Film Close-Up: Orlando Bloom

by Joey_Berlin

After six years living in the bright glare of the Hollywood limelight, Orlando Bloom looks forward to making a temporary retreat. But first he has to say goodbye to an old friend, his character Will Turner.

ORLANDO BLOOM - Orlando Bloom says he has bittersweet feelings about the 'Pirates of the Caribbean' franchise coming to a close with the final installment, 'At World's End.' CNS Photo courtesy of Peter Mountain. Bloom has bittersweet feelings about the "Pirates of the Caribbean" franchise sailing off into the sunset with the final installment, "At World's End," but he is excited about this time of transition in his career.

In "Pirates of the Caribbean: At World's End," the dashing Will Turner reunites with Johnny Depp's Capt. Jack Sparrow in the netherworld and gets closer romantically with Elizabeth, played by Keira Knightley, all in time for the bombastic final battle.

Since he shot to stardom playing the elf Legolas in the "Lord of the Rings" trilogy, the 30-year-old Bloom has starred mainly in period epics, including "Troy" and "Kingdom of Heaven." His occasional forays into contemporary settings ("Haven" and "Elizabethtown") have yielded less-favorable critical notices.

Bloom, who is dyslexic, gravitated toward acting at a young age. In 1999, director Peter Jackson happened to catch Bloom in a performance and asked him to audition, and legions of swooning young female fans will forever hold Jackson in their debt.

Q: The "Pirates of the Caribbean" trilogy has been a part of your life for several years now. Do you have mixed emotions about it coming to an end?

A: Yeah, I feel very fortunate. It feels like I've been doing a pirate movie for most of my adult life. But

obviously it's a quality film and I've been working with great people, under the direction of Gore Verbinski and with Johnny and a great cast. It's been a fantastic sort of safety net, as it were. So it's definitely a bittersweet feeling. It's going to be sad to say goodbye to the character of Will because I love him, you know? He's completely fearless, and he's become a pirate by the end of it. So just as I was starting to get excited about becoming a pirate, it's come to an end.

Q: What aspects of this movie will appeal to the huge fan base of teenage girls that you have all around the world?

A: Oh, I think the writers did such a great job. I think part of what's compelling about the romance between Will and Elizabeth is that you're desperate for them to get together. And I think that the writers, and Gore's vision for it, really came together very cleverly for the end sequence. I think audience members will have a real sense of satisfaction.

Q: You turned 30 while filming in Hawaii. Were you able to celebrate your birthday there at all, or did filming take priority?

A: Yeah, everything sort of takes second place to the serious business of making a movie, especially a movie like this one. But it was fun. I had friends and family around. It was really good. It was lovely to be in Hawaii for it. I was actually really excited to turn 30 and I sort of felt like I didn't have to take myself seriously anymore because the number did it for me, in a way. Yeah, it was a big relief.

Q: Are you at all anxious about this career transition period you are facing, having just come off a pair of tremendously successful trilogies?

A: It's cool because I'm ready. I'm going back to London to do some theater. I need to do something completely different. I want to go back to what it felt like when I left drama school, you know, that feeling of immersing myself in a completely different world. I love working as an actor on movies but my decision to do theater was because I just thought it was now or never.

Q: Having had time to get used to being a celebrity, are you dealing better with the attention now?

A: All of the attention that I got very quickly after doing "Lord of the Rings," I think it actually put me more into a shell for a while. I think it made me a little more shy because it was very new and I wasn't sure how to deal with it. And I think I'm still learning to come out of that shell. For me, part of this trilogy coming to a close and moving into other work and doing theater and stuff, is to get that confidence in myself from working on my craft in another way.

Q: Are you a little nervous about returning to theater after achieving so much success in movies?

A: It's going to be fun. I'm really looking forward to it. And I know what I'm capable of and I'm not afraid to make some mistakes along the way. When you've been a part of so much success I think people just keep associating you with success. And then if you make a step wrong then they shoot you down. So it feels like there can be more at stake. But really, as I'm turning 30 and growing up, I'm realizing that there's really nothing at stake. I've got nothing to lose and everything to gain at this point.

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