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'The Hobbit: The Battle of the Five Armies'

By Derek Zemrak

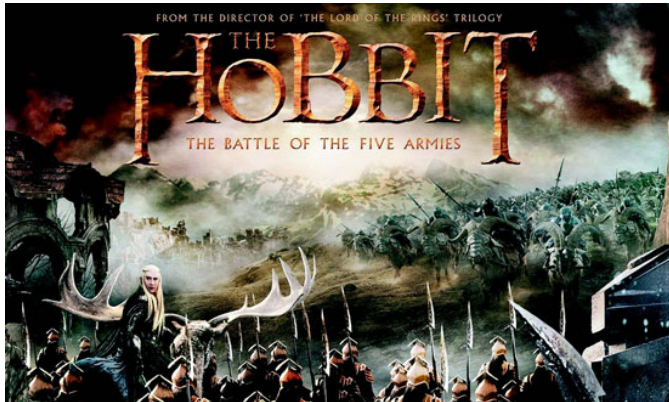


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see" on a big screen - the bigger the better.

Bilbo and company are forced to engage in a war against a collection of enemies to keep the terrifying Smaug from obtaining the Kingdom of Treasures and demolishing all of Middle-Earth. The film once again stars Martin Freeman (Bilbo), Ian McKellen (Gandalf), Cate Blanchett (Galadriel), Richard Armitage (Thorin), Orlando Bloom (Legolas) and Benedict Cumberbatch (Smaug). You can count on "The Hobbit: The Battle of the Five Armies" to once again receive several Oscar nominations, in the technical categories, when the nominations are announced Jan. 15.

Another holiday movie will take place this Friday, Dec. 19, during the California Independent Film Festival Funder's Night at the Rheem Theatre. We will be showing a special screening of Animal Planet's first original TV movie "Hercules Saves Christmas," starring Hercules from Animal Planet's hit TV series "Pit Boss."

"Hercules Saves Christmas" takes us on a magical, fun-filled and touching journey. Max, an adorable yet mischievous 12-year-old boy meets a talking dog named Hercules who takes him to the North Pole to meet Santa and argue his way onto the "nice list." The movie was shot in 2012 in the Bay Area, including Orinda Theatre Square and the Orinda Theatre. The movie was produced by Shorty Rossi, Leonard Pirkle and myself, and stars newcomer Anthony Robinson as Max, who was nominated for a Young Artist Award in 2012 for the role in the movie. The movie also stars McKenzie Phillips ("One Day at a Time"), Marc McClure ("Back to the Future," "Superman"), Kathy Garver ("Family Affair") and George Mcquire as Santa Claus. Mcquire recently performed live at the Rheem Theatre in the stage play "Love Letters" to rave reviews. Leonard and I will both be attending the screening, which will include a Q&A session. Refreshments will be served and tickets must be purchased in advance at the Lamorinda Theatre box office or online at www.lamorindatheatres.com.

Starting next week at the Orinda Theatre includes Disney's "Into the Woods" and "Unbroken." I would like to wish everyone a wonderful holiday season and an amazing 2015! See you at the concession stand!

Derek can be heard each Saturday morning at 8 a.m. on KEST 1450AM discussing movies and entertainment in the Bay Area.

The holiday season is now in full swing and as with many of us it is also Hollywood's busiest time of year. Lamorinda Theatres has a full schedule of holiday films this week, starting off with the highly anticipated and the defining chapter of the Hobbit franchise, "The Hobbit: The Battle of the Five Armies," on Wednesday, Dec. 17. As the title states it is a battle and the movie is much more action packed than the previous Hobbit films, "The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey" and "The Desolation of Smaug." This time around, three-time Oscar winner, director Peter Jackson, keeps the audience on the edge of their seats from the opening scene through the 2 hours and 24 minutes of the movie.

The movie opens with the dragon, Smaug, going on a rampage, destroying the local village, causing mayhem among the people. I can confidently state, this was one of the most amazing visual effect scenes in Hollywood history. A "must

Reach the reporter at: info@lamorindaweekly.com

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