



WARNER BROS.  
STUDIO TOUR  
LONDON

# THE MAKING OF Harry Potter



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Warner Bros. Studio Tour London – The Making of Harry Potter is a unique attraction offering visitors the ultimate opportunity to journey behind the scenes of Harry Potter and experience the magic that has gone into creating the most successful film series of all time.

Visitors are able to step into the original Great Hall, first built for Harry Potter and the Philosopher’s Stone, experience green screen technology and marvel at the breath taking miniature scale model of Hogwarts castle. The attraction allows visitors the chance to see first hand the sheer scale and detail of the actual sets, costumes, animatronics, special effects and props that have been used in all eight of the Harry Potter films.

In addition to the Great Hall, some of the most iconic sets featured in the attraction include Dumbledore’s office, Diagon Alley, the Ministry of Magic, number four Privet Drive, Gryffindor common room and the Forbidden Forest.

Sarah Roots, Vice President of Warner Bros. Studio Tour London, commented:

*“What makes the Tour so special is that everything on show has been used in the making of the Harry Potter film series. All the sets, props and costumes are authentic and show the incredible detail and craftsmanship that goes into film production. All the films were shot at Leavesden so it’s wonderful to have given the sets a permanent home here.”*

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT THE STUDIO TOUR’S PRESS OFFICE  
**[press@wbstudiotour.co.uk](mailto:press@wbstudiotour.co.uk)**

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# ABOUT



In 2000, an enterprising production team made its way to a film studio on the outskirts of London. The producers were inspired to make a film based on a book about a young boy with a lightning bolt scar who, on his eleventh birthday, learns that he is a wizard. That story was Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone and that studio was Leavesden.

From 1939–1994 the studios were known as Leavesden Aerodrome, a local airfield and factory. During World War II, the plant produced fighter planes for the Ministry of Defence and, in the following years, it became a production centre for Rolls-Royce aircraft engines.

The factory closed in 1994 and Leavesden began a major transformation. Hangars became soundstages for filming and workshops for constructing sets and props. Meanwhile, the airfield's runway and grassy fields turned into a fully functioning backlot. The old aerodrome was now England's new home for film production. By the time cameras began filming Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone six years later, author J.K. Rowling's first four Harry Potter books had climbed to top spots on best-seller lists all over the world. The filmmakers, cast and crew were now tasked with bringing to life on the big screen a magical world that was loved by millions.

Hundreds of talented men and women converged at Leavesden Studios to begin more than a decade of production.

With each new film, the Harry Potter phenomenon grew, and soon the seven books that enchanted the world had become the biggest film series in history.

Warner Bros. Studio Tour London - The Making of Harry Potter celebrates the incredible craftsmanship behind these films as well as the wonderful production family that called the studios home for ten years. This tour also marks the first time that fans get the chance to set foot on the actual sets from their favourite movies.





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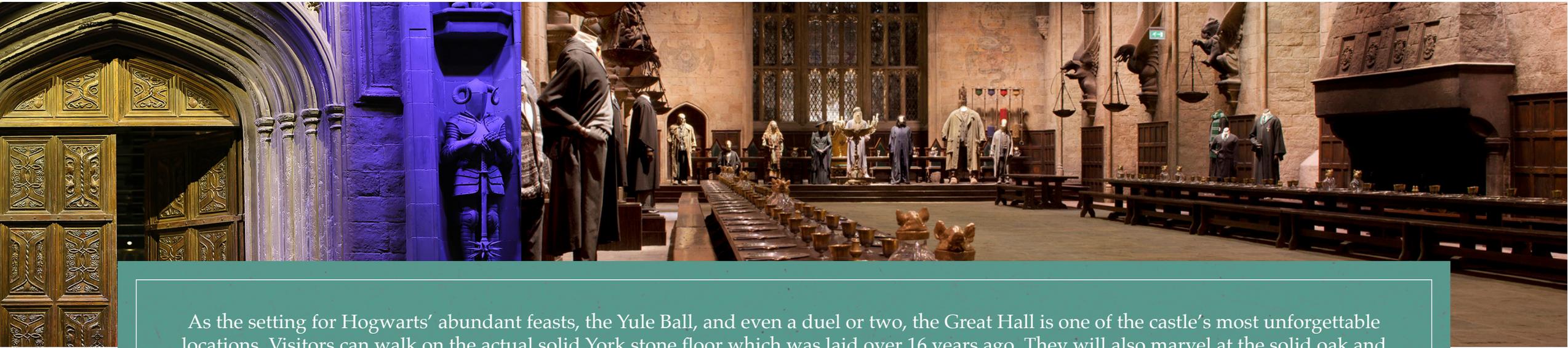
THE  
MAKING OF  
*Harry Potter*



# THE TOUR



# THE GREAT HALL



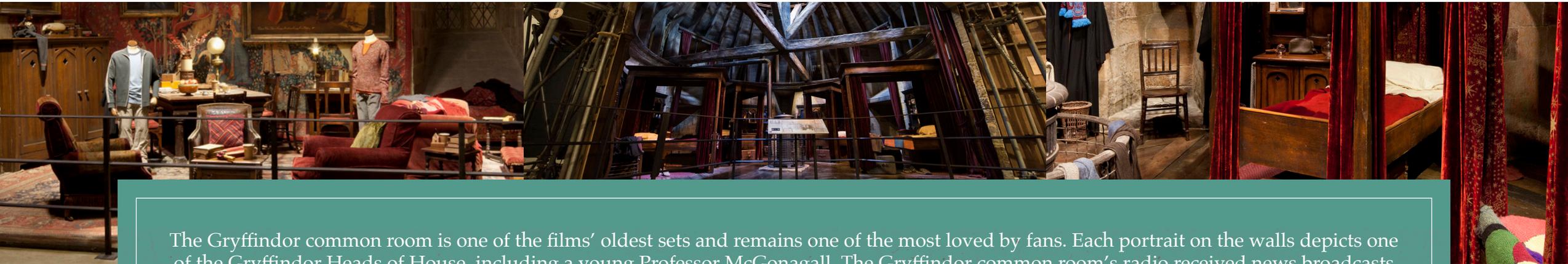
As the setting for Hogwarts' abundant feasts, the Yule Ball, and even a duel or two, the Great Hall is one of the castle's most unforgettable locations. Visitors can walk on the actual solid York stone floor which was laid over 16 years ago. They will also marvel at the solid oak and pine house tables which were built for the films and then aged with axes and chains. Over the years, the Hogwarts pupils have taken it upon themselves to carve in their own graffiti, which production designer Stuart Craig encouraged – after all Hogwarts is a school!

Though it was rarely seen on screen visitors can also enjoy the unique house points bead system which prop makers are especially proud of. It is said to have caused a national shortage of beads when it was first installed in the year 2000.

The physical ceiling in the Great Hall was inspired by the arched timber ceiling of Westminster Hall in London; however, the Great Hall's enchanted ceiling, as seen in the films, was created using visual effects. The floating candles were created via individual candle-shaped tubes containing spirit oil which were suspended by wires, digitally removed on screen.

During production on the first film, the heat from the flames burnt through the wires and the 'candles' fell onto the tables. The floating candles were created digitally thereafter.

# GRYFFINDOR COMMON ROOM AND BOYS' DORMITORY



The Gryffindor common room is one of the films' oldest sets and remains one of the most loved by fans. Each portrait on the walls depicts one of the Gryffindor Heads of House, including a young Professor McGonagall. The Gryffindor common room's radio received news broadcasts from the Wizarding Wireless Network and has an opening on the front grille that actually moves like a talking mouth. The set decoration department chose the rich tapestries for their medieval look and prominent use of the Gryffindor colours — scarlet and gold.

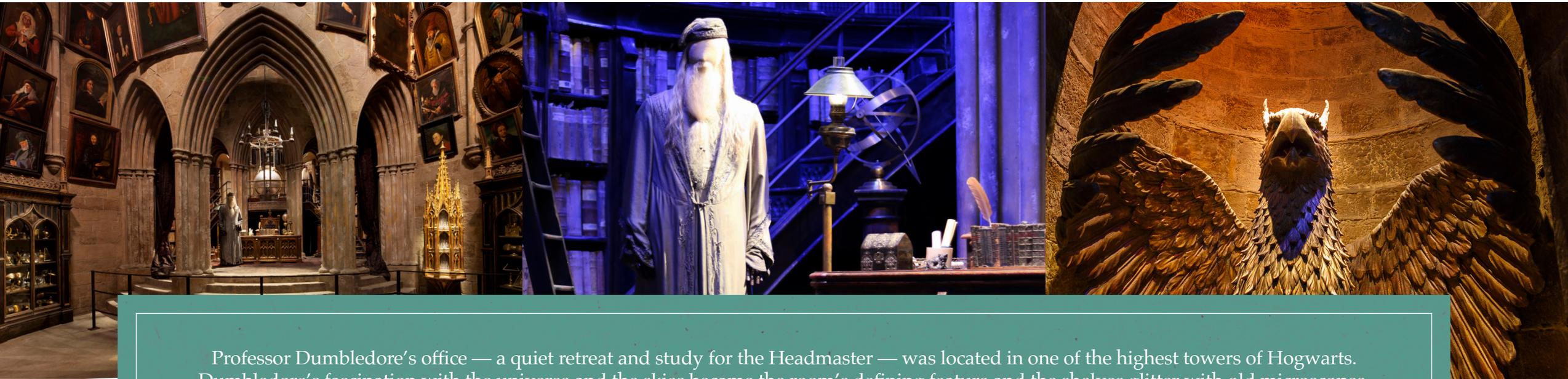
Within the set visitors will be able to spot Harry Potter's Invisibility Cloak which was printed with Celtic symbols and ancient runes.

Several cloaks were made, including versions with a green fabric lining that allowed the visual effects department to make Harry and his friends appear to be invisible.

Up the spiral staircase from the Gryffindor common room was the Gryffindor boys' dormitory, which will now feature alongside in the attraction. The set includes the original beds made for Harry, Ron, Seamus, Neville and Dean for the first film. Over the course of filming, as the cast grew from young boys to teenagers, filmmakers were required to find unique camera angles to hide the fact that the cast had clearly outgrown the beds. Over the years the set decorators personalised the boy's spaces in the dormitory; for example, they put up posters and pennants of Ron's favourite Quidditch team near his bed.

The small, circular shape of the room was production designer Stuart Craig's way of creating a space in which Harry Potter would finally feel at home. Designers had originally planned to custom-make the fabric for the curtains surrounding the beds. However, set decorator StephenieMcMillan spotted the perfect fabric in a local shop window.

# DUMBLEDORE'S OFFICE

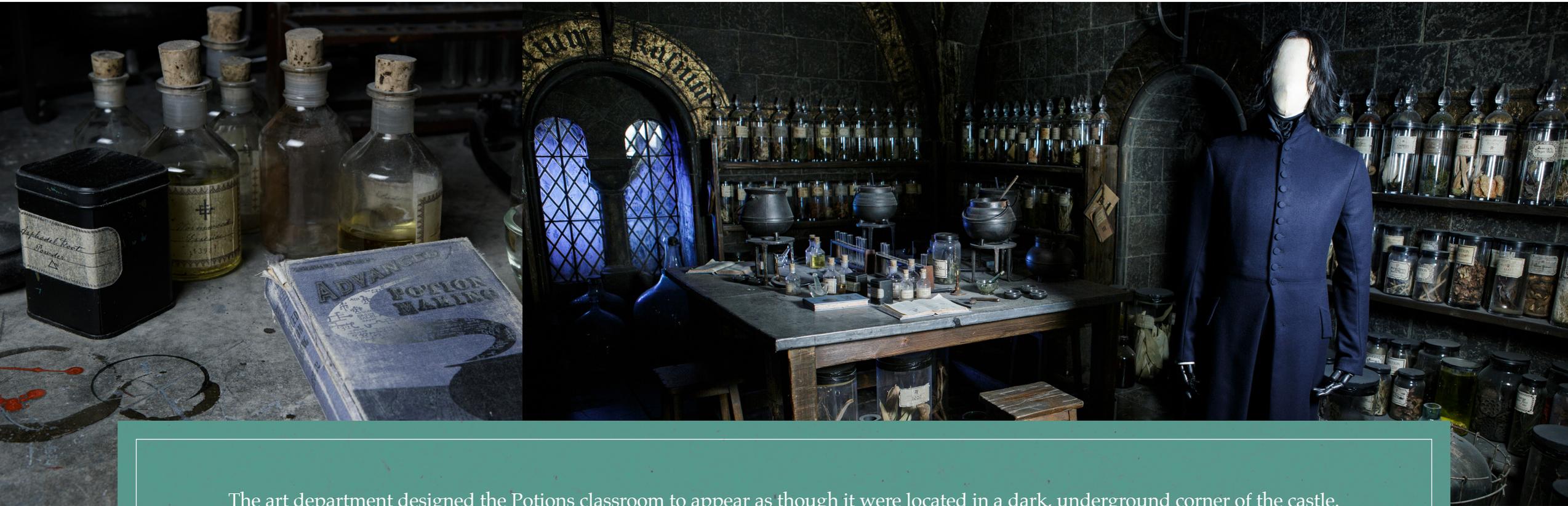


Professor Dumbledore's office — a quiet retreat and study for the Headmaster — was located in one of the highest towers of Hogwarts. Dumbledore's fascination with the universe and the skies became the room's defining feature and the shelves glitter with old microscopes, telescopes, star charts and astronomical devices. The office also features forty-eight portraits of former Hogwarts Headmasters and hundreds of books which are actually British phonebooks covered in leather.

The Memory Cabinet where Dumbledore kept his memories, as well as those he had gathered from other wizards, was filled with more than 800 tiny, handmade and hand-labelled vials and is located in the office next to the Pensieve.

Tucked away in the upper chamber was Dumbledore's largest telescope. Though one of the most expensive pieces ever created for the series, it was only ever seen in the background. Eagle eyed visitors will notice key props situated within the office including the Sorting Hat and The Sword of Gryffindor.

# POTIONS CLASSROOM



The art department designed the Potions classroom to appear as though it were located in a dark, underground corner of the castle. The brass-leaved archways are inscribed with the Latin and English names of potion ingredients and rare minerals, all selected from ancient alchemy recipes. Students brewed their potions using old-fashioned, gas-powered Bunsen burners and among the ingredients kept on the classroom shelves were baked animal bones from a local butcher shop and dried leaves and herbs.

# HAGRID'S HUT



Hagrid's Hut is the home of Rubeus Hagrid, Keeper of Keys and Grounds at Hogwarts and later, Care of Magical Creatures teacher. Filmmakers relied on some clever tricks to make Hagrid seem larger than the other characters, including creating two different versions of the set. A larger scale set was used to make characters of 'regular' size seem small in comparison to the surroundings and a smaller set was used to make Hagrid (Robbie Coltrane) seem large. Set decorators also filled the hut with an abundance of cages, each containing peculiar real animals and items such as hairless cats, fruit bats, and ostrich eggs.

# THE WEASLEY KITCHEN



The Burrow was designed to look as though Mr Weasley had built it all. Within the Weasley kitchen visitors will spot the magical household items such as the self-washing frying pan which was created by the special effects department.

The rather unique Weasley Family Clock, featured in the kitchen, was purchased at a local auction. Prop makers outfitted it with new pendulums, gears, hands and other fanciful accessories to turn it into the clock that let Mrs Weasley know where each member of her family was at all times.

# THE MINISTRY OF MAGIC



Concealed deep beneath the streets of London, the wizarding world's centre of government in Britain, the Ministry of Magic, is accessible by telephone booth, lavatory and the Floo Network.

The office towers within the Ministry were based on a 19th century Victorian building in London and covered with thousands of green and red tiles made of wood.

As the Ministry of Magic was one of the largest sets ever constructed for the films, scenes shot there required hundreds of extras — many of whom were actually crewmembers in cloaks, beards and hats.

The Magic is Might statue, including the fifty-eight Muggles at the base being crushed under the rule of the wizarding world, was sculpted from foam and hand-painted. Each of the Ministry's enormous fireplaces is over nine metres tall.



# THE FORBIDDEN FOREST



Home to an abundance of creatures, the Forbidden Forest offers shelter and protection to Hippogriffs and Acromantula among many others. One of Rubeus Hagrid's original costumes will be on display, lantern in hand, to welcome visitors through the Hogwarts Gates deep into the forest. Filled with 19 trees each with a diameter of over 12 feet, visitors will walk beneath the giant entwined roots on their journey and will even be able to control the weather using the same techniques created by filmmakers.

Amongst the imposing trees, visitors will encounter a full size model of Buckbeak, which is new to the tour, and have the opportunity to bow to the majestic creature.

They will see up close the incredible detail and craftsmanship that went into creating the magnificent Hippogriff. Continuing their journey, visitors will come face-to-face with Aragog, the Acromantula. Emerging from his dark lair, the enormous spider will appear before visitors along with spiderlings from his family. Created by Nick Dudman, Creature and Make-Up Effects Designer, with help from Production Designer Stuart Craig, Aragog had a leg span of over 18 feet and was even able to crawl out of a hole and deliver dialogue in Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets.

# PLATFORM 9 ¾ & HOGWARTS EXPRESS

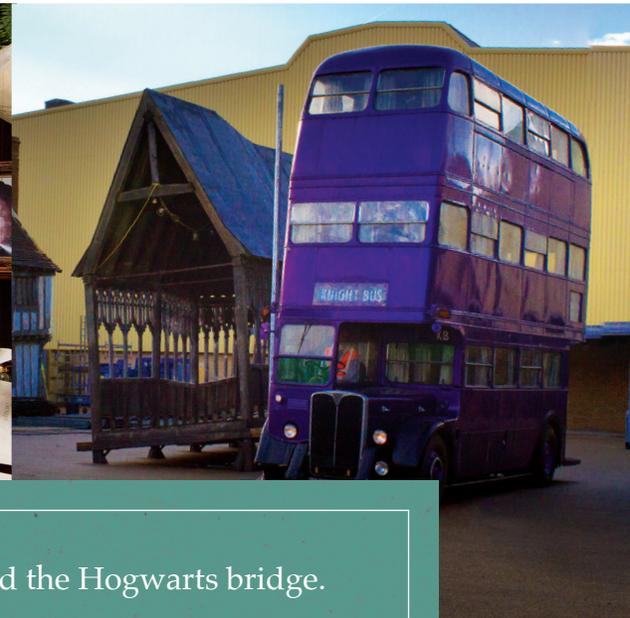


The Hogwarts Express locomotive transported hundreds of students from Platform 9 ¾ to Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry. Most of the scenes that take place on Platform 9 ¾ were actually shot on location at King's Cross Station in London, however, during Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows – Part 2, part of the station platform was recreated on a soundstage here at Leavesden, complete with the track and the train.

The Hogwarts Express provided the background for the very first shot ever captured for Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone and then, ten years later, for the very last shot of the entire series in Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows – Part 2.

The real locomotive and passenger carriages were used on locations throughout the United Kingdom to create the exterior views of the train while a special interior carriage set (built on the soundstages at Leavesden) was used for all of the scenes that take place inside the train. Visual effects artists replaced the green screen background in the windows with moving backdrops and special effects like hopping Chocolate Frogs and flying Dementors.

# THE BACKLOT

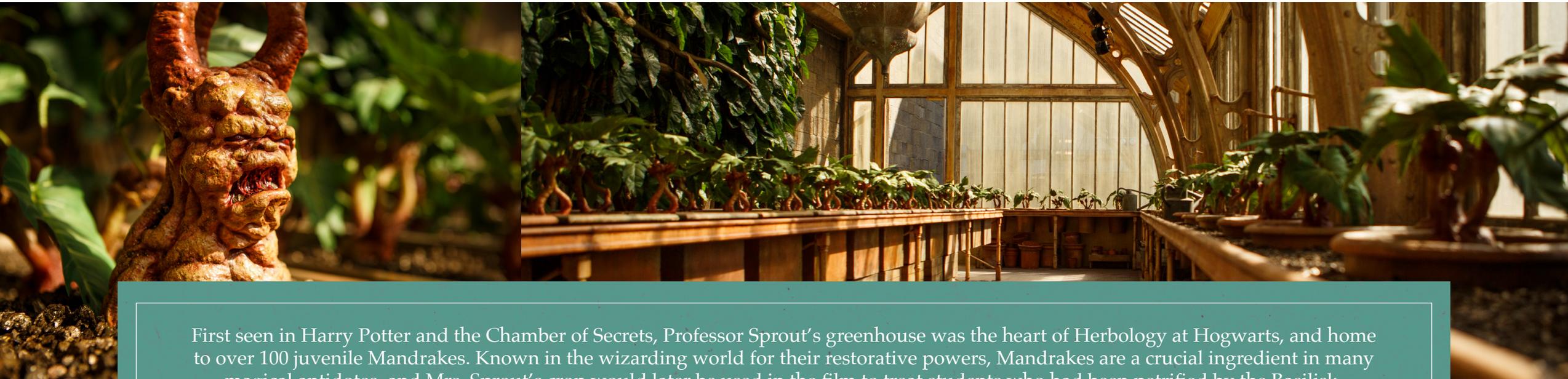


During production, the backlot was home to the exterior sets of the Harry Potter films — including Privet Drive and the Hogwarts bridge.

Number four, Privet Drive was the quiet, suburban home of the Dursleys, the relatives who raised Harry Potter. The exterior of the house in Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone was filmed in Bracknell, Berkshire. For future films, the filmmakers decided to recreate the street on the backlot. Though it was never in the original novel or script, the now iconic Hogwarts bridge was created for Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban. Only one section of the bridge was ever built; the visual effects department created the remaining sections using computer-generated effects.

The 22-foot tall Knight Bus was created from pieces of three vintage London double-deckers. Two versions of the bus were built: one that was motorised and able to be driven and a 'stunt' version that spun around on a turntable. Interior shots of the Knight Bus were filmed on a soundstage.

# PROFESSOR SPROUT'S GREENHOUSE

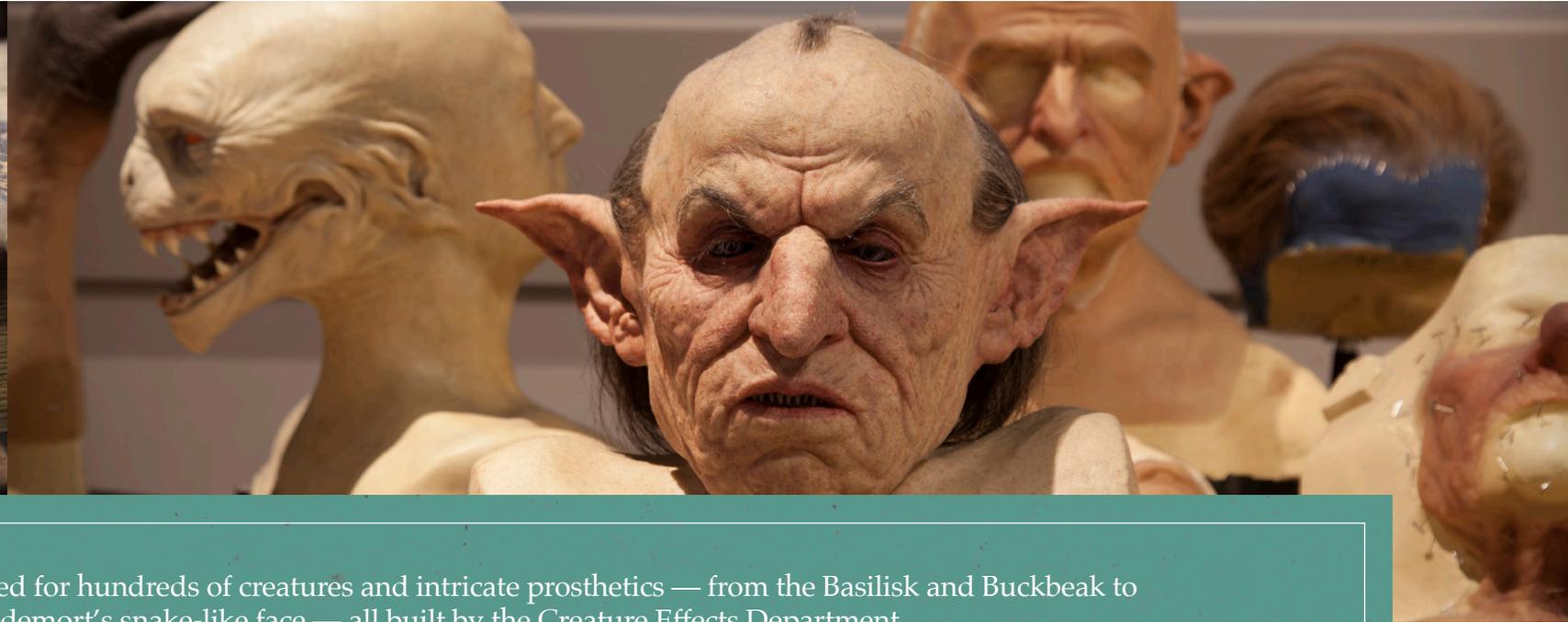


First seen in *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*, Professor Sprout's greenhouse was the heart of Herbology at Hogwarts, and home to over 100 juvenile Mandrakes. Known in the wizarding world for their restorative powers, Mandrakes are a crucial ingredient in many magical antidotes, and Mrs. Sprout's crop would later be used in the film to treat students who had been petrified by the Basilisk.

The Creature Effects Team created four types of Mandrake to serve different purposes on screen. Some were given detailed faces for close ups, while others contained animatronics to bring the plant's deadly cry to life. The Mandrakes seen at the Studio Tour were created using original moulds from the film, then hand-painted, potted, and given leaves. Just like a Herbology student, visitors can stop by the feature to pull up a Mandrake and hear it scream.

The design of Professor Sprout's Greenhouse was inspired by cast iron greenhouses common in the Victorian era. The set at the Studio Tour was created using fiberglass, then painted and distressed to look like rusting iron. Bursting through the roof and spreading across the wall is the Venomous Tentacula, a rare, dangerous, and very expensive magical plant. During filming, various techniques were used to achieve the poisonous Tentacula's sinuous grasping movement, but the effect was ultimately computer-generated.

# CREATURE EFFECTS



The Harry Potter films called for hundreds of creatures and intricate prosthetics — from the Basilisk and Buckbeak to Lord Voldemort’s snake-like face — all built by the Creature Effects Department.

Creature Effects created the makeup effects for characters like Griphook the goblin, but also built other amazing creatures such as the Mandrakes by using animatronics made of steel and foam. The department also created models called maquettes, which were scanned by the Visual Effects Department who then developed their own computer-generated versions.

They also built a life-size version of Dobby for the actors to work with in Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows — Part 1.

The Visual Effects Department then scanned that version into the computer, and applied computer-generated facial expressions and movement to create the Dobby that is seen on screen.

# THE CREATURES, MAKEUP AND PROSTHETICS



Aragog had an 18-foot leg span and was covered by hand with yak hair, sisal (a fibrous plant of the agave family) and hemp from brooms. The animatronic figure was so complex that it required nearly 100 technicians to operate.

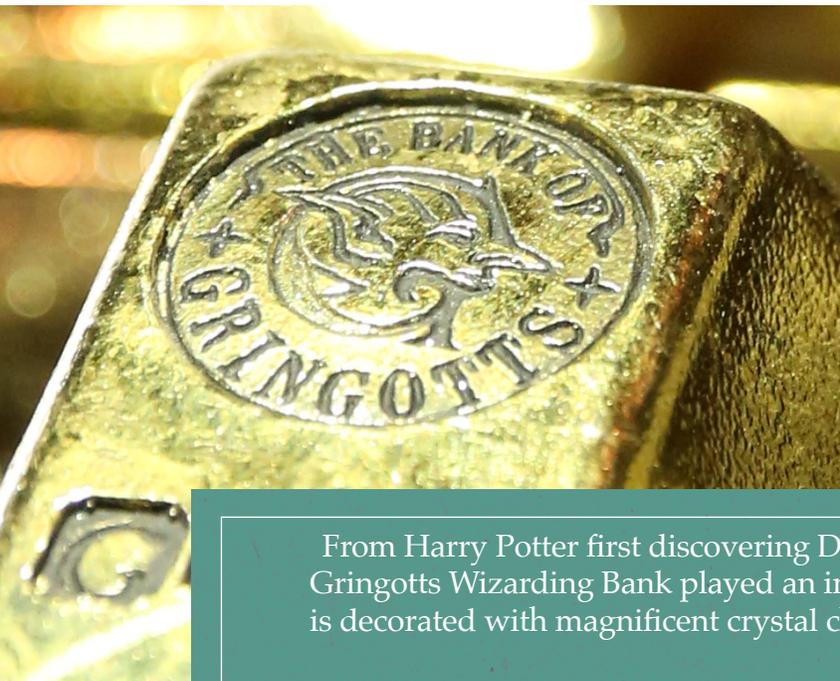
Three life-size, animatronic versions of Buckbeak were built: one standing, another rearing and a third lying down. Visual effects artists also scanned a life-size version of Buckbeak to create a digital model, which was then animated for *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban*.

Three animatronic versions of Fawkes were built: an old, moulting phoenix, a new-born bird that rises from the ashes and a (non-moulting) adult phoenix. A computer-generated version of Fawkes was also made from digitally scanned models of the bird.

The Greyback makeup effects artists developed a seven-piece silicone prosthetic mask for Greyback's werewolf face. Each prosthetic was made with real goat hair that was inserted strand-by-strand.

The makeup effects used to create the Dark Lord, Voldemort, included temporary tattoos for veins, enhanced cheekbones, contact lenses, and false eyebrows, fingernails and teeth. Coloured dots on actor Ralph Fiennes's face were used to track the movement of his face and digitally replace his nose with Voldemort's snake-like nostrils.

# GRINGOTTS WIZARDING BANK

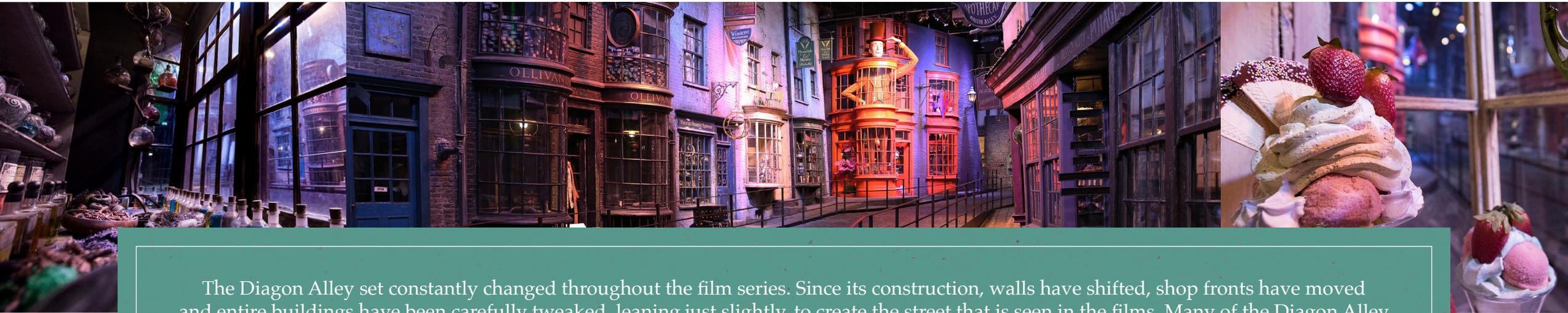


From Harry Potter first discovering Diagon Alley to the famous trio escaping on a Ukrainian Ironbelly dragon in their quest for a Horcrux, Gringotts Wizarding Bank played an important role in the Harry Potter film series. Lined by towering marble pillars, the grand banking hall is decorated with magnificent crystal chandeliers and finished with real brass leaf. Inkwells, quills, ledgers and piles of Galleons, Sickles and Knuts complete the goblin tellers' desks as seen on screen.

Gringotts Wizarding Bank is famously run by goblins. Walking through the imposing marble columns, visitors will discover the costumes and prosthetics belonging to Bogrod, Griphook and many other goblin bankers. Each prosthetic mask took weeks to create, with every hair individually inserted and veins painstakingly painted by hand. It took four hours to transform actor Warwick Davis into Griphook in the films which included him wearing black contact lenses and dentures with extremely sharp teeth to complete the goblin look.

Once through the banking hall of Gringotts, visitors will enter the depths of the Lestrange Vault used to store the treasures of Bellatrix Lestrange including the Sword of Gryffindor and Helga Hufflepuff's Cup, one of Voldemort's many Horcruxes. During filming 38,000 pieces of rubberised treasure were created for the Lestrange vault including 7,014 Hufflepuff Cups. Here, visitors can try out a unique photo opportunity allowing them to step inside the Lestrange vault and surround themselves with treasure.

# DIAGON ALLEY



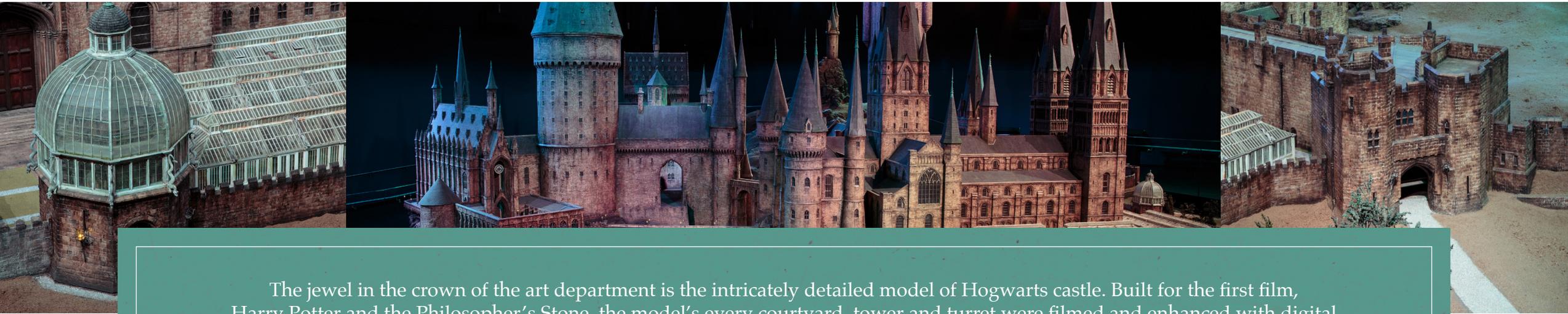
The Diagon Alley set constantly changed throughout the film series. Since its construction, walls have shifted, shop fronts have moved and entire buildings have been carefully tweaked, leaning just slightly, to create the street that is seen in the films. Many of the Diagon Alley set pieces were also re-dressed for use in the village of Hogsmeade for *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban*.

The original design of the street combined the rich details from the *Harry Potter* books with inspiration from the streets described in the works of Charles Dickens. Each of the shopkeepers and patrons was given his or her own unique costume.

In the three-storey explosion of orange in a deserted Diagon Alley, the Weasley twins sold everything from Extendable Ears to fireworks in the Weasleys' Wizard Wheezes shop. The 120 individually designed products reflected Fred and George's mischievous sense of humour. Designed to look like an 18th century shop, the Weasleys' storefront took more than three months to build — and much of that time was spent constructing the 20-foot mannequin above the main entrance.

The dusty Ollivanders wand shop in Diagon Alley is where Harry's wand chose him.  
The shop was home to more than 17,000 individually labelled wand boxes.

# HOGWARTS CASTLE MODEL



The jewel in the crown of the art department is the intricately detailed model of Hogwarts castle. Built for the first film, *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*, the model's every courtyard, tower and turret were filmed and enhanced with digital effects to create unforgettably realistic views of the magical school.

Footage of this meticulously built model was combined with digital effects to create unforgettably realistic views of the exterior of Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry. A team of 86 artists and crew members built the first version of Hogwarts castle for *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*. To make Hogwarts appear even more realistic, artists rebuilt miniature versions of courtyards from Alnwick Castle and Durham Cathedral, where scenes from *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* were shot. The Hogwarts landscape is inspired by the Highlands of Scotland, including the regions of Glen Nevis, Glen Coe and Loch Shiel.

Model makers installed more than 2,500 fibre optic lights, which simulate lanterns and torches and even gave the illusion of students passing through the hallways. Artists also used real gravel for rockwork and boulders, and real plants for landscaping and trees.

The work on the model was so extensive that if one was to add all the man hours that have gone into building and reworking the model, it would come to over 74 years.