**IAN McKELLEN**, born and raised in the north of England, has been honored with over 50 international acting awards during his more than half a century on stage and screen. He is beloved by fans worldwide as Magneto in the “X-Men” films and Gandalf in “The Lord of the Rings” and “The Hobbit” trilogies.

McKellen’s performance as Gandalf the Grey in Peter Jackson’s “The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring” brought him an Academy Award® nomination for Best Supporting Actor and a Screen Actors Guild (SAG) Award®.

He received his first Academy Award® nomination, for Best Actor, for his masterly portrayal of gay film director James Whale, in Bill Condon’s 1998 classic “Gods and Monsters.”

In 1995, McKellen starred to acclaim as Richard III, in his own screen-adaptation of Shakespeare’s play, which he also produced. Other film credits include Michael Mann’s “The Keep,” Fred Schepisi’ “Plenty” and “Six Degrees of Separation,” John Schlesinger’s “Cold Comfort Farm,” Sean Mathias’ “Bent” and Ron Howard’s “The Da Vinci Code.”

McKellen has also been honored for his extensive television work, from the miniseries “The Prisoner” to his monumental performance in “King Lear”: from his reincarnation of Tsar Nicholas II in the telefilm “Rasputin”, to his classic guesting as himself in HBO’s “Extras”. He co-stars with Derek Jacobi and Frances de la Tour in ITV’s series “Vicious,” which airs on PBS in US.

On the first night of Channel 4 in UK, McKellen played a mentally handicapped man in Stephen Frears’ “Walter.” He surprised everyone with his 10 episodes in UK’s longest running soap, “Coronation Street.”

McKellen attended Cambridge University and, since 1961, has worked non-stop in the British theatre. He has been leading man and produced plays, modern and classic, for the Royal Shakespeare Company and the National Theatre of Great Britain and in the West End of London. He has won Olivier Awards for his performances in “Macbeth” (1976-78), “The Alchemist” (1977), “Bent” (1979), “Wild Honey” (1984), and “Richard III” (1990), as well as Evening Standard Awards for his work in “Coriolanus” (1984) and “Othello” (1989), and for Outstanding Contribution to British Theatre (2009).

In 1981, he swept the Best Actor Awards, including the Tony, for his portrayal of Salieri in the Broadway production of Peter Shaffer’s “Amadeus.” For over a decade, he toured his one-man show, “Ian McKellen: Acting Shakespeare,” through four continents, including twice on Broadway. In 2001 he returned to the New York stage in “Dance of Death,” with Helen Mirren. In 2013 he and Patrick Stewart receivied raves all round jn a repertory of Pinter’s “No Man’s Land” and Beckett’s “Waiting for Godot”,on Broadway.

In 2014 he reunited with director Bill Condon to film “Mr Holmes” for release in 2015. Ian portrays a 93-year-old Sherlock Holmes.

In 1991, Sir Ian was knighted (KBE) for services to theatre in UK. He is a co-founder of Stonewall UK, which lobbies for legal and social equality for gay people. In 2008, the Queen personally appointed him Companion of Honour (CH), for his services to drama and to equality.

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