

LIFE AFTER DARTH

toward explaining the underlying allure of Darth Maul. Park has been able to parlay his winning image into more work, laying the foundation for what could be a long-lasting career on the silver screen. For beyond the character's creative conception, it's Ray Park's own personality and magnetic quality powering Darth Maul, and while the make-up and lightsaber are indeed impressive, perhaps that's what viewers are picking up on.

The *Insider* caught up with Park during one of his breaks from shooting *X-Men* in Toronto. Obviously, since our last interview, a lot had changed—or so we thought.

SO NOW DOES IT FEEL TO BE A STAR? HAS YOUR LIFE CHANGED SINCE *STAR WARS* CAME OUT?

It hasn't—except that more people recognize you for what you do. I still feel the same. All I wanted to be was successful at what I do. I am doing more traveling: I came to Denver [for the *Star Wars* Celebration], and went to a few conventions, and now I'm living in Toronto until the *X-Men* shoot is finished in February. It's a little bit similar here to London, because of the inns and subways.

DO PEOPLE RECOGNIZE YOU ON THE STREET NOW?

Not really in Toronto, but in London they do. When people recognize me, you can tell, because they are just staring at me. I went to Greece this year with my girlfriend, and people recognized me there! It was nice—I was getting free drinks. People are generally just really nice.

LAST SPRING AND SUMMER, WITH *EPISODE I* OPENING AROUND THE WORLD, MUST HAVE BEEN PRETTY OVERWHELMING. NOW THAT THINGS HAVE CALMED DOWN A BIT, WHAT'S YOUR IMPRESSION OF 1999?

It wasn't until round about now that I said, "Wow, I've done a lot this year!" I wasn't thinking about it at the time, because I was in demand and traveling around. I really enjoyed it. It was a real big eye opener, just meeting people and conducting myself with them. I'm used to teaching and working with people that way, so it's different now how people see me. I was prepared for it—I'd been waiting for the release of the movie for a year, but I didn't know what to expect.

DID YOU KNOW DARTH MAUL'S EYES WOULD BE STARING OUT FROM JUST ABOUT EVERY *EPISODE I* POSTER AND PRODUCT PACKAGE?

No, I didn't know. I did my job and finished it, and that was it. No one said to me, "Your face is going to be on packaging," because that's theirs. It's got nothing to do with me. But I remember looking at the

