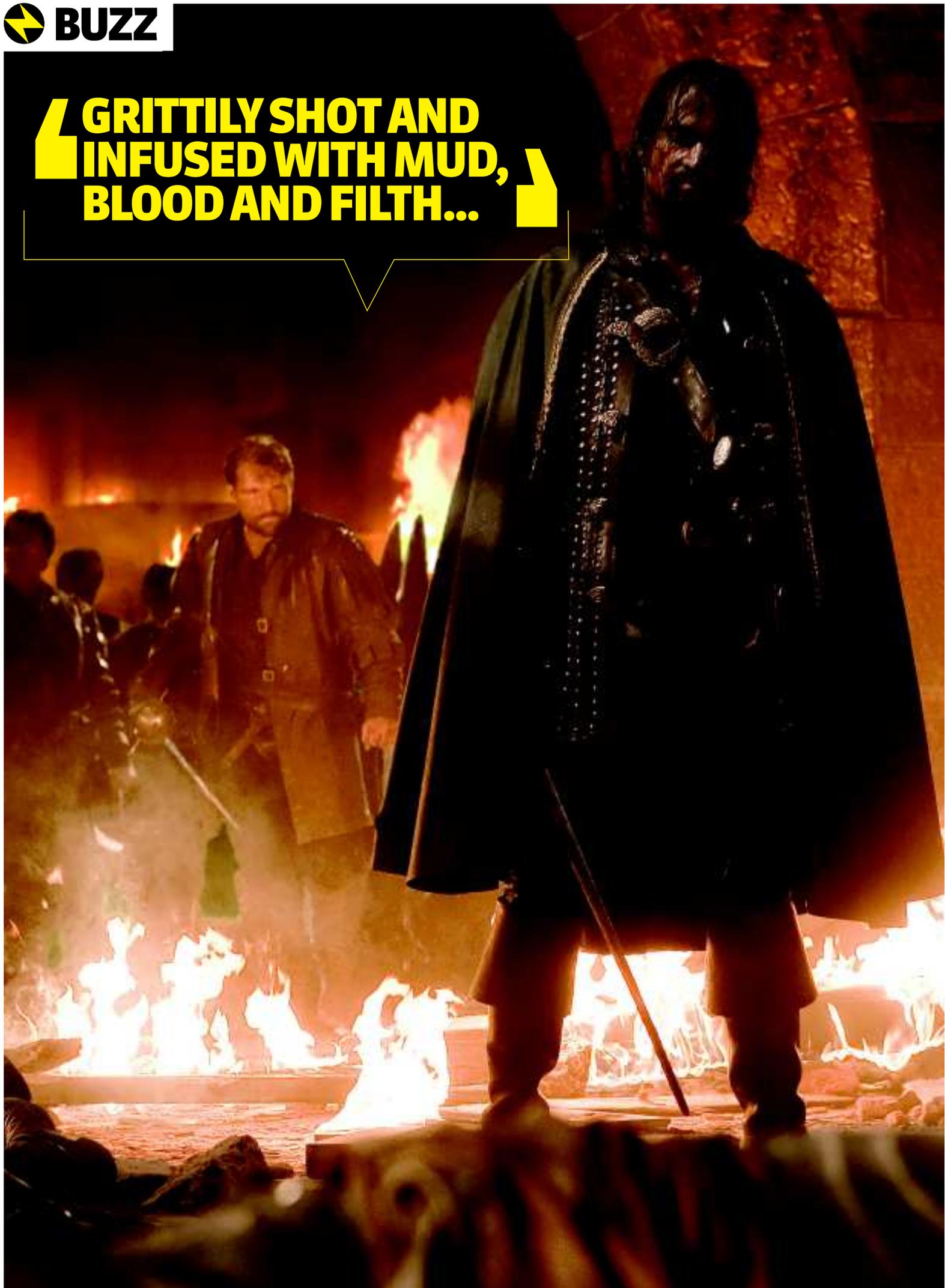


**GRITTIPLY SHOT AND
INFUSED WITH MUD,
BLOOD AND FILTH...**



SOLOMON KANE

The 17th-Century Man With No Name.

ETA 5 FEBRUARY 2010 Living by his bloodied blade and savouring a life of pillage and plunder, Solomon Kane must pay the price when the devil comes calling. But Kane won't give up his soul that easily – he escapes the Reaper's clutches and seeks redemption by renouncing his mercenary ways and devoting himself to valiant deeds and piety. Of course, those murderous impulses return quicker than you can say fiery pits of hell.

Kane is the invention of Robert E Howard, the man who created *Conan The Barbarian*. His sword-and-sorcery escapades were a regular feature in the Depression-era pulp mag *Weird Tales* and now he's making his belated leap to the big-screen, courtesy of director Michael J. Bassett and James Purefoy, who finally gets to wear the black cape and wide-brimmed hat that was cruelly snatched from him on *V For Vendetta* (Purefoy got the sack early on and was replaced by Hugo Weaving as V). That's not his main reason for wanting to raise Kane though...

"He's just a really cool character," Purefoy tells *Buzz*. "I was very influenced by Clint Eastwood when I was growing up. I'd sit in front of his movies wearing a poncho – I'm not kidding, 12 years old – and my mother would give me a cheroot to smoke. He was the coolest person I'd ever seen in my life. I was always drawn in because he was such a taciturn enigma. And to my mind, Solomon is the 17th-Century Man With No Name."

Grittily shot and infused with mud, blood and filth, Solomon Kane evokes the films of Michael Reeves, in particular his 1968 classic *Witchfinder General*. Using various bits of Kane lore, Bassett has concocted an origin story that sends Kane off through strife-torn 17th-Century England, his flesh scarred by spiritual symbols, to link up with a Puritan clan (led by Pete Postlethwaite) and battle thugs, witches and demonic hordes. "In Howard's stories, he's a fully formed character," says Bassett. "Where our story ends, Howard's starts, so there's plenty of material for sequels."

With swashbuckling derring-do, brilliantly gloomy production design and Purefoy providing a charismatic anti-hero, Kane had *Buzz* buzzing at the Toronto Film Festival. "There are so many silly fantasy movies," Bassett states. "I wanted to take fantasy to a darker, more intense place. And Solomon Kane is one of the most interesting, conflicted heroes there is." **MM**

For the latest features and video check out tinyurl.com/tfस्कane



These new Puritans: (above) Pete Postlethwaite and Alice Krige; (right) Rachel Hurd-Wood and Jason Flemyng as Kane's nemesis Malachi.



EVER MET TOM CRUISE?

Gossip, tidbits and backstage banter from the unsung heroes of the screen trade...



He's a prosthetics designer and sculptor who's reckoned with Greek gods, Roman warriors and *that* alien.

BRENDAN LONERGAN CV

*Clash Of The Titans, Surviving Evil, Troy, Gladiator, Saving Private Ryan, Alien*³

I've never met Tom Cruise. The most star-struck I've been was visiting *Batman* in 1988. We were having tea at the end of the day and Jack Nicholson walked in, all ready to get his game face on. He was impressive.

The first time I felt I was living the dream was on *Alien 3*. It was early in my career and I'd always been a horror fan, so working on that franchise with that team was incredible. The film's got a lovely look to it, even though Fincher was being handed script rewrites literally every day as he was filming.



I sculpted Joaquin Phoenix's armour on *Gladiator*. The job varies enormously – one day you're supervising an entire workshop, the next you're painting breastplates.

I love CGI. I think it can work beautifully when in conjunction with the practical stuff that I do, it doesn't have to be an either/or thing. I think the best films are the ones that keep you guessing, so you can't tell where the models end and the effects begin.

Prosthetics can be tricky. Most actors are great about it, but if you're working in tropical heat with this itchy, heavy stuff on your face, contending with tics and mosquitoes and spiders getting into the suit, it does get grim.



I was on set for some of *Revenge Of The Sith*.

I watched Hayden Christensen get in the Vader suit – he was thrilled. Ewan McGregor looked bored. I think when you use green screen at the expense of actual sets, it doesn't give actors much to work with.

Some directors are hands-off when it comes to design. Others, like Fincher and Cameron, they get much more involved. They'll do a concept drawing and go, "OK, now make that good!"

I've just finished working on *Clash Of The Titans*, making armour for Liam Neeson and Mads Mikkelsen. The team was great, it was one of the nicest jobs I've experienced. **ED**



Clash Of The Titans opens on 26 March 2010.