actors from The Lord of the Rings , including Ian McKellen , Andy Serkis , Hugo Weaving , Elijah Wood , Ian Holm (as older Bilbo) , Christopher Lee , Cate Blanchett and Orlando Bloom reprised their roles .