

Orcs, Oh My!

One Ring to Rule them all,
One Ring to Find them,
One Ring to Bring them all,
and in the Darkness Bind them ...

has given the music for this production an authentic and unique sound.

When rumors of this production first surfaced, there was fear that the result would be cheesy or would stray too far from the original work. To help keep the adaptation in line with Tolkien's material, Laurie Battle, Head of Licensing at Tolkien Enterprises, is working as Creative Consultant, advising the director and producer directly, as well as pointing the way to further research when necessary.

According to Wallace, *The Lord of the Rings* will be a "very physical show." The set has moving parts and uses dynamic set design. The stage floor was built at Delstar in England and weighs about 30 tons. It cost \$1,200,000 (Canadian) to build.

In addition, to emulate the variety of characters in the tale, the show will include a variety of performers. "There will be some people whose primary skill is that they're great actors," says Warchus, "others who will form a core choir group with magnificent singing and still others who are sort of circus performers – aerialists, puppeteers, that kind of thing."

In pulling together this production, Warchus admits to being inspired by the costuming in *The Lion King*, the acrobatics and diverse cast of *Cirque de Soleil*, and others.

The Lord of the Rings is appropriate for children aged 8 and older. Kevin Wallace, producer of the show, advises, "People should use their own discretion and bring children who are old enough to enjoy the performance." This is especially true, since it will be approximately three and one-half hours long.



Photograph by Cylla von Tuedemann.

Rob Howell, the stage designer for *The Lord of the Rings* works on a prototype for The Black Rider in the design studio.

Electronic Arts was recently granted the rights to develop games based on J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings*. These rights expand the developer's ability to take players to deeper levels of the fiction than explored in previous games.

Previews of *The Lord of the Rings* will start Feb. 2, 2006 and the Gala Opening will be on March 23. Toronto will be the only place to see this production for at least nine months, when the London production premieres in late 2006. Toronto will be the only place to see this musical for at least 18 months, according to Kevin Wallace, producer of the show.

A Kevin Wallace Limited Production, *The Lord of the Rings* is presented by Kevin Wallace and Saul Zaentz, in association with David and Ed Mirvish and Michael Cohl. Tickets, which are \$78 or \$125 (Canadian), are available at www.lotr.com or by calling (416) 872-1212 or (800) 461-3333.



The Man Behind the Curtain

Matthew Warchus is a respected director from England and has been nominated for two Tony awards on Broadway. He studied drama and music at Bristol University, followed by several years directing at the West Yorkshire Playhouse. In 1996, he directed *Art* in London, New York and Toronto, making him an international success.

Photograph by Manuel Horton.