

## **Cinema (Germany) Dec 2013 magazine**

What does the Hobbit mean to you?

The book was one of the reasons why I became an actor. My first theatre experience was in an production of the Hobbit when I was 14. Because of that it is a great honour to be a part of this project.

What went through your mind on the last day on set?

That they would have to carry me off the set in a strecher because the sequences were extremely physically exhausting. I got cut in the face and also Peter Jackson was ill. But nevertheless it was very moving. I mean I've been involved into this project for 3 years.

I was committed in 2010 even though the Studio had not given an official green light for the project. And I couldn't imagine myself as a dwarf.

Because with a height of 1.90metre you do not look like a dwarf?

Exactly, but as Thorin I enjoyed looking up to other actors. Because all my life I have made myself small to listen to other's conversations.

What are the key moments in part 2?

We get deep into the realm of the Woodland Elves and see the hatred between them and the dwarves even more. And the madness that takes over Thorin, deep in Erebor is just another element. But the high point of this development will be shown in the third part, in the battle of the Five Armies. By the way for the film maker it's a real challenge to film the second part of a trilogy, because the introduction of the main figures is completed and the plot heads for the big finish. The skill is to present the middle part as an independent part of the story. And Peter managed to do that, perfectly, just like in "The Two Towers".

How did you approach the emerging madness of your character?

It's very difficult to show madness on the big screen. And nearly impossible to write down in the script. Because this state of mind does not follow any rules. To bring Thorin's obsession on screen I dealt with any possible form of addiction. Because Thorin is addicted to gold. I also read a lot about the foulness at the moral decline of the human race. The people who caused the financial crises were really helpful in this context (laughs).

What matters the most for you in acting?

50 % imagination and 50 % concentration.

How did you get into the mood for your role?

I listened to different kinds of music. Classical from Wagner as well as Russian Choral music, rock from Muse and Radiohead and some disturbing compositions from Krzysztof Penderecki's "Threnody for the victims of Hiroshima". Pure Terror.

And how did you relax?

At the weekends I sometimes went skiing secretly, because I wasn't allowed to do so for insurance reasons. When we shot the scene where the dwarves open the secret door to Erebor, I begged Peter to let me ski down Mount Ruapehu in my Thorin-costume but oddly enough he did not agree to it (laughs).