

Film Review: Truly Disappointing Trek of ‘The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey’

Submitted by [BrianTT](#) [1] on December 13, 2012 - 12:51pm

- [Brian Tallerico](#) [2]
- [HollywoodChicago.com Content](#) [3]
- [Ian McKellen](#) [4]
- [J.R.R. Tolkien](#) [5]
- [Martin Freeman](#) [6]
- [Movie Review](#) [7]
- [Peter Jackson](#) [8]
- [The Hobbit](#) [9]
- [The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey](#) [10]
- [The Lord of the Rings](#) [11]

CHICAGO – Twice as many frames per second and another dimension only serve to amplify the notable flaws of Peter Jackson’s truly disappointing “The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey,” a bloated, dull mess of a film that meanders when it should move and stumbles when it should run. Paced like a high school student writing a paper to meet a word count but without anything actually worth writing, this incredibly slow CGI adventure barely merits comparison to Jackson’s masterful “Lord of the Rings” films other than to point out how much this work reminds one of another start to a prequel trilogy that quickly earned fan spite. The only problem with the comparison is that “The Phantom Menace” is arguably better.



Rating: **2.5/5.0**

Bilbo Baggins (Ian Holm again in the opening but Martin Freeman as a younger Hobbit) is writing another story for young Frodo (an Elijah Wood cameo in the opening scenes) as “The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey” opens. It’s the tale of when Gandalf (Ian McKellen) came to the Shire and pushed young Bilbo on an adventure. The dwarves of Erebor, who we have learned were cast out of their home by a brutal dragon named Smaug and waves of horrifying Orcs, are attempting a return to their homeland and they need a burglar. Hobbits make good burglars. The wizard, the reluctant Hobbit, and the dwarves head off across Middle Earth, getting only part of the way in this first of three films based on J.R.R. Tolkien’s beloved novel.



[Read Brian Tallerico’s full review of “The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey” in our reviews section.](#) [12]

Telling a third of a relatively-small book in a 160-minute-plus film would be a challenge for any filmmaker but it is a particular one for Peter Jackson, who now has fallen so deep into his own vision of Middle Earth that he’s forgotten what first made it entertaining to viewers. After stumbling, bleary-eyed and weary from the “Journey,” I went home and watched a bit of “The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring” and “The Lord of the Rings: Return of the King” and the comparisons are easy to make, immediate, and not in the favor of “The Hobbit.” There’s an artistry in those three award-winning films that feels replaced by bloat here. There’s an urgency replaced by a sense that every shot, every angle, and every set needs to be adored and admired. Where we felt the need for Frodo to complete his quest, it feels like we’re more often being asked to appreciate the filmmaking during Bilbo’s. The filmmaking enhanced the story of “The Lord of the Rings” whereas the story merely seems a tool to expand Jackson’s technical skills to what will be nine hours of filmmaking. The priorities have shifted. It’s no longer a film about a Hobbit. It’s a film about a director who has the power to take a two-hour story and stretch it till it breaks apart in an explosion of 3D, 48fps, CGI glory.



[Continue reading for Brian Tallerico’s full “The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey” review.](#) [12]

“The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey” stars Martin Freeman, Ian McKellen, Richard Armitage, Ken Stott, Graham McTavish, James Nesbitt, and Andy Serkis. It was adapted by Fran Walsh, Philippa Boyens, & Peter Jackson and directed by Jackson. It opens everywhere on December 14, 2012.



The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey

Photo credit: Warner Bros. Pictures

Source URL (retrieved on Apr 24 2024 - 4:23pm):

<http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/20810/film-review-truly-disappointing-trek-of-the-hobbit-an-unexpected-journey>

Links:

- [1] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/users/briantt>
- [2] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/brian-tallerico>
- [3] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/hollywoodchicagodotcom-content>
- [4] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/ian-mckellen>
- [5] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/jrr-tolkien>
- [6] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/martin-freeman>
- [7] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/movie-review>
- [8] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/peter-jackson>
- [9] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/the-hobbit>
- [10] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/the-hobbit-an-unexpected-journey>
- [11] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/the-lord-of-the-rings>
- [12] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/reviews/20808/truly-disappointing-trek-of-the-hobbit-an-unexpected-journey>