

Carrefour Savoires

Portrait Richard Armitage

Looking at the photo you would probably say that **this face** is known to you without being able to place it. You will be enlightened. *By Arnaud Bordas.*

When an actor is bordering on 1m 90 and shows a face with regular features and gray-blue eyes that could bring down a group of women, what can he do to get noticed? Where others would have chosen the easy way out and have tied themselves to posh roles in romantic comedies, the Englishman Richard Armitage, who came from British television, has preferred to interpret a bearded dwarf with long hair in *The Hobbit*, the new trilogy by Peter Jackson, inspired by the works of J.R.R. Tolkien. Well done: the role of the charismatic Thorin Oakenshield, the actor disguised by the talented makeup artists and shrunken through the magic of digital effects, has made his mark in the minds of audiences around the world just as Viggo Mortensen had with his interpretation of Aragorn in *The Lord of the Rings* ten years ago. The two characters have a lot in common besides their status as heir to the throne, which Thorin must regain accompanied by the Hobbit Bilbo, Gandalf the Grey Wizard and his twelve fellow dwarves, embarking on a journey that will take him to Moria, (*author's mistake – should be Erebor*) the kingdom of his people when they were driven out by the terrifying dragon Smaug. We remember the start of *An Unexpected Journey* - the first part of *The Hobbit*, released in cinemas last year - in which Thorin heroically faced his nemesis, the white orc Azog.

This year he is expected to shine in the second chapter *The Desolation of Smaug*, where his role will gradually become more complex and end in climax during the gigantic Battle of Five Armies that ends the last chapter. After that, the name Richard Armitage should certainly be one of the influential members of the kingdom of Hollywood.