

DreamWorks Brings Legends to Life

Rise of the Guardians is the new DreamWorks animated film where the Guardians try to protect the children of the world. The Guardians include Santa Claus, the Tooth Fairy, the Easter Bunny, the Sandman, and now Jack Frost.

Movieguide® had the chance to talk with the first time director, Peter Ramsey. Ramsey has been working with DreamWorks for about eight years, but this is his first big budget movie to direct. Before, Ramsey had worked on about 25 live action movies, but has done a wonderful job with animation in *Rise of the Guardians*. Read more about the *Rise of the Guardians*, [here!](#)

MG: This is the first time directing? How excited were you?

Ramsey: I was pretty thrilled. I wanted to direct a movie for literally decades, that's what I got in the business to do. For it to finally happen and finally happen on this scale is pretty mind blowing.

MG: You have been working with DreamWorks for some time now. Why?

Ramsey: Prior to working with them, I had done some live action, I had been a storyboard artist. Also, I directed some second units on several movies. I had story boarded maybe 20, 25 movies in my live action career. A producer, on one of the movies I worked on, went on to produce the SHREK movies at DreamWorks, so he gave me a call several years later and asked me if I would be interested in checking out animation. I had never done it before and was kind of intrigued and ready for a little bit of a change, so I thought I would check it out and came over, started learning about it, and really liked it and it just so happens that they were kind of intrigued by my

experience in live action and thought that I could bring some stuff to the making of their films.

MG: It looks like you have done a whole range. Do you think you will continue with animation?

Ramsey: I like it a lot. I really kind of have grown to love it. I've always loved animation, you know growing up. For whatever reason, I didn't dream of ever working in it, but I am really kind of loving it. I love the characters in the movie. And, I also feel like I just want to have a much better grasp of how to make one of these. So experience has me hungry to try to do it again and do it better. But, you know some day I would love to go back in to live action and do that since that was my first dream.

MG: I thought this was an interesting choice for who the guardians would be. Did you participate in developing that?

Ramsey: William Joyce who wrote the original books, the original concept, had already picked which guardians to focus on, and you know they are kind of the big ones, so that felt pretty right. There are lots more that he has in his worlds, in his mythology, that you could easily bring into future movies if we got to make any.

MG: I thought that they all seemed real, not just icons.

Ramsey: We tried to give them all specific character traits – real personalities and sort of real things that they bring to the world. The whole reason to make a movie about them is to relate to them, to understand why they are who they are, and why they have been so important to so many people for so long. That was kind of one of the big challenges of the movie that you learned about them.

MG: I thought that there was a great message, but you tell me in your own words what you would say the message is?

Ramsey: The overarching message is that there are certain things that you need in life that you need to hold on to in order to grow and mature to be a good person. Dreams, and joy and wonder. All of them are in direct opposition to what our bad guy brings, which is fear and hopelessness, all those things that make life really small and keep you from branching out to try new things or to open yourself up to other people or anything like that. There's got to be a way to fight against that. . . how things like hope and wonder, and dreams and imagination, push back against fear.

MG: The character that is least defined is the Man on the Moon. Who exactly is the Man on the Moon?

Ramsey: We intentionally kept him kind of mysteries. He is the oldest and wisest guardian of them all. In a way he is their leader, but we didn't want to make him too explicit. We kind of felt it was important to put ourselves in Jack Frost's shoes, you know, I don't understand why this is happening. I don't understand why I am here. I know my life must have some kind of meaning, but I don't understand what it is. And, I can't get any answers. Until he goes through this journey himself and goes through this realization of himself. Really, it is what everybody goes through. We all kind of have experienced some confusion and doubt and all these things about why we are here and what we are supposed to be doing. And, to be able to go through him on this journey, hopefully it lets people feel like they are working through some of that themselves. Also, that he sticks with it, and he finds out what his center really is. What the purpose was for him being here. If it was too easy, if you could get all your answers from someone who would be able to give all your answers immediately, there almost wouldn't be any point to go through life. That's kind of what we wanted to do by keeping the Man on the Moon mysterious.

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