

THE HOBBIT: THE DESOLATION OF SMAUG

USA/New Zealand | 2013 | 161' | Adventure, Fantasy | Rated PG-13

Directed by

Peter Jackson

Written with

Fran Walsh
Philippa Boyens
Guillermo del Toro

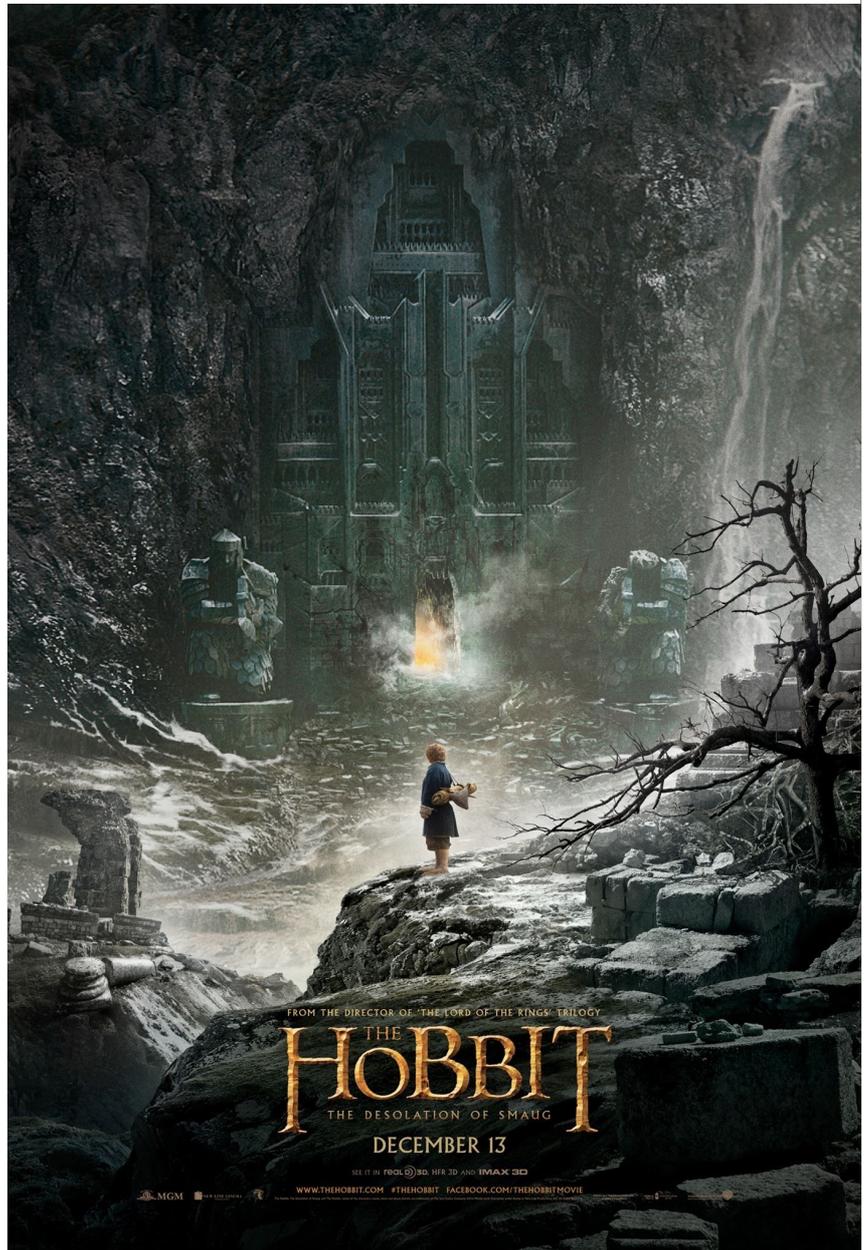
J.R.R. Tolkien
(from the novel by)

With

Ian McKellen
Martin Freeman
Richard Armitage
Orlando Bloom
Evangeline Lily
Cate Blanchett
Benedict Cumberbatch

Original Music by

Howard Shore



Première:

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World release:

10/07/2008

Beyond darkness... beyond desolation... lies
the greatest danger of all.

Budget: \$225.000.000

Gross: \$958.000.000 ca

REVIEW

Bilbo and his dwarf companions are about to continue their journey to their lost land of the Lonely Mountain, but the more they move on the more risks they have to face. Giant spiders are only the first of the monstrous creatures they have to fight, and the separation from Gandalf, whose task is to face the Necromancer, does nothing but complicate things. Even the elves, their ancient enemies, will be on their path, both luckily and unluckily, as their time in the elves' reign will be spent in little cells. Bilbo will free his friends once again, but the run for lake-town has only begun, and, even there, the risks are all but over. Inside the mountain, if they ever get there on time, the terrible dragon Smaug will be waiting for them.

Spectacular is an adjective one could always use to define Peter Jackson's work. But, after this last one, the question is beginning to turn: is this really always enough?

Once again, this journey to Middle-Earth is a real journey for the audience too: we are caught and brought to this fantastic land with or without our will, and, a part from the 3D and the 48 fps technology which I already magnified in the first movie review (*The Hobbit - An Unexpected Journey*), the images are shot with an attention for details and an almost maniacal precision, so that nothing seems out of scheme. Even when the book fans have a bit of shock when the story isn't followed precisely, the addiction are made with tact and sensitivity, so that no one can actually complain about that without sounding prejudiced.

Either way, the story really gets fast and enjoyable far before the first movie did, and the 'absurd' length, almost 3 hours, doesn't affect at all the greatness of the movie, also thanks to the great crew behind every scene, especially the photography, which is, as usual, extraordinary.

As for the characters, Martin Freeman confirms a period of absolute glory, with another stunning performance. His character leads more that it would be required, and its great skills affect the whole group. But it's the 'dragon scene' that proves him a great deal: the movements, clumsy with the 'shoes' he has to wear, and the whole acting are the best thing of the movie. Around him, there has been a sensible improvement of the characterization of the dwarfs, and this screenplay enhancement offer to all

of the actors the chance to actually bring something to the acting level, far better than the first movie's. Of course, Richard Armitage is still the best, but it seems that the only reason justifying his supremacy is his more important role, nothing else. I really want to mention Ken Stott, who plays Balin, who, in my opinion, is really the best of them all. Also, I have to mention Ian McKellen, for his always magnificent Gandalf, and Evangeline Lilly, because entering a franchise like this and leaving a mark such as the one she leaves is a mission only meant for great actresses; her character is one of the best and she doesn't deserve to be criticized for a Peter Jackson's decision (to add this new character, totally invented): the decision can be contested, but the final result, thanks to Lilly and her wonderful performance, cannot be disapproved.

The music, to end with: Howard Shore is almost unmistakable, and this fifth chapter of the Middle-Earth saga is the perfect example to confirm this. And still succeeding in composing new themes as well as his wise use of the old and known ones is the greatest achievement he could earn.

After all this positive judgments, can I not label this movie as a great one? Yes, I can. The fact is that it really is a masterpiece in direction, photography, music; that the actors are really good at their job, and they almost never are in the wrong place or with the wrong expression; but, as I said at the very beginning, this is the fifth movie of the series: can I possibly getting tired of the same old but good Middle-Earth? Well, being next year's one the last one, all that I can say is... it surely comes at the right time. If not a bit late.

ASSESSMENT	
POSTER	92%
TAGLINE	81%
TRAILER	80%
SATISFACTION	79%
DIRECTING	90%
SCREENPLAY	84%
PRODUCTION DESIGN	91%
CINEMATOGRAPHY	88%
CAST	90%
MUSIC	92%
TOTAL	88% - B+