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REYNOLDS**

ON DEADPOOL 2

EXCLUSIVE

ATOMIC BLONDE

**KATHRYN
BIGELOW**

Talks Detroit

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CAN WRITE A
SCREENPLAY

MOVE OVER BOND AND BOURNE,
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“BRING
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Charlize Theron

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Films clockwise from bottom left: Kingsman: The Golden Circle, Blade Runner 2049, Justice League, Spider-Man: Homecoming (main image), War for the Planet of the Apes, Transformers: The Last Knight and Dunkirk.

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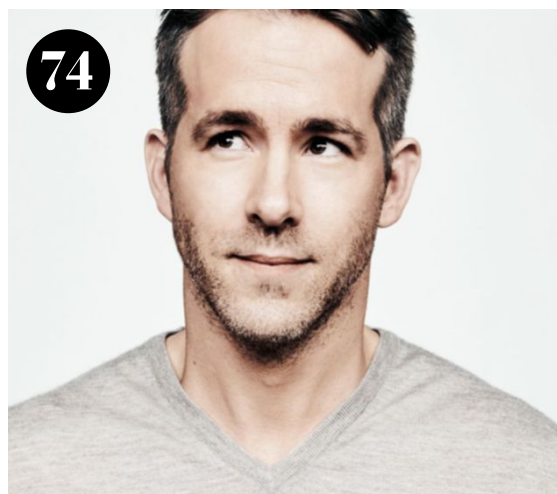
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ATOMIC BOMBSHELL
Charlize Theron gets mean as a 1980s Cold War spy in new thriller *Atomic Blonde*.





'LORRAINE FIGHTS TO THE DEATH FOR SURVIVAL. SHE'S COMPLICATED AND INTENSE'



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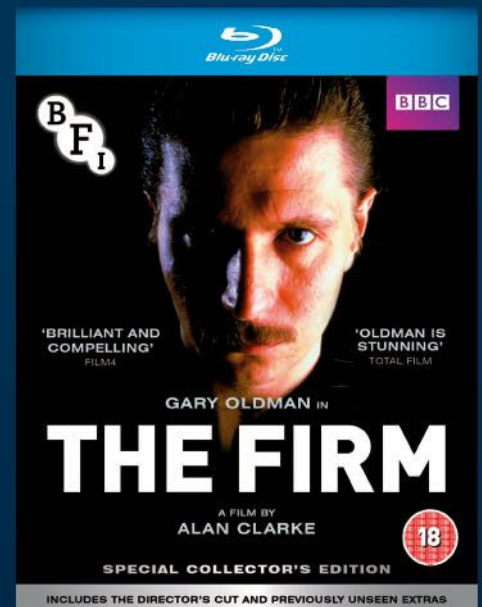
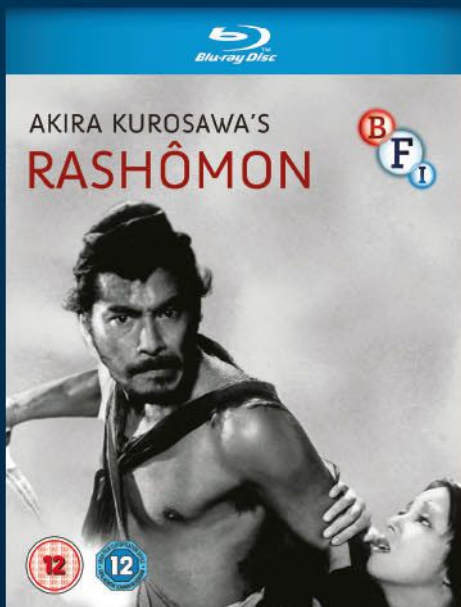
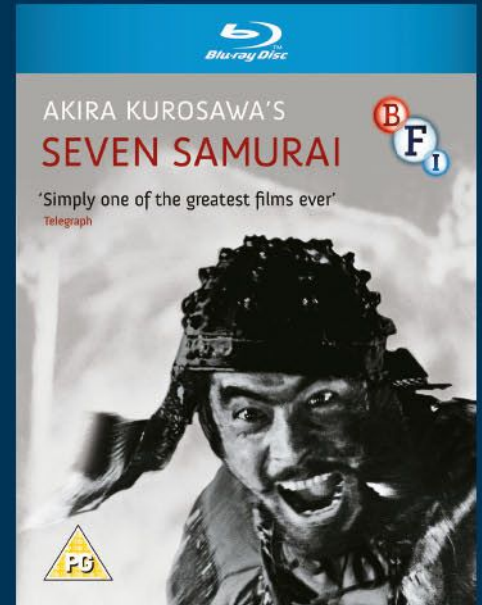
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Dialogue

Mail, rants, theories etc.



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TF'S CINEMATIC AGONY
UNCLE HAS YOUR BACK.

DEAR WINGMAN

I just watched a trailer and had the following reaction: My eyes were yanked out of my head and replaced with rainbow drops, individually wrapped in little bits of candy floss that had been pre-soaked in Nutella. You know, for that extra nuttiness. This was all secured in place with pink marshmallows that had been warmed by a fire so they were all gooey inside. My new pupils were made from those coconut Liquorice Allsorts. The yellow ones. What trailer was it? What trailer was it?!

MARTIN JACKSON, MILTON KEYNES

WINGMAN SAYS...

The 'nuts' references suggest it's either *The Nut Job 2: Nutty By Nature*. Or maybe a re-release: *Candyman? Bonbons On The Fourth Of July? When Haribo Met Sally? Have a Q for WM? Email me! No bribes accepted. Although if you have any chocolate coins going spare...*



STAR LETTER

★ The past is a foreign country and they did do things differently then. There was no world wide web or even *Total Film*. So other than seeing trailers in the cinema, the only way to get your upcoming-movie fix was to watch the TV programme *Film 1973/74/75* etc. The programme was my weekly watchtower for new movies, movies in production, reviews and interviews with the stars. But the real beacon was Barry Norman. He was such a fantastic presenter with a leisurely, relaxed style, always friendly and honest. So I say thanks Barry. And why not?

D. WARWICK, VIA EMAIL



Well said. Bazza blazed a trail. For one thing, he brought unbiased, unpretentious criticism to the masses. For another, his inspiring example helped keep the streets clean of any number of

TF staffers. For more Norman, see p142. Mr. D, and everyone with a letter printed here will receive a copy of *Kong: Skull Island*, out now on Digital Download, 3D Blu-ray, 4K Blu-ray, Blu-ray and DVD. Think *Love Island*, with a lot less waxing. Didn't send an address? Email it!

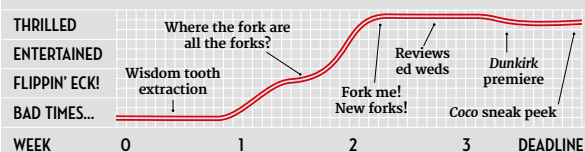
PLANET ERROR

I enjoyed your *Ultimate Comic Book Quiz* book that came with issue 261. But surely I'm not the only one to notice that in the 'Spider-Man (Easy)' section, the question "For which newspaper does Peter Parker work as a photographer?" has the wrong answer

CRITIC'S DARLING

We say farewell to the beloved behemoth of movie criticism on page 142.

FILM REFLECTIVE INTEREST CURVE™



All this smouldering on show, but all Laura Pantrey can see are the McConau-nails.



– it's not the *Daily Planet*! I can't believe a mistake of such super-proportions like this could occur when this issue also has a feature on the new *Spider-Man* film.

ROB S, SWANSEA

Like Spidey himself, we clearly need to go back to school. Either that or be beaten with a bugle, daily. At least the incorrect answer was legitimately comic-booky and not something make-believe like the *Morning Horn*, *Evening Tuba*, or *Sunday Sport*.

YOU'VE GOT NAILS

I couldn't help but notice that in your *Teasers* story (issue 260) on the upcoming adaptation of Stephen King's *The Dark Tower* that Matthew McConaughey is sporting some pretty fierce-looking nails. Is *The Man In Black* prone to a manicure or two, or can we expect some nasty scratchy stabbing action? Death by claw, perhaps? Puts my stubs to shame!

LAURA PANTREY, WORTHING

We hadn't seen the film at press time so can't confirm whether Mr. McConaughey fights tooth and nail, but we'd be well up for a *Saturday Kitchen*-style egg-peeling contest between him and Robert De Niro in *Angel Heart*.

HEALTH HAZARD

I'm not sure how you feel about self-healing techniques – you know, the type rooted in energy-healing practices – but, I thought I'd give them a go. So I bought and watched a DVD called *A Cure For Wellness*. It's just that, after a 2.5-hour treatment, my physical and emotional pain had increased. In fact, I became very confused and started hallucinating. I've also developed an eel phobia. I'm now feeling it's best to stick to deep breathing and only nine cups of office coffee per day. Any suggestions?

HYPER ELEANOR, SKIPTON

Alas, it's fair to say the title of Gore Verbinski's film wasn't 100 per cent

OFFICE SPACED

Chatter 'gems' overheard in the Total Film office this month...

* "I do enjoy a fart on a plane." * "I'm just trying to get the Fab out of my keyboard!" * "Nothing worse than being on someone's Out Of Office." * "As you know, I'm not a fan of myself."



TOTALFILMONLINE

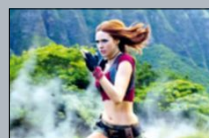
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LOGAN CARE PACKAGE

bit.ly/2uePlt2

For *Logan*'s home-ent release, we received a few of the mardy mutant's favourite things: Fireball whisky, whisky flask and Cohiba cigar. Fun times, but please do remember to watch Blu-rays responsibly.



JUMANJI 2 TRAILER: YOU REACT

bit.ly/2ueDmLU

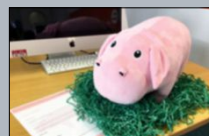
Our first look at *Welcome To The Jungle* inspired an A-Z of emotions, from "Looks horrific" (@wazza14) and "There goes my childhood" (@ramardtya) to "Sexy" (@iBHARATkaushik).



CAT TREATS OF THE MONTH

bit.ly/2taatve

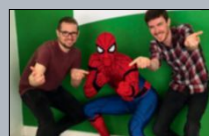
Celebrating the release of mog-umentary *Kedi*, a bag of goodies including cat apron, cat IQ test, Turkish Delight and feline mask that on the wrong head is the scariest thing since *Cat People*.



SUPER PIG TREAT OF THE MONTH

bit.ly/2uNoYav

The Twitter response to our *Okja* plush was fairly muted: "Will literally sell my first-born for this," said @katerbland, while all @RebeccaPahle could muster was "Oh Jesus Christ want want want".



FRIENDLY NEIGHBOURHOOD VISIT

bit.ly/2tJjnx5

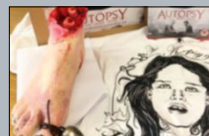
The very day our *Homecoming* cover hit the newsstands, the Spider-Man himself popped into TF Towers for a spot of superheroic squatting with Avengers-in-waiting Captain Features and The Teaser.



INHUMANS TRAILER: THOUGHTS

bit.ly/2v8KOo3

The first peek at the TV show drew a mixed response. "Not exactly a freight train of excitement," said @CharlesDodd71, though there was love for XXL bulldog Lockjaw: "He can stay!" (@ShelfHelpMe).



EDIBLE FOOT OF THE MONTH

bit.ly/2taJqQE

Just your typical freebie: Blu-ray (*The Autopsy Of Jane Doe*), t-shirt... severed foot?! Not a real one – though it bloomin' looks it – but a cake from master baker/anatomist @allminepatisser. Toenail, anyone?



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medically accurate. As a pick-me-up you could perhaps try some of the titles with genuine self-help content, such as *What To Expect When You're Expecting*, or *How To Get Away With Murder* (if convicted you get your money back, so it's win-win).

UN-ORDINARY WORLD

Sorry to rain on your parade, but in issue 260 you say that the genius that is David Lynch has not directed for 11 years. He actually directed the concert movie *Duran Duran: Unstaged*, released in 2014. I have the proof on Blu-ray if you'd like to borrow it? To be honest, I'm not sure it's one of his proudest moments, and it did give me a headache trying to watch it all the way through. That said, it's still undeniably Lynch: i.e. batshit crazy. And the music is great though.

MARTIN MCGREGOR, ANDOVER



Being *Total* rather than *Partial* or *Half-Arsed Film*, we do strive to be a broad church. (Although not in the David Tennant sense of standing about dazed and unshaven on a beach – though now that you come to mention it...)

SHELF HARM

There are certain actors whose entire filmographies I like to collect. So it gets frustrating when

some of their movies don't get a DVD release. The spaces are starting to make my shelves look incomplete.

Absences include *Little Birds* (2011) starring Juno Temple; *The End Of Love* (2012) with Amanda Seyfried and *Every Secret Thing* (2014) with Dakota Fanning. (I'm not even going to mention *Hounddog*. Oh, I just did.) All are available for Region 1, but where are the R2 releases? For us moviephiles who like to see complete collections, this is unacceptable... or am I being obsessive? No... loving movies has to be an obsession, right?

WARREN HENDERSON, KENT

We feel your gappy-shelved pain – at least with the rise of streaming services hungry for content there's the hope that more of these awol items will start surfacing. As for being obsessive, nothing wrong with being deep into movies, so long as you regularly come up for air. *Dialogue* said as much at its recent *Guardians Of The Galaxy*-themed wedding, where the priest was purple and all the vows were replaced with "I am Groot."

DADDY DAY CARE

The superb *Captain Fantastic*, subtly setting up its extended universe Gasmask Boy spin-off.



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TEASERS

COMING ATTRACTIONS

- * The **thunder god** goes intergalactic **p16**
- * Meet this year's **Palme d'Or winner** **p19**
- * The **new kid** on the action block **p30**
- * One way to keep **cool** this summer **p35**

EDITED BY JORDAN FARLEY



EXCLUSIVE

BOOK OF THE DEAD

DEATH NOTE | How Adam Wingard's killer anime adaptation prepared him for monstrous new territory...

Where were you the day Phil Lord and Chris Miller “departed” the Han Solo spin-off? Director Adam Wingard won’t forget in a hurry. “That happened the first day I was meeting the writer on *Godzilla Vs. Kong*. So the phrase ‘you’re not bigger than the franchise’ was in my head the whole time.” Wingard is talking to *Teasers* about his new Netflix movie *Death Note* – an adaptation of the Japanese phenomenon – but with Legendary’s colossal 2020 crossover currently in pre-production, his attention has turned to the future. “Even though I haven’t done a \$200m movie, at least doing something at this level – which was about \$40m – gives you an idea of what to expect, and how to deal with that stuff.”

More on Wingard’s monster mash-up later. First there’s the small matter of *Death Note*, the latest Original Movie from online streaming giant Netflix. Initially published between

2003 and 2006, Tsugumi Ohba’s multi-million-selling manga has been adapted into a 37-episode anime, plus novels, videogames and a series of live-action Japanese movies.

Wingard came to *Death Note* late, but started at the beginning. “I found out about it through my younger brother,” he recalls. “He called me a couple of years ago and said, ‘If you ever adapt something into a movie, you should do *Death Note*.’ At the time, I was still in the indie world so I was like, ‘Yeah, sure. I’ll just knock on Warner Bros’ door.’”

Turns out having *You’re Next*, *The Guest* and *Blair Witch* on your CV means knocking is no longer required. Instead, Wingard was approached by Warner Bros after Shane Black and Gus Van Sant both failed to get an adaptation off

MASKED MAN
Keith Stanfield plays enigmatic detective ‘L’, on the hunt for a vigilante serial killer.





the ground. After a year in development with writer Jeremy Slater, Warner pulled the plug, but allowed Wingard to shop the project elsewhere. Within 48 hours, *Death Note* was added to Netflix's rapidly expanding roster.

It's easy to see why from the film's high-concept premise. *Death Note* follows Light Turner (Nat Wolff), a student who comes into possession of the titular notebook when it literally falls out of the sky and lands at his feet. Inscribed are a series of rules that explain the Note's unholy power: anyone whose name is written on its pages dies. Light uses the book to eliminate the guilty with the stroke of a pen. But is it justice, or murder? Complicating matters is mysterious master detective 'L' (Keith Stanfield), whose formidable intellect threatens to expose Light and his partner in crime Mia (Margaret Qualley).

Wingard has made some major changes for the film, moving the action to America and distilling the manga's labyrinthine game of cat and mouse to a lean 95-minute thriller, but remains true to the spirit of the series. "To me, it was always an examination of morality," Wingard explains. "None of the changes we made were based around something we thought was broken. But when you take something like *Death Note*, which is about as Japanese as you can get, and you move it into a different country, it changes everything. We had a responsibility to do something new with it."

One of the film's more peculiar elements is the presence of the Shinigami, Death Gods that only the possessor of the Death Note can see. But these demonic tricksters are not to be trusted, particularly when voiced by a rarely-more-menacing Willem Dafoe. With the Japanese films going the all-CG route to underwhelming effect, Wingard was determined to keep things practical. "We took a 7ft-tall actor and put him in the costume, because one of my biggest fears is doing a movie that has bad VFX. Nothing scares me more than the colour green."

As a man about to embark on a VFX-heavy tentpole, the irony of a greenscreen phobia isn't lost on Wingard. One thing he isn't afraid of is "creative differences", which have led to a number of high-profile blockbuster departures in recent years. "The key to surviving in the studio world is: whatever movie you promised them in the beginning, you can't stray away from it," Wingard reveals. "Making movies at a big-budget level is a political thing, it really is."

Political it may be, but with *Godzilla* and *Kong: Skull Island* both possessing clear directorial vision, Wingard sees Legendary's MonsterVerse as an opportunity to put his stamp on a blockbuster in a way even the MCU and *Star Wars* can't offer. "That was the main thing for me. It's a franchise, but each movie has its own style and tone and feel to it. I want to get in there and do my version of that thing," Wingard smiles. "When I first met with the producers, they sent me the

Godzilla 2 script, and they had a look book for it, and they had an outline for *Godzilla Vs. Kong*. I read the *Godzilla 2* script and thought it was really great, and it was obvious that they were

going in a great direction, because *Godzilla Vs. Kong* is, in many ways, a sequel to *Godzilla 2*. There might be some carryover with the characters and stuff."

But the million dollar question, of course, is how can the 100ft Kong hope to fight the 350ft *Godzilla*? "I'm going to be working on pre-vis and animatics to try to figure that out, because I don't think you're the only person with that question!" Wingard laughs. Could *Skull Island*'s allusion to the fact Kong's still growing hold a clue? "Well, there you go. Without saying anything, that's what I'm counting on, too."

Seems Wingard isn't the only one with a big future ahead of him. **JF**

'ONE OF MY BIGGEST FEARS IS DOING A MOVIE THAT HAS BAD VFX'

ADAM WINGARD

KEEPING IT REAL
Director Adam Wingard (below) shies away from greenscreen effects.

SCARED YET?
Willem Dafoe provides the 'spine'-chilling voice for 7ft demon Ryuk (right).



ETA | 25 AUGUST / *DEATH NOTE* IS STREAMING ON NETFLIX FROM NEXT MONTH. *GODZILLA VS. KONG* OPENS 22 MAY 2020.



LIGHT AND DARK
Nat Wolff (left) plays writer-of-
notes Light, while Keith Stanfield
and Paul Nakauchi (above and
right) attempt to track him down.

'I WANT THE AUDIENCE
TO LEAVE THE CINEMA
WITH A SENSE OF JOY'
TAIKA WAITITI

FIRST WORD

FRIENDS REUNITED

THOR: RAGNAROK | Hulk. And the God Of Thunder. In an arena. All together now: fiiiiiiiiight!

A lot of what we're doing with the film is kind of dismantling and destroying the old idea and rebuilding it in a new way that's fresh," director Taika Waititi says of *Thor: Ragnarok*. We'd expect nothing less, given his is the brain behind *What We Do In The Shadows* and *Hunt For The Wilderpeople*, two of the funniest, weirdest, most quietly audacious films of the past few years.

Key to Waititi's thunderous refresh? Locking Thor (Chris Hemsworth) and Hulk (Mark Ruffalo) in the ring for a gladiatorial slug-fest that should, in all likelihood, raze the Colosseum to the ground. With the God of Thunder blasted to scraphead planet Sakaar, then captured by warrior Valkyrie (Tessa Thompson), he's imprisoned by Jeff Goldblum's regal (and rather fetchingly eye-lined) Grandmaster and forced to fight for kicks.

It's a kooky twist, partly inspired by the *Planet Hulk* comic-book storyline, that Hemsworth approves of. The actor previously revealed that he hoped Thor would take a leaf out of *Guardians Of The Galaxy*'s book, saying of James Gunn's film: "It was like off-centre and unpredictable, and I think we can definitely use a dose of that, you know?"

Luckily, Thor and Hulk have a long history of beef. In 1963, *The Avengers* #3 pitted them against one another for the first time, while 2010's *Hulk: Let The Battle Begin* saw the duo trading blows at (of all places) Mount Rushmore. Then, of course, there was the sneaky side-swipe of *Avengers Assemble*, which

hinted the pair's rivalry could spill from the comics into cinemas.

Thor: Ragnarok finally delivers on that promise and it seems audiences approve – the film's Led Zeppelin-scored trailer set records after being viewed 136 million times in 24 hours. It could give Thor the boost he needs. Neither of his solo films appear in the MCU's top 10 highest-grossing films (they're currently 11 and 12), but Waititi could finally help put the underdog on par with Iron Man and Caps.

Of course, the Thor versus Hulk thread is just one of many in *Ragnarok*'s rich tapestry. There's also the small matter of pesky Loki (Tom Hiddleston) impersonating daddy Odin (Anthony Hopkins), which somehow leads to the release of big bad Hela (Cate Blanchett) and a battle for Asgard. "I think the overall sense that I'm trying to give to the audience," Waititi says, "and what I want the audience to leave the cinema carrying with them, is a sense of joy." Let battle begin. **JW**

ETA | 27 OCTOBER / THOR: RAGNAROK OPENS LATER THIS YEAR.



HOT RIGHT NOW

TOM HARDY

AN ACTOR WITH CHARM AND VENOM...

Today, Tom Hardy can be seen on IMAX screens across the country flying to the rescue in Christopher Nolan's *Dunkirk*, a gargantuan recreation of the evacuation of 400,000 troops during one of the fiercest battles of World War 2 (read *TF*'s review on p50).

"I was just in my own little play," he said of his long scenes in the cockpit, but had no doubts as to the film's scale: "It's so epic in the storytelling."

Dunkirk, of course, is a mighty ensemble drama, but Hardy will most certainly be top dog in his upcoming projects. *Mad Max: The Wasteland* will be the follow-up to *Fury Road*, with Hardy confirming, "I am waiting for the call." And he's to return to comic-book movies when he suits up as Venom to kick off Sony's Marvel Universe.

In the comics, Venom is not just the Big Bad we saw in Sam Raimi's

Spider-Man 3, but also an anti-hero — *Daily Globe* journalist Eddie Brock loses his job and his wife because of Spidey, then picks up the web-slinger's discarded black suit, unaware that it's an alien symbiote.

Given the Ruben 'Zombieland' Fleischer-directed *Venom* movie will also feature Carnage, another alien symbiote that attaches itself to serial killer Cletus Kasady, chances are we'll

see *Venom*'s better side. He'll perhaps even team up with Tom Holland's Spidey to take on Carnage, as he does on the page.

If, that is, Holland is to appear in these spinoff movies that'll feature characters caught in his web. Ex-Sony chief Amy Pascal, now head of production company Pascal Pictures, says, "There's always a chance." She also confirms that the movies in the Sony Marvel Universe are "playing in the world we are creating for Peter Parker... and they will be connected to each other as well." **JG**

ETA | 2018 / VENOM OPENS NEXT YEAR.
DUNKIRK IS OUT NOW.



EXCLUSIVE

ART ATTACK

THE SQUARE | Ruben Östlund's Palme d'Or winner skewers the contemporary art world.

There's an astonishing seven-minute scene in *The Square* that (probably) won writer/director Ruben Östlund (*Force Majeure*) the top prize in world cinema single-handedly. In it Terry Notary 'entertains' a dining hall full of tuxedoed toffs with his ape act. But as Notary's animalistic Oleg turns aggressive, he refuses to break character. It's so uncomfortable you could be sitting on a cloud and still squirm.

"I would say that scene is at the core of my approach. I'm interested in looking at human beings as a herd of animals," Östlund tells *Teasers* shortly after his triumph at Cannes. "It's an example of the bystander effect, that when something happens we don't like we get paralysed." Shot over three days with 300 extras, it was just as excruciating to make as it is to watch. "No one in that room got used to Terry. There was a tension every time he entered," Östlund smiles. "[Co-star] Dominic West said after: 'OK, that's the best performance I have ever seen.'"

But *The Square* isn't all monkey business. Taking place two steps left of reality, the film orbits around the Museum of Contemporary Art, where suave curator Christian (Claes Bang) is

launching new installation *The Square*, a simple shared space with a message of compassion. All the while Östlund casts a critical eye over the pretension of modern art, the media's thirst for controversy and the hypocrisy of society to preach charity, but ignore those in need on the street.

Despite Östlund's satirical stance, he has "a positive viewpoint about *The Square* as an installation", not least because he built a real-life *Square* in Värnamo, Sweden, in 2015. But when it comes to contemporary art in general, Östlund's knives are out. "Galleries have the same things in all of them. You know, there's a piece of neon art on the wall,

GOING APE

Terry Notary torments Dominic West in *The Square*'s stand-out scene; (below) Elisabeth Moss as a reporter who's covering the new installation.

and then there's some objects on the floor," he sighs. "You don't get provoked. I really think we should criticise that world the same way we should criticise the movie industry and the conventions we are stuck in."

With all his films tackling meaty sociological concepts, Östlund fears cinema will stagnate if filmmakers aren't vigilant. "When I look at the scripts that have been sent to me from the US, they say, 'It's a thriller, but it's also a love story.' It's boring. I think we need a wide spectrum of different kinds of expressions, because otherwise movies will be not that interesting."

Ever the perfectionist, Östlund is tweaking his film's edit ahead of *The Square*'s official release in 2018. Following that, he has fashion in his sights. "I'm working on a film called *Triangle Of Sadness*," Östlund reveals. "If I was attacking the art world a little bit in *The Square*, this time I'm going to attack the fashion and beauty industry. Not the people, but the structure and the machinery. I'm going to do a very dark, humorous satire about that world." **JF**

ETA | 6 AUGUST / THE SQUARE
SCREENS AT SOMERSET HOUSE
FOR ONE NIGHT ONLY AND OPENS
WIDE IN EARLY 2018.





YOU TALKIN' TO ME?

Film quotes pose as questions. Film stars try to cope.

IN THE CROSSHAIRS THIS MONTH: **SHARLTO COPLEY**

You talkin' to me?

That's a technique that I actually use as an actor – the idea of doing takes in different ways. I tend to offer up a lot of variation.

Do you feel lucky, punk?

I didn't think of myself as lucky when I was starting out in the business, but now I'd have to say that I am. *District 9* changed everything. But in a certain way, I'd been working so hard in different aspects of the business [as a co-founder of a television company, and head of a production company] that it didn't feel like it came out of the blue.

You talk the talk; do you walk the walk?

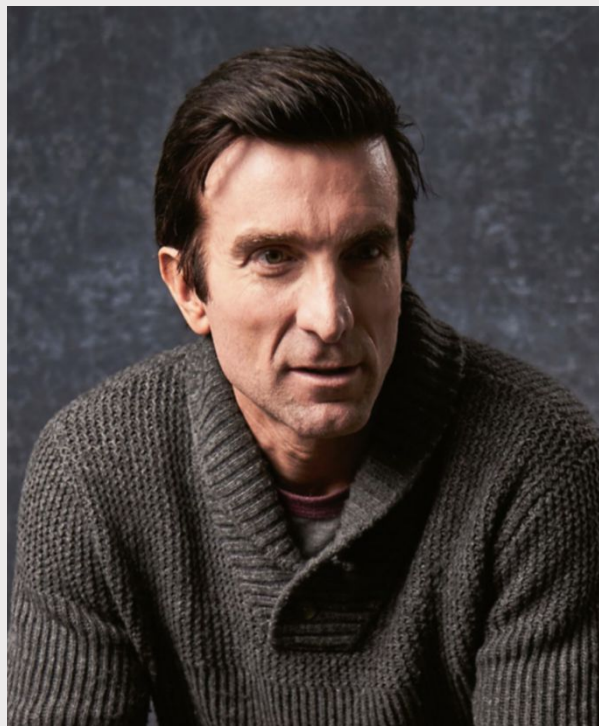
[laughs] Well, Vernon certainly does! In *Free Fire*, he definitely has the walk and the talk, though I don't know if he's as competent as he believes he is. Ben [Wheatley] hadn't written the character as a South African but he gave me a lot of rope to improvise and bring what I wanted. We turned him into a real mouth.

Have you ever danced with the devil in the pale moonlight?

I haven't but several of my characters certainly have, and probably taken it a step or two further as well, after the dancing. [laughs] People think I'd be a party animal [in real life] but I don't drink and I don't smoke and I haven't done drugs my whole life. When I was younger, I was the designated driver. I'd have fun and then it gets to a point where people are drunk enough around you that it just gets annoying. There's a sense of isolation that comes [with sobriety].

You ever have that feeling where you're not sure if you're awake or still dreaming?

Yes, usually on publicity tours where they've whisked me from one time zone to the next. Most actors hate



'ACTORS ARE LIKE "I'M TIRED, THE LIGHT'S IN MY FACE..." JUST MAN UP AND DO IT!'

publicity tours, but I overall enjoy it. You get to see the world and I like talking to people. I'd feel like such a spoilt brat to complain. Yeah, you can get a little tired and you have to be on camera, but that's as difficult as the job gets, like, "I'm tired and the light's in my face." Just man up and do it!

Why so serious?

I'm definitely not, man. I truly believe you should be able to laugh at anything – any of your weaknesses, or any of the crazy shit that human beings do to themselves and each other. It's just ridiculous.

What's your favourite scary movie?

Well, bizarre as it may be, I'm not a fan of scary movies. I never dug Freddy

[Krueger] growing up. I didn't want that shit in my head. It's like drugs – there are certain things I just don't want in me. [laughs] But I'd probably say *The Sixth Sense*.

What's in California?

My house. I moved there in 2010, after *District 9*. In certain ways, Los Angeles is similar to the Johannesburg I grew up in – it deals with a lot of the same challenges, racially. It's a very segregated city. But I also find it an incredibly inspiring place. Hollywood was the symbol of my dreams, as a kid. We went to Universal Studios when I was 11 and I was like, "Wow, I want to one day live here and work here." So to move there when I was 36... it brings us right back to "Do you feel lucky, punk?"

Do you like that thing you do for a living, these things you see?

I love what I do for a living; I don't like what I see in terms of what the media business is doing. Now, in the news media, in the quest for rating and clicks, you can watch people getting shot on camera. It's pretty crazy.

You hear that? That's a popping sound that you're hearing. It's almost like popcorn...

[laughs] Oh lord. That was an improv line. I thought I'd taken it too far. It's what I talked about with the "You talkin' to me?" question – giving different options. But Neill [Blomkamp, director of *District 9*] put it in the movie! He launched my whole career. I hope to do many more movies with him. **JG**

ETA | 7 AUGUST / FREE FIRE IS OUT ON DVD, BD AND TO STREAM NEXT MONTH.



SHOOT 'EM UP
Copley strutting, '70s-style, in *Free Fire*.

Questions: Taxi Driver, Dirty Harry, Full Metal Jacket, Batman, The Matrix, The Dark Knight, Scream, Borat, Se7en, District 9.



EXCLUSIVE

FUNNY BONES

COCO | A young Mexican boy voyages to the Land of the Dead in Pixar's latest original...

Filmmaking's hard – whether it's an original or a sequel," jokes producer Darla Anderson when *Teasers* meets her in a cinema café following a screening of some early footage from Pixar's upcoming *Coco*. It's the first original film the Emeryville animation house has produced since *Inside Out* (sandwiched as it is between *Finding Dory*, *Cars 3*, *The Incredibles 2* and *Toy Story 4*) and is inspired by the Mexican celebration of Día de los Muertos, or Day of the Dead.

"People sometimes confuse it with Halloween," explains writer and co-director Adrian Molina of the festival's skeletal imagery, before assuring *Teasers* it's a tradition that's actually rooted in family and remembrance rather than scares. *Coco* isn't the first film to address the Day of the Dead, though.

Besides providing the theme for *SPECTRE*'s Mexican opener, the 2014 animation *The Book Of Life* also covered similar ground. "When it came out and we saw what it was, we thought it was a lovely movie, but we were encouraged that our story was original and that we weren't treading over too much of the same territory," adds Molina.

With *Toy Story 3*'s Lee Unkrich at the helm, *Coco* tells the story of Miguel, a 12-year-old boy who dreams of being a musician, against the wishes of his familia. When Miguel gets his hand on the guitar of his (dearly departed) idol Ernesto de la Cruz, he's transported to the Land of the Dead, where he meets his ancestors in skeletal form. *Coco* does share some common ground with previous Pixars in that it features an odd-couple pairing traversing unfamiliar terrain as Miguel enlists skeletal Hector (voiced by Gael García Bernal) as his guide.

The footage we saw was packed with sight gags and physical

DEAD GOOD

When 12-year-old Miguel finds himself in the Land of the Dead, all sorts of pixel-busting action ensues.

humour, with the skeletons providing a unique visual challenge to the animators. There's also the small matter of Miguel's canine sidekick, Dante. Bringing the Xoloitzcuintli (Mexican hairless dog) to life required typically in-depth research. "We had a couple of days at the studio where we brought a bunch of Xolo dogs into the studio," smiles Molina. "If you've seen the trailers with Dante, he's really goofy, really loveable, so I think people are going to love him."

For a story rooted in tradition, *Coco* is pushing Pixar's tech to the limit when it comes to creating the Land of the Dead. "I think it is [*the biggest world Pixar has created*]," asserts Anderson, who compares the setting to *Monsters Inc.*'s door chase scene "on steroids". "It's a really expansive world," adds Molina. "The Land of the Dead is this towering cityscape full of, I think, over six million lights. There are just technically a lot of pieces to work with." Boundary-pushing visuals, combined with Pixar's trademark combo of laughter and tears – "We've tried to do each in equal measure" says Molina) – should ensure that *Coco* pops. **MM**

ETA | 19 JANUARY / COCO OPENS NEXT YEAR.



TOTAL FILM TOP 10

TF's ever-evolving 2017 movie league table...



01 DUNKIRK

NEW

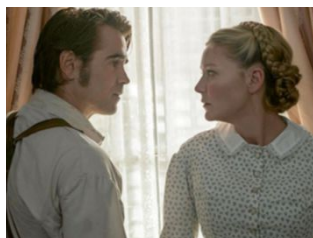
War, what is it good for? Incredible movies, apparently, as Christopher Nolan's emotive WW2 epic soars straight into the top spot.

02 LA LA LAND

↓

03 MOONLIGHT

↓



04 THE BEGUILLED

NEW

In like a bullet, Sofia Coppola re-configures Don Siegel's southern thriller for the female gaze, and hits the target.

05 WONDER WOMAN

↓

06 TONI ERDMANN

↓

07 MANCHESTER BY THE SEA

↓

08 THE LOST CITY OF Z

↓



09 SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING

NEW

Third time lucky for Spidey on the big screen as Tom Holland's best web-head ever smashes onto the list.

10 LOGAN

↓

HOLDING COURT
Shia LaBeouf and
Sverrir Gudnason as
the legendary rivals.



EXCLUSIVE

FIRE AND ICE

BORG/McENROE | How the Danish director of *Armadillo* recreated one of the tennis world's greatest rivalries.

Shia LaBeouf as John McEnroe? You cannot be serious! Actually, Danish filmmaker Janus Metz Pedersen is very serious about Hollywood's current enfant terrible playing the bad boy of '80s tennis, whose on-court tantrums and berating of umpires saw him variously dubbed SuperBrat, King Sneer and The Incredible Sulk. "Shia has a temper and personality that are very similar to John's," says Metz Pedersen. "He also has a reasonable resemblance to John so he was always my first choice.

"He called me after reading the script and committed to the film right then and there. The only thing that I had to promise was I could make him look left-handed, because Shia is right-handed and John was the most famous left-hander in the game."

Johnny Mac, of course, is only half of the story. The other belongs to Björn 'Ice' Borg, the unflappable Swede whose battle for supremacy with his fiery American rival reached its apex at the 1980 Wimbledon Final: an epic

five-set tussle widely considered the greatest tennis match ever.

"They were seen by the world as each other's opposite," reveals Metz Pedersen, who found his Borg in Swedish actor Sverrir Gudnason. "But deep down they were really very similar. Both had demons snapping at their feet that drove them to a sense of perfection and also a sense of madness. The film explores how Björn became Björn, John became John, and why this meeting made the world stand still."

The fateful match is the climax of what the Dane calls "a double-journey-flashback story" that also finds room for Stellan Skarsgård as coach Lennart Bergelin and Borg's own son Leo as his teenage self. "We're all in for truth and authenticity and here you have Björn's own flesh and blood," the director marvels. "You can't get any more real than that."

If you're eager to see lots of vintage McEnroe racket-smashing, though, prepare for disappointment. "It actually takes a lot of determination to break a tennis racket, so we didn't smash many," laughs Metz Pedersen. "But Shia certainly gave it everything when he had to..." **NS**

ETA | 22 SEPTEMBER / BORG/MCENROE OPENS LATER THIS YEAR.

SOUND BYTES

Quotable dialogue from this month's movies – and their stars

"I HOPE TO HONOUR THE GREAT WORK ALREADY DONE AND HELP DELIVER ON THE PROMISE OF A HAN SOLO FILM."

Ron Howard picks up the reins from Phil Lord and Christopher Miller.



21

Length in minutes of the *Frozen* short playing with *Coco*.

746 MILLION

BOX OFFICE IN US DOLLARS OF *WONDER WOMAN* AT TIME OF WRITING.



"ONE HUNDRED BILLION TRILLION PLANETS IN THE COSMOS. YOU WANT TO KNOW, DON'T YOU, WHY THEY KEEP COMING HERE?"

Yes, Sir Edmund (**Anthony Hopkins** in *Transformers: The Last Knight*), we certainly do.

"WHEN WAS THE LAST TIME AN ACTOR ASSASSINATED A PRESIDENT?"

Johnny Depp jokes (we think) at Glastonbury.



LIFT OFF

Damien Chazelle has added *Teasers* favourites Kyle Chandler and Corey Stoll to the cast of his Neil Armstrong biopic *First Man*, starring Ryan Gosling.

GOOD THING
BAD THING



END OF DAY

Three-time Best Actor winner Daniel Day-Lewis has announced his retirement from acting. PTA's *Phantom Thread* will be his last film.



"THIS MORNING AMAL AND GEORGE WELCOMED ELLA AND ALEXANDER CLOONEY INTO THEIR LIVES. ELLA, ALEXANDER AND AMAL ARE ALL HEALTHY, HAPPY AND DOING FINE. GEORGE IS SEDATED AND SHOULD RECOVER IN A FEW DAYS."

A press release announces the arrival of **George Clooney's** twins.



"I WANTED TO MAKE A MARVEL MOVIE BUT I DON'T THINK THEY REALLY WANTED TO MAKE AN EDGAR WRIGHT MOVIE."

Edgar Wright opens up on his *Ant-Man* exit.



INDIE SPOTLIGHT

KILLA QUEEN

PATTI CAKE\$ | 8 Mile meets Precious in Jeremy Jasper's hip-hop-fuelled Sundance breakout...

Growing up in New Jersey, aspiring musician Jeremy Jasper had an epiphany. "I thought, 'It's inevitable there's going to be a big girl from New Jersey who becomes a breakout rapper,'" Jasper tells *Teasers*. "She'll be the ultimate female Tony Soprano underdog Jersey, chip-on-her-shoulder character." But over the years, as Jasper moved into directing music videos, his premonition still hadn't materialised. "It never happened. So, of course, I had to make it!"

The story of wannabe rapper Patricia Dombrowski, aka Patti Cake\$ (Danielle Macdonald), Jasper's feature debut draws heavily from his own life, and puts a new spin on a familiar format. Underestimated because of her plus-sized appearance and possessing an original, offbeat voice, Patti has superstar qualities, but is held back by a dead-end job in a no-hope town and a mother (Bridget Everett) who burdens Patti with her own failings. Joining forces with encouraging bestie Jheri (Siddharth Dhananjay), local weirdo Basterd (Mamoudou Athie) and her gravel-voiced gran (Cathy Moriarty), to form hip-hop quartet PBNJ, Patti's musical career finally starts to take off.

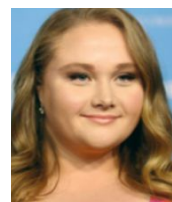
With a head-bopping baseline at its heart, Jasper had the film's memorable music in mind from the first draft. "When I was writing the screenplay, I would come up with the ideas for the songs," he recalls. "In the script, it'd say,

'This one is early Def Jam style,' or 'This one's like an R&B slow jam'. I spent two months in a studio coming up with 20-something songs." Comparisons to *8 Mile* are inevitable, but Jasper shrugs them off. "You can't escape it with a film about an aspiring white rapper. But what we're doing is very different. It's more comedic. It's more psychedelic. It has fantasy sequences. It's even more emotional in a way. And it's funny."

Already a hit at this year's Sundance (Fox Searchlight won a hard-fought bidding war), Jasper has special plans for the film's forthcoming soundtrack. "We're making new songs. It's like a full Patti album," he smiles. "We recorded four songs just this past week, and we're going to make a music video this summer." Next stop: the top of the charts. **JF**

ETA | 1 SEPTEMBER / PATTI CAKE\$ OPENS THIS AUTUMN.

LISTEN TO ME
Siddharth Dhananjay and Danielle Macdonald as the aspiring rappers.



Q&A
DANIELLE MACDONALD

When did you first meet Jasper?

He called up out of the blue and asked me to come and do the [Sundance] Labs. I was very confused, because I don't rap and I don't have a Jersey accent. I was like, "What makes you think I can do this?" He said, "I just have a feeling."

Do you see any parallels between yourself and Patti?

We are very different, but we also share some of the same inner qualities, emotionally. And then the physical stuff I had to learn. The rapping, the voice, how to move differently and dress differently.

How did you learn to rap?

There was a whole process. It started with Jeremy sending me raps and me sitting in my closet alone doing it. And then my roommate, Nicole, helped me understand flow. And then a month before shooting I got a rap coach called Skyzoo. He really helped me.

And being an Aussie, was the New Jersey accent a challenge?

Jeremy wanted a very specific accent, because it was what he grew up listening to. I started learning a couple of months before production. All these elements helped me find more and more parts of the character. **JF**



THE NEXT BIG THING

JOSH O'CONNOR

IS IN FARM'S WAY...

Totally ingraining yourself into a character is the most invigorating thing I've ever done," enthuses Josh O'Connor, the 27-year-old Brit who's carved out an impressive career with *Peaky Blinders*, *The Riot Club* and *Cinderella*. In *God's Own Country*, he plays Johnny, a gay farmer who falls for a migrant worker. "It's this hopeful, simple love story," he says...

Your Yorkshire accent's spot on. Was it hard to get right?

Yeah, it was. I worked on a farm for two weeks before we started filming, so I totally immersed myself in that world, and then I stayed in character throughout. By the time we started filming, the accent was so ingrained, I was just speaking that way. If anything, it's strange going back to my southern accent.

What drew you to *God's Own Country*?

I haven't seen a film like this before. You see Johnny at his worst from the beginning, where he can't be vulnerable, he can't open himself up. He gets pissed and has casual sex. This is a guy who's so closed off and so unable to articulate or understand emotions.

How do you feel about the film being compared to *Brokeback Mountain*?

I love that film and the comparison is obviously an honour, but at the same time, it deals with very different feelings. *Brokeback Mountain* has this story of people with feelings of repression. I think this story is full of hope, and it actually deals with emotional struggle.

Was the sex scene in the field difficult to shoot?

It felt closer to a dance, really, than anything sexual. And it was in the mud. It was freezing. I'd say that was probably the most intense [scene]. Actually, I think we did it in two takes. We had one take, quickly changed our costumes, and did it again, and moved on. It was the quickest sex scene ever! **JE/JC**

ETA | 1 SEPTEMBER / *GOD'S OWN COUNTRY* OPENS IN JUST OVER A MONTH.



CAN WE TALK ABOUT...?

SHARED UNIVERSE FATIGUE

Are studios so eager to mimic Marvel's franchising success that they're forgetting individual films must also impress in their own right?

As new worlds of gods, monsters, superheroes, car fetishists and more monsters open up, does the box-office wobble of *The Mummy* indicate mixed audience feelings about shared universes? In Universal's latest bid to revive its monster stable, Sofia Boutella's bandage fetishist Ahmanet struggles to resurrect her dead lover through the body of Tom Cruise. Spoiler: she doesn't wholly succeed. And, in less spoiler-y business, Universal's bid to revive its vintage monsters is off at a wobble, too.

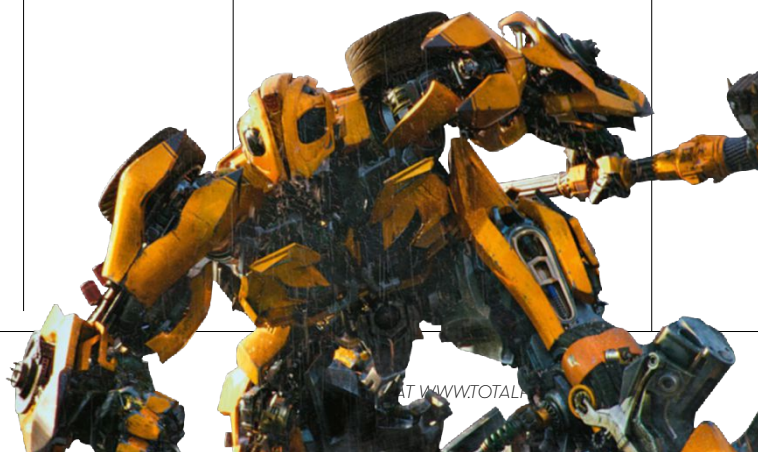
Slated by most critics (Rotten Tomatoes score: 15 per cent), plus under-performing audience-wise (worldwide box-office count as *Total Film* went to press: \$385m), *The Mummy* crystallises questions currently surrounding Hollywood's shared universes. Movie properties from Themyscira to Jakku to Skull Island are muscling in on the shared-universe game; plus, there's even talk of *Transformers/Fast And The Furious* universe extensions. But is what's

good for the Hulk necessarily good for the Hunchback of Notre Dame?

In retrospect, Universal's decision to use *The Mummy* as a vessel for its 'Dark Universe' launch (ignoring 2014's *Dracula Untold*) perhaps failed to recognise the battle its monster faced. After Brendan Fraser's *Mummy* series stiffed on its third instalment, matters mummified needed a credibility boost. Other Universal monsters may have sullied the studio's rep, too, such as 2004's *Van Helsing* and 2010's *The Wolf*

Man. But how could the *Mummy* stand out when forced to fight for screen space with Russell Crowe's potion-glugging Dr. Jekyll and other Easter egg-y teasers: lagoon creature's hands, vampire skulls?

True, Universal has precedents in monster mash-ups; consider films such as 1943's *Frankenstein Meets The Wolf Man*. But the studio's vintage



UNIVERSAL APPEAL?

Jake Johnson, Annabelle Wallis and Tom Cruise in *The Mummy*.

mash-ups arrived after their first monster cycle had time to impress, and then hardly matched up to their predecessors: state your preference, *Bride Of Frankenstein* or *House Of Frankenstein* (1944)?

If Universal's own precedent advises caution rather than quick world-building, so do other universe-seeders. *Batman V. Superman: Dawn Of Justice*, *Suicide Squad* and *The Amazing Spider-Man 2* lumbered with the strain

Universal's monsters might not: the shock of the strange can be diluted when the screen heaves with familiar monsters.

Yet even Marvel has registered consistency's cost with a set of tropes to swing on: one-note villains, city-trashing climaxes, hero cameos – does Spidey's MCU *Homecoming* need to double as *Iron Man 4*? And while *Ant-Man* was fun, it showed how unique voices can struggle behind the scenes in shared universes. "I wanted to make a Marvel movie but I don't think they really wanted to make an Edgar Wright movie," remarked Edgar Wright, asked why he and Marvel split.

Perhaps something similar occurred with the *Star Wars*-iverse's Han Solo spin-off. The decision to replace *Lego Movie*/21 *Jump Street* wags Phil Lord and Chris Miller with Ron Howard as director looks like a case of pursuing a safe pair of hands rather than a distinct voice. As for *The Mummy*,

JOINING FORCES

(above) Henry Cavill and Ben Affleck in the misfiring *Dawn Of Justice*; *Kong: Skull Island* (below) was the second film, after 2014's *Godzilla*, in Legendary's new 'MonsterVerse'; (below left) could a *Transformers*/*Fast And The Furious* mash-up be next?

those other films anyway. But a range of full-bodied flavours can seem to be the price of shared-universe films. Tonal flavours are rigorously policed to avoid risks of contradiction; so is the connective plot tissue. When one recent film offered a smarter alternative, it also walloped *The Mummy* at the box office: *Wonder Woman*'s low-key shared-universe nods gave Gal Gadot room to excel.

In fairness, Bill Condon's incoming *Bride Of Frankenstein* intrigues. Plus, Kurtzman has declared an interest in smaller-budget films, which might offer room for director-driven work. Imagine Robert Eggers (*The Witch*) reviving the fog-soaked fear and folklore of *The Wolf Man*, or Ana Lily Amirpour (*A Girl Who Walks Alone At Night*) visiting the surreal depths of *Creature From The Black Lagoon*. If shared universes are to thrive, the key to stretching their frontiers might be daring individual films. Yet if studios put the bigger picture first, will audiences ever see the trees for the woods? **KH**

'IS WHAT'S GOOD FOR THE HULK NECESSARILY GOOD FOR THE HUNCHBACK OF NOTRE DAME?'

of trying to combine taut stories with piled-up characters and seeds for universe-growing spin-offs.

Although Marvel's model is the one studios want to emulate, other studios seem to have ignored Marvel's relative stealth approach. The MCU gave audiences time to warm to Iron Man, teasing the Avengers discreetly. Plus, Marvel Comics' soap opera-ish nature suits the format in ways that

the deployment of writer/producer (predominantly) and Dark Universe architect Alex Kurtzman as director, rather than a more experienced helmer, indicates an emphasis on the universe over individual films.

True, *Star Wars* producer Kathleen Kennedy's approach worked for *The Force Awakens* and *Rogue One*, so Solo's outing shouldn't be written off. And he always occupied the same universe as



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**JOHN
RHYS-DAVIES**



**ANDREW SCOTT
(SUNDAY ONLY)**



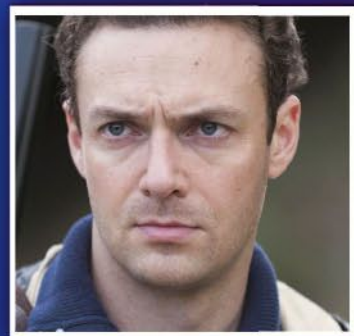
**NICK
BLOOD**



**STING
(SATURDAY ONLY)**



**SETH
GILLIAM**



**ROSS
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All guests attend subject to commitments/availability and may appear for all or part of the event. Line-up is correct at the time of going to print, but may be subject to change.
All tickets are limited and the organisers reserve the right to refuse entry. Tickets are non-refundable.

Every now and then, a limousine pulls up outside the *Total Film* office and a movie star disembarks, looking lost. He or she is then encircled by their entourage and marched into the reception area (I'd like to say foyer, but that's far too grand) to wait for the world's slowest lift. And wait. And wait. Finally, it shudders to a halt on the ground floor to disgorge a journo clutching a pack of fags, or perhaps a really smelly pasty. The star then squeezes into the space with his or her minions and rattles their way up to the fourth floor to visit the teenager's bedroom that is the *TF* office.

FAMOUS FLYBYS

I often wonder what they're really thinking as they flash their Hollywood grin. They're probably expecting a cavernous office clattering with industry, like in all those newspaper movies of the '30s and '40s, but instead find themselves shuffling between banks of desks on a small-ish floor crammed with magazine teams while the boiling kettle drowns out hellos.

Do they spot the models of Gollum and Batman on the bookcase? Let's hope not as they're reconfigured daily into ever-more gymnastic sexual positions. Do they happen to look out of the window and into the flat opposite, where a man spends his days naked except for, on occasion, a Jason Voorhees-style hockey mask? They must have detected the retch-worthy reek that once infected the office for six whole weeks, until I discovered

IT SHOULDN'T HAPPEN TO A FILM JOURNALIST

Editor-at-Large JAMIE GRAHAM lifts the lid on film journalism.

THIS MONTH WHEN STARS VISIT THE TF OFFICE



a bunched plastic bag and inside it a boiled egg (now black and suppurating) I'd dropped down the side of my desk.

When Luke Evans visited the office he was so impressed with the reviews editor's giant ball of elastic bands that he started bouncing it on the floor – much to the disgust of the people in the office beneath. Joss Whedon was jetlagged to an extent that he could hardly speak – unless, that is, he was actually rendered dumbstruck by the aforementioned naked guy in the flat opposite, who likes nothing

more than to bend forward, ass-to-glass, and languorously inspect the contents of his fridge. 'Snoopy' turned up with a friendly wave only to have trouble getting his bonce through the door. Edgar Wright and Terry Gilliam were in their element, keen to talk movies before settling down to do long video interviews about their respective careers.

Lovely, lovely Aaron Eckhart was met downstairs by one of the team ("You're the muscle," he joked, without missing a beat) then burst out of the lift bellowing, "HEY YOU GUYS!" and headed straight to the nearest desk to pump everyone's hand. Unfortunately it was *Pro Cycling* magazine, and he had to be steered across the floor to *TF*'s dingy corner.

TOILET HUMOUR

Best of the bunch, though, was the visit of James McAvoy to promote *Filth*. People who work on movie magazines, like everyone else, have their big-screen crushes, and one of Team *TF* had been doe-eyed for McAvoy ever since he'd played a faun in *The Chronicles Of Narnia: The Lion, The Witch And The Wardrobe*. The meet went well: a firm handshake, a warm smile, a couple of light-hearted pleasantries. Then it was time for a group photo, with staffers spilling out of the edges of the frame as they crowded in on the action.

With nowhere left to stand, our heroic *McA* fan hastily crouched down in front of her dream man, only for McAvoy to quip, "Does she need to go to the toilet?" *Click* – her beetroot face was snapped for posterity.

Not that she'd ever forget it anyway. How could she, with the rest of us reminding her at every opportunity?

Jamie will return next issue...
For more misadventures, follow:
[@jamie_graham9](#) on Twitter.

'DO THEY SPOT THE GOLLUM AND BATMAN MODELS IN THEIR GYMNASTIC SEXUAL POSITIONS?'



EXCLUSIVE

KILLING TIME

AMERICAN ASSASSIN | Teasers heads to an NY edit bay to meet the new American action hero...

You flinch, you die!" growls Michael Keaton. Dressed down, with a buzzcut and bulging eyes, he's overseeing a forest-set mud scrap between Dylan O'Brien (lean, naïve) and Scott Adkins (stacked, seasoned). "You go down out there, you're a ghost. You don't exist," Keaton rages, wielding a handgun. "There's nobody coming back for you." He puts the gun in his mouth.

"He's psycho!" laughs director Michael Cuesta of Keaton's character in *American Assassin*. "And Keaton's so unpredictable. Yeah, he stuck a gun in his mouth. He has a dangerous quality." It's June 2017 and *Teasers* is in New York visiting the Post Factory, the production company where Cuesta and producer Lorenzo di Bonaventura are editing the film. We've been given exclusive access to check out footage as it's cut together, watching a rat-a-tat of scenes so brutal they'd make *Bourne* wince.

First we meet 25-year-old Mitch Rapp (O'Brien) who – in the wake of his girlfriend's death during a terrorist attack – is hellbent on revenge, and enlisted by the CIA. "He's sort of an action hero but a millennial version of that," Cuesta says. "He has a boy next door quality to him, but boy did he grow up on this movie. He feels very unexpected as this guy but he is complex, scary and strong."

Enter Stan Hurley (Keaton), a notoriously roughneck operative with a razor's edge approach to recruitment. One training sequence sees Mitch handed his behind by Adkins' Victor ("Dylan learned every fight," Bonaventura says), while a nerve-shredding virtual-reality exercise involves electric shocks and psychological manipulation. "He's a mean son of a bitch," Bonaventura says of Hurley. "It's not the typical mentor/mentee thing at all. He wants Mitch to flush out. He never lets up."

Based on the 11th book in Vince Flynn's spy series, *American Assassin* is Cuesta's first film since 2014 thriller *Kill The Messenger*, and draws on his previous work directing *Homeland*. The footage we watch makes it look like *Homeland* meets *Bourne*, and is equally as complicated as that combination implies. "You think you're dealing with a movie about Muslim terrorism," explains Bonaventura, "but the threat becomes America." Namely Taylor Kitsch's 'Ghost', an ex-CIA operative Cuesta describes as "Mitch's reflection". He adds: "There is that yin-yang part of revenge and how it can go bad. That's what Hurley's about. He doesn't want to see another guy go bad." There will be blood. **JW**

ETA | 15 SEPTEMBER / AMERICAN ASSASSIN OPENS LATER THIS YEAR.



FRESH BLOOD
(above) Dylan O'Brien as Mitch Rapp, a fresh CIA recruit desperate for revenge.

TASKMASTER
Michael Keaton (right) plays the no-nonsense trainer preparing Rapp for the field.





SCENE SETTER
Director Michael Cuesta organises the action (middle).

GONE ROGUE
Taylor Kitsch's Ghost with Shiva Negar's Turkish agent Annika (below).





EXCLUSIVE

THE EQUALISER

BATTLE OF THE SEXES | Emma Stone and Steve Carell serve up a boundary-busting sports biopic...

There are few topics hotter in Hollywood right now than the gender pay gap. But in the tennis world, parity was fought for on the court in the 1970s, when world number one Billie Jean King broke the mould and demanded the same pay for male and female players. It's a subject Emma Stone, who stars as King in *Battle Of The Sexes*, knows a thing or two about, having asked male co-stars to take a pay cut so they could work on a levelling playing field. How times have changed...

In 1973, King was at the top of her game, when Bobby Riggs (Steve Carell), a retired Wimbledon champion, challenged her to an exhibition match worth \$100,000 to prove the superiority of male tennis players. Carell's faux-chauvinist is more hustler than misogynist, but with the issue of utmost importance to King, the two tennis titans embark on a fateful collision course.

Covering the nine-month period up to, and including, the match – which was seen by 90 million viewers worldwide – the film also details the metamorphosis happening in King's off-court life, as the married athlete finds herself in her first lesbian love

affair. "The film really tells the story that was happening in her personal life, at the same time the match was happening," explains co-director Valerie Faris. "The idea that as she had the most attention on her, she was also going through a real transformation, personally."

While several other films about the match were in development around the same time, only Simon Beaufoy's script received King's blessing. As the film's other director Jonathan Dayton explains: "This is the endorsed, official telling of this time

MATCH POINT
Emma Stone and Steve Carell as tussling tennis stars Billie Jean King and Bobby Riggs.

of her life." The directors pursued Stone knowing she would make the perfect Billie Jean. "They're actually quite alike," Dayton notes. "They're two of the most exceptional people I've ever met. There's a drive in them, as well as a goodness."

Carell had previous experience with the directors, having worked with them 10 years prior on *Little Miss Sunshine*, and made Riggs a more sympathetic character than most people remember him publicly. "The way Steve plays him, Bobby is almost playing this character: 'The public loves a good chauvinist.' This was really a hustle for him. And he just happened to be a good tennis player."

Fortunately, so is Carell, who trained with Lornie Kuhle – the same coach Riggs himself worked with 44 years ago. Stone also trained for the movie, working with the man who puts Matt Damon through his paces on the *Bourne* films. "She's completely transformed her body – it's unbelievable," informs Dayton. "Billie Jean saw her body as a machine, as a tennis player – and she worked harder at it than anyone." **MH**

ETA | 20 OCTOBER / BATTLE OF THE SEXES OPENS LATER THIS YEAR.



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SHORT CUTS

The latest happenings in movieland...



BEAST REGARDS

Newt Scamander's barely had a chance to enjoy a mug of butterbeer since last year's *Fantastic Beasts*, but he's already back in action as shooting on *Fantastic Beasts 2* kicks off at Warner Bros Studios Leavesden. The plot skips from New York to London as Newt (Eddie Redmayne) and a young Albus Dumbledore (Jude Law) unite to track down awful nasty Grindelwald (Johnny Depp).

GONE ROGUE

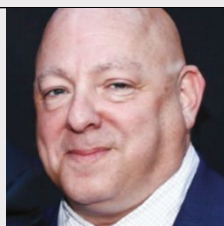
Directors Phil Lord and Chris Miller have departed the production of the untitled Han Solo movie after months of shooting over "creative differences". Two days later, Ron Howard hopped in to take their place. He calls the gig "a little opportunity that came my way", and hasn't wasted time proving he's got a roguish wit to match Han's by tweeting hilariously mundane pictures from the set.

BAT'S ENTERTAINMENT

"I have ideas about an arc," director Matt Reeves has revealed about a potential new Batman trilogy, adding that he has an "ambition for a series of stories, but really the most important thing is gonna be to tell a vital first story". He's helming the film for Warner Bros, with Ben Affleck returning as the Dark Knight.

IVANNA FIGHT

It's been a while since he promised to "break" Rocky, but Ivan Drago (Dolph Lundgren) could be about to slip the gloves back on for *Creed 2*. "History will always repeat itself," Stallone announced in an Instagram post that hinted young Creed (Michael B. Jordan) could finally meet the man responsible for his father's death (see 1985's *Rocky IV*). This is going to hurt.



MY MOVIE LIFE

The films that baffle and bewitch comic-book author **Brian Michael Bendis**...



THE MOVIE THAT EVERYONE HATES BUT I LOVE

The movie that gets the most ire, which bothers me as if it were a movie I'd made myself, is **INDIANA JONES AND THE KINGDOM OF THE CRYSTAL SKULL**. I can't argue with any of the [criticisms], and anything anyone ever says about it is right. But everything in that movie is in all of the other Indy movies, and everyone loved those. I gave it a huge pass and I'm mad that no one else did. It's like, "If Steven Spielberg doesn't have any credit at the bank, then no one does?"



THE MOVIE I'D TAKE TO A DESERT ISLAND

Warren Beatty's **REDS** is my overall favourite movie. It's also very long, and you always want a long movie on a desert island! It's about all the things that I love, as it's just about the world we live in. I often look back on that movie and its real-life components, and I think of how you could make a modern version of it that would reflect the world we live in today. I wish I could have made it, and I'm always inspired by it.



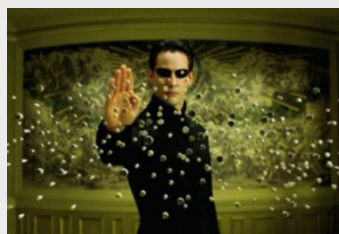
THE MOVIE I LOVE BUT NO ONE'S HEARD OF

My wife and I knew we were right for each other the moment we both said that we knew who Hal Hartley was. He did a few movies in the late '80s and early '90s that we both love, **TRUST** being one that we saw together, and we probably fell in love the day we saw it. It's not actually one that nobody's heard of it, but it was one of those things where, when you're first dating someone, you get so excited that they have even heard of this thing, let alone like it.



THE MOVIE REMAKE I'D MOST LIKE TO SEE

This is something I will be pursuing one day but there's a movie called **HERO AT LARGE**, starring John Ritter at the height of his *Three's Company* fame. He plays an actor who pretends to be a superhero for promotional purposes, who actually ends up running around, doing heroic things. It's like a precursor to films like *Kick-Ass*. It's one of those movies that was way ahead of its time, so maybe it's worth looking at again.



THE COMIC-BOOK MOVIE THAT I LOVE THE MOST

THE MATRIX is a movie that is wildly successful in its use of almost complete comic-book language and design. The whole movie is just like a big comic book, as it was made by the Wachowskis, who are like über comic-book fans, and has designs by [comics artists] Geof Darrow and Steve Skroce. It's one of those rare landmark movies where there were movies before it and then there were movies after it, and *The Matrix* is absolutely one of those movies.



THE MOVIE THAT EVERYONE LOVES BUT I HATE

I spend many hours a year baffled by how much I don't get the **FAST & FURIOUS** films. People I admire and work with love them as much as I love *John Wick*. I try to watch them with open eyes, to try and find my way into the franchise just on its own merits, but I just don't get it. **SJ**

ETA | 25 AUGUST / LONDON SUPER COMIC CON TAKES PLACE NEXT MONTH AT THE BUSINESS DESIGN CENTRE. TICKETS AVAILABLE AT LONDONSUPERCOMICCON.COM.



EXCLUSIVE

SNOW BUSINESS

THE MOUNTAIN BETWEEN US | Winslet and Elba battle the elements in icy survival romance...

Some filmmakers strive to entertain, others to educate. *Omar* director Hany Abu-Assad has loftier ambitions. "What is the meaning of life? Is it surviving? Or is there more than just living?" While *Teasers* has a sweaty-palmed flashback to A-level philosophy, Abu-Assad elaborates on the connection between his latest film and the *Ultimate Question*. "It can't be that our existence is just about surviving," Abu-Assad says. "As humans, we have more values. So I thought this was a fantastic opportunity to create a very human story of love, understanding and communication."

With material that meaty, it's easy to see what attracted heavyweights Idris Elba and Kate Winslet to the two-hander about strangers stranded on the side of a mountain when the pilot of their chartered plane has a fatal stroke. An extreme meet cute, you might think, but with Ben and Alex both in committed relationships, the film goes deeper than your typical love story. "It's adult, you know," Abu-Assad says. "When you think you're going to die, and there's another person who feels that, you're going to develop something more than love."

Central to Abu-Assad's vision was an unflinching determination to shoot

entirely on location, with the mountainous border of Alberta and British Columbia doubling for Utah's High Uintas Wilderness. Survival experts were enlisted to facilitate shooting in an inhospitable environment, but it remained logistically challenging. "Our first AD would fill the call sheet with: 'If it's cloudy, this is what we're going to do. If it's snowing, this is what we're going to do...'" Abu-Assad recalls. "Kate and Idris were prepared for six different scenarios every day."

Michael Fassbender, Margot Robbie, Charlie Hunnam and

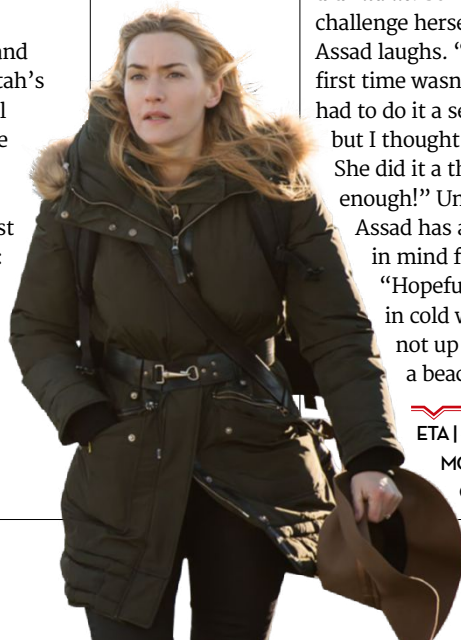
HELPING HAND
Kate Winslet and Idris Elba as the two stranded survivors of a plane crash.

Rosamund Pike were all attached to previous versions before Abu-Assad signed on, adding Idris Elba's name to the mix. "We sent him the script and he loved it," Abu-Assad says. Shortly after an awards show encounter helped Elba snag his co-star. "The week we met him, he presented a Bafta prize with Kate. So he talked to her about it, sent her the script, and the rest is history."

Perhaps Winslet wouldn't have been so keen to sign on had she known Abu-Assad would drop her in freezing water for a scene where Alex falls through thin ice. "Don't forget, she did *Titanic*. So it's not a new thing to challenge herself physically," Abu-Assad laughs. "She did it, and the first time wasn't good enough, so she had to do it a second time. It was OK, but I thought we could do it better. She did it a third time, and that was enough!" Understandably, Abu-Assad has a very different climate in mind for his next film.

"Hopefully it's not going to be in cold weather, not in snow, not up a mountain. Maybe a beach somewhere." **JF**

ETA | 6 OCTOBER / THE
MOUNTAIN BETWEEN US
OPENS LATER THIS YEAR.





EXCLUSIVE

PEDIGREE CHUM

VICTORIA & ABDUL | Incredible true story of the servant who became Queen Victoria's BFF...

It has nothing to do with Brexit," says Stephen Frears of his latest film *Victoria & Abdul*, which chronicles the outrageous – in the eyes of the court, at least – friendship that blossomed between Queen Victoria and her Indian servant Abdul Karim. "But the idea of making a film that involves a Muslim... it's very, very entertaining. I hope Donald Trump sees it. That makes me laugh."

Enconced in Twickenham Studios, Frears is in typically gruff, mischievous form while chatting to *Teasers* during the sound mixing. Never a man to waste words, he fields our questions with, shall we say, succinct replies.

How true is the story? "I don't know. I wasn't there." Did any of your research from *The Queen* help? "I don't think so. *The Queen* is quite a minimalist film. This is quite lavish." Did you talk to Judi Dench about reprising her role in *Mrs Brown*? "We never talked. There was nothing to say." Did you direct her performance? Shakes head. Do you ever direct actors? "The idea that you hire them for enormous amounts of money and then tell them what to do seems insulting."

Well, Frears is clearly doing something right, his CV boasting *My Beautiful Laundrette*, *Dangerous Liaisons*, *The Grifters* and *Philomena*. *Victoria & Abdul*, based on the 2011 book by Shrabani Basu, is an amusing, moving addition, with a sure-to-be-Oscar-nominated Dench forming a genuinely touching bond with Ali Fazal's Abdul while simultaneously delighting in how her actions infuriate her son Bertie (Eddie Izzard) and assorted prigs.

"I know all about being provocative," says Frears with a sly smirk. "She was an extraordinary woman. She liked sex and didn't like her children. That's already quite striking." Does he think, then, that *Victoria & Abdul* contains any trace

WE ARE AMUSED

Judy Dench looks like a locked-in Oscar prospect for her turn opposite the young Indian actor Ali Fazal.

elements of the hooligan spirit that infused his early work?

"I hope so. I don't feel I'm a beaten figure." He shrugs and thinks back to his early days making TV. "We were very badly behaved. I don't get material like that now. Or maybe I'm too sophisticated or jaundiced to respond to it. I don't sense films being rebellious. All I did with *My Beautiful Laundrette* was read it and say: 'This is wonderful. We must make this now.' I can see *Laundrette* was very cheeky."

Which begs a parting, cheeky question: what does he think of Daniel Day-Lewis' retirement? "I think if you found him a good script tomorrow he might well come out of retirement." **JG**

ETA | 15 SEPTEMBER / *VICTORIA & ABDUL* OPENS IN THE AUTUMN.





BETWEEN TAKES

SALMA HAYEK

The star of *The Hitman's Bodyguard* talks life on set...

What's the first thing you do on set?

Coffee. And I ask the director for permission to talk to the production designer. I always want to be involved with the space that my character lives in. If it's not what I had in mind for my character, I say, "What if..." I'm really sensitive to space.

What do you always take with you?

I used to take four or five dogs. Not

anymore. Sometimes I take one.

Animals keep me grounded and give me a sense of peace.

Any superstitions?

A long time ago I did, but they went away. I will happily walk under ladders.

Hot or cold lunch?

It depends on the weather. If it's hot, I like cold; if it's cold, I want hot. I'm

allergic to mussels and oysters and lobster and I do not like onions. A big lunch makes me tired but I eat a big lunch anyway. I deal with it later.

Do you ever sleep between takes?

I don't sleep during the day; I barely sleep during the night. The couple of times I have [*slept on set*], I woke with heartburn and freaking out, not knowing where I was. But I do have one trick to relax. I stand on my head. I have this urge to do a headstand. Sometimes I just do it on the set while I'm waiting. I think, "That looks like a good place," and I do it and everyone stares.

Ever use your phone?

No. [*pause*] Sometimes I use it for music to get in a character's head, but I don't think of it as a phone, I think of it as a music-giver.

Most embarrassing on-set moment?

I've had many. I was profoundly embarrassed when I was in the Grand Canyon with Matthew Perry at the beginning of my career [1997's *Fools Rush In*]. I was hot and tired and my dyslexia kicked in. I changed the order of the words every time. I did so many takes. I was mortified.

Best on-set experience?

I've had some great ones; I've had some horrid ones! *From Dusk Till Dawn* is the thing I'm most proud of because I'm scared of snakes and had to go into a trance. I had to become one with the snake. At one point she put her tongue in my mouth. [*pause*] I also liked screaming "motherfucker" at the King of the Motherfuckers [*Samuel L. Jackson*] on *The Hitman's Bodyguard*. It was a privilege.

What's the craziest thing that you've ever witnessed?

Robert Rodriguez makes you do all your own stunts. I had two hernias. On *Once Upon A Time In Mexico*, I had to jump from a bus. They had a cushion on the floor but it was sooo far away. I said, "I'll never make it." They said, "Don't worry, it's been calculated." I said, "There's no way..." I hadn't taken into account the explosion behind me. I went *beyond* the cushion. And later they threw me out of a building five times, almost naked... JG

'I'M SCARED OF SNAKES BUT I HAD TO BECOME ONE WITH IT. SHE PUT HER TONGUE IN MY MOUTH'

ET 18 AUGUST / THE HITMAN'S BODYGUARD OPENS NEXT MONTH.



EXCLUSIVE

REMEMBER ME?

UNA | Rooney Mara confronts her seducer in a gripping drama about a dangerous attraction...

She's been the girl with the dragon tattoo, the girl who inspired Facebook, and the girl Cate Blanchett fell in love with in *Carol*. Yet the girl Rooney Mara plays in *Una* is a different person entirely – a young woman who was seduced by an older man when she was only 13, a criminal act that changed the course of both their lives and left her with a host of unanswered questions.

Una starts with Mara's title character, now 28, setting out to get answers from Ray (Ben Mendelsohn), who has served time for his actions and is now living under a different name. "The film is about a woman trying to reclaim her past," explains director Benedict Andrews. "It's about their encounter, their confrontation at his place of work and her attempts to understand and unravel what happened to both of them."

Based on David Harrower's 2005 play *Blackbird*, *Una* marks Andrews' first foray into film. Yet he's no stranger to the story, having directed the German language premiere of *Blackbird* in Berlin. "It really stuck with me," reveals the 45-year-old. "I remained fascinated by the play, and the characters' complex and ambivalent relationship. I was interested in how the idea of time was contained in the story, and the idea of

the past being interwoven with the present. That enquiry into time, trauma, memory and emotion is one of the deep pulls of the film, and something cinema is uniquely equipped to talk about."

Andrews accepts the paedophilia at the heart of the drama may be a turn-off to many. But he's insistent that the film does not condone Ray's conduct or take the easy route of demonising him. "I've had conversations with survivors who are thankful for how *Una* approaches the material without shying away from the damage and the pain of it," he says. "Part of the power of cinema is its ability to humanise even monsters..." **NS**

ETA | 1 SEPTEMBER / UNA OPENS LATER THIS YEAR.

DARK PAST
Rooney Mara's *Una* tracks down Ben Mendelsohn's paedophile, 15 years after they had a relationship.



Q&A
BEN MENDELSON

What attracted you to *Una*?

It's an incredibly visceral, psychological thriller that hooked me the second I read it. I knew that Rooney would be playing *Una* and I had worked with Benedict in Australia so it was a very immediate yes.

Were you daunted by the transgressive nature of the central relationship?

Look, I know how I feel about the guy, but what I'm trying to do is take that situation and make that dialogue as lively as it's written. Strong characters like Ray are great to play. It's what you look for as an actor.

Do you get recognised more now, after playing *Rogue One's* Orson Krennic?

The *Rogue One* thing doesn't necessarily translate as much because the costume was so iconic. It was so peculiar I don't get noticed without it! Also people don't generally expect to see someone from *Star Wars* walking down the street...

We'll see you soon in *Ready Player One*. How did you find working with Spielberg?

Oh, it was a dream come true. Steven is the most extraordinary director on set with a camera, and as an audience for an actor he's just amazing. I'm quite sure the film will be unbelievable. **NS**



REX

HUNTING GROUNDS
Look for the Oscar-winner
next in *The Big Sick*, out now.



THE HERO

HOLLY HUNTER

The Georgian gal is still sickeningly good...

It feels adult, it's funny, and it's really human." Holly Hunter's description of comedy *The Big Sick*, in which she plays the mother of a girl in a coma, could describe the actress herself. Direct but warm, the 59-year-old Oscar-winner has forged a career out of defying expectations, whether screaming in *Raising Arizona*, miming in *The Piano*, or super-stretching in *The Incredibles*.

Were you drawn to *The Big Sick* by the involvement of Judd Apatow?

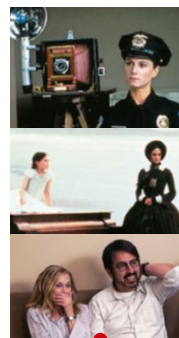
Yes, you're exactly right. The pedigree of the movie was immediately a cut above because Judd operates with such integrity and he's got such great taste. I laughed in a very particular way when I saw *This Is 40* because Judd was so right on. It felt like he was really generous with himself and that moved me.

You did comedy early on with 1987's *Raising Arizona*. Is it a genre that you particularly enjoy?

Yes, and a lot of the things I've done have been comedies, so it's something I do feel at home in. Joel and Ethan [Coen], their scripts are impeccable. Their storytelling is so beautifully structured, there's a certain kind of magic that their movies possess. They create a universe that is very much theirs. They know what movie it is that they're making.

That same year, James L. Brooks' *Broadcast News* came out, which was a demanding role for you...

It was demanding mostly because I was very afraid that I wasn't going to be able to do it. It was daunting, it was completely unknown. I mean, working with Bill Hurt, working with Albert Brooks. It just felt like it was another level that I wasn't sure I was gonna be up for. I think that the anticipation is the worst of almost everything in life. The anticipation of doing *Broadcast News* was actually much, much worse than the doing of it. Once we began shooting I realised that it's something I was accustomed to, which was acting! I love to act!



HUNTER HIGHS
(top to bottom)
Hunter in the Coens' *Raising Arizona*; winning an Oscar with Anna Paquin in *The Piano*; and with Ray Romano in *The Big Sick*.

'SIGOURNEY WAS THE FORERUNNER OF BELIEVABLY AWESOME FEMALES IN POWER'

Are accolades such as the Oscars a big deal for you?

Well, of course, it's like a great, beautiful, big validation. It's cool to be seen in that way, too. If I were a bowler and I went to a bowling league, I would go to the Big Bowling League Annual Party. What did I do with my Oscar? It's at my home here in New York City.

Your first acting role was in the slasher movie *The Burning*. How do you feel now looking back at that experience?

Well, look, I got paid more than I ever could've imagined on *The Burning*; I was making over a thousand dollars a week, which was incredible. I could make my rent, I didn't have to wait tables for a while, I got all these new friends and I was kind of a glorified extra. I got my Screen Actors Guild card. So it was fantastic.

From one extreme to the other, you worked with Jane Campion on *The Piano*, playing Ada – the role that won you that Oscar. Was that a special film for you?

Oh, very special. Without question, it felt special when we were making it. It felt special just reading the script. That's when it first began to feel special, being invited into that world that Jane wrote.

You've played a lot of kick-ass women. You and Sigourney Weaver made a great team in Jon Amiel's *Copycat*...

Sigourney, she's an actress who's incredible and has such a power. The whole thing with this beautiful chapter that we're in with *Wonder Woman* and Gal Gadot; Sigourney was the forerunner of believably awesome females in power. Sigourney started that. She's really something.

What can you tell us about *The Incredibles 2*?

We're in the middle of it. It's really exciting. I'm so happy and I feel so lucky that Brad Bird is doing this one as well, because he's got a perspective like nobody else. Like the Coens, Brad knows what story it is he wants to tell. I was just glad that something else was going to happen to this family. We waited a little while for it! **JW**

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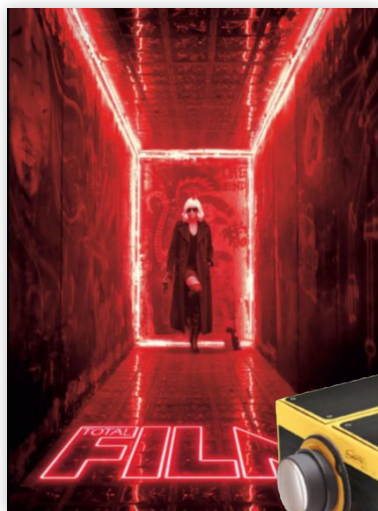
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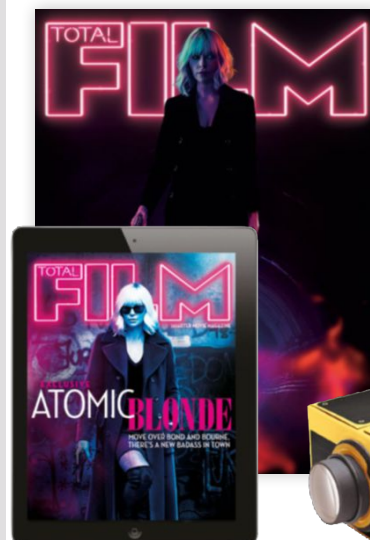
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BIG SCREEN

THE WORLD'S MOST TRUSTED MOVIE REVIEWS

44

LOGAN LUCKY

Sibling thievery...

'HEART, SMARTS
AND SURPRISES...
IT'S PRIME
SODERBERGH'



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ALSO RELEASED

We couldn't see them in time for this issue, so head to gamesradar.com/totalfilm for reviews of the following:

TITLE	RELEASE DATE
The Dark Tower	18 August
The Hitman's Bodyguard	18 August

For more reviews visit gamesradar.com/totalfilm

CERTIFICATE TBC **DIRECTOR** Steven Soderbergh **STARRING** Channing Tatum, Adam Driver, Riley Keough, Daniel Craig, Katie Holmes
SCREENPLAY Rebecca Blunt **DISTRIBUTOR** Studiocanal **RUNNING TIME** 120 mins

LOGAN LUCKY

Hell or heist water...

★★★★☆ OUT 25 AUGUST

When Steven Soderbergh 'retired' from cinema in 2013, he attributed his frustration with filmmaking in part to "the way the people with the money decide they can fart in the kitchen". Directors were mistreated, he lamented, by financiers who thought they knew best.

SEE THIS IF YOU LIKED...

THE HOT ROCK 1972

Robert Redford shines in Peter (Bullitt) Yates' taut, tricky hipster heist romp: a gem.

ANT-MAN 2015

Marvel channels ample reserves of small-scale fun and genre know-how into a wise-cracking caper movie.

BABY DRIVER 2017

Cars, crime, wicked sounds. Edgar Wright's genre vehicle drives to its director's distinct tune.

FOR MORE REVIEWS VISIT GAMESRADAR.COM/TOTALFILM

Lured back to film by a precision script from Rebecca Blunt, Soderbergh has excised his kitchen of intrusive ass-gas. Pitched at the mid-budget level he loves and Hollywood often neglects, *Logan Lucky* is prime Soderbergh: a sure-handed and warmly comic heist caper, it arrives packing layers of heart, smarts and surprises under a well-appointed hood.

The backdrop is the NASCAR world, but Soderbergh's confidence shows more in his steady pacing and rootsy Americana setting than any top-gear gloss. Forget *Ocean's Eleven's* glitzy hustle; forget a certain vehicular franchise, too, which Blunt's script drops "Furious Fast" puns about. We're in West Virginia, where toilet-seat-tossing is a feature at county fairs, and where Channing Tatum's Jimmy Logan is found working on his wheels as he extols the virtues of a country tune to his daughter Sadie (Farrah Mackenzie). "I like the song because of the song," he explains. "I guess I also like it because of the story behind it."

Likewise, just as his *Magic Mike* balanced crowd-pleasing instincts with social insight, Soderbergh takes pleasure in fuelling surface mechanics with stories that resonate. When Jimmy is fired from work because of his limp, the scene reflects an uncaring America. By contrast,



Tatum's unforced charm and Soderbergh's patient portrait endear this loving lummock of a father to us, even if he isn't the brightest bulb, or the most punctual dad. A faded quarterback, Jimmy resembles a Springsteen song given serio-comic life: he's one of America's forgotten, who cooks up a scheme to score some loot because he wants to do right by his daughter and ex-wife Bobbie (Katie Holmes).

BANG GANG

The family ties are strengthened by Jimmy's brother Clyde (Adam Driver), who shakes up a mean cocktail at a low-lit bar on the edge of town

despite having lost an arm in telling circumstances. Aided by the pitch-perfect restraint of Driver's affectionately blank performance, the chemistry between the siblings is attractive, even if they might be too dim to realise their heist plan is bonkers.

The brothers' plot to steal money from the Charlotte Motor Speedway sure is elaborate: simply put, the race will distract security while an underground tube system is used to spirit the cash away. But it also offers a neat mirror for Soderbergh's pitch. He makes slick surface work of team-gathering generics, while the Coen-esque characters and slanted dialogue furnish underlying riches.

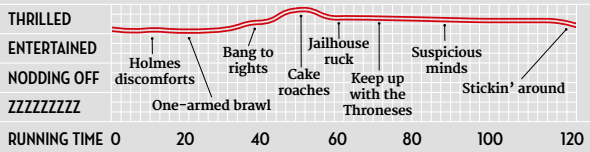
Foremost among the rogues' gallery is "in-car-cer-at-ed" explosives man Joe Bang, whose cartoon-ish name comes with

'JIMMY RESEMBLES A SPRINGSTEEN SONG GIVEN SERIO-COMIC LIFE'



In his two weeks inside, Bond had gone downhill fast.

FILM PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE™



a persona to match, thanks to the redneck relish (and prison onesie) of Daniel Craig's gamely Bond-blitzing delivery. Aiding him in tech know-how are Fish (Jack Quaid) and Sam Bang (Brian Gleeson), dolts whose concerns about the job's "morality" showcase the comic delights of Blunt's script. (If it's good chat you're after, stay sharp for a deliciously quotable *Game Of Thrones* exchange, too.)

SKILL JOYS

By comparison, the women aren't as developed as you would like, coming

from the director of *Erin Brockovich* and *Haywire*. But Riley Keough plays it cool as Mellie Logan, and Katherine Waterston deploys a fine line in scalding looks as a nurse. Holmes, meanwhile, unveils unexpected yet welcome sharp edges as a mother more tightly wound than her strappy shoes.

Propelled by crate-digging Belfast DJ/composer David Holmes' funky score, the plot is equally tightly wound. Though Soderbergh and his backwoods crims act goofy, both harbour discreet skills. Between an outrageously convoluted prison bust, some nail-varnished cockroaches, and the zip of a bag, the fine points of the heist are marshalled with sly degrees of cheek and panache, tooled to disarm our suspicions. Even if the details don't hold up, we're having too much fun watching

Team Logan navigate various unexpected variables to mind.

Hilary Swank's cameo as a tenacious cop threatens to steer events into darker waters, but this isn't that kind of film. In Soderbergh's self-aware hands, it's a character-centric, director-driven, genre-savvy invitation to take pleasure in a job well orchestrated, right up to a judicious closing shot that leaves you wanting to linger awhile with its motley crew. Since few filmmakers are making films like it today, let's hope Soderbergh lingers in cinema, too. No tooting in his kitchen, please. **Kevin Harley**

THE VERDICT

One more job... Soderbergh executes his cine-comeback with élan, aided by winning A-team work from Tatum, Driver and Craig.

CERTIFICATE TBC **DIRECTOR** David Leitch **STARRING** Charlize Theron, James McAvoy, Sofia Boutella, Toby Jones, John Goodman, Eddie Marsan **SCREENPLAY** Kurt Johnstad
DISTRIBUTOR Universal **RUNNING TIME** 115 mins

ATOMIC BLONDE

Balls-to-the-Berlin-Wall action...

★★★★★ OUT 9 AUGUST

The name's Broughton. Lorraine Broughton. While the name might sound more like someone who works in accounts than an international superspy, don't let the unshowy moniker deceive you. In star (and producer) Charlize Theron's hands, Lorraine Broughton is one of the most arresting new characters you'll meet on the big screen this year: ruthless, efficient, seductive... it's almost like she's on a mission to out-Bond Bond.

SEE THIS IF YOU LIKED...

THE BOURNE IDENTITY 2002

Matt Damon's amnesiac reinvents the espionage thriller.

HAYWIRE 2011

Bone-crushing action and an ass-kicking operative, Soderbergh-style.

MAD MAX:

FURY ROAD 2015

Another full-blooded Theron actioner that favours in-camera stunts.

FOR MORE REVIEWS VISIT GAMESRADAR.COM/TOTALFILM

Where Lorraine has an edge on 007 is that this is a hard-R actioner: bones break, heads pop, sex scenes go beyond innuendo. It's hard to imagine anyone else handling the role's steely grit like Theron. Lorraine feels instantly iconic, from the platinum bob and chic wardrobe, to her chilly, unreadable stare and an amoral code that'll keep you on the right side of suspicious throughout. But, most memorably of all, she's wholly kickass, with Theron fully committing to the brutal, lengthy fight scenes that take place in locations ranging from a multi-storey apartment block to the backseat of a car.

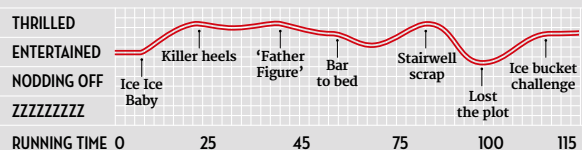
Set in the late '80s, with the Berlin Wall still just about standing, *Atomic Blonde* introduces MI6 agent Broughton as she's debriefing suited superior Gray (Toby Jones) and a top CIA bod (John Goodman) on her recent escapade in the German capital. From the washed-out greys of the interrogation room, we're thrust back to the neon-hued, graffiti-smattered streets, and the pace barely lets up from there. Introduced to grubby undercover operative David Percival (James McAvoy), Broughton is seeking a highly classified list of double agents who are being offed one-by-one.

In this world of shifting alliances and back-room dealing, keeping up with the plot is a fool's errand, as there's so much quadruple-crossing going on that no one can be *entirely* trusted. Don't fret though, as the characters and set-pieces are propulsive enough. Theron is cool incarnate. In one striking shot early on, she's soothing her bruises in a bath of ice, before dropping a couple of cubes into a glass and topping up with vodka. When she scraps, you half-suspect she might shatter rather than bleed.

If the film's a close cousin tonally to *John Wick*, another action throwback about a sharply dressed badass, that shouldn't come as a surprise. On directing duties here is David Leitch, the stunt coordinator-turned-director who co-directed *JW* with Chad Stahelski (who went on to direct *JW: Chapter 2* solo). On the strength of *Atomic Blonde*, it's no surprise that Leitch has been snapped up for *Deadpool 2*. He nails the succession of crunching set-pieces – including one bravura tracking shot that'll leave you feeling pummelled – but also ensures that the film has a distinct look and hyperreal tone.

If you didn't know *Atomic Blonde* was based on a graphic novel (2012's *The Coldest City*), you'd probably be able to guess: this is stylised, unsubtle cinema, where actions speak *much* louder than words, and '80s pop gems underscore several crucial moments. If characters are frequently more cool than complex, it's hard to gripe when the film is such a hectic blast. A 'Lorraine Broughton will return' end card would certainly not be unwelcome. **Matt Maytum**

FILM PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE™



THE VERDICT

Theron is totally badass in a relentless thriller that never takes its foot off the gas. Bold and brash, with some of the year's most bruising fight scenes. For more, read our feature on p64.



Nobody tries the magic
goldfish prank on Lorraine
and gets away with it!





The sexual tension reaches new highs in the unexpected bouncy castle scene.

SEE THIS IF YOU LIKED...

STAR WARS EPISODE IV: A NEW HOPE 1977

Valerian takes more than a few cues from Lucas' peerless universe.

THE FIFTH ELEMENT 1997

A more memorably bonkers space opera from Besson.

JOHN CARTER 2012

Not so much a bad sci-fi adap as one 20 years too late to the screen.

FOR MORE REVIEWS VISIT GAMESRADAR.COM/TOTALFILM

VALERIAN...

Luc Skywalker...

★★★★☆ OUT 2 AUGUST

A €200 million price tag. *Avatar*-rivalling visual ambition. Source material oft-regarded as an influence on *Star Wars*. Luc Besson's *Valerian And The City Of A Thousand Planets* arrives with interstellar expectations. While it's no *Jupiter Ascending*-style stinker, a dispiritingly conventional screenplay and miscast leads prevent this take on French comic-book series *Valérian And Laureline* from ever truly taking off.

Not that there isn't innovation. An early sequence in an inter-dimensional Grand Bazaar is brain-breakingly inventive. Before that a 10-minute, near-silent vignette on a pristine Day-Glo beach planet stuns with its simplicity. And then there's the opener – a bravura history of humanity's first contact, from present day to the 28th

CERTIFICATE 12A **DIRECTOR** Luc Besson
STARRING Dane DeHaan, Cara Delevingne, Rihanna, Ethan Hawke, Clive Owen
SCREENPLAY Luc Besson **DISTRIBUTOR** Lionsgate **RUNNING TIME** 137 mins

Century. Taken in isolation, *Valerian's* first 30 minutes are up there with the best sci-fi in recent memory. The trouble starts when the story kicks in.

Enter Valerian (Dane DeHaan) and Laureline (Cara Delevingne), space agents who police the universe by day and flirt awkwardly by night. Their latest mission takes them to Alpha – a planet-sized city home to 8,000 alien species. But the megalopolis has a literal heart of darkness, where some seemingly belligerent force threatens the fabric of the galaxy itself.

Every penny of that record-breaking (and independently financed) budget has been put on screen. If *The Fifth Element's* taxi skyways knocked your orange suspenders off in 1997, *Valerian* frequently makes Milla Jovovich's swan dive look like a pre-production animatic. Besson hurtles his camera through a series of awe-inspiring environments, and populates them with increasingly bizarre alien species. It's like *A New Hope's* cantina sequence stretched over two hours, with Rihanna

making the biggest impression as Bubble – a meek, shapeshifting stripper – alongside a game Ethan Hawke as her pimp, (not so) Jolly. While the world often acts as little more than a backdrop, screen sci-fi doesn't get much more optically arresting.

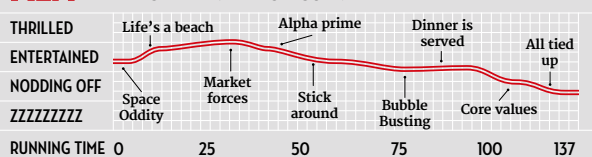
And yet, Besson's rocketship is knocked off-course. Penned by the Euro auteur himself, the ploddingly predictable story, adapted from 1975 volume 'Ambassador Of The Shadows', falls well short of the significant achievements elsewhere. The dialogue, meanwhile, feels clunky even when spoken in indecipherable alien tongues. And the leads also disappoint. DeHaan lacks the cocksure swagger of the Han Solo archetype he's playing up to, while Delevingne is asked to do little more than be chased or deploy an endless series of exasperated reaction shots.

Besson's world is undoubtedly ripe for further exploration. But he'd be wise to hone his storytelling, and possibly recast. **Jordan Farley**

THE VERDICT

VFX Oscar glory seems inevitable, but a formulaic plot and underwhelming leads are just two of *Valerian's* thousand problems.

FILM PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE™





Sally Hawkins as Maud, in the home that became her canvas.

CERTIFICATE 12A **DIRECTOR** Aisling Walsh **STARRING** Sally Hawkins, Ethan Hawke, Gabrielle Rose, Kari Matchett **SCREENPLAY** Sherry White **DISTRIBUTOR** Sony **RUNNING TIME** 116 mins

MAUDIE

Hawke and Hawkins, together at last...

★★★★☆ OUT 4 AUGUST

You don't know a click about cleaning!" sneers grumpy bachelor Everett (Ethan Hawke) at the woman he's hired to be his live-in housekeeper. And he's right – with her arthritic hands, hunched-over posture and total lack of domestic experience, Maud Lewis (Sally Hawkins) is hardly maid to order.

Luckily Maud has other attributes: an untapped talent as a folk artist whose playful paintings gradually change her life, Everett's opinion of her and the shack they call home. The result is a slow-burn love story that worms its way into your heart, even in moments when it's akin to watching paint dry.

Hawkins has been here before of course, having previously played a no-less-irresistible force of nature in Mike Leigh's *Happy-Go-Lucky* (2008). That film's Poppy, though, didn't have to deal with creeping emphysema, an abusive hubby or the biting cold of Nova Scotia – just a few of the additional challenges thrown Maud's way in a pic that stacks its emotional chips inexorably in its plucky heroine's favour.

Some might find *Maudie* as twee as the fluffy cats and songbirds that made her famous. But it's nigh-on impossible not to be charmed by Hawkins, while Hawke certainly does his best to convince as an unloveable yokel. **Neil Smith**

THE VERDICT

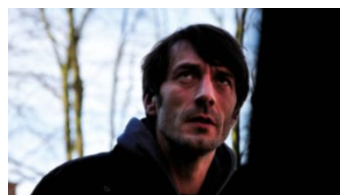
Hawkins shines in a touching biopic that will make you laugh, cry and Google its subject afterwards.



ANNABELLE: CREATION

★★★★☆ OUT 11 AUGUST

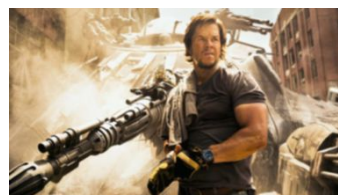
Forget 2014's *Annabelle* – this is the only *Conjuring* prequel you need. Set in the 1950s and with a creaky single location, it unleashes the tiny terror on a nun (Stephanie Sigman) and the orphans in her care. The script is straightforward enough, but *Lights Out* director David F. Sandberg's careful visuals emphasise shivery mood for something worthy of the *Conjuring* label. **Josh Winning**



THE GHOUL

★★★★☆ OUT 4 AUGUST

Written and directed by Gog from *Peep Show* (aka Gareth Tunley), this lonely, London-set psychodrama follows Tom Meeten as he investigates a murder. But is he policeman, madman or both? With an excellent cast (including Alice Lowe and Paul Kaye) and alluringly off-kilter atmosphere, it's more successful as an exercise in style than storytelling, the circular narrative collapsing in on itself at the last. **Matt Glasby**



TRANSFORMERS: THE LAST KNIGHT

★★★★☆ OUT NOW

By now you know exactly what to expect from a *Transformers* film: undeniably epic action spectacle at the cost of character, logic or genuine drama. The Dark Ages-set prologue might briefly convince you this is going to serve up something different, but before long the MacGuffin's established and the film's descended into another brash, brawny endurance test. **Matt Maytum**



DESPICABLE ME 3

★★★★☆ OUT NOW

"I miss the Minions!" mutters reformed supervillain Gru (Steve Carell). He's speaking for the audience: thanks to long-lost twin Dru, there's twice as much Carell in this threequel and a lot less of his scene-stealing helpers. If the plan was to reconfirm Carell as the franchise's lynchpin, it backfires, with Dru's antics clearing the way for Trey Parker's '80s-obsessed baddie to moonwalk away with the movie. **Neil Smith**

CERTIFICATE 12A **DIRECTOR** Christopher Nolan **STARRING** Tom Hardy, Kenneth Branagh, Mark Rylance, Cillian Murphy, Fionn Whitehead, Harry Styles **SCREENPLAY** Christopher Nolan **DISTRIBUTOR** Warner Bros **RUNNING TIME** 106 mins

DUNKIRK

Escape plan...

★★★★★ OUT NOW

A real-life retelling of a pivotal moment during WW2 might seem an unexpected choice for the writer/director/world-builder of original blockbuster fictions. Yet the classical, elegiac *Dunkirk* is still unmistakably a Christopher Nolan film. Like many of Nolan's previous projects, it's multi-layered, non-linear, precision-calibrated, epic in scale – and even boasts Bane himself rocking a shearling coat and shouting through a face-obscuring mask.

SEE THIS IF YOU LIKED...

THE BATTLE OF BRITAIN 1969

A starry ensemble recreates a key wartime event with soaring stunts from real vintage planes.

SAVING PRIVATE RYAN 1998

Desperate survival on the WW2 beaches under the eye of another event-movie director.

INCEPTION 2010

Nolan's looping narrative eye-saucer showcases a filmmaker at the height of his powers.

FOR MORE REVIEWS VISIT GAMESRADAR.COM/TOTALFILM

But while many of those clever, clockwork creations thrilled and confounded, Nolan has long been criticised for a certain clinical coldness. No such problem here – heartfelt and moving, *Dunkirk* may be teeth-clenching stuff, but it's also the auteur's most unapologetically emotional and accessible film to date... and it could be the movie to finally get him into the Oscar-winners' circle.

Rather than take an impersonal God's-eye overview of the events of May 1940, when 400,000 troops were pushed back by German forces to the beaches of Dunkirk to face death and defeat if they weren't rescued, Nolan dissects his film into three separate narrative tracts. The respective strands cover land, sea and air – an approach that immerses you in the boots-on-the-ground reality for the blood-and-guts men (civilian and military) battling to change history.

LAND, SEA AND AIR

After opening with a young soldier – with the aptronym Tommy (Fionn Whitehead) – escaping gunfire through the streets of Dunkirk only to arrive at the crowded, desperate beaches, those narratives unfurl in different times: the story of troops



on the shore begins a week before the climax; the journey of Dorset sailor Mr. Dawson's (Mark Rylance) sea-based rescue mission starts a day ahead; and the tale of two fighter pilots, Farrier and Collins (Tom Hardy and Jack Lowden), kicks off an hour before in the skies over the Channel.

As the stories weave in and out of each other, we see key life-threatening incidents (a downed Spitfire, a torpedoed ship, a sinking fishing boat) from different perspectives, with each replay informed by increasing investment in characters and a 360-degree understanding of the logistics at play. The cumulative effect is both thrilling

and devastating. We're deftly shown the misinterpretations that fuelled troop hostility towards the RAF (unseen from the beach, it was assumed the fighter squadrons had simply abandoned their comrades) and the constant peril every man was in despite apparent deliverance. Think you're safe aboard a naval medic ship? That a bailout went OK? That the proximity of help will save you in oil-slick water? Think again...

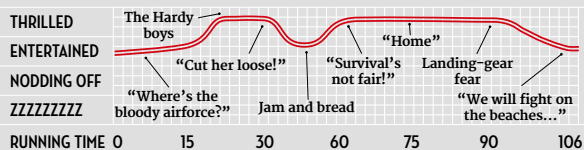
Playing as briskly and tensely as any escape thriller with mouth-agape-impressive in-camera effects, the movie constantly asks audiences to consider what they would do in a series of relentless, deadly situations while highlighting the acts of bravery, honour and kindness that exemplify the famous Dunkirk Spirit. A white lie to protect a shellshocked soldier here, a last-ditch fight despite

'IT COULD BE THE MOVIE TO FINALLY WIN NOLAN AN OSCAR'

50



FILM PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE™



running on empty there, the faith of an ordinary father speeding to save a man in memory of his fallen son... small moments in the bigger picture that build to the ultimate show of British stoicism in a flotilla of little ships as Hans Zimmer's insistent, Shepard tone score (driven by the sampled ticking of Nolan's own wristwatch) gives way to the stirring strains of Elgar's emotive 'Nimrod' variation – challenging viewers not to shed a tear. Manipulative? Probably. Flawlessly executed? Yes.

A true ensemble piece, *Dunkirk*'s cast may have little dialogue, and limited individual screen time, but all are (pardon the pun) uniformly excellent – yes, cynics, even that One Direction bloke. While the young guns provide the derdoing, the more seasoned cast bring the gravitas and feels. Special mention must go to Rylance's delightful, nuanced patriot, Hardy's dexterity in portraying emotions from behind an oxygen mask in the confines of a cockpit and Kenneth Branagh's Shakespearean naval commander – when, eyes brimming, he utters the word "home", it'll break you.

PLANE BRILLIANT

But they, of course, are not the stars of the show. What really makes *Dunkirk* so immediate, so visceral, are the period-correct vintage planes and

boats fitted with innovative cameras to create literally breath-holding moments underwater, in the sky and on the sea. Hoyte Van Hoytema's beautiful, terrifying lensing – dizzying dogfights, suffocating sinkings and a cinematography-award moment when a Spitfire lands on sun-gilt sand – ensure that what could have been complicated and depressing is rendered with clarity. Thoroughly modern in its approach, yet classical in style, it's a film that will appeal as much to Batman fans as WW2 scholars, and ultimately, the Academy come gong time. **Jane Crowther**

THE VERDICT

Haunting, thrilling and emotional, *Dunkirk* is a prestige pic with guts and glory that demands multiple views. Especially in IMAX.



She couldn't believe it; someone had nicked the sheets off the line, again.

CERTIFICATE 12A **DIRECTOR** David Lowery **STARRING** Casey Affleck, Rooney Mara, Will Oldham **SCREENPLAY** David Lowery **DISTRIBUTOR** Picturehouse Entertainment **RUNNING TIME** 92 mins

A GHOST STORY

Sheet happens...

★★★★☆ OUT 11 AUGUST

A Malick-y meditation on life and, mainly, death, the latest from writer/director David Lowery (*Ain't Them Bodies Saints*, the *Pete's Dragon* remake) has tabs on itself. Lots of tabs. The plot is sheet thin. Grumpy muso Casey Affleck and moon-eyed wife Rooney Mara live in a house. One day, he dies, then comes back to mope around with a *Scooby-Doo*-esque sheet over his head.

While the sight of Casey the not-so-friendly ghost haunting the corners of his old life is striking, he can only communicate one emotion, which gets old fast (the only thing that happens at pace). One shot of Mara eating a pie is so prolonged you suspect Affleck won't be the only one to expire before the credits. A montage of her leaving the house, meanwhile, practically constitutes an action scene.

But there's something here beneath the sixth-form philosophy: lovely shots of Affleck gliding through a waterlogged meadow at magic hour; clever use of Dark Rooms' gorgeous 'I Get Overwhelmed'; and an arresting cameo from actor/musician Will Oldman as the last person you'd want to sit next to at a party. In short, enough meat on the bones, but only just. **Matt Glasby**

THE VERDICT

Like an arthouse *Ghost*, this is bold, original filmmaking with a pervasive sense of amused detachment.



THE WALL

★★★★☆ OUT 28 JULY

American snipers John Cena and Aaron Taylor-Johnson are caught in the crosshairs of their Iraqi opposite number in a relentlessly taut thriller, a cautionary tale on the folly of starting wars you can't finish. Director Doug Liman pares the action down to its elemental essence, while Laith Nakli, only heard as lethal sharpshooter Juba, provides the best unseen antagonist since Kiefer Sutherland in *Phone Booth*. **Neil Smith**



LAND OF MINE

★★★★☆ OUT 4 AUGUST

Writer/director Martin Zandvliet's gripping drama unfolds in post-WW2 Denmark, where a revenge-seeking sergeant (Roland Møller) is assigned a group of teenage German POWs. Their perilous task: to defuse thousands of landmines planted to deter a seaborne invasion. Bringing to light a little known and far from honourable chapter of Danish history, this is convincingly acted and insanely tense. **Tom Dawson**



TOM OF FINLAND

★★★★☆ 11 AUGUST

Touko Laaksonen is best known as artist Tom of Finland, whose erotic images of bulging men in uniform upturned gay stereotypes in the 1950s. In this polished biopic, director Dome Karukoski delves into Laaksonen's past as a closeted lieutenant and hesitant freedom fighter. If the imagery is less racy than TOF fans may be used to, Pekka Strang's quiet turn as Laaksonen has a simmering power. **Josh Winning**



SHIN GODZILLA

★★★★☆ OUT 10 AUGUST

The first Japanese G-movie since 2004's *Godzilla: Final Wars* sees the lumbering lizard wade from the sea to head for Tokyo, his trail of destruction spliced with inter-agency meetings full of red tape and squabbling. The doc-flavoured approach lends both urgency and tedium, while the blend of miniatures, stop-motion and CGI references the various looks of his 63-year history. **Jamie Graham**



SCRIBE

★★★★★ OUT NOW

When Duval (François Cluzet) gets a job transcribing phone-tap conversations, he's willing not to ask questions – until he overhears a murderous conspiracy. Thomas Kruithof's debut is a lean thriller, using the empty apartment where Duval works as a metaphor for his complicity. It's also a throwback to paranoid '70s classics such as *The Conversation*, right down to its preference for typewriters over digital tech. **Simon Kinnear**



NAPPING PRINCESS

★★★★★ OUT 16 AUGUST

High-concept sci-fi and down-to-earth drama intertwine in this beautiful anime from Kenji Kamiyama (*Ghost In The Shell: Stand Alone Complex*). When her father is arrested, Kokone (Mitsuki Takahata), who dreams about being a magical princess, sets about freeing him. As reality and fantasy blur, we're taken on an occasionally confounding but enchanting quest with poignant reveals in store. **Matt Looker**



THE ODYSSEY

★★★★★ OUT 18 AUGUST

An attractive if conventional biopic of French underwater explorer Jacques Cousteau. Spanning three decades, writer/director Jérôme Salle's screenplay seeks to cram in too much at the expense of a deeper exploration of themes and characters: the most interesting aspect is the ambivalent relationship between Cousteau (Lambert Wilson) and his activist son Philippe (Pierre Niney). **Tom Dawson**



DARK NIGHT

★★★★★ OUT 18 AUGUST

Tim Sutton's experimental drama reprises the mass shooting at a screening of *The Dark Knight Rises*. Favouring artfully shot portraiture over narrative, Sutton follows the killer and victims ahead of their tragedy. Yet this portrait of an alienated culture funnelling its rage into gun violence is itself too cold and distant to connect. Sutton says nothing that Gus Van Sant's *Elephant* didn't convey more powerfully. **Simon Kinnear**

CERTIFICATE 15 **DIRECTOR** Mark Gill **STARRING** Jack Lowden, Jessica Brown Findlay, Jodie Comer **SCREENPLAY** Mark Gill, William Thacker **DISTRIBUTOR** Entertainment One **RUNNING TIME** 94mins

ENGLAND IS MINE

Showing who's Moz...

★★★★★ OUT 4 AUGUST

After soulful, stylish movies about Joy Division (*Control*) and Factory Records (*24 Hour Party People*), Manchester music's big-screen form stumbles with this patchy Morrissey portrait. Presumably steered by rights issues, co-writer/director Mark Gill focuses on Mozzer's early years, when the bequipped indie hero-to-be was merely lank-haired mard-arse Steven. Although Gill mounts convincing snapshots of provincial boredom, he pitches them perilously close to boring.

Redemptive elements include Jack Lowden's subtle study of a weary young Moz, while Jessica Brown Findlay offers enlivening back-up as his arty goth-punk cohort Linder Sterling, who struggles to jolt Mozzer to action.

If the film could use more of Linder, it could have used much more of Morrissey's musical ties with The Cult's Billy Duffy (Adam Lawrence) and, crucially, Smiths guitarist-to-be Johnny Marr (Laurie Kynaston). Yet as music and band drama take backseats to Morrissey's depression, the fireworks of his incoming success only emerge in late-film glimpses. You could call that bold, but it's also self-defeating, especially when the tingle-inducing final shot teases a film you'd rather see. One with actual Smiths songs. **Kevin Harley**

THE VERDICT

Lowden and Findlay excel in their roles, but Mark Gill's Moz-movie needed more: both more music and more "people who are young and alive".

The decor no doubt helped foster Morrissey's famously sunny disposition...



Three films in, and we're still no closer to understanding the weirdness that is sentient car biology.



SEE THIS IF YOU LIKED...

WHO FRAMED ROGER RABBIT 1988

In which Benny the Cab shows he's still the best animated car in cinema.

CARS 2006

The late Paul Newman reprises his role in *Cars 3* via outtakes from the original.

WHERE THE WILD THINGS ARE 2009

Chris Cooper's larynx also got a workout in Spike Jonze's monster mash.

FOR MORE REVIEWS VISIT GAMESRADAR.COM/TOTALFILM

CARS 3

Time to re-tyre...?

★★★★☆ OUT NOW

Midway through *Cars 3*, Lightning McQueen (Owen Wilson) gets literally stuck in the mud. Unable to drive, he sits there immobile, spinning his wheels. As visual metaphors go, it's a strikingly apt symbol for a series that's both Pixar's least-loved (by the critics anyway) and its most commercially, er, driven. You could even apply it to Pixar itself, which is in something of a creative slough only two years on from the highpoint that was *Inside Out*.

The stats speak for themselves – five prequel/sequels in eight years, with two more (*The Incredibles 2* and *Toy Story 4*) on the way before the end of the decade. That would be fine if the non-franchise stand-alones were all up to *Inside Out*'s standards. *Brave* and

CERTIFICATE U **DIRECTOR** Brian Fee
STARRING Owen Wilson, Chris Cooper, Cristela Alonzo, Armie Hammer, Nathan Fillion
SCREENPLAY Kiel Murray, Bob Peterson, Mike Rich **DISTRIBUTOR** Disney **RUNNING TIME** 109 mins

The Good Dinosaur, alas, were anything but, putting pressure on the upcoming *Coco* (see p21) to claw back some cred.

Cars 3, for what it's worth, is a lot better than 2011's *Cars 2*, which put aggravating tow truck Mater front and centre of a Bondian spy spoof that made next to no sense, even within the context of the property's logic-skewing alt-verse. For one thing, *Cars 3* puts the spotlight back on race car Lightning, the race circuit itself and the gentle Americana of the 2006 original. It also improves upon its immediate predecessor by having a subtext; McQueen's painful realisation that his powers are dwindling enables director Brian Fee to offer a thoughtful contemplation on what champions do when they're past their prime.

One can possibly read from this that Pixar chief John Lasseter has read the runes himself and is anticipating the day when he will pass the reins to younger talents. (He's started by

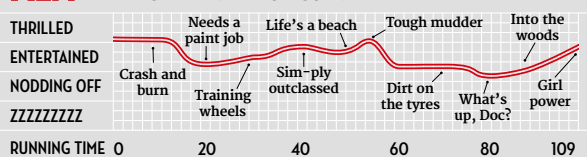
letting Fee – a storyboard artist on the first two *Cars* films – fill his director's chair.) If that's *Cars 3*'s agenda, however, it's one that comes with a heavy-handed sermon on the value of mentors, represented not only by flashbacks to Paul Newman's Doc Hudson but also by grizzled old-timer Smokey (Chris Cooper).

The film rates higher by giving Lightning a sleek rival in hi-tech speedster Jackson Storm (Armie Hammer), having a decent female lead in the form of peppy trainer Cruz Ramirez (Cristela Alonzo) and incorporating some self-knowing nods to its ranking in the studio's pecking order. (Lightning's new sponsor, voiced by Nathan Fillion, wants him to give up racing and focus his energies on flogging branded merchandise.) But even at its best, *Cars 3* is only a shadow of *Cars* – a film that, lest we forget, was hardly one of Pixar's finest in the first place. **Neil Smith**

THE VERDICT

Pixar's least essential franchise gets back on track with a polished but disposable threequel.

FILM PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE™





Jamie Bell prepares to take on the terrorists.

CERTIFICATE 15 **DIRECTOR** Toa Fraser **STARRING** Jamie Bell, Mark Strong, Abbie Cornish, Tim Pigott-Smith **SCREENPLAY** Glenn Standring **DISTRIBUTOR** Icon **RUNNING TIME** 94 mins

6 DAYS

Under siege...

★★★★☆ OUT 4 AUGUST

The sight of black-clad SAS members on the balcony of the Iranian Embassy in London remains one of the most iconic images of the 1980s. Echoing Paul Greengrass' *Bloody Sunday* (2002) and *United 93* (2006), Toa Fraser's film studiously recreates events as six armed men storm the diplomatic building to take 26 people hostage.

Scripted by Glenn Standring, *6 Days* builds the drama from several different perspectives: the SAS team, including Rusty Firmin (Jamie Bell); hostage negotiator and Met police chief inspector Max Vernon (Mark Strong); plus the BBC's live-from-outside reporter Kate Adie (Abbie Cornish).

The Iranian-Arab terrorists, demanding the release of Arab prisoners from jails in Khuzestan, are also given a voice, with group leaders Salim (Ben Turner) and Faisal (Aymen Hamdouchi) wrestling over whether to start killing hostages or give the negotiators more time.

The peek behind events is engrossing, as negotiations ensue, plans are aborted and the SAS train for all eventualities. Bell is perfect as the coiled Firmin; ditto Cornish as the soon-to-be-famous Adie and Strong as the conflicted cop. Knowing the outcome scarcely matters here; you'll be thoroughly stomach-knotted by the final act. **James Mottram**

THE VERDICT

A fascinating and faithful reconstruction, impressively acted by all and drum-tight with tension.



LE DOULOS

★★★★★ OUT 11 AUGUST

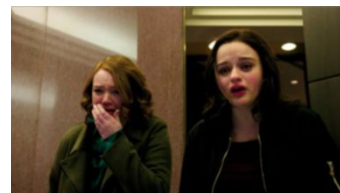
Deceptions, double-crossings and ambiguities abound in Jean-Pierre Melville's 1963 policier. This intricately plotted tale tracks the fates of two Parisian criminals, the world-weary Faugel (Serge Reggiani) and his younger friend Silien (Jean-Paul Belmondo). Superbly shot in high-contrast monochrome, it unfolds in a stylised universe where character is defined by actions and costumes rather than words. **Tom Dawson**



PRICK UP YOUR EARS

★★★★☆ OUT 4 AUGUST

Thirty years after it raised a finger to Section 28-era Britain, the tasty rising-talent mix in Stephen Frears' study of Joe Orton holds up, while Gary Oldman electrifies as the cocky provocateur. Alan Bennett's script overdoes a meta framing device, but witticisms pour from Orton's lover Kenneth Halliwell, played to perfection by Alfred Molina. Saucy, smart, deliciously snarky. **Kevin Harley**



WISH UPON

★★★☆☆ OUT 28 JULY

A brisk riff on the old *Monkey's Paw* cautionary tale, this slight teen horror by John R. Leonetti gives schoolgirl Clare (Joey King) seven wishes – via a cursed Chinese box – each incurring a “blood sacrifice”. Fun when it nods to *Final Destination*'s ghoulish pleasures, it descends into illogic and cringey teenspeak; all but the least demanding viewers will end up wishing they were watching a slightly better film. **Matt Glasby**



47 METRES DOWN

★★★★☆ OUT NOW

Set in Mexico though largely shot in underwater tanks in Basildon, this tale of two sisters trapped in a shark cage on the ocean floor serves up some undeniably tense moments that easily rival *The Shallows*. Yet it also boasts some unintentionally funny ones, such as one of the sibs promising “I’ll be right back!” or Captain Matthew Modine halting the rescue effort to explain nitrogen narcosis. **Neil Smith**

"You may want to sit down before you hear this..."



CERTIFICATE TBC DIRECTOR Bonni Cohen, Jon Shenk
STARRING Al Gore SCREENPLAY N/A DISTRIBUTOR Paramount
RUNNING TIME 100 mins (TBC)

AN INCONVENIENT SEQUEL: TRUTH TO POWER

Shock and Gore...

★★★★★ OUT 18 AUGUST

It's been 11 years since Al Gore's global warming doc *An Inconvenient Truth* saw him carting his Powerpoint presentation across the USA, its stark revelations meeting with alarm, scorn and awards. In the decade since, things haven't exactly improved, giving Gore plenty of ammo for this follow-up, directed with a cinematic eye by *National Geographic* alumni Bonni Cohen and Jon Shenk.

Gore has more of an on-camera role than before, and he's an engaging guide. If the first film was his war cry, *Sequel* is more plaintive, its potent images of crashing ice caps, devastating floods and melted roads chiming with a polemic that, thanks to Gore, is remarkably emotional. At times it feels like he's screaming into the void, which is perhaps expected given the current state of world politics. Trump casts a long shadow over *Sequel*, which takes a foreboding look at his climate-change denials. This is both persuasive and poignant, and it's distressing to imagine what an inconvenient threequel might find. **Josh Winning**

THE VERDICT

Never preachy, always engaging, Al's follow-up to his 2006 Oscar-winner paints a startling picture of a world in crisis.



YOUR NAME

★★★★★ OUT 23 AUGUST

A big-screen encore – including IMAX – for last year's anime sensation, which to date has banked more than \$350m globally. A time-travelling, body-swapping, gender-twisting, disaster-based teen romance, it resembles little else around. From time loops to tumbling comets, there's a lot to take onboard, but director Makoto Shinkai knows how to keep viewers rapt and emotions engaged. **Kevin Harley**



THE UNTAMED

★★★★★ OUT 18 AUGUST

A meteorite downed in Mexico carries a creature capable of giving unparalleled sexual pleasure. It sounds like B-movie exploitation, but is a disturbing meditation on desire, and its potential for destruction. Director Amat Escalante channels Cronenbergian carnality and Andrzej Żuławski's *Possession*, while Simone Bucio and Ruth Ramos deliver stunning performances. Beware: this is explicit stuff. **Tim Coleman**



CAPTAIN UNDERPANTS: THE FIRST EPIC MOVIE

★★★★★ OUT NOW

DreamWorks' adap of the wildly popular children's books makes a successful stab at that elusive treat: the kid-flick that entertains parents. Two pals (voiced by Kevin Hart and Thomas Middleditch) hypnotise their headmaster (Ed Helms) into thinking he's the titular hero. Funny, absurd and smart-stupid enough to keep everyone happy. **Ken McIntyre**



HOWARDS END

★★★★★ OUT 28 JULY

A 4K restoration marking the 25th anniversary of this 'heritage' drama (nine Oscar noms!), adapted from E.M. Forster's novel. Centred on the titular country house, the story follows two upper-class families in Edwardian England. Choice performances from Anthony Hopkins and Emma Thompson, but any social criticism is weakened by the veneration of the privileged milieu. **Tom Dawson**



GENOCIDAL ORGAN

★★★★★ OUT NOW

Adapted from a Japanese novel and directed by anime veteran Shûkô Murase, *Genocidal Organ* is set in 2022: a time when nations are suffering from mysterious genocides. Agent Clavis Shepherd (Yûichi Nakamura) has to find answers, but discovers only heavy questions of consumerism, language and evolution. Smart stuff, with parallels to (the original) *Ghost In The Shell*, only not as refined. **Stephen Kelly**



QUEST

★★★★★ OUT 18 AUGUST

This affectionate doc follows a working-class black family at the heart of their Philadelphia community. With former addict Christopher 'Quest' Rainey running a studio for young rappers and wife Christine's 'Ma' Rainey working at a local shelter, the film blends the personal with the implicitly political. Filmmaker Jonathan Olshefski illuminates the rich, strife-filled lives of these extraordinary people. **Matt Looker**



STEP

★★★★★ OUT 11 AUGUST

A crowdpleaser at Sundance this year, *Step* tracks a group of Baltimore high-school seniors as they prepare for both college and the impending step champs. If the formula feels familiar, the girls' personalities obliterate any chance of tedium, with Broadway producer-turned-director Amanda Lipitz providing sensitive insight into their home lives while capturing the toe-tapping with joyful aplomb. **Matt Maytum**



EVERYTHING, EVERYTHING

★★★★★ OUT 18 AUGUST

This YA-adapted, eye-rolling weepie centres on Maddy (Amandla Stenberg), an 18-year-old with a severe immuno-deficiency disease. When hunk Olly (Nick Robinson) moves in next door, her hermetically sealed world unravels. Stenberg's effervescent turn can't save this from curdling early into manipulative, melodramatic mush. **Ken McIntyre**

CERTIFICATE 15 **DIRECTOR** Stanley Tucci **STARRING** Geoffrey Rush, Armie Hammer, Clémence Poésy, Sylvie Testud **SCREENPLAY** Stanley Tucci **DISTRIBUTOR** Vertigo **RUNNING TIME** 90 mins

FINAL PORTRAIT

Easel does it...

★★★★★ OUT 18 AUGUST

Paris, 1964: American art lover James Lord (Armie Hammer) – from whose memoir the script's adapted – is invited by his friend, famous Swiss artist Alberto Giacometti (Geoffrey Rush), to sit for his portrait. Won't take more than two or three hours, says Giacometti. Nearly a fortnight later, the artist is still snarling at his canvas, repeatedly scrubbing out his work to start again, while Lord has postponed multiple flights back to New York.

Stanley Tucci's film – his fifth as director – has serious points to make about the burden of being an artist, even a world-famous one. But they're securely embedded in the comedy of frustration played out between painter and sitter, thanks largely to Geoffrey Rush's irascible performance. Stooped, dishevelled, shaggy-haired, he roams around his junk-strewn studio, seizing at every potential distraction, whether it's jaunts to the local bistro or visits from his prostitute model/muse/mistress Caroline (Clémence Poésy).

Poésy provides fine support, as do Sylvie Testud as the artist's wife, Tony Shalhoub as his brother and Armie Hammer as Lord. But this is Rush's show, and he rises to it triumphantly. If you enjoyed Timothy Spall as Mr. Turner, here's another portrait not to be missed. **Philip Kemp**

THE VERDICT

A stellar performance from Geoffrey Rush centres this diverting glimpse into the chaotic life of a great artist.

Giacometti was also a world-class starrer.



CERTIFICATE 12A **DIRECTOR** Jon Watts **STARRING** Tom Holland, Robert Downey Jr., Michael Keaton, Marisa Tomei, Jon Favreau
SCREENPLAY Jonathan Goldstein, John Francis Daley, Jon Watts, Christopher Ford, Chris McKenna, Erik Sommers **DISTRIBUTOR** Sony **RUNNING TIME** 133 mins

SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING

Back to cool...

★★★★★ OUT NOW

Do we really need another Spider-Man reboot? Five years after the last one? Sure, the tyro web-slinger's exuberant cameo during *Captain America: Civil War*'s airport smackdown was fun and, crucially, *fresh*, all zestful gymnastics and zinging gags. But really, haven't we seen Spider-Man do whatever a spider can over three Tobey Maguire movies and two Andrew Garfield films? That famous red-and-blue onesie is smelling an incy wincy bit noxious.

SEE THIS IF YOU LIKED...

PRETTY IN PINK 1986

Molly Ringwald is schooled in matters of the heart as prom approaches.

SAY ANYTHING... 1989

John Cusack's outsider woos valedictorian lone Skye with his boombox heart.

SPIDER-MAN 2002

Tobey Maguire has fun harnessing his powers and fights flying foe the Green Goblin.

FOR MORE REVIEWS VISIT GAMESRADAR.COM/TOTALFILM

Well, unitard + rightful universe (this is Spidey's first solo screen outing in the MCU) = an adventure washed of fatigue and spritzed with Febreze. Picking up pretty much where *Civil War* left off, it finds a 15-year-old Peter Parker (Tom Holland) juggling schoolwork and spandex as mentor Tony Stark (Robert Downey Jr.) tells him to up his game by helping the little people. By day he hangs out with best bud Ned (Jacob Batalon) and snarky Michelle (Zendaya) while crushing on bright and beautiful senior Liz (Laura Harrier). By night – or rather between 3.30pm, when school lets out, and 10pm, lest Aunt May (Marisa Tomei) worry – he too-soon kicks off his training wheels and embarks on a mission worthy of a fully fledged Avenger: to clip the mechanical wings of the Vulture (Michael Keaton).

GIVING THE BIRD

Having played Batman and Birdman, Keaton brings intriguing baggage to the part. His character's made more



"You may remember me from such franchises as *Spider-Man* and *Amazing Spider-Man*."

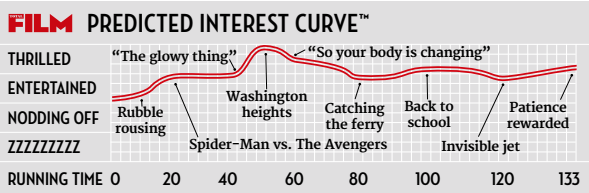
interesting still by possessing a legitimate gripe against Stark, who's profited from the clean-up of New York following the alien invasion seen in *Avengers Assemble*.

Compare that to the man inside the battle-armoured bird – Adrian Toomes is a blue-collar construction boss when we meet him, sifting through the rubble soon after that very attack. His business is crushed when the suits take over; fast-forward eight years and so what if he's pilfered some of the chitauri tech to fashion kick-ass weapons for the highest bidders, taking wing in the process?

How is that different to Tony's funding of Stark Industries?

Such piquant psychology and grounded storytelling is the very foundation of Jon Watts' movie. Taking its cue from the first dozen or so *Amazing Spider-Man* comics by Stan Lee and Steve Ditko in the early '60s, the *Ultimate Spider-Man* arc of the noughties and John Hughes' '80s teen movies, this is a contained, emotionally centred tale about finding yourself. "I'm nothing without this suit," a distraught Peter tells Tony, to which his inevitable reply is, "Then you shouldn't have it." Yes, it features a vertiginous set-piece atop the Washington Monument; true, the Staten Island Ferry splits vertically in two; and hell yeah, there's a tussle on the *outside* of a speeding invisible jet,

'FIRST AND FOREMOST A MARVEL MOVIE, JUST WITH A YOUNGER HERO'



but it's also a character drama set largely in Queens and high school.

So good are the quiet, everyday moments that you can't help wishing they lasted longer. At one point Peter attends a house party only to suit up and rush off before he's even spotted a keg, while the homecoming prom referenced in the title is similarly short-changed. Hughes' movies are, undoubtedly, in the film's DNA, but not so much as the promo talk had us believe. This is, first and foremost, a Marvel movie, just with a younger hero.

And what a hero. Ebullient, fretful and permanently awestruck, Holland is a delight as both Parker *and* Spidey. His USP as an MVP in the MCU is his athleticism. This, after all, is the actor who leapt on the showbiz scene with a grand jeté by playing the title role in *Billy Elliot The Musical*. Here, his dance training allows him to be his own stuntman when the mask is in place, and Watts largely avoids videogame shots to enhance that grounded feel – at least until the Spidey versus Vulture climax, which like so many superhero finales, becomes a stretched-out slugfest.

BUDDYING UP

Briefer and better are Holland's over-eager interactions with Downey Jr. and Jon Favreau as security heavy

Happy Hogan. Never mind Tobey Maguire's jazzy street-strut – this is what Spidey having fun *really* looks like.

And fun is what *Spider-Man: Homecoming* is really all about, from Peter trying to get to grips with his new Stark-fashioned tech-suit replete with its own AI to a hilarious post-credits sting that caps a running gag involving one of the other Avengers. Holland, like his character, is clearly having a blast throughout, and you'll know just how he feels.

Jamie Graham

THE VERDICT

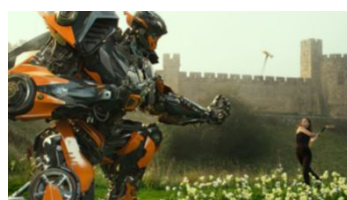
Spidey's got a spring in his step once more. The planned sequels will rejoin him for junior year and then senior year. We'll happily enrol right now.

BOX OFFICE CHARTS 12.06.17 – 09.07.17



SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING

The BBFC warning of “obscured strong language” refers to the end credits, when the spider that bit Peter bemoans his non-appearance by weaving “WT...”, before he’s swatted by a cat.



TRANSFORMERS: THE LAST KNIGHT

With the underperformance of this and Guy Ritchie’s latest, blockbusters with an Arthurian theme have surely Galahad it for now. Camelot? Not even once...



ALL EYEZ ON ME

A fair number of eyez on this biopic of hip-hop legend Tupac Shakur in its opening weekend, though not so many thereafter, as cinemagoers began hearing with their earz that it’s a bit zzzz.

UK TOP 10

Pos	FILM	THIS MONTH	SINCE RELEASE	WEEKS OUT
1	Despicable Me 3 ★★★	£19.6M	£19.6M	2
2	Spider-Man: Homecoming ★★★★★	£9.4M	£9.4M	1
3	Transformers: The Last Knight ★★	£9M	£9M	3
4	Wonder Woman ★★★★★	£8.7M	£21.5M	6
5	The Mummy ★★★	£5.3M	£8.6M	5
6	Baby Driver ★★★★★	£6.6M	£6.6M	2
7	Pirates 5: Salazar’s Revenge ★★★★★	£3.4M	£19.4M	7
8	Baywatch ★	£2.4M	£9.4M	6
9	My Cousin Rachel ★★★	£1.7M	£2.3M	5
10	All Eyez On Me ★★★	£1.6M	£1.6M	2

US TOP 10

Pos	FILM	THIS MONTH	SINCE RELEASE	WEEKS OUT
1	Wonder Woman ★★★★★	\$205M	\$368.8M	6
2	Despicable Me 3 ★★★	\$149.2M	\$149.2M	2
3	Cars 3 ★★★	\$133.7M	\$133.7M	4
4	Transformers: The Last Knight ★★	\$118.9M	\$118.9M	3
5	Spider-Man: Homecoming ★★★★★	\$117M	\$117M	1
6	Baby Driver ★★★★★	\$56.9M	\$56.9M	2
7	The Mummy ★★★	\$46.3M	\$78M	5
8	All Eyez On Me ★★★	\$44.3M	\$44.3M	4
9	47 Metres Down ★★★	\$38.5M	\$38.5M	4
10	Captain Underpants: The First Epic Movie ★★★	\$38.3M	\$70.5M	10



47 METRES DOWN

Bait, The Shallows, Sharknado... why do they keep making shark flicks? You’ll never top that classic with the one-word title. OK, haven’t seen Jason Statham’s *Meg* yet, but it’s so gonna rule.



DESPICABLE ME 3

Like *Minions*? Good news: *Minions 2* is due 2020. Can’t stand *Minions*? Good news: in that time your kids could turn into surly tweens who wouldn’t be seen dead at the cinema with you!



BABY DRIVER

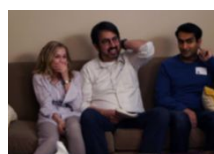
An R-rated film featuring a clip from a Disney movie (*Monsters, Inc.*)! Whatever next – Buzz and Woody attempting to fill the *Hot Fuzz* swear box in record time? How do we make it happen?

STILL OUT, STILL GOOD... OUR PICK OF THE MOVIES OUT NOW



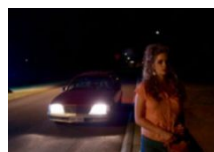
THE BEGUILLED ★★★★★

“Witty, menacing and steamy (in every sense), this is both an intelligent update of the 1971 Eastwood starrer and Sofia Coppola’s best work to date. Oscars await.”



THE BIG SICK ★★★★★

“Warm, funny and risk-taking, this autobiographical love story from *Silicon Valley*’s Kumail Nanjiani gives the ailing romcom genre a topical shot in the arm.”



HOUNDS OF LOVE ★★★★★

“Aussie first-time writer/director Ben Young’s terrifying and terrifically played kidnap thriller is charged with depth and dread... a must-watch you can barely watch.”



SONG TO SONG ★★★★★

“Terrence Malick’s latest mosaic of murmurs, metaphysics and magnified magic hours is the best of his recent run. And it features Val Kilmer with a chainsaw.”

COMING SOON THE BIG HITTERS ON THE CARDS FOR NEXT MONTH...



KINGSMAN: THE GOLDEN CIRCLE

OUT 20 SEPTEMBER

The first *Kingsman* (2014) had its fair share of famouses – Michael Caine, Samuel L. Jackson, Luke Skywalker – but this sequel is like an Oscars luncheon: Jeff Bridges, Julianne Moore, Halle Berry... not to mention Channing Tatum, Elton John and, somehow, Colin Firth, which will raise eyebrows among viewers of the original. That movie made \$414 million, hence the even starrier line-up. Expect whopping great set-pieces too, as fully fledged secret agent Eggsy (Taron Egerton) legs it to the States for a team-up with his American counterparts. For King-sized access, see next issue.



IT OUT 8 SEPTEMBER

The most unhinged clown this side of Krusty is back in business, 27 years after the telly adap of Stephen King's pant-ruiner. Early word suggests this could break the curse of the horror re-do – in other words, not fall on its face like a kids' entertainer who's been snorting the sherry trifle.



AMERICAN MADE OUT 25 AUGUST

You wait ages for a Tom Cruise flick involving planes, then two come along at once. Thankfully, no mummies in sight in Doug Liman's true-life tale of a TWA pilot turned drugs runner. Cruise/Liman struck gold with *Edge Of Tomorrow*. Hopefully this'll be a – wait for it – repeat performance.



DETROIT OUT 25 AUGUST

Five years after *Zero Dark Thirty*, Kathryn Bigelow's back with another fact-based hard-hitter, this time tackling the infamous Algiers Motel incident that occurred during the 1967 Detroit riots. John Boyega heads the cast. For more of him, Bigelow and the rest of the movie's talent, see page 98.

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COVER STORY



64

ONE WAY OR ANOTHER I'M GONNA GET YA

Graphic novel adap **ATOMIC BLONDE** sees a deadly and unapologetic MI6 agent fighting for some 007 action and hoping to snare audiences in a new thriller franchise. Can Charlize Theron and team consolidate Wonder Woman's box-office wins in the blockbuster stakes? Total Film rendezvous with a very determined female power player...

WORDS JOSH WINNING

COVER STORY



November 1989, Berlin. The Iso Fac nightclub. Neon letters flicker on the wall. "EVERYTHING YOU WANT IS ON THE OTHER SIDE OF FEAR." Re-Flex pumps over the sound system as a woman parts the pink air. Blonde, brutally beautiful, she slips onto a bar stool, makes electric eye contact with another woman, and leads her into a strip-lit corridor to make out. Then the icy beauty pulls a gun and slams her make-out buddy into the brickwork.

Welcome to the acid-trip world of *Atomic Blonde*. Set in the hazy club days of Cold War Berlin, its punk-rock action scraps unspool against a backdrop of barnstorming 1980s beats. Oh, and it stars the most complex, anarchic, kick-ass spy to bust onto the big screen this decade. Bye-bye Bourne and Bond. Sayonara Salt. MI6 agent Lorraine Broughton is here to take names and she's not afraid to break bones doing it.

"Lorraine is very much a mystery," reveals Charlize Theron of her no-nonsense sleuth, an expert in hand-to-hand combat and escape and invasion. She's also utterly fearless about getting physical – at one point, Lorraine floors



an even dozen polizei using nothing more than kitchenware and a hose (set, naturally, to George Michael's 'Father Figure'). "She doesn't explain her actions to anyone," adds Theron. "She fights to the death for her survival. She's a complicated and intense spy who also happens to be a woman."

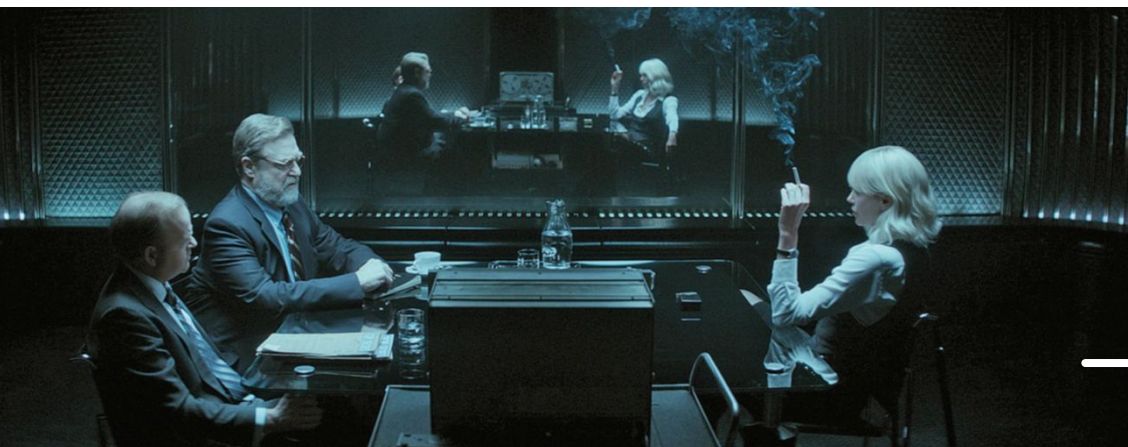
Theron knows a thing or two about fearless women. On-screen, she's lit fires under *Mad Max: Fury Road*, *Fast & Furious 8*, *Prometheus* and the *Snow White* two-hander. Off-screen, she's a famous straight-talker, pulling no punches

BERLIN COOL

The wardrobe department raided East European thrift stores to get Lorraine's look.

POWER PLAY

Theron gets serious with Toby Jones' MI6 boss and John Goodman's CIA man (below).





COLD BOY

WRITER ANTONY JOHNSTON REVEALS *ATOMIC BLONDE*'S COMIC-BOOK ORIGINS OF A COLD WAR SPY.

What inspired you to write *The Coldest City*?

I grew up during the Cold War, and I'd already decided that if I was going to do a Cold War story, it would focus on Berlin, which was a really unique place packed with spies. And so what better time to set a story than when it was all about to come crashing down around their heads?

The movie's quite different...

It really is action-packed, but the basic framework of the story is the same. It's not like *The Bourne Identity* where the book and the movie are completely different. In this, the overall structure is the same, they just inserted more action wherever they could. Everything has been really amped up to 11. I'm really happy with it!

You produced, as well. What sort of notes did you give at the script stage?

The original script was even more over-the-top than the final movie, if you can believe it. Not in terms of the kineticism of the action, but the first draft had a helicopter gunship in there... it was crazy.

At what point did you decide to have a female protagonist in your story?

Fairly early on, actually. I had an outline of the story that wasn't working and I just suddenly thought: "Hang on, what if it was a woman? How would that change things?" The book's not a feminist polemic, but the fact that she's a woman is important, certainly in the attitude of other characters towards her in constantly being underestimated.

How did that change the story?

When it became a female MI6 officer, the questions became: what kind of person will she have to be to be a good, respected veteran officer in 1980s MI6? So she became this very much no-nonsense, take-no-crap woman who refuses to apologise for the fact that she's a woman, which is one of the things that Charlize picked up on. **JW**

when it comes to addressing inequality in Hollywood and actively pursuing empowering roles through her production company, Denver And Delilah Productions. *Atomic Blonde* is just one of those, and a film Theron's championed ever since she snapped up the rights to Antony Johnston's graphic novel, *The Coldest City*, back in 2010.

It's May 2017 when *Total Film* meets the Oscar-winning actress on Stage 33 of the Universal lot in LA. Towering in black stilettos and cropped trousers (complete with go-faster stripes), she's every bit as striking and regal as her latest big-screen badass. Businesslike but with an infectious cackle, she's just about recovered 18 months after shooting *Atomic Blonde*, which saw her pummeling bad guys for much of the shoot, doing 100 per cent of her own fight choreography and paying the price.

"We really wanted to show the consequences of these fights," she says. "We wanted it to be raw and real and have Lorraine and the audience feel every punch and kick and blow to the head. There was just nothing pretty about it. I cracked three teeth, I had some dental issues and I was trying to



train for five hours a day. But yeah, after multiple procedures and a couple of surgeries, I'm just like new!"



ew is right. *Atomic Blonde* may be going old-school when it comes to its setting, but this isn't your run-of-the-mill, George-Smiley-in-a-trench-coat spy flick. Set in the classic city of spies, three days before the fall of The Wall, it sees Broughton despatched to East Berlin by MI6 boss Gray (Toby Jones) to find out who put a hole in the skull of her former partner. The answer may lie with the mysterious Spyglass (Eddie Marsan), an agent whose head contains, according to Gray, an "atomic bomb of information".

Spyglass has memorised a list of undercover operatives that, if it lands in the wrong hands, could prolong the Cold





HOW TO DRESS A SUPERSPY

COSTUME DESIGNER
CINDY EVANS ON
SARTORIAL SAVAGERY.

Have a mantra...

My conversations with Charlize always started with the word "cool". That was our mantra. That word makes you feel like anything is possible. It makes you reach deeper and want to do something visually spectacular. In Lorraine's case, we wanted to elevate her style against the backdrop of gritty '80s Berlin, almost to stand alone in her own world of style.

Ignore other spy films...

You can't help being influenced by other films subconsciously somehow. Inevitably something sneaks in - like the gold and black turtleneck Lorraine wears in the long stairwell fight, which was inspired by the gold sweater Jason Bourne wore in the first *Bourne* film.

Make them stunt proof...

Most of the fabrics I used had a lot of stretch - even the over-the-knee boots had some stretch to them. We needed some doubles varying on the sequence. It never felt like enough, but we somehow managed to make it all work.

Know where to shop...

There was the most amazing thrift store in Budapest called Humana. I was also fortunate enough to have support from Dior and their archives, and John Galiano made the white vinyl trench coat. All of these designers greatly upped the ante of the fashion in this film, especially when working with a minimal budget.

Pick an influence...

Of course we paid homage to Debbie Harry's iconic style in some moments. I believe you can still be dead sexy and kick ass in a long coat. **JW**

'IT WOULDN'T BE FAIR TO SAY THAT THIS IS JUST THE FEMALE JOHN WICK. THIS IS ITS OWN THING'

DAVID LEITCH

WHITE OUT
British designer John Galiano provided the signature white vinyl trench coat.

➔ War for another decade. With a dangerous double agent known as Satchel also on the loose, plus Russian heavies and a mystery woman shadowing Lorraine's every move, she'll have to use every trick she's got to both stay alive and bring justice to a city in political disarray. On the plus side, if she comes out of it still breathing, says MI6 boss C (James Faulkner), "You may have tea with The Queen." Talk about motivation.

Adapted from Johnston's graphic novel by 300 scribe Kurt Johnstad, the script's combustive cocktail of noir and '80s cool proved to be catnip for director David Leitch, who was fresh from co-directing the first *John Wick* when his wife, producer Kelly McCormick, handed him the script. "I started to see pictures and hear music," he recalls of reading it, "and I knew how I could make this movie different, not your typical Hollywood spy movie. I saw a world that was referential to the '80s, wild and sexy and kind of how we remember it. I saw a huge opportunity to take the idea of the spy thriller and turn it on its head."

Sitting in a Universal meeting room, Leitch is taking a nine-hour break from pre-production on *Deadpool 2*, which he's just five weeks away from shooting. "I flew in this morning from Vancouver. I got in at 4am and I fly back tonight," he says, dressed down in a cap and jeans. Flight fatigue doesn't prevent him from talking excitedly about his vision for a thriller that upends cliché.

"I think people do love spectacle and they love action movies, but the ones that are really successful are the ones that have great characters you come back for," he reasons. "That's why *Bourne* was relatable, all these big franchises. *John Wick* was relatable in a sort of revenge wish-fulfilment way." Speaking of which, while *Atomic Blonde* does share some DNA with the Keanu movie - neon lighting, complex fight sequences, editor Elísabet Ronaldsdóttir - Leitch's debut is an altogether different beast. "It wouldn't be fair to say that this was just the female *John Wick*," he reasons. "It is its own thing."

Not that having *John Wick* around didn't inspire a little competitive spirit

ATOMIC BLONDE



— quite literally when it came to Theron's training. She and Keanu Reeves (who was prepping for *John Wick: Chapter 2*) trained alongside each other at 87Eleven, Leitch's production company, and seeing Reeves in action encouraged Theron to up her game. "Seeing how committed he was to getting things right and nailing all of his moves brought out my competitive side and made me work even harder," she smiles. "There was no way I was gonna let John Wick show me up!"



f anything, he's got nothing on Lorraine. While Wick had his slick nightclub shootouts, *Atomic Blonde* sees

Lorraine proving her mettle in a standout set-piece that would have John crying for his dead dog. In a scrap inspired by a mere four-page scene from the original novel, Lorraine goes hand-to-hand against a series of assassins, fighting up and down stairs, taking hits, tumbling, crashing into an apartment and using anything she can get her hands on to fight back.

It's an exhausting, 12-minute blitzkrieg of blood and broken limbs, cut together to resemble one continuous take. At times dazed, Lorraine can barely stand, her legs going out from under her.

"Am I your bitch now?" she grunts as she choke-holds a goon. By the end, she's a bloody mess, but then she has to get into a car, where the chase hits the road... "We were very excited when we started talking about it," says Theron, bright-eyed at the memory of the sequence. "It was exciting knowing we were doing something that hadn't been done before, that really kind of drove us all. We also knew that it was a big... David's dream was big, so a lot of the success of how we were gonna pull it off was in what I was capable of doing."

Ahead of shooting in Budapest, Theron endured a grueling regime of combat training with a small stunt team headed up by stunt coordinator Sam Hargrave. Leitch, an ex-stuntman who worked on *The Bourne Ultimatum* among more than 80 others before picking up a camera, watched Theron's progress and noted what she was capable of. He then pushed Hargrave's stunt team to come up with something suitably brutal. "I'm like: 'Bold choices! Everything you want is on the other side of fear! Let's do it, right? Let's do it!'" Leitch laughs.

His fearlessness extended to how he planned to execute the sequence. Determined to find a way to make the action as gritty as possible, Leitch recalled a chat he'd had years earlier



ALL ACTION
Theron shoots a scene with Eddie Marsan, who plays agent Spyglass; James McAvoy as the foul-mouthed Percival (top).

COVER STORY

➔ while shooting second unit on *In Time* with cinematographer Roger Deakins. “He said, ‘I just want to find a way to stick with the characters, David,’” Leitch remembers. “So I started to think about that. Sometimes when you can stick with the character it makes you uncomfortable because the convention of editing lets the audience off the hook. But if I can make the audience stay with Lorraine for 12 minutes, getting the shit kicked out of her, how does that make you feel? If you can make your audience feel that just once in your movie, then I think you’ve succeeded.”

The sequence is so strong, it’ll earn favourable comparisons to *Bourne*, which Theron says is par for the course in a genre with so few female leads. Early reviews referred to her character as ‘Joan Wick’ and ‘Jane Bond’, both jokes Theron takes on the chin. “It’s funny, I get the irony of it all, it’s all in good jest,” she says, “but it’s funny that we have to do that because we don’t have other female characters like that for comparison.” Because, yes, Lorraine isn’t just fighting bad guys – she’s also fighting

'WE WANTED IT TO BE RAW, REAL AND HAVE THE AUDIENCE FEEL EVERY BLOW TO THE HEAD'

CHARLIZE THERON

Shooting over just three days in Budapest in November 2015, the sequence was staged with Theron tackling all of her own fight choreography, while stuntwoman Monique Ganderton took the odd tricky fall. “It was one camera operator and he was basically in the fight scene with us,” says Theron, “and yeah, by the third day we were fucked, but it was great because we shot it in continuity, so we were supposed to be.”

patriarchy’s sledgehammer. Much of the film’s power comes from how much she’s underestimated and undermined by men – and especially by MI6 agent David Percival (James McAvoy). Deep undercover in East Berlin, he’s Lorraine’s only contact, but he’s gone native, swallowed up by the city’s club culture. He has, in Lorraine’s words, “disastrous Sinead O’Connor hair”, a hand in a cast (McAvoy broke his arm filming *Split*), and seems perpetually hungover or high.

FRENCH FANCY
(top) Lorraine gets intimate with Sofia Boutella’s Gallic agent Delphine.

HUNGARY GAMES
(right) On location in Budapest, which doubled for Berlin.



ATOMIC BLONDE

"Women are always getting in the way of progress, aren't they?" he spits at one point, which makes for a tense quasi-partnership in which Percival also jokingly professes his love for Lorraine. "He's not doing it for queen and country," says McAvoy, wearing a navy jumper, jeans and boots, running a hand through his beard. "He's spying and lying and dying for the love of the game, the love of the spying game. And he hates it, but at the same time he's compelled. It's like a drug to him."

McAvoy leapt at the role after Leitch sent him an "audacious look book, which was a collection of super-cool, dirty, sexy, grubby-as-fuck but cool-as-fuck, chic images". And while he's consistently denied he'd ever play Bond ("I don't think I am a Bond type; I don't think I'd enjoy playing him," he tells us), Percival allowed him to scratch a spy itch while also going as grubby as his copper character from *Filth*.

"If Bond is the shiny spires of espionage, then we're in the fucking sewers covered in shit in this one," he jokes. "It is the anti-Bond, for me. I don't see Lorraine as any of those. She's definitely not Bond or Jason Bourne. She's more punk rock than those guys. She's more anarchic. She's more ruthless and unscrupulous, and she's almost fucking suicidal. She's more terrifying than those people and I think she'd beat any of them. I do! I think she'd beat any of them."

It's a timely argument, given discussions about gender inequality in Hollywood. Action blockbusters fronted by women remain frustratingly few in number. While Angelina Jolie drew critical acclaim and decent box-office returns with *Salt*, that was way back in 2010, and films such as *The Hunger Games* remain the exception rather than the rule. Just last year, it was revealed that, of the year's top 100 films,

only 29 per cent starred a sole female protagonist. Even in *Star Wars: The Force Awakens*, a film that champions female empowerment, Finn had more lines than Rey.

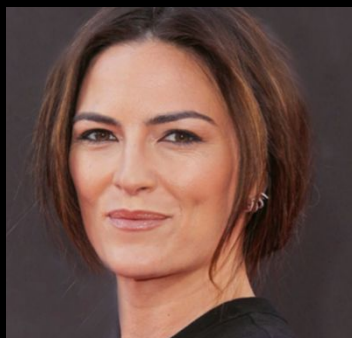
The tide appears to be changing, but slowly. Because, of course, this is the Year Of *Wonder Woman*. Cresting a wave of glowing reviews and box-office kerchings (yep, it out-grossed *Batman V Superman* in the US), the Amazonian princess' success story left Theron "ecstatic". "It shows that there has been this hole in the market for female-led films," she says when we catch up with her in July 2017, "especially in the action space – and people all around the world want to see a woman kick ass just like any other male superhero or action star."

If Lorraine is paving the way for future generations, that's none-more apparent than in her romantic interest. In a canny example of gender-blindness, scriptwriter Johnstad transformed the graphic novel's character Henri into Delphine (Sofia Boutella), a demonstrably female part-time translator who wants to be "a poet or a rockstar". In reality, she's new to the spying game and in over her head when she ends up smooching Lorraine in the Iso Fac nightclub.

The role provided a fun challenge for Boutella, who's best known for being an action hero in her own right after playing a blade-legged baddie in *Kingsman: The Secret Service* and the bandaged princess in *The Mummy*. "I absolutely loved that David didn't see me as the go-to stunt girl on this movie," she enthuses when we catch up with her in a cosy lounge on the Universal lot. Munching on crisps and with a scented candle burning on the table, she's rocking '80s chic in a cherry red Chanel jacket, vintage red trousers and industrial black Louis Vuitton boots.

"I liked exploring a character who's a bit lighter and more bubbly," she says. "I loved every aspect of Delphine. I mean you can see, maybe Lorraine was like her when she was young and maybe what toughened her up was all this deception." As for playing part of a lesbian couple, Boutella loved the fact that *Atomic Blonde* was so purposefully progressive regarding matters of the heart. "It's not unusual in real life," she reasons of non-hetero relationships. "We don't see it enough, I think we should."





DOUBLE TROUBLE

ASSISTANT STUNT COORDINATOR AND CHARLIZE THERON'S DOUBLE, MONIQUE GANDERTON, ON BRAWLING IN BLOCKBUSTERS.

Atomic Blonde felt kind of like an arthouse action movie. It was a really small crew, small stunt team of six guys, we were all working in Budapest, so it felt more like a family production than a blockbuster movie, which I loved.

I worked on Fast & Furious 8 after Atomic Blonde, so this was my first movie with Charlize. She showed up in Budapest with tooth problems. She busted them while training in LA. We were like, "Oh boy, she's injured, she's not gonna want to do anything." Nope, she just came by the next day, took a painkiller and said: "Let's go!"

You can be an amazing martial artist, but it's not necessarily exciting to watch you fight. But you can be just a brawler, like Charlize, and that's so exciting and captivating. She learns the moves and then she puts her Charlize acting on top of it and it's fierce. She actually did all the fights.

The fighting's a blend of different styles. Jon Valera, our fight choreographer, and our stunt coordinator Sam Hargrave had a very different set of ideas, and I come from a martial arts background. So we'd think: "What feels good? What looks cool?" We watched a ton of videos. We had a lot of fun with it.

I'm a big fan of letting women take some hits in action scenes. Women are tough! They can do it. And to see that passion and Charlize taking a beating, that was cool! **JW**



Delphine marks the actress' first romantic role ("That depends how you watch *Kingsman*!" she jokes), and it provided Boutella with a crash course in the art of on-screen amour. In true Bondian fashion, she and Lorraine slip between the sheets, albeit for a graphic love scene that would make Connery blush. "She's gorgeous," Boutella marvels of her co-star. "That's hypnotising in itself. I've never done a sex scene to that extent in a movie before and Charlize was just cracking jokes and making me feel comfortable. She just led me. She made me feel good about myself and what I was doing."

Her character's gender switch is emblematic of a film that wants to demolish boundaries along with the Berlin Wall. "What I liked about Lorraine was that she was unapologetic," says Theron. "We never know how she got into this job, we never explain her past, or is she bisexual or is she gay? We don't answer any of those questions." She's also about the only spy in cinematic history unafraid of sticking out like a sore thumb.

As the film's hella-chic poster attests, Lorraine's in Berlin for business, but she's going to do it looking like a catwalk model. In a nifty twist on spy clichés, Lorraine's image drew primarily on Deborah Harry's style and Helmut Newton images, subverting the idea that spies should be as beige as possible. For Leitch, the decision was less about sexing up the spy genre as figuring out how a spy in '80s Berlin would try to blend in. "You don't want to be in trench coats or you'd stick out," he says. "You want to be living the life. That city was such a rock and roll city that to be undercover in that kind of environment, what would that be like?"

Adds Theron: "I loved the idea originally of a spy not trying to blend in. There was something about that to me that was almost smarter. It was like, well let's just stick out like a sore fucking thumb and then nobody will pay attention."

SHABBY CHIC
McAvoy (right) channels his *Filth* past as Lorraine's Berlin contact.



That may be true of Berlin, but Leitch and Theron will surely be hoping for the exact opposite when *Atomic Blonde* hits cinemas. In a genre over-crowded with Y chromosomes, Lorraine represents a new kind of heroine for our increasingly meathead-weary times, and if she's able to draw crowds, it'd be another triumph for female action heroes. "I know we're breaking new ground," muses Theron, "because when the first reviews came out there was a lot of like: 'Well, we don't know who she is!' and 'They didn't spend any time explaining her to us.' I was like, 'Nobody writes that about Bourne!'"

ATOMIC BLONDE



Others are lining up to follow suit. *Batgirl*'s heading to cinemas courtesy of Joss Whedon, Marvel's got *Captain Marvel* (though still no Black Widow solo), Lara Croft's grubbing up for a reboot, and Jennifer Lawrence is headlining spy thriller *Red Sparrow* with her *Hunger Games* director Francis Lawrence. Progress isn't happening fast enough, though, says Theron.

"Why have we not had a ton of Ripleys? Why's that not happened?" she demands. "That stuff drives me more than taking some kind of responsibility towards, you know, what I should be doing as a woman. People who inspire me and do things that are brave and outside of the box are people who are just really living their lives.

I want my kids to see that. I want them to see a mom who grabbed the fucking world by the balls. Why not? *Why not?*"

And if Lorraine survives this round of Cold War carnage, could we see *Atomic Blonde* turning into a franchise? "It has the potential," muses Leitch, who already has an idea for a sequel. "Maybe it's now the '90s. Can we land on an event that is a backdrop, and can we immerse ourselves in what was cool at that point, the music and the vibe? And then do we want to keep exploring this character? I think that we do. I think she's compelling and we're gonna want to see more."



Theron has her own ideas for where Lorraine might go next. "I would like to see her sipping a martini on the beach – I think she deserves it after the beatings she's taken!" she laughs, no doubt recalling her own battle scars. On a more serious note, she adds:

"I'd love to be able to make more of these films. Lorraine has many more stories to tell." And if it came to it, she's clear on who'd win in a fight between Lorraine and Bond. "Oh Lorraine, hands down. Bring it, 007." How's that for fearless?

ATOMIC BLONDE OPENS ON
9 AUGUST. READ OUR
REVIEW ON P46.

RYAN'S Slaughter

While warming up for *Deadpool 2* by causing death and disorder in kamikaze action-comedy *The Hitman's Bodyguard*, **RYAN REYNOLDS** yaks to *Total Film* about the Merc with a Mouth, marriage to Blake Lively and killing it at the box office.

WORDS JAMIE GRAHAM PORTRAIT ART STREIBER

'I gave birth to our two daughters. It was very hard on my penis. My penis is still upset with me, squeezing those kids out...'

Ryan Reynolds, as if you didn't know, is a joker, which comes in handy when you're swerving questions about the private life that you guard so closely. It also allows for maximum fun on movie sets. "There are some people in this industry who can't thrive unless they're in a constant state of conflict," he says, leather jacket creaking as he rubs at a well-kempt beard and peers through his heavy-rimmed glasses in a Manhattan hotel suite. "Early on I made a bookmark of that – that I never wanted it to be me because I don't think you're necessarily reaping some kind of great artistic benefit. I also saw brilliant actors who were light on their feet and prepared and happy to be there, and I always wanted to be *that* guy."

With 25 years in the business since he moved from Vancouver to Florida upon landing his first gig, aged 13, in TV soap *Fifteen*, Reynolds is now the guy that other actors on set look to for inspiration. Having *Deadpool* on your CV helps. It's not just the \$783m

return from a modest \$58m budget for an R-rated movie – it's that he championed the snarky superhero for a decade before some leaked test-footage elicited such fanboy frenzy that Fox greenlit the project within 24 hours. The rest, as they say, is violent, swears, fourth-wall obliterating history.

"I don't think a day's gone by where I haven't worked on it in some manner or other since we wrapped on the first one," he says when asked how *Deadpool 2* is coming along. "Rhett [Reese], Paul [Wernick] and I have been having so much fun. The script's been done now for quite a while; we're in the place where we're just writing alternative jokes." Presumably the goal this time out is to be even more outrageous? "That's a short-sighted way to think of it, like, 'Let's see how crazy we can be!'" he muses. "But yeah, we're fortunate that we can tell the story and not worry about any form of censorship. We get to scream in the *Deadpool* language with a full-throated ease."

More on the Merc with a Mouth's ongoing misadventures later. For now, though, Reynolds is keen to discuss



his latest serving of movie mayhem *The Hitman's Bodyguard*, an action-comedy that plays like an explosive, absurdist *Midnight Run* as the world's greatest bodyguard, Michael Bryce (Reynolds), is forced on the road with an equally skilled assassin, Darius Kincaid (Samuel L. Jackson), who's due to turn state's evidence at the International Court of Justice. Hundreds of armed goons pop up at every turn – expect running gun battles in Coventry (!) and speedboat chases along the canals of Amsterdam – though these two mortal enemies need no help in killing each other.

"I signed on to it two-and-a-half years ago and it had a really bumpy road," explains Reynolds with casual frankness. "The director left, or he was excused, and Patrick [Hughes, *The Expendables 3*, *Red Hill*] jumped in. So I revisited it 10 weeks before we were going to shoot, and it was... serious. We took a pass and gave it a light tone because it's such a silly world. There's no sense in these two characters clenching their jaw muscles throughout the movie – you want these guys to embrace the absurdity of the situation."

As you'd expect, Reynolds and Jackson strike an agreeably disagreeable tone with their badass badinage ("I just knew we'd have a great chemical bond"), while the practical stunts help give *The Hitman's Bodyguard* an '80s/'90s vibe ("The budget isn't such that you'd have huge CGI effects. I love that. Necessity is the mother of invention"). It's the kind of tailored star vehicle that Reynolds must have dreamed about toplineing when he headed to LA at 17 years of age.

"I don't think I even dreamed it," he smiles. "My aspirations were always minimal. I moved to LA to join [comedy troupe and school] The Groundlings, not to be a movie star. I thought, 'I'll work really hard and may be good enough to get on a sitcom.'"

Despite having honed his quicksilver wit on his cop dad, sales assistant mum and three older brothers, and despite being the star member of an improv group at school where he learned "to make myself the butt of the joke", Reynolds was rejected by The Groundlings. He did land the sitcom, though, with *Two Guys, A Girl And A Pizza Place* offering three years

of solid work (1998–2001) after a hitherto nomadic career in TV. Then came another break playing the titular frat boy in *Van Wilder: Party Liaison*, a rowdy comedy that became something of a cult classic (Reynolds is still regularly approached by guys wanting to buy him shots, saying, "They're soooo disappointed when I say I don't drink"). Since then he's been in romcoms (*Just Friends*, *Definitely, Maybe*, *The Proposal*), action-thrillers (*Smokin' Aces*, *Safe House*, *R.I.P.D.*) and of course had a first muted runout as Wade Wilson aka Deadpool in 2009's *X-Men Origins*, followed by another less-said-the-better gig in *Green Lantern*. His best films and performances, however, are those that showcase his off-centre sensibilities: interred-alive thriller *Buried*, killer-com *The Voices* and dog-eared road movie *Mississippi Grind*.

These represent the true Reynolds, and anyone in doubt need only look at his Twitter feed, where "Airplane toilets are aggressive. It wasn't until I got back to my seat that I noticed my

pants and testicles were missing" is a standard entry. It makes you wonder if he's ever gone too far on social media and been asked to stay 'on brand'?

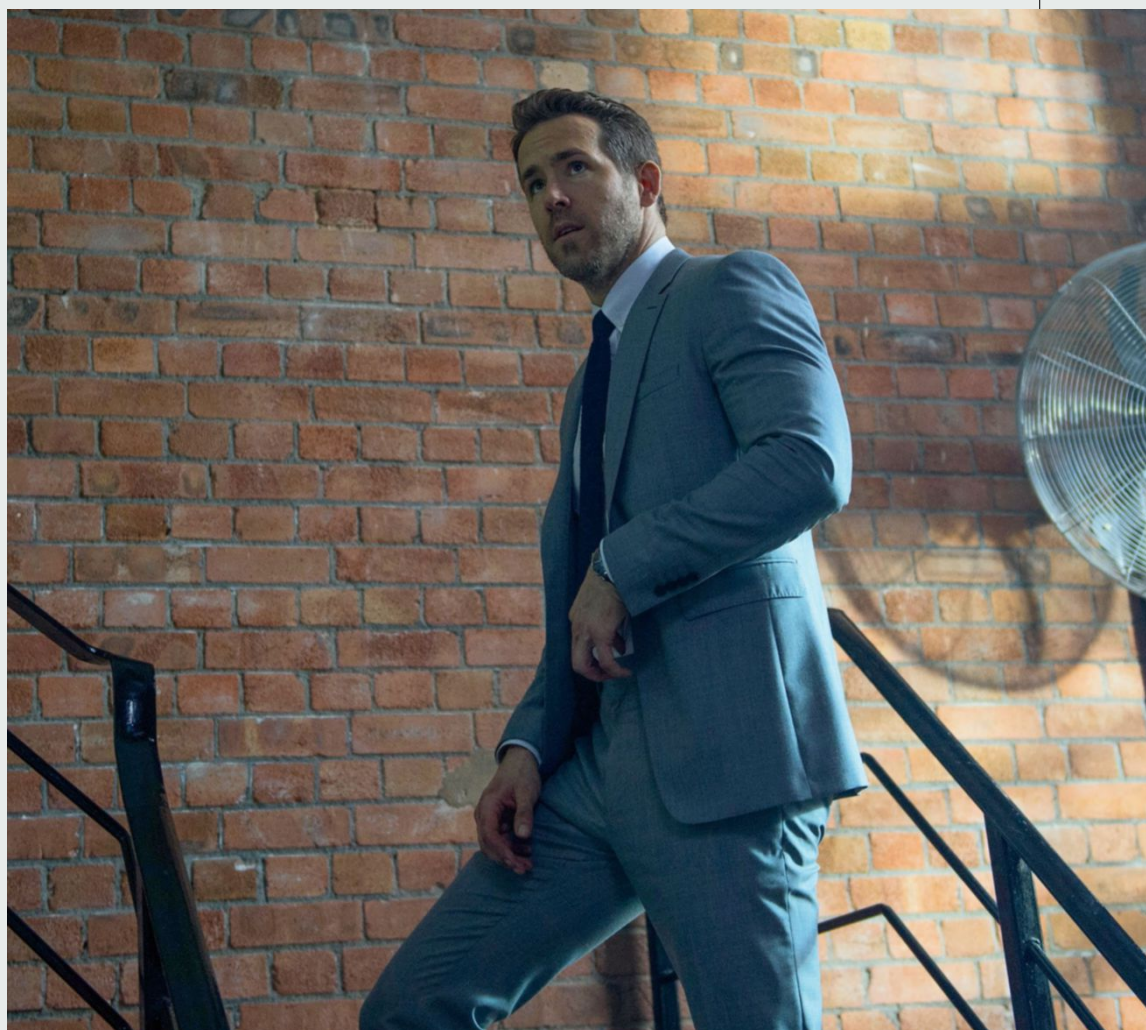
"I haven't had that yet," he grins. "I'd be so proud if I got a call from the head of a studio. That would be my next tweet: 'Get this...'" He considers. "The day I got Twitter and Instagram was the day that *Deadpool* got the greenlight, because I just knew that it would have to be an integral part of pushing that movie out. I often write the feed in the voice of Wade Wilson, and I think they understand that."

The line between private and public personas is an important one to Reynolds, who is now married to Blake Lively with two young daughters after a previous marriage to Scarlett Johansson. It was, then, a big decision for him to take his family to the unveiling of his star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame in December 2016, having previously shunned cameras.

"That sort of thing doesn't happen twice, so you weigh your options and

ON GUARD

Reynolds (below) as the titular lawman in action-comedy *The Hitman's Bodyguard*, in which he must keep Samuel L. Jackson's assassin (right) alive; (below right) finishing off the *Deadpool 2* script.



think, 'Well, I can leave my family at home and try to carefully curate how their image circulates in the public eye,' or I can go, 'Fuck it,' and look back in 20 years and say that we were all there together," he shrugs. "It was a blast. I walked down that fucking boulevard when I was 16 years old; I couldn't believe I was up there with those names."

The decision, like all others, was made mutually. "We prioritise our relationship," he says. "Our life is not as crazy as some people might think. We don't even live in Hollywood; we live in New York, which is a different lifestyle. Los Angeles can appear as a one-industry town, so you can feel that you're constantly being valued. But New York is brim-full of diversity in every way."

After chatting about family, it's probably a relief to get back to *Deadpool* 2 despite earlier claiming that he couldn't say much. Let's begin with that tweet by Josh Brolin while in make-up tests for Cable, son of

'Now the origin story's done, what's the story we really want to tell? We get to continue Deadpool's insane journey'

X-Men member Scott Summers aka Cyclops and Jean Grey's clone Madelyne Pryor. What was that hashtag again? *Ryanismybitch*?

"That's an all-true story," Reynolds laughs, before getting serious. "Josh is everything you want in a character that's as iconic and imposing as Cable. He's going to bring the right levels of intimidation and charisma."

It goes without saying that Deadpool, who knows he's a comic-book character played by Reynolds in the movies, will call Brolin out for also being big bad Thanos in the Marvel Cinematic Universe – he cameoed in *Avengers: Age Of Ultron* and *Guardians Of The Galaxy*, and will take centre stage in *Avengers: Infinity War*. The sarcasm's started already, with Reynolds tweeting, "The fuck, Fox! You can't play 2 characters in the same universe. Josh Brolin was in *Sicario* and I was in *Sabrina The Teenage Witch*."

Joking aside, Brolin has signed a four-picture deal, indicating that Cable will muscle into the X-Men movies. Deadpool, surely, will follow suit. There are already whispers of an X-Force movie... "I'd love to see that universe expand, but that's all I can really say about it," he half-grins, half-grimaces, instead returning the focus to *Deadpool* 2. "Now the origin story's done, it's given us this incredible opportunity to say, 'Well, what's the story that we really want to tell?' We get to continue Deadpool's insane, fuck off crazy journey, and we get to introduce Cable, and we get to introduce [Atlanta's *Zazie Beetz* as mutant mercenary] Domino."

Domino, it should be noted, also appears in the comics' X-Force team, thus reinforcing the likelihood that this is where the movies are headed. But here's a question to end on: given he's just teamed up with Jackson in *The Hitman's Bodyguard*, will Fox and Disney strike a deal to allow Nick Fury to conscript Deadpool into the Avengers? They're all Marvel heroes, after all, and it's already happened in print.

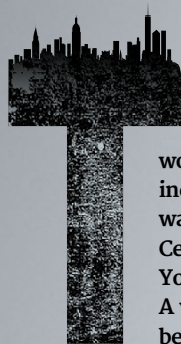
Reynolds laughs. "That sounds like a *great* idea but a *very expensive* idea. Can you imagine the shit-talking contest with Iron Man? Oh, that would be great. But it would have to be rated R to completely unharness everybody. Unbridle the merriment and watch them go..."

THE HITMAN'S BODYGUARD OPENS ON 18 AUGUST. DEADPOOL 2 OPENS IN 2018.



MAKING OF

GANG OF



Two soot-blackened industrial towers stand watch over Mount Zion Cemetery in the New York borough of Queens. A wintry hillside sprawls beneath them, stacked with memorial stones and angels in the cold, bright January light. One grave bears the name Lazarus, and that's appropriate, because today *Total Film* is witnessing a miraculous resurrection.

Two figures stand among the gravestones, pursued by a boom mic. One is Sigourney Weaver, dressed in snowy white fur. The other is Elodie Yung, draped in an ankle-length black coat, as if in mourning for her own character, sai-twirling Greek assassin Elektra Natchios, last seen sacrificing her life in the final episode of *Daredevil* Season 2. "I've never been more sure of who I am," she declares, clearly in possession of a pulse again.

How is Elektra returned from the dead? What is her relationship with the woman in the white fur? Who, in the name of sweet, merciful Stan Lee, is Sigourney Weaver actually playing? No one's saying. This is a Marvel shoot, after all, and there's a strict spoiler lockdown, possibly enforced by an armed response squad. But this we do know: it takes a screen presence as powerful, as legendary, as Weaver's to unite the heroes of *The Defenders*.

Welcome to the endgame of one of TV's most audacious experiments. Two years ago Netflix delivered *Daredevil*, a raw, bloodied take on Marvel's blind vigilante. Three more bouts of street-beat superheroics followed: *Jessica Jones*, *Luke Cage*, *Iron Fist*, all renouncing the shiny spectacle of their big-screen counterparts in favour of something altogether bleaker, more bingeably bruising. It's all been building toward *The Defenders*, ➡

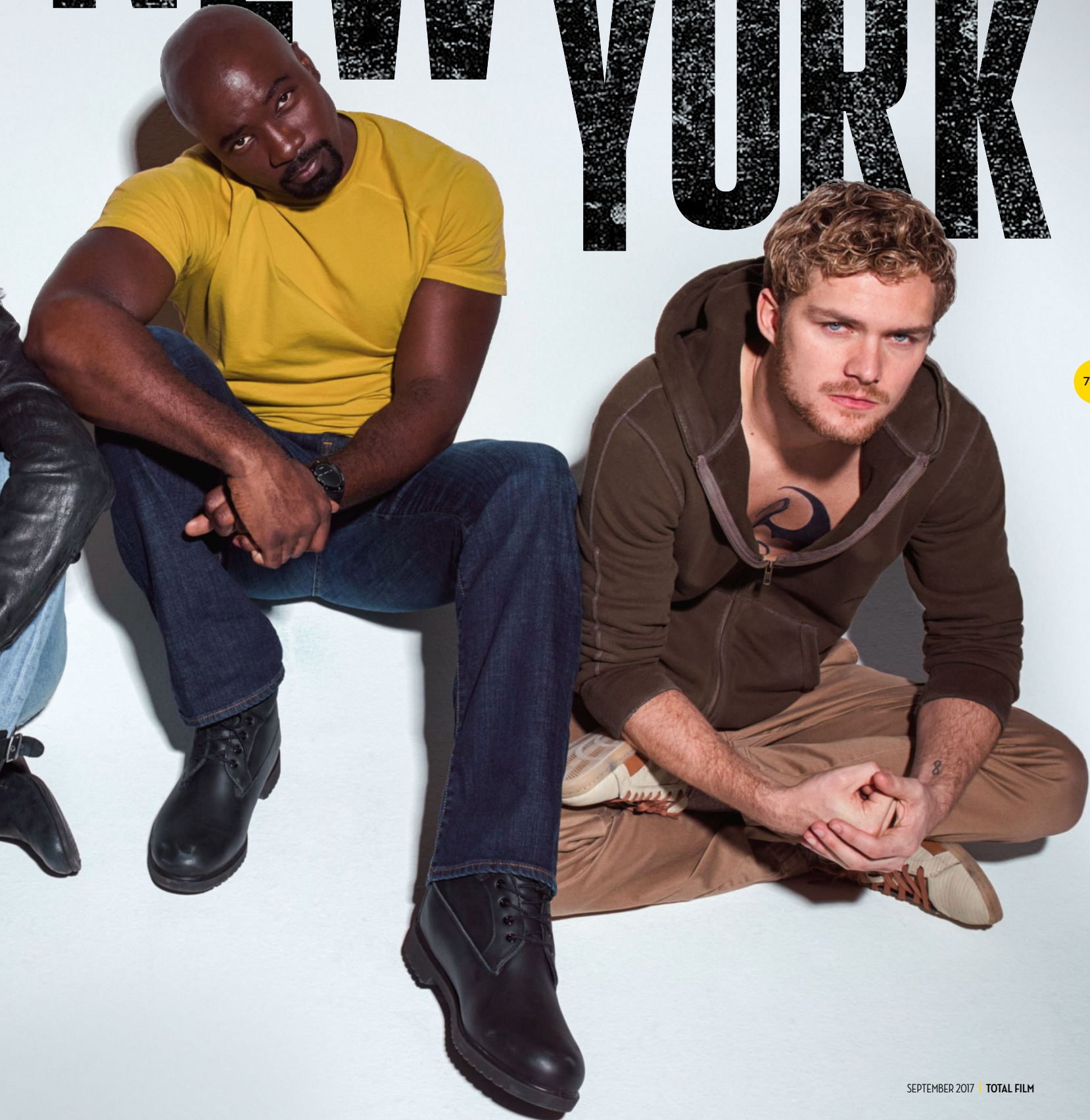


THE DEFENDERS

Daredevil, Jessica Jones, Luke Cage and Iron Fist are assembling for **THE DEFENDERS**. Total Film catches up with the small-screen Avengers to find out what threat is uniting Hell's Kitchen's antiheroes...

WORDS NICK SETCHFIELD

NEW YORK



MAKING OF



an eight-episode series that brings New York's urban champions together.

"It's funny," says Charlie Cox, alias lawyer-turned-superhero Matt Murdock, talking to *Total Film* during a break in filming. We're in a small, icy room in Brooklyn's Chinatown and he's wrapped against the cold in a hooded black jacket bearing a white sticker with the letters MM scrawled upon it. "When I signed the contract to do *Daredevil*, I vaguely remember my agent saying, 'You know, they'll do this, and then they'll do the other shows and then eventually there's going to be this team-up.' And I just remember thinking, 'Yeah, yeah, yeah... we'll see!'"

There is a mutual understanding and a mutual respect once they all realise that deep down in their cores they have something very much in common," says showrunner Marco Ramirez, charged with uniting the mismatched small-screen heroes. "But I think a lot of the fun is watching them not get along.

"As a dramatist and a TV writer it's imperative that there be conflict," he continues. "Beyond whatever conflict is going on outside the Defenders, the conflict within the Defenders was, to me, worth mining even more. So yeah, they get along eventually, but it's not pretty, it's not smooth. It's not like they get recruited and they're all going to completely give up their own agency and their own journeys and their own stories. They each have to get to this on their own, because they're all so independent. So that process of getting them on board, getting them to the

point where they're working together is, I think, the real fun of the show."

"They feel like lone wolves," adds Cox, "and so to bring them together authentically, to find a way in the story for it to make sense, that they stay together and work together, is a really tough writing challenge. And Marco Ramirez and Doug Petrie [*who helped develop the show*] have done a wonderful job. I had a lot of questions early on – 'Why don't I walk out the door?' And there was always a reason they were able to pitch me, and I think that's evident."

That's not the only thing that had the actor hooked, though. "I'm really able to identify the Easter egg moments," he tells *Total Film*. "Even though I didn't grow up as a fan I'll often read a line, or something structural that brings us together or whatever, and think, 'Oh, that's a good one. [*The fans*] are going to like that!' Without giving too much away we've had a few iconic moments. The first time Jessica and Matt meet, and Luke and Danny meet. And then suddenly we're all in a room together. And there's a moment, of course, where we all engage in martial arts together! So there's going to be a few cool moments."

Engineering Tumblr-worthy moments is one thing. A bigger challenge is splicing four disparate shows into one. The Netflix corner of the Marvel Universe maintains a ground-level perspective but each series has carved its own tone and agenda, from the hot-button social politics of *Luke Cage* to how *Jessica Jones* has tackled the nerve-shredding aftermath of mental abuse. "They've done such



CAGE FIGHTER
Mike Colter reprises the role of Luke Cage.

a great job in creating all of these shows that exist as standalone series but somehow still feel connected," says Krysten Ritter, back in the biker jacket as superpowered PI Jessica Jones. She's clutching a can of Canada Dry in Jessica's fingerless gloves. "They each have their own colour palette, their own sound, their own style. *Jessica Jones* was jazz and New York and a psychological thriller. This is bigger – bigger in scope. It's not as claustrophobic and in her head. It's a bigger world, and it's colourful, and there's a lot more action."

Mike Colter – aka bulletproof fugitive Luke Cage – agrees that the stakes are raised in *The Defenders*. "The thing we're dealing with is something that Cage has never encountered. Cage is all about Harlem. It's bigger than Harlem. It's the world, almost. [*Luke has to*] understand this is about mankind, a bigger fight."

Everyone's tight-lipped about the precise nature of the threat that needs all four heroes to deal with it – Weaver will only admit that her character, Alexandra, is "adversarial" – but they hint that the menace has a topical charge. "The enemy we're dealing with isn't

TEAM-BUILDING

Finn Jones as Danny Rand, aka the Iron Fist, and (right) Charlie Cox as Daredevil.





THE DEFENDERS

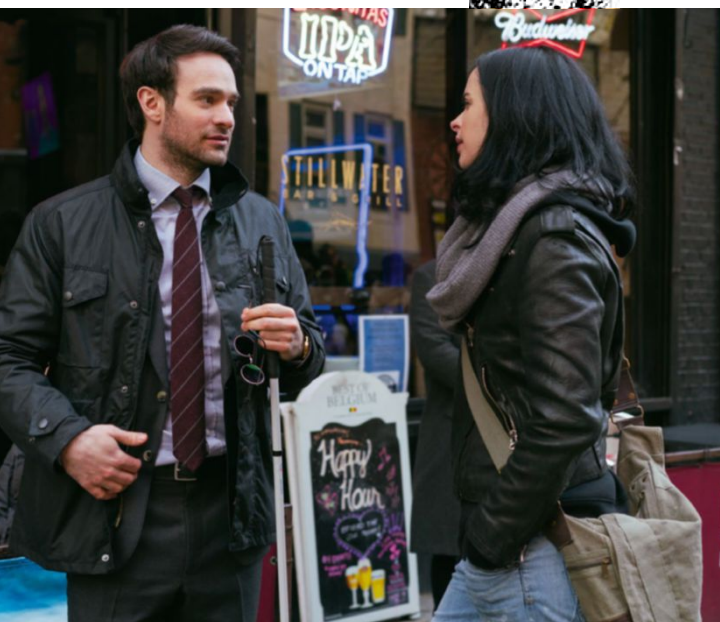
too dissimilar to the kind of danger we're seeing going on in America right now," says Finn Jones, the most recent recruit to the Netflix pantheon as Danny Rand, billionaire martial artist hero of *Iron Fist*. "They're power hungry. A power-hungry entity that has seeped its way into every aspect of human life, through the financial [world], through the politics... It has got its grasp on society. And we are there to try and dismantle that and expose it."

Ritter chooses not to draw any direct parallels between this threat and the current political climate in the States – "Honestly, I'll just start crying right now. Let's not get political!" – but Colter says, "We're essentially defending society and morals. [There's] a small faction who wants to rule everything. Because it all comes down to greed, power, money – for what, right? When you have it all, then what? It's always that way. Everybody wants more, more, more. To what end?"

and freak out. We walked outside and someone saw Mike – because how can you miss him? – and they go, 'Oh my God, Luke Cage!' And then they saw me and they were like 'Jessica Jones!' And then they saw Daredevil and they, like, freaked the fuck out, which was really cool. So we're all in it together. It's like we're in a band, you know?"

Showrunner Ramirez worked equally closely with his counterparts in the writers' rooms. "Everyone was aware of what everyone else was doing at all points in time," he shares. "Everyone had a time for input and was able to say, 'This is great, this is the character we love so much, this is moving them along.' It was a very friendly, amicable environment."

"It almost felt like summer camp, because we were all in the same building. So if we had a question about the next season of *Luke Cage*, we would literally just walk down the hall, knock on the door of Cheo [*Hodari Coker*, *Luke*



'THAT PROCESS OF GETTING THEM TO WORK TOGETHER IS THE REAL FUN OF THE SHOW' MARCO RAMIREZ

Quick to banter, the four stars have a chemistry that spills beyond the screen. "We're serious about the work," says Colter, "but we're really just looking to have a laugh when the camera's not on us."

"We work long hours and it's mainly at nights, so we've got to keep the energy up," adds Jones. "We have a lot of downtime. We all like to gather around and just riff. You see it in the director's face. When they start they're just like, 'Oh God, how are we going to contain these guys? How are we going to get them to just hit their marks and say their lines?'"

"Especially between the hours of 1am and 4am," grins Colter. "That's when we get really squirrely. Right then we're probably hopped up on sugar and walking around with oatmeal cookies."

"We're all stoked," shares Ritter. "We're like high-five, we got hit shows! We all support each other so much, and it's really cool to be in it together. We went to dinner the other night, the four of us, and people started to realise

Cage showrunner] and say, 'Hey, Cheo, is it OK if we do this with Luke?' He would open the door, we'd talk, then we'd go back about our business. So it felt a lot like we were in a dormitory. We were on the Marvel TV campus."

There's a profound hush in Mount Zion Cemetery. Even the planes passing from JFK seem strangely muted. The crew clutch steaming coffees and discuss the incoming weather ("Snow tomorrow, 70 per cent chance..."). Make-up women fuss over Elodie Yung, because even assassins need spritzing.

"What I like about this is that it's Marvel with a little 'm', not a capital 'M'," Sigourney Weaver tells *Total Film*. "So it's not apocalyptic and it doesn't take place on different planets. It's in a city I can really relate to. It's gritty, it's beautifully shot and I can relate to [this] much better [than the movies]. I like the other Marvel Universe but I'm happy to be working in the universe with a little 'u'."



DRESS TO KILL
Sigourney Weaver plays big bad Alexandra; (above) Charlie Cox's Matt Murdock meets Jessica Jones, aka Krysten Ritter.

THE DEFENDERS IS RELEASED ON NETFLIX 18 AUGUST.

MAKING OF



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AVENGERS REASSEMBLE

Jeremy Renner and Elizabeth Olsen set aside their superpowers to hunt down a savage killer in Taylor Sheridan's **WIND RIVER**, the third part of the writer/director's 'thematic trilogy', after *Sicario* and *Hell Or High Water*. Total Film investigates...

WORDS JAMIE GRAHAM

There are two reasons to be intrigued and excited by Taylor Sheridan's brutal crime-thriller *Wind River*. One is that it closes the screenwriter's loose trilogy that explores the demons of modern-day America, coming hot on the heels of *Sicario* (drugs) and *Hell Or High Water* (economic collapse), two of the finest US pictures of recent years. The other is that it re-teams Jeremy Renner and Elizabeth Olsen, aka Hawkeye and Scarlet Witch, in rather less fantastical circumstances. Here they don't fight a sentient AI that wants to eradicate all of humanity, but investigate the rape and murder of an 18-year-old Native American woman from the titular reservation in wintry Wyoming. Not that Sheridan knew of the hook that his casting provides...

"I've never seen *The Avengers*," he shrugs, taking a bay-window seat on the Croisette in Cannes, where his film is playing in the Un Certain Regard category having already wowed Sundance. A sometime actor who's best known for his role as Deputy David Hale in *Sons Of Anarchy*, he's a commanding, jock-handsome guy, his iridescent green eyes a match for the azure sea. "People kept

saying: 'They worked together before,' and I was like: 'Really?' I asked Jeremy and he said: 'Oh, we did this movie together. I play this guy who uses a bow and arrow.' So I thought it was some dark, medieval thing that no one saw. Then I was at home one day and my son pointed at the TV and was like: 'It's Jeremy!' I thought: 'Wow, he's an Avenger.' Then Lizzie came in and did some weird thing with her hands. I thought: 'Wow, they're in the same movie. Wow, they're in my movie. Wow, I'm going to get asked about that.'"

As, of course, are the two stars themselves. Renner slumps down complaining of jetlag, but refuses coffee lest it mess with the nap he's planning to take after talking to *Total Film*. "It was one of the reasons to go do it. There's already a comfortability level," he says. "I find, at this point in my life, I want to work with people who inspire me. Lizzie is an amazing human being. It was great to be able to work with her in a different way. When you're in the mountains and the snow, it's nice to have a familiar face."

Olsen's response indicates that the respect and the affection are mutual, though her answer goes beyond the usual actor-on-actor platitudes. "I love working with Jeremy," she begins, before pausing



as a sound system kicks in outside the window. “That’s not annoying, right?” she laughs, then raises her voice to continue: “You see who he is in the movie. I mean, he’s a deeply soulful person, and he’s a really great problem solver. When you’re on set with him, whether it’s *The Avengers* or this, he’s so great at helping the larger picture. The way he speaks about character and script and story and structure and beats and moments... it’s an education. He’s a really generous collaborator.”

What does she mean by: “You see who he is?” She smiles wryly. “He’s not going to do the same thing that Benedict

NEW ARRIVAL
(above) Elizabeth Olsen as FBI agent Jane Banner, with Graham Greene’s reservation chief.

THE ICE PACK
Taylor Sheridan and his crew prepare a scene on location in Wyoming (below).



‘I INITIALLY SET OUT FOR CORY TO BE A PIECE OF GRANITE, BUT I FELL APART IN MOST SCENES’ **JEREMY RENNER**

Cumberbatch is going to do, right? He’s not putting on a show. He’s such a grounded person and a presence on screen. It’s very hard to find a false moment. It’s easy to get to know Jeremy the man through watching his films.”

THE REAL DEAL

Renner plays Cory Lambert, a taciturn US Fish and Wildlife Service agent who is allowed on the Wind River reservation to kill any predators that prey on the local farm animals. Hunting a family of mountain lions across the blizzard-blitzed slopes, he happens upon the shoeless frozen corpse of Natalie (Kelsey Asbille), and an autopsy reveals that her death was caused by her lungs bursting from inhaling sub-zero air as, presumably, she fled her attacker(s).

Las Vegas FBI Agent Jane Banner (Olsen) is called in. Capable and forthright, she’s smart enough to not let pride hamper her investigation,

and quickly elicits the aid of Lambert so she might get to grips with the isolated community, inclement weather and harsh terrain. The inquiry uncovers some harrowing secrets, and along the way Sheridan brings his forensic eye to a forlorn, desperate population crippled by loss.

“It mirrors my experience with the world, OK?” starts Sheridan, who stresses that Denis Villeneuve and David Mackenzie did crackerjack jobs of directing *Sicario* and *Hell Or High Water* but he *had* to direct this one as it’s so personal to him. Taking the reins was, he claims, only a small step up given he visualises every script, and includes detailed stage directions to communicate tone at all times. “When I was in my twenties, a very good friend of mine was Native American. He lived on a reservation and he introduced me to that world. I was taken with the culture and made a lot of friends there, and was so upset with the

WIND RIVER



money, we gave them casinos – well, what a great gift. It’s fucking offensive. Pardon my French.”

He’s not the only one to whom *Wind River* is intensely personal. Renner is similarly angered by the treatment of Native Americans, but says: “My energy was not put into understanding so much what it’s like to live on a reservation, because I’ll never understand that.” He instead focused on exploring loss, for the case is made painfully resonant to Cory by the fact that the dead woman was a good friend of his own daughter, who herself died three years before. Renner mentions a rape in his own family and losing a six-month-old cousin to a cot death. “Cory’s plight and my situation are all pretty mixed in,” he says. “I got to act out a version of who I am. I initially set out in my mind for Cory to be a piece of granite. But I fell apart in most scenes. It was like: ‘Holy fuck, this guy’s not as tough as I thought he was.’ He’s hyper-sensitive. I had to constantly restrain emotion. These are tough things to deal with,” he concludes, blowing out a breath.

MURDER SQUAD
(above) Banner calls on Jeremy Renner’s expert hunter, Cory Lambert, to help with the investigation; (below) Renner with Gil Birmingham’s Martin Hanson.

Olsen, too, saw parallels between Jane, who refuses to be bowed by this most patriarchal of environments, and her own resilience. Earlier Sheridan told *Total Film* that she is one of the strongest, most independent people he’s ever met, pointing out how she’s forged her own identity from the shadow of her two older sisters, Mary-Kate and Ashley – child stars both who morphed into fashionista titans.

“I didn’t see that parallel,” she says, “but all of my friends and the people I’ve surrounded myself with will say I’m a pretty direct communicator and sometimes it’s [small, mock-mortified voice] not the greatest thing. Sometimes you have to understand how people want to be communicated with. In that way I’m like Jane – she’s not really reading the situation in an emotional way because that’s not her job, to feel sorry for someone. Her job is to go in and figure out what the problem is and fix it.”

DIRECT ACTION

When it comes to knowing your job, kudos must go to Sheridan, who matches his directorial style to his milieu and story. This is a land of “snow and silence”, where the only options are to “survive or surrender”. And so the tale unfurls as a hard-bitten noir/vengeance-western that recalls the Coen brothers’ *No Country For Old Men*, Sam Raimi’s *A Simple Plan* and Larry Fessenden’s criminally underseen wintry folk-horror *Wendigo*. There is an élan to the visual storytelling, but it’s purposeful and muscular. The violence, when it inevitably arrives, impacts with the force of an avalanche.

“The terrain forced me to create a visual palette,” Sheridan starts. “I’d love to shoot things on sticks and dollies but you can’t lay track on snow. So I sat down with my DP Ben Richardson, who’s a wizard, and said: ‘How are we going to make this feel authentic without feeling sloppy,’ which is what handheld can do. So we decided to shoot it in this voyeuristic manner. Not from the perspective of a person, but from the perspective of an animal.

We would shoot really low, or high from a tree. We would try to find ways where it felt like the animals in the forest were watching the people.”

And the explosive violence? “I worked with some guys at the

way they were treated in America. We went to this land that wasn’t ours, we made a lot of promises to the people to allow us to coexist, we broke all of those promises, and then we killed their food source and then we killed them. And those that survived we forced onto land that we thought wasn’t valuable. Then we realised: ‘Oh shit, that land is valuable. It has uranium on it or we can run a pipeline under it.’ So we’re still exploiting and extracting from what little we’ve given them. And that’s a shameful – shameful – governmental practice that’s ignored by our press and is not in the public consciousness.”

Normally calm, collected and pretty damn cool, Sheridan is visibly enraged. It’s wise to let him vent... “America’s presently going through a necessary catharsis and is dealing with issues of race and gender equality and sexual identity, but what nobody’s mentioning, not once, are the Native Americans. They’ve been, essentially, on really big prisoner of war camps for the last 130 years, and we don’t talk about it. It’s offensive to me. The Supreme Court has already ruled, twice, that they’re justified in receiving all their land back, but it’s wildly inconvenient for us to give it to them so we gave them money, but we didn’t really give them



IN TOO DEEP
Banner realises she's in
a land without back-up.



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DYNAMIC DUOS OTHER MOVIES IN WHICH AVENGERS HAVE ASSEMBLED...



ZODIAC 2007

Iron Man (Robert Downey Jr.) and Hulk (Mark Ruffalo) play a journalist and cop obsessed with catching an elusive true-life serial killer in director David Fincher's dark and brooding masterpiece.



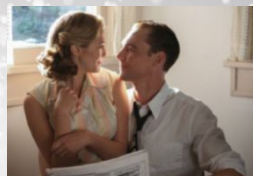
IN THE HEART OF THE SEA 2015

Thor (Chris Hemsworth) and the newest Spider-Man (Tom Holland) face a foe big enough for any superhero movie in the form of a giant whale.



THE HURT LOCKER 2008

Hawkeye (Jeremy Renner) and Falcon (Anthony Mackie) start to show the signs of psychological damage as part of an army bomb disposal squad in the Iraq War.



I SAW THE LIGHT 2015

Loki (Tom Hiddleston) plays hard-drinking, drug-hoovering and pain-afflicted country and western crooner Hank Williams. Scarlet Witch (Elizabeth Olsen) is his long-suffering wife.



THE NANNY DIARIES 2007

Black Widow (Scarlett Johansson) looks after a Manhattan moppet but finds her eye drawn to Cap – sorry, Harvard Hottie (Chris Evans) – living upstairs.

WIND RIVER

NEW DIRECTION

Debut director Sheridan takes time out with his star, Olsen.



"It's a great point and I have two answers for that," he begins. "First, there's the harsh reality of moviemaking. The only way to make an independent film is to secure your budget with the foreign sales, and the only way to secure your budget with the foreign sales is to have a recognisable commodity. So I have to find someone who is attractive to the marketplace, but services all the needs I have as an artist. That's an extreme challenge. There are a lot of actors who can guarantee my financing, but there are not many who can bring the gravitas and understatement and compassion that Jeremy brings to it."

No breath, point two: "I've heard people say: 'If Taylor was to write this from a Native American view, it would be a stronger film.' How can I tell you it from a point of view I don't have – how arrogant is that? But I can tell it from the standpoint of a man who's been in love with a woman who's Native American, who has friends who are part of the reservation experience. I can tell that story truthfully." Finally he breathes. "I'm really proud of the Native American actors I was able to find and utilise, and I hope – especially with Gil Birmingham, who plays Martin in this, and played Alberto in *Hell Or High Water* – I hope I made a star. And I think Martin Sensmeier, who played Chip in the film, is gonna be a star."

Hopefully he's right. What is certain is that Sheridan, as a director, has a major career ahead of him to complement his already etched-in-stone rep as one of Hollywood's hottest screenwriters. Who knows, he might one day direct an *Avengers* movie...

WIND RIVER OPENS ON 8 SEPTEMBER.

➔ LAPD and went through hours of their footage of gun battles, and the longest one I could find lasted 25 seconds. It's chaotic and it's sloppy. I wanted it to feel real. I don't want to ever glorify violence. I've always said: 'When a bullet is fired in one of my movies it has a home, and I want you to see that home.'" He pauses, lining up his words. "As for the rape... There's a general misconception that this is an act of sex. It's an act of violence. I had to shoot that in a way that felt violent and in no way sexual. There's no nudity in the scene. I focus on the horror of her reaction and the complete lack of empathy of the man who's on top of her."

No glorification, no flinching, no false notes. This extended to the training of the actors ("I did a lot of physical training – I wanted to feel confident holding a gun, and you change the physicality of a

character based on skill and confidence," explains Olsen), and even the score. Sheridan hired Nick Cave, who knows all about grief having been just 19 when he lost his father to a car crash, and ordered him to avoid any and all clichés pertaining to Native American music. "No percussion" and "You can't use a fucking flute" were the instructions, along with: "I want you to make a score for a horror movie that takes place on another planet."

But here's the thing: in a film so obsessed with authenticity and so intent on measuring people by rigorous moral standards, isn't it a little off to do a *Mississippi Burning* and have two white Hollywood stars as your leads? Sheridan doesn't miss a beat.

SNOW BUSINESS

The icy wastes of the reservation are as much of a character as the acting talent.



MASTERCLASS



88

HOW TO... WRITE A SCREENPLAY

Screenwriter extraordinaire **Jane Goldman** has shaped the stories of everything from *Kingsman* to *Kick-Ass*, *The Woman In Black* to *X-Men: First Class*. Next up: gory chiller *The Limehouse Golem* and a *Total Film* masterclass in how to turn screenplay dreams into blockbuster reality. Take note...

WORDS MATT MAYTUM

ADMIT IT – YOU’VE THOUGHT ABOUT WRITING A SCREENPLAY.

Anyone with a vague knowledge of film and a reasonable proximity to a laptop has probably contemplated churning out their own script. But do you have what it takes?

Meet Jane Goldman, one of Britain’s most successful screenwriters thanks to her work on varied, genre-busting blockbusters (starting with 2007’s *Stardust*). Though she admits to having had no formal training, she’s currently busier than ever, having recently written *Miss Peregrine’s Home Of Peculiar Children* for Tim Burton, penned *Kingsman* sequel *The Golden Circle* for regular collaborator Matthew Vaughn, and teamed-up with George R.R. Martin for a top-secret *Game Of Thrones* spin-off.

Her next project to hit screens is *The Limehouse Golem*, a grisly slice of Victoriana starring Bill Nighy and Olivia Cooke. Like her previous work, it plays with conventions, and is adapted from a celebrated source – adaptations being something of a Goldman specialty – in this case, Peter Ackroyd’s 1994 novel *Dan Leno And The Limehouse Golem*.

Having honed her craft as a journalist and author, Goldman was an established writer before *Stardust* led her to screenwriting. “It was just this lovely combination of everything that I loved about writing,” she tells *Total Film*. “It had all the structure that I loved and had spent many years enjoying. It also had the fun and childlike feeling of making stuff up!” Fancy following in her footsteps? Here’s the Goldman standard writing tips and essential advice on crafting a winning screenplay...



THE WRITE STUFF

"I think it helps to have a lot of stamina. You do have to keep at things, and really put the time into it. I think people don't often think about that. The creative part is great fun – making up stories. Everyone loves that. But there's the long, technical structuring and polishing that is not to everyone's taste.

"You need to have the imagination element that you have in the arts, but I definitely think it helps to have a very technical mind and a sense of the engineering of it all – that thing of realising why things are working when you're watching movies, which kind of does ruin watching other movies in some ways. [laughs] But it's the understanding of how those parts [work]; it's analysing. 'Oh, I'm crying now, but it's because of this.' It's definitely somewhere between an art and a science.

"There are certainly creative elements that can't be taught. I mean, you can't teach someone to have good ideas. But you can definitely learn how to structure things and use structure to create emotion. You can definitely learn how things work."

STUDY UP

"Before [my first screenplay] *Stardust*, I had been approached by a publisher, asking if I wanted to write a novel. Because there didn't seem to be many books on the structure of novels but loads on screenwriting, I actually wound up reading the classic [screenwriting] ones back then.

"I must have read a bunch of books on screenwriting, and I went to a few seminars. There was one really great [seminar], which I always recommend to everyone: it's called *Beyond Structure* [by David Freeman], which was all these really interesting observations about what makes individual scenes in films really special. Even though I was there with a view to figuring out how to write a novel, the whole time I was thinking, 'Actually, screenwriting sounds like it's really fun.'"

OFF THE PAGE

Goldman's next project to hit cinemas will be *The Limehouse Golem* (below); *Kick-Ass* (right) was her first collaboration with Matthew Vaughn.

ADVICE WORTH TAKING

"The most useful writing advice that I now pass on to anyone who ever asks me is from a book on writing called *Bird By Bird* by Anne Lamott, which I really, really recommend. She has a whole chapter called 'Shitty First Draft'. The idea is to basically forgive yourself and just tell yourself, 'Look, this first draft is going to be shit, but I'm just going to finish it.'

"Because what most people tend to do – particularly with screenplays – is they'll just keep rewriting the same 30 pages. Then you wind up with an unfinished screenplay. In a nutshell, the general advice I give to people is: don't go back and edit while you're writing. Write all the way through to the end.

"So if I've decided halfway through that actually this person's dad should be dead, but I've already written a dad – rather than going back and removing the dad, I just make a note and say, 'Oh yeah, the dad is dead.' And when I finish the whole draft, I'll go back and kill the dad. It's such a game-changer."

STAY ON TARGET

"Set yourself a daily target, and not a ridiculously ambitious one. Reach for a daily target that you can probably exceed on a good day, and then you can buy yourself days off, or, more likely, just bank them because you'll have days when you won't get there.

"I'd say five pages a day is a really reasonable target to set yourself. I mean, if you're on a stupid deadline, then you set yourself as many pages as you basically have to do. Like, when I was doing *X-Men: First Class*, we had so little time. I think my target then was 10 pages a day, and sometimes more because it just had to be finished.

"I remember [*Stardust* author] Neil Gaiman once saying a really cool thing as well: even if you just wrote one page a day – you know, if you've got another very demanding full-time job – it wouldn't take that long to actually have a finished script."

MAKING PAPER

"If you just think about it in terms of professional sports, it's the same as that. If you play professionally for the local football team, it's not going to pay you a fortune, but you can live on it. But it's not something where you can write in and apply. Someone has to notice that you're capable of doing the job, and then give you a job, which is annoying. But that seems to be the case for a lot of fun jobs, I guess.

"A lot of people want to know the easiest way to get into screenwriting. I genuinely believe the answer is writing a novel. Not that that's how I got into it – I didn't at all. The interesting thing is, some studios are so keen for fresh material all the time, people are reading every novel that comes out. It's comparatively a lot harder to get a screenplay onto somebody's desk, weirdly.

"Another thing I would say is: screenwriting competitions are really good. Because if you can write a letter to a good literary agent and say, 'I came first in this quite prestigious screenwriting competition. Will you read my thing?' then you're off to the races."





THE ADAPTATION GAME

"It depends on what you're adapting; they're all really, really different. To use *The Limehouse Golem* as an example, that was a novel that I had loved for years. When I said 'I'm adapting it' [to people who had read the book], they're like, 'How the fuck are you going to do that?'"

"Because the book plays a huge, great trick on the reader that really only works in print, but I really loved the challenge of that. I wanted to see if I could keep the thrill that I had when I was reading the book. I wanted to see if I could find the cinematic equivalent of that, so that adaptation was necessarily very different."

"And then there was *Kick-Ass*, which was four issues, and it wasn't finished yet. [The comic's writer] Mark Millar had a little page where he talked about where it was going, but Matthew [Vaughn, director] really wanted to start work on it. So actually, that ended up being very collaborative, rather than straightforward."

"With *X-Men: First Class*, there was a comic called *First Class*, and obviously there's the X-Men who are characters created by other people, but that story was not actually taken from any arc of the comics. With something like *The Woman In Black*, actually, that was interesting because it's a perfect story and it translated perfectly. But if you translate it exactly, it would have been very short, because it's a novella. It was a matter of seeing in what ways you could augment it and what else could go in that would be interesting and true to the spirit of it. Every adaptation is different, but it's a process that I absolutely love."

MY (NOT SO) PRECIOUS

"Filmmaking is a team sport. You have to be a team player. You definitely can't be precious. The only time when it's frustrating is occasionally when someone will ad-lib something because it maybe feels more natural to them, but it changes the meaning completely."

"Anything that makes things better, I'm thrilled. If an actor does a funny ad-lib, I'm only ever grateful, because people might think I wrote it."

"Some directors really like to have a writer on set, and others don't mind one way or another. It's interesting working with Tim Burton [on *Miss Peregrine's Home For Peculiar Children*], because his planning is so meticulous that I don't think he changed a single thing. He really did not need a writer on set at all. It's extraordinary."

"I don't think a writer who was precious would last long, because writers are famously not ever really considered the most important person on a film set. If you're precious, you would not last long in the industry."

SCREEN PLAY BY PLAY

The average script length is 110-120 pages, with one page roughly equal to a minute of screen time.

The most expensive script ever sold was *Déjà Vu* by Bill Marsillii and Terry Rossio – in 2005, it went for \$5m, trouncing Shane Black's record of \$4m for *The Long Kiss Goodnight*.

Back in 1900, screenwriter Roy McCardell was paid \$15 (the equivalent of \$432 accounting for inflation) to write 90-second 'scenarios', an early version of a script.

A 'spec script' is a screenplay written for free by a writer who will then attempt to sell the finished script to a studio, producer or production company. *Good Will Hunting*, *Butch Cassidy And The Sundance Kid* and *Thelma & Louise* were all spec scripts.

Studios often request a 'beat sheet' from scriptwriters. This is a breakdown of a script's main story beats, i.e. its big events. Numerous beat sheets can be created as the script goes through rewrites.

Bidding wars between competing parties often occur when a script is 'taken out wide', meaning all the major Hollywood players have been sent the script by an agent. A bidding war will often lead to a high six-figure deal.

Scripts can be as verbose or as sparse as you like. Stanley Kubrick's were lean and dialogue-driven, while Shane Black's scene descriptions are peppered with jokes. Tarantino's scripts go into great detail regarding shot composition, types of lenses and soundtrack ideas.

USE IT OR LOSE IT

"The polishing and editing stage, after you've done your first draft, is where the actual writing bit all happens. That's where it becomes something that's good."

"And I think as a general rule – and actually, this is in all of the screenwriting books and seminars, but it is good advice – is if you look at everything, and ask yourself about every single element of the script: would the script still work without this bit? Whether it's a line of dialogue or a whole character or a whole scene."

"If it works [without it], you have to really seriously think about throwing it away. And that can be a really brutal thing to realise. It's like, 'Oh shit, we don't actually need this scene. I love this scene, but it'll still make sense without it, and it should probably go.'"

THE LIMEHOUSE GOLEM OPENS ON 1 SEPTEMBER.

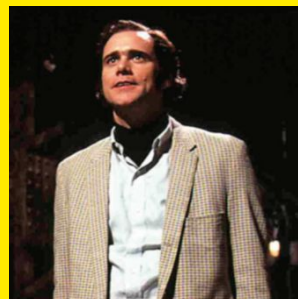
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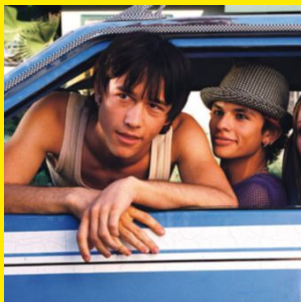
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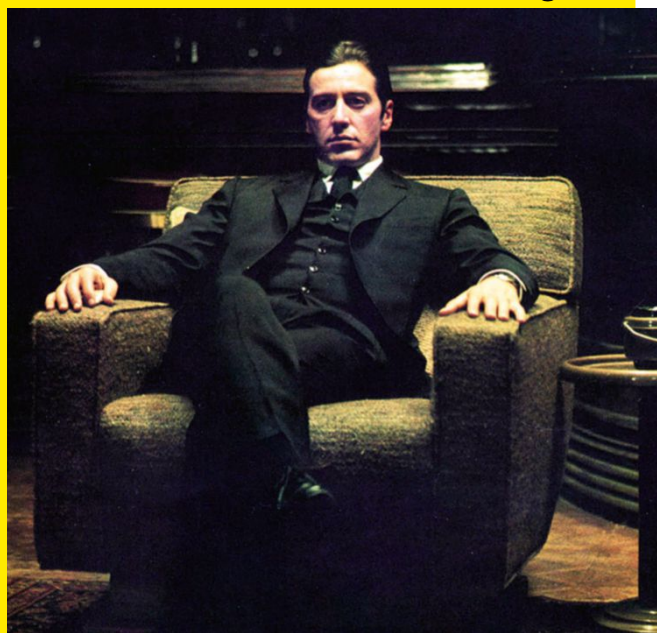
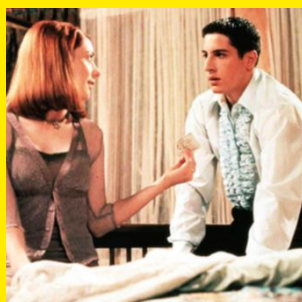
MOVIE-STAR





AUDITIONS

RGETTABLE



Few actors gets handed a job on a platter... these stars had to earn their breakout roles. Total Film unearths the scintillating screen tests that made movie history...

WORDS KEVIN HARLEY

AUDITIONS



ONES THAT GOT AWAY

Didn't pass the (screen) test...

John Lithgow

BATMAN (1989)

Before Lithgow fought Sly Stallone as *Cliffhanger's* sado-villain, he almost butted heads with Bruce Wayne. Tim Burton considered casting him as The Joker. When Lithgow doubted his own suitability, some other guy hooted all the way to the bank.

Robert De Niro

THE GODFATHER (1972)

Sometimes, rejection is opportunity's seed-bed. De Niro is wired in his bid to play mobster Sonny. Too wired, perhaps: James Caan's looser performance won out. But rejection freed De Niro to win an Oscar for his Vito in *Part II*.

Eddie Redmayne

STAR WARS: THE FORCE AWAKENS/THE HOBBIT (2015/2012-14)

He caught a niffler, but Redmayne couldn't catch a break from Jakku (as Kyo) to Rivendell (as Bilbo). For both, he overdid the voices. "You got anything else?" asked casting director Nina Gold after Eddie's 10 Kyo tries. Ouch.

Chris Klein

MAMMA MIA! (2008)

"Now every man that I see is a potential threat," screeches Klein, karaoke-killing Abba with a threatening glare. But it's not as scary as the cocky actor's singing, which went down in failed-audition history. "I beg of you..." please stop.

Tom Hiddleston/ Liam Hemsworth

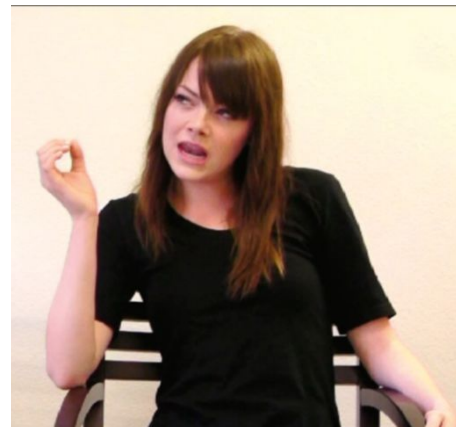
THOR (2011)

Hiddleston "wowed the room" auditioning to play Thor, claimed director Ken Branagh, but his muscle was more lean chicken than beefcake. Liam Hemsworth also auditioned, which must make family gatherings awkward. Brother Chris won, despite fluffing his first audition.

EMMA STONE

EASY A (2010)

Who said it's easy being Emma Stone? Despite proving herself in *Zombieland* and *Superbad*, Stone spent two hours nervously re-recording a one-minute audition tape for virginal outsider Olive Penderghast in director Will Gluck's high-school comedy. "Let the record show," she nailed it. Between her hyper-expressive eyes, quick wit, earnest righteousness and classic-Hollywood voice, Stone projected the natural star quality any director would kill to have in (virtually) every frame of their movie.



HUGH JACKMAN

X-MEN (2000)

Thank Tom Cruise for this one. Struggling to match Cruise's pace while making *M:I II*, Dougray Scott busted his shoulder in a motorbike bump. Shooting overran as a result, costing Scott the Wolverine role. Enter Jackman, fresh from *Oklahoma!* on stage. Compared by screenwriter David Hayter to "a young Clint Eastwood", Jackman projects great charisma through laconic restraint. But he's also got an easy warmth that magnetises us and the most superheroic hair since Chris Reeve's kiss-curl, making him the perfect candidate for the soulful hard-nut: though Dafne Keen (Laura/X-23) looked a sight scarier in her electric Logan audition.





TOM HARDY

STAR TREK: NEMESIS (2002)

It isn't just the shiny bonce: the road to Bane is scrawled all over Hardy's screen test as villainous Picard clone Praetor Shinzon. Hardy claimed to be "terrified" playing opposite Patrick Stewart, but a revolutionary righteousness burns in his vocal inflections.



JOSEPH GORDON-LEVITT

MYSTERIOUS SKIN (2004)

Gordon-Levitt graduated from 3rd Rock From The Sun with his nuanced turn as a tough/tender, wired/wounded teen hustler in Gregg Araki's heart-breaking Scott Heim adaptation. Joe's astonishing audition is camera-ready: the smirk may be cocksure, but the eyes are haunted.



ALLYSON HANNIGAN

AMERICAN PIE (1999)

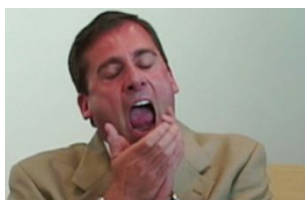
Buffy's Willow made audiences choke on their beer as nympho-geek Michelle. With wide-eyed earnestness and a one-track mind, Hannigan nails every note – even the way she stumbles breathlessly over the lines fits. Flutes would never look the same again.



RACHEL MCADAMS

THE NOTEBOOK (2004)

Fresh from Mean Girls, McAdams played Allie Hamilton in director Nick Cassavetes' break-out Nicholas Sparks weepie. Going by her audition with co-star Ryan Gosling, she was ready to put herself through the wringer for the job. McAdams hits every emo-base on the head arguing with the Gos. Fiery, forthright, indignant, raging and quivering with tremulous hurt, she rollercoasters through the feels with the ease of someone flipping through a notebook.



STEVE CARELL

ANCHORMAN: THE LEGEND OF RON BURGUNDY (2004)

From the cheesy suit down, Carell is man-child Brick Tamland in this delicious screen test. Carell pitches the pan perfectly dead-wards, while the colour of his face when he laughs would shame passing beetroots. "Don't make me laugh"? Try not to.



CHRISTOPHER REEVE

SUPERMAN (1978)

Reeve's ability to fill Kal-El's pants was initially questioned, but his earnest warmth, wry wit, no-smoking charm and kiss-curl stand hands-on-hips tall in his audition with Holly Palance. You'll believe a man can fly and never tell a lie.



MATTHEW MCCONAUGHEY

DAZED AND CONFUSED (1993)

"He came in on an audition and said: 'Hey, I'm not this guy, but I know this guy,'" explained director Richard Linklater of the McConau-hunk's bid to play stoner-sage Wooderson. That understanding is scrawled all over McConaughey's dazed grin and drawl in his screen test, where he lectures Wiley Wiggins on being cool, shares deep thoughts on high-school girls, and sparks up his career with the ease of lighting a joint.



JIM CARREY

MAN ON THE MOON (1999)

Carrey has never been Oscar-nominated, but the audition alone for his riff on prankster virtuoso Andy Kaufman almost deserves one. Singing and dancing badly, Carrey truly gets how Kaufman toyed with audiences. And those congas? Kaufman's own, bought by Carrey at auction.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

ALIEN (1979)

"I was from the theatre," Weaver recalled of her pre-Alien days. "I wasn't even sure I wanted to be in a movie!" If anyone else had doubts, her screen test obliterated them. Dressed in army surplus gear, she smokes/swears like she doesn't give one, barks orders, and owns the set with natural authority.





TIPPI HEDREN

THE BIRDS (1963)

Hedren described her experiences working with Hitchcock as “horrific”: he became obsessed with her, then lobbed live birds her way after she rejected him. His fixation seems all too creepily evident in the voyeuristic screen test for his avian Daphne du Maurier adaptation, in which Hedren exudes grace under leering pressure as she’s put through multiple costume changes. “How do you feel about this whole experience?” co-star Martin Balsam asks. Queasy, perhaps?



GABOUREY SIDIBE

PRECIOUS (2009)

Sidibe cried for real auditioning to play deprived, abused Precious Jones in Lee Daniels’ emotion-wringer. A deep empathy pierces her screen test: as she folds into herself, you believe this is a woman crumpled by pain, driven to feel unnoticed.



AL PACINO

THE GODFATHER (1972)

Paramount thought Pacino wrong for Michael Corleone, and big Al agreed. But director Francis Ford Coppola couldn’t get Pacino’s face out of his head. The screen tests show why: Pacino’s uncertain wariness is evident, but his eyes burn with star-making intensity.



JAMES DEAN VS PAUL NEWMAN

EAST OF EDEN (1955)

Oh, the awkwardness. Dean and Newman screen-tested for one role in the John Steinbeck adaptation, but there’s no competition. Newman’s bow-tie and laugh seem too eager to charm next to Dean’s switchblade-flipping cool.



NATALIE PORTMAN

LÉON (1994)

The casting director famously thought the 11-year-old Portman too young for the role of Mathilda in Luc Besson’s trainee-assassin flick. Portman’s parents agreed. But when young Nat says: “I’ve seen better days,” in her audition reel, you believe she could project depths beyond her years. Unnervingly confident from her line deliveries to her eyebrows, she appears completely in control, even when called on to utter phrases such as: “Hi, piggie.”



HENRY THOMAS

E.T. THE EXTRA-TERRESTRIAL (1982)

When the original choice to play Elliott proved overly bossy, director Jack Fisk recommended nine-year-old Henry Thomas to Spielberg. *Indiana Jones* fan Thomas arrived to audition with a mini-bullwhip – and botched the reading. But when he improvised a scene with casting director Mike Fenton’s NASA man threatening to take E.T. away, Thomas’ controlled show of swelling emotion (he was remembering his dead dog) devastated Spielberg. No phoning it in.

AUDITIONS ON FILM

Here’s to the ones who dream...

Emma Stone

LA LA LAND (2016)

Even with all the razzle-dazzle on show, it’s the leads who elevate Damien Chazelle’s bittersweet beauty. For Mia Dolan’s last-ditch audition, Stone pours rivers of emotional conviction into ‘The Fools Who Dream’, slaughtering viewers with every note.

Naomi Watts

MULHOLLAND DRIVE (2001)

“I suck at auditions,” Watts has claimed. But she electrifies bright-eyed Hollywood hopeful Betty’s creepy screen test among gropey old men in David Lynch’s film-world fright-mare. As Betty discovers the femme fatale within, Watts exposes the film’s heart of darkness.

Dustin Hoffman

TOOTSIE (1982)

“When you talk to me, you talk to me professionally!” After threatening to knee the director’s balls through the roof of his mouth, Hoffman’s out-of-work, in-drag actor blurs the character/actor boundaries with a scene-stealing soap-opera audition. Success is a shoo-in.

Dick Shawn

THE PRODUCERS (1967)

Struggling to find a singing Hitler for their taste-blotzing musical, Gene Wilder and Zero Mostel watch gob-smacked as a soup-can-wearing, flower-flinging hippie auditions crooning about “lurve pow-ah!” The fit is so wrong, it’s deemed right: “That’s our Hitler!”

Various

WAITING FOR GUFFMAN (1997)

Hopeless hopefuls audition for an amateur play in Christopher Guest’s mockumentary. While Catherine O’Hara, Fred Willard and Parker Posey improvise agonisingly awful auditions, Eugene Levy assiduously botches every note of ‘I Dream Of Jeannie’. Feedback? “We’ll let you know...”



CARRIE FISHER

STAR WARS (1977)

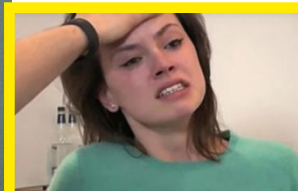
Fisher beat 24 name actresses to the role of Princess Leia, and her audition leaves no doubt why. Screen-testing alongside Harrison Ford (not yet cast as Solo, just helping George Lucas out), Fisher is all nervy grins and edgy focus between readings. When she delivers, she's right in the moment. Somehow investing lines about the "fourth moon of Yavin" with an intelligent conviction beyond her 19 years, she leans into the role with the insistent passion that propelled her to diss Moff Tarkin's BO. It's almost startling when Fisher reverts to herself, shyly declaring her name to camera. Sob.



TOBEY MAGUIRE

SPIDER-MAN (2002)

Greased-up and brooding, Maguire proposed a moodier version of Spider-Man in his alley-spat audition for the (not-so) friendly neighbourhood superhero. While Sam Raimi's film eventually played lighter, Maguire's impressive here, channelling Bruce Lee as he tackles sophisticated fight choreography while, pivotally, looking every bit the hero.



DAISY RIDLEY

STAR WARS: THE FORCE AWAKENS (2015)

To test actors' abilities, sometimes there's only one option: torture. Searching for someone "tough, sweet and terrified", J.J. Abrams subjected Ridley to Kylo Ren brain-scans. Howling with fight and fright, her response blew Abrams away: all the way to Jakku.



CHRISTIAN BALE

BATMAN BEGINS (2005)

Screen-testing opposite Amy Adams, Bale unleashed that divisive voice with bone-crushing purpose. Bale used that deep-throat register ("Swear to me!") to, reckons Christopher Nolan, "Project massive energy through this costume." Needs must: he was wearing Val Kilmer's dodgy Bat-cossie, after all.

MAKING OF

STRAINED DAYS

Fifty years on from the race riots that rocked America, Kathryn Bigelow's intense **DETROIT** revisits a shameful moment in US history. Total Film joins the director and her team to discuss one of the most important Hollywood movies this year.

WORDS JAMES MOTTRAM

98

Oh man, I hate that question!" *Total Film* has just asked Mark Boal, the two-time Oscar-winning writer of Kathryn Bigelow's *The Hurt Locker* and *Zero Dark Thirty*, how he and Bigelow settled on their new film, *Detroit*. A former journalist, Boal admits it's difficult to pinpoint exactly what led him to this latest collaboration, a frenetic real-life piece of history that turns the clock back five decades to the explosive Detroit riots of 1967.

"For the record, I was pulled in by the story," says Boal, who'd been studying various topics when he began to focus on this dark chapter in the city's history. Beginning after the predominantly white Detroit police force raided an illegal bar run by African Americans, the violence swiftly escalated, with shops looted and National Guardsmen and state troopers called in as the unrest unfolded over several hot summer days. By the end, Detroit was a war zone and 43 people were dead.

Most significantly, on 25 July, police raided the annex of the Algiers Motel – a night nobody who was there would ever forget. With the help of his six-strong research team – including the Pulitzer-winning Detroit reporter David Zeman – Boal came into contact with one witness, Larry Reed. "He hadn't talked about this one life-changing night to anybody in 50 years when I found him. He had never really fully recovered, and I just left his apartment very moved by his story... I knew I had to write it, or try to tell it."

Reed, then a member of Motown group The Dramatics, was just one of the people caught up in the Algiers Motel that night – when unchecked police brutality led to the deaths of three unarmed black men, allegedly shot dead at close range, execution-style, as others were beaten and brutalised. "At first I thought it was Larry's story, and then it grew outward from there as I met people," says Boal. It was at this point that he took the script to Bigelow, suggesting this could be their next project.

After working with Boal on *The Hurt Locker*'s Iraq-set bomb disposal tale and the equally compelling hunt for Osama bin Laden story *Zero Dark Thirty*, the director was intrigued. "As I was learning about the tragic events of 1967, I was watching the Ferguson unrest play out in the news," she explains, referring to the riots that took place in August 2014 after the fatal shooting of the 18-year-old black citizen Michael Brown by a white police officer in Missouri. "Those two events unfolding side-by-side really galvanised the need for me to contextualise this story and bring it to a wider audience."

Jack Reynor, the Irish American actor cast as Demens, one of the police officers involved in the raid, concurs. "I think this one is on the membrane of social commentary in the States. You couldn't be on a sharper edge." The nature of police conduct in the US is unquestionably a hot-button topic, already documented in Ryan Coogler's recent *Fruitvale Station*, which unerringly captured the



MAKING OF



TRUE COLOURS
(above) Will Poulter as racist ringleader Krauss, at the Algiers Motel; (right) director Kathryn Bigelow sets the scene; (below) John Boyega gives a weighty performance as security guard Melvin Dismukes.

death of Oscar Grant, an unarmed Oakland citizen fatally shot on the platform of a BART station in the early hours of New Year's Day, 2009.

Bigelow points to the recent outcome in the Philando Castile trial – in which a Minnesota police officer was acquitted of fatally shooting a young African American after pulling him over in his car. “I find myself facing a question to which there is no easy or apparent answer: Why does this keep happening? Why is injustice allowed to endure? I think that’s an essential notion for every American to examine, regardless of who they are or where they come from. At its heart, that’s what *Detroit* will ask of its audience.”

While the Detroit riots – and particularly the Algiers Motel incident – were well-documented at the time, these historical events have slipped through the cracks over the years. “I would say this is a story that’s been kind of forgotten,” says Boal. “In general, the story of the rebellion and riots in Detroit is one that’s not told very often. First of all, there were African Americans who felt it was dangerous to talk about. And white people who were ashamed. It was

one of those things that has kind of been pushed away.”

Bigelow believes it was “only a matter of time before it was unearthed”, especially with the 50th anniversary of the riots being marked this July. But there can be no question, *Detroit* will shine a spotlight on a horrifying tragedy in 1960s US history. Actor Will Poulter feels it’s not a moment too soon. “We’re in danger of avoiding the topic of race and not having the conversation.

So my hope – and I think this aligns with the filmmakers’ hope – is that this film will encourage conversations about racism and race.”

Poulter, the British actor from *The Revenant* who also worked with Reynor

on 2014’s *Glassland*, plays Krauss, the main instigator in the Algiers brutality. Naturally, he had reservations about playing such an unredeemable figure. “I didn’t see any parallel that existed between myself and the character, besides from the fact he was a white male. So that was quite tricky, and to try and come to terms with the psychology of someone you really bear no resemblance to is very challenging. It may have been the hardest thing I’ve done.”

Shot by the British cinematographer Barry Ackroyd – whose work with Ken Loach and Paul Greengrass as well as on *The Hurt Locker* evidently prepared him for this ultra-real docu-drama approach

DETROIT



– *Detroit* drops the viewer into the head-spinning chaos of the riots. It's a dizzying hand-held style, reminiscent of Ackroyd's work on Greengrass' 9/11 film *United 93*. "I think that level of confusion," notes Poulter, "speaks to how dangerous it was on the streets of Detroit at that time."

Gradually, we meet the dozen or so disparate people who will wind up at the Algiers. Among those taking refuge from the riots on that fateful night: Vietnam veteran Robert Greene (Anthony Mackie); Carl Cooper (Jason Mitchell) and Aubrey Pollard (Nathan Davis Jr.); Dramatics members Larry Reed (Algee Smith) and Fred Temple (Jacob Latimore); and white Ohio students Julie Hysell (Hannah Murray) and Karen Malloy (Kaitlyn Dever).

After shots were fired in the vicinity of the Algiers – thought to have come from a sniper's rifle – Detroit police officers, state troopers and National Guardsman arrived on the scene. Also in attendance was black security guard Melvin Dismukes – "Someone who has a very distinct perspective on what happened that night," says *The Force Awakens'* John Boyega, who plays him. What follows is one of the most harrowing scenes in recent cinema, as Bigelow lets the Algiers raid play out across an unbroken 40-odd minutes.

The celluloid equivalent of being lowered into a boiling cauldron, Boal

STREETS OF RAGE
(above) Jack Reynor's cop Demens amid the riots. (below) Anthony Mackie as Vietnam veteran Robert Greene.

makes no apologies for this intense sequence. "It was tough to write and it was tough to watch... look, it's tough to watch the news these days. The world has become a difficult place to stomach in some sense. As far as the narrative goes, it is the turning point of the story. So it had to be in there... I think it was very tough material, tough to think about, and I recognised that it put the audience in a difficult spot. I was certainly aware of that as I was writing it."

Shooting the sequence, the lynchpin of the entire film, was a huge challenge. "There was an extreme emotional toll on everyone involved in bringing the motel scenes to life," says Bigelow. "Those playing both



victims and perpetrators really had to go to places that, as hard as they are to watch, were even harder to portray." Poulter readily agrees. "It was three weeks of being in a hell hole to be honest. That hotel became a house of horrors."

He adds, "I can't imagine what it was like for the recipients of that abuse. I was only dishing it out." For the young African American actors – many of whom had "negative stories", says Poulter, about the experiences with police to draw from – it was particularly tough. "There were times where a couple of us broke down on set just crying in the middle of a scene because it was just so heavy," says musician-turned-actor Algee Smith. "But we knew why we were there. You definitely knew the responsibility."

The respect Bigelow commanded over her young cast meant they would go to extremes for her. "If she calls and asks for just my toe to be in a film, I'll do it," says Boyega, echoing the others' sentiments. It helped that the shoot – partly filmed in Detroit, partly in Boston – was awash with those who were there that night. "Julie [Hysell] was actually on set nearly every day giving me input, providing context and helping us really add authenticity to the scenes," says Bigelow.

A film that will surely feature in the forthcoming Oscar race, *Detroit* is liable to cause a stir, particularly Stateside. "It's going to be a very divisive film," estimates Reynor. Remarking that even young crew members from Detroit didn't know much about the Algiers incident, Boal is uncertain. "It's hard to predict. The response from – I hate this phrase – African American community types has been very, very strong. And that's been really gratifying to me. Who knows, though, man? I have no idea."

Undoubtedly, there will be anger – not least when audiences are reminded that the police officers involved went largely unpunished. "Our aim is not to draw conclusions on behalf of the audience or retry a 50-year-old case," warns Bigelow. "*Detroit* is about re-visiting a terrible but significant episode in American history." Its ambition? To open up a dialogue about the systematic racism that still exists. "Our biggest hope," concludes Poulter, "is that it leads to a more progressive future for everyone."

DETROIT OPENS ON 25 AUGUST.

WORDS JAMES MOTTRAM PORTRAITS RICCARDO GHILARDI



I FELT I HAD TO
EXPLAIN WHO I AM
IN THESE FILMS. NOW
I DON'T FEEL LIKE
I HAVE TO DO THAT



KRISTIN SCOTT THOMAS

Hanging with Prince, starring in *Four Weddings*, swearing with Ryan Gosling... Kristin Scott Thomas' three-decade career simply can't be categorised. Returning in Sally Potter's comedy *The Party*, she chats frankly with TF about what it takes to be this adventurous...





E

legantly attired and full of her usual poise, Kristin Scott Thomas is in sceptical mood when *Total Film* greets her. To undertake a career discussion with this most eclectic of actresses will take some work. "I don't know if you've done a KST fest," she says, "of all the wonderful films I have made over the past 30 years?! I doubt it!" Well, maybe not *everything*. But the work of Scott Thomas spans far more than the expected Brit period dramas – "big hats and wigs", as she puts it.

True, she's done her share – everything from *Bel Ami* with Robert Pattinson to *Easy Virtue* and *Angels & Insects*. But Scott Thomas is an actress with a surprising CV, with blockbusters (*Mission: Impossible*) sitting comfortably alongside cult movies (*Only God Forgives*). Fluent in French, after she moved to Paris in her early years, she's one of the few Brits – alongside Charlotte Rampling and Jane Birkin – to have also carved out a formidable career across the Channel.

Over here, she's beloved for playing Fiona in 1994's *Four Weddings And A Funeral*, winning a Bafta for Best Supporting Actress. In Hollywood, they fêted her for playing Ralph Fiennes' paramour in *The English Patient* – an Oscar nomination and a fertile period that saw her paired with everyone from Robert Redford to Tom Cruise and Harrison Ford followed. On the continent, she gained the European Film Award for Best Actress, in 2008, for the intense drama *I've Loved You So Long*.

This remarkable and wide-ranging success was hardly a given. Born in Cornwall and raised in Dorset, Scott Thomas' early years were marked with tragedy (both her father and stepfather died in flying accidents when she was young). After training to be a teacher at the Central School of Speech and Drama in London, only to be told she wasn't good enough to be an actress, she relocated to Paris to become an au pair. It was here that she began studying drama.

Graduating, she struck gold when she won a role alongside Prince in *Under The Cherry Moon*. It didn't even matter that starring with His Purpleness won her two Razzie nominations, she was on her way. But there's no question, KST – even now, at 57 – has an uneasy relationship with stardom and selling herself in interviews. "I don't think I'm cynical about it but I'm aware of it," she says. "It's a business, and if you're going to be in a business, you have to work it."

TF encounters her on the west London set of her new film *The Party*. Sally Potter's

nimble comedy draws from *Who's Afraid Of Virginia Woolf?* and other middle-class dissections for a frequently hilarious tale about Janet, a newly promoted opposition MP (Scott Thomas) and her academic husband Bill (Timothy Spall) hosting a gathering that goes from bad to nuclear. Her first screen appearance in three years, it's a frank reminder of just how bitterly funny she can be. Let the KST fest begin...

How did you get involved with making *The Party*?

I'm trying to remember... I think it came through my American agent. I thought: "Oh, this looks interesting!" Read it in one fell swoop, and then met Sally [Potter, writer/director], and we decided there and then. It was very simple, a straightforward decision. When something like this comes to you, you have to seize it – it's so rare, this kind of project, with such great parts, and a really great director, who looks after you and looks after the performance. The talent that Sally has, you really have to seize the opportunity... even if it's something that will be a small project.

What was the biggest challenge you faced working on the film?

Because Sally's written this thing so well, the writing is really great, and with really good writing there are a million ways of doing something. For me, a good script with good dialogue means something that you could play in different ways. A bad one is when there is only one way of saying it, and you are locked into it, and you hate yourself for doing it because it's so boring. The challenge is not to lose your footing, to keep a steady course through it, not to veer off in different directions in your style, or in the building of the character. Oh, and I find being quite violent very challenging!

Indeed, your character is first seen brandishing a gun! Among many other things, this is a film that deals with old friendships gone sour. So how did you prepare yourself for the role?

We all read together, we worked out the basics of everybody's relationships before we started shooting... that was really great. You are thrown in the deep end. And then you have to get up and do it.

Have you ever been to a party that's as disastrous as this?

I'm afraid I have, yes! Not as glamorous as this...



FULL ENGLISH
Oozing sexual chemistry
opposite Ralph Fiennes in
The English Patient.



CRYING NEED
Kristin Scott Thomas returns to cinema for the first time in three years in Sally Potter's *The Party*.

You shot the movie in a very short space of time, two weeks. Was there a reason for that?

I think it was quite complicated to get everybody at the same time... because it's only 13 to 14 days or something. The problem with actors like Cherry [Jones] or Tim [Spall] or Cillian [Murphy] – or any of us! – is that we're always working! Apart from me, who doesn't work anymore, [laughs] or won't work anymore! But I think it was quite difficult to get us all in the same place for even just two weeks, because we're all really busy!

You've taken a step back from acting recently. *The Party* is the first film you've acted in for almost three years. Is it a profession you have mixed feelings about?

Well, it's a job, it's not a hobby. In the past I've felt it's not something that I do when I'm feeling good about it. It's not something that I do because I have to do it. It's something that I do and sometimes I'm angry with it, and hate it. It's very frustrating sometimes, on all different

levels. It's frustrating when you can't get the job that you want. It's frustrating when you keep getting offered the jobs you don't want. And it's frustrating when you're in the job and you can't quite get a grip on the character or you can't quite get a grip on what kind of film we're making here or who is this director and why has he asked me to do that? And then sometimes it can be that you're surfing this huge wave, and

it just feels so great, to be taken on this thing, and sometimes it can go really, really well.

What do you still love about acting?

I don't know what it is, but I love being

part of a team. This is why I like theatre, because it's a real group effort. If one thing is out of sync on stage that night, it could mean chaos. If somebody dries, or forgets something, or doesn't do what they're supposed to be doing, it could be chaos, so you have to be very alert. And that's the side of filmmaking I really enjoy. The technicalities of it all. I'm quite a manual person – I like cooking and gardening – so I like the actual making of it.

Let's turn back to the beginning. Was there a movie that turned you onto acting?

The film that made me want to become an actress was *The Sound Of Music*. I still absolutely love *The Sound Of Music* and anything with Julie Andrews in it. I was very small, probably under 10. I knew I wanted to be an actress before that, but it somehow made things seem even better! The opening shots of her coming over the mountain – and it's all a bit shaky, because I don't know what kind of equipment they used in those days – and you hear this music swelling up really slowly, and you see a spinning figure in this great big field and it's so fantastic!

After you left school, did you ever do any regular 9 to 5 jobs?

Yes, I did, but never for more than 10 days. I was a secretary, but on the tenth day, I had to go and fetch my boss. I'd been hired in his absence and I had to go and fetch him from the airport and I was fired that day. I was a receptionist. I also got fired from that. I used to spend my time calling my friends on the phone. I worked in a shop, I was a waitress...

IT'S FRUSTRATING WHEN YOU CAN'T GET THE JOB THAT YOU WANT

You moved to Paris to become an au pair, but then studied drama. But what first got you into film?

Erm... when I was very young, when I was 23, I was doing a play in the middle of France, in Burgundy, and I got a call from a casting agent saying: "Would I come to Paris to audition for a small part in a film [*Under The Cherry Moon*] that Prince was doing?" And this was back in '85, so this was when Prince was like God. And I'd been listening non-stop on my Walkman to 'Raspberry Beret'... so I took that as a sign! And I went and I just fell into it.

How was Prince?

It was Prince! It was my first film. And it was just odd! I think that's enough, isn't it? Most people can understand why – it was just peculiar. I had very, very strange words to say.

Did the experience change you?

I got swept up in this idea that if you have a career, you could be a star. I remember somebody coming into a dressing room saying, "Do you want to be a star?" and it had never occurred to me. I didn't really know what that was. And I realised that if I said yes, that would send me off on some kind of path, and I wasn't quite sure if I wanted to engage... so it was a bit of an uncomfortable moment. I felt I ought to say yes, but I didn't really want to. I went to Los Angeles for a bit and stayed three months and came back.

So what was your concept of stardom back then?

All I knew about stars was that they had huge, great stretch limousines, wore very, very high heels and sang! I didn't really know what that meant! And it was a wild time in the south of France. Crazy. I'd never stayed in a hotel in my life before, and suddenly I was being whisked around. It was all weird. Very, very, very odd. Bodyguards and stuff. And it was just weird. I was very naïve, that's what I thought [*Hollywood*] was, but I didn't realise what else it was. But I had a feeling that it would be a lot of discipline and hard work, which frankly I wasn't prepared to do, so I came back here, and started working in an arena that I felt much more comfortable in. Where perhaps the competition wasn't so stiff. There wasn't so much pressure

put on the way you look. It wasn't so competitive. Europe is far less competitive than Los Angeles. I was terrified of competition. It's something that made me feel quite sick. And I just really didn't want to go down that road, because I knew it would be the road to hell!

Gradually, you began to win roles in films such as *A Handful Of Dust* and *Bitter Moon*. Do you have distinct memories of that early period?

You think you've forgotten them and then you realise that you haven't. I made this film [2011's] *Salmon Fishing In The Yamen*, and we shot in this house in Wiltshire, and as I drove up, I thought: "I must've been here before, many moons ago." I walked into this place, and there was this door, and suddenly for some reason, I lent up against it and said: "It's always been you, Charlie!" Duckface! It all came out. And that's where we'd shot *Four Weddings And A Funeral*, the scene, my scene! When I confessed to having been in love with Hugh Grant – it all came back, the whole speech.

How fondly do you look back on *Four Weddings*?

It's great! How old is that film? People still quote it. All the stuff – "Fuck-ity fuck fuck fuck." All that stuff in the beginning. Loads

of things. People are always coming up to me and going: "You Charlie!" I'm really proud of *Four Weddings*. It was a real kick off for Working Title, and a real kick off for that genre of English comedies. And for me. That was a very fruitful time. I made something like 18 films in two years! I made this Romanian film [*An Unforgettable Summer*], *Mission: Impossible*, *Richard III* and then *The English Patient*. It was this huge build-up to *The Horse Whisperer* and then I thought, "No, stop."

What do you remember about Brian De Palma and *Mission: Impossible*?

What did he give me? He gave me a really outrageous piece of direction once. I was acting away and he said: "Cut! Cut! Cut! You're in an elevator, and you're a spy, but you look like you're surveying your estates in Russia!" OK, I'll stop acting! Maybe I should write a book – "Pieces of directing I've loved!" I remember one director saying to this actor – the whole film was about this guy dying – "Remember you're a dying man!"

ALL I KNEW ABOUT STARS WAS THAT THEY HAD HUGE GREAT LIMOUSINES

FIVE STAR TURNS

UNDER THE CHERRY MOON 1986

Although she claimed she only took the role out of desperation for a job, her 25-year-old self is radiant as the waitress who captivates Prince's gigolo in his directorial debut.

FOUR WEDDINGS AND A FUNERAL 1994

Scott Thomas campaigned hard to play Fiona, who's infatuated with Hugh Grant's dippy toff. "I couldn't think of anyone better for that part than me," she said.

THE ENGLISH PATIENT 1996

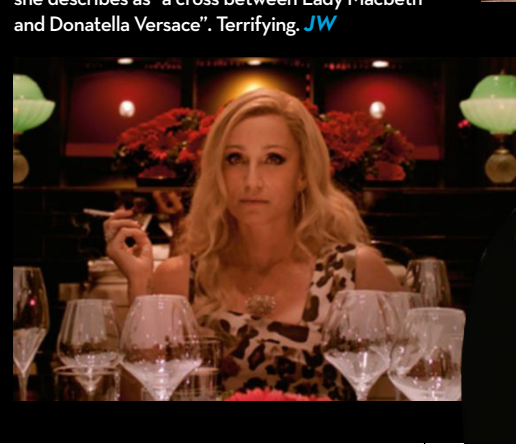
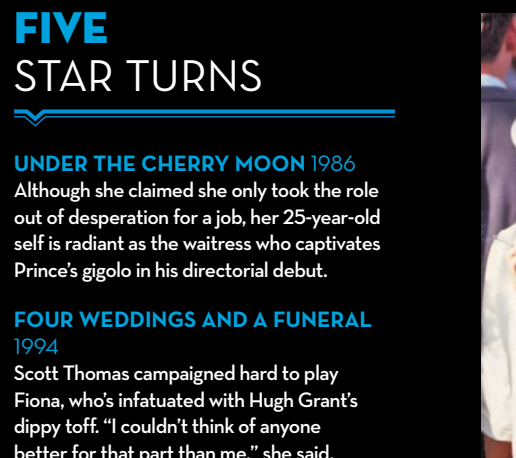
"Occasionally, you read scripts and, well, there you are on the page," she said of her Oscar-nommed turn as Katharine Clifton in Anthony Minghella's defining war drama.

GOSFORD PARK 2001

As uppity Sylvia McCordle in Robert Altman's period drama, she earned a rep as a challenging co-star. "I was playing this woman who was difficult and so I became difficult."

ONLY GOD FORGIVES 2013

Almost unrecognisable as a bleached-blond drug kingpin, KST swears up a storm in Nicolas Winding Refn's crime drama playing a woman she describes as "a cross between Lady Macbeth and Donatella Versace". Terrifying. **JW**





The English Patient saw you nominated for an Oscar. How did you find the awards season?

It was exhausting and exciting at the same time. I will tell you what was really exciting was the fact that it was for this film, which I didn't think I had a hope in hell of being involved in... that's something I really wanted to get involved with. I'd read this book [by Michael Ondaatje], and I loved it so much, and I'd heard somebody was making a film, and I didn't care what I did on it, I wanted to be a part of it. And then I thought: "If they're looking for actresses, I should go up for it." And I immediately thought I'd make a rather good Hana, and then they sent me along for this other part [Katharine], and it did work. And the result of that, we made this film... and it looks so beautiful and gorgeous and luscious, but it was done on such a tight budget, and there was so much excitement around it.

I was working with such extraordinary people like Anthony Minghella, Saul Zaentz, Ralph [Fiennes], Walter Murch, the film editor, and it was so much talent on that thing, I was amazed to be one of them. And so then you get rewards for it – you get pats on the back. It got nine Oscars, that film, and it was so exciting to be part of it. Obviously when you're being shoved in the limelight to defend a patch as an actress, that's another thing – it's quite anxiety-making. But the Oscar ceremony itself lasts I don't know how many hours. Luckily I had something to do. I had to give somebody else an Oscar, so that kept me busy for a bit. It's the campaigning I find quite distasteful, being English.

What was distasteful about it?

I found being bombarded with people wanting me to wear their clothes... to begin with, I was really excited and flattered, and then I realised that I got really sick of it. I thought: "Why don't I just wear the dress bag, the bag it comes in, with the name on it?" Basically I just felt like a billboard. I was so naïve, I realised how much wheeling and dealing was going on behind the scenes. You think: "They love me, they want to give me an Oscar, how wonderful!" But it's not quite like that. It's a business and you're the shop window. But obviously, if I had a big Oscar sitting in my lavatory, I'd be telling you a completely different story!

You went from Oscar season directly into making Robert Redford's The Horse Whisperer. How did that feel?

I was thrilled. It was a part I really wanted to play. I didn't want anyone

KRISTIN SCOTT THOMAS IN NUMBERS

19

Age she moved to Paris, where she still lives.

457m

Amount in dollars of her highest-grossing film, 1996 actioner *Mission: Impossible*.

85

Her current number of acting credits.

2014

Year she announced her retirement from movies. She ended up taking a three-year break.

3

Number of films she's appeared in with Ralph Fiennes: *The English Patient*, *Chromophobia* and *The Invisible Woman*.



else to play it. You read something and you feel: "I have to do this and if somebody else does it I'll be so miserable." Those are the ones you chase. You have to feel that way about it. It has to be a gut reaction. So when I read the script, I loved it and felt that I wanted to play that character. And Robert Redford was the big plus, because he's this most marvellous director. It was very long – six months. I wanted to go on that journey to America. The great thing about being an actress is that you really do get to go on these huge trips. It's a completely different time of your life. You're being another character for months and you're going to another part in the world, and you're utterly immersed in it.

On top of all that you'd also got to work with Harrison Ford on Sydney Pollack's *Random Hearts*...

I was fantastically lucky with my Hollywood stuff – I really was working with the crème-de-la-crème. Robert Redford, Sydney Pollack, Harrison Ford, [and on 2001's *Life As A House*] Irwin Winkler and Kevin Kline...

What happened after that?

Then what happened is that I got bored with the things I was being asked to do in America, so I started saying no and then I started saying no rather too much. Then it becomes really difficult and I couldn't be bothered. Basically the question is: "Why go off and shoot a film for four months in America because it's America?" There are how many reasons? One is you get worldwide recognition and you get paid a lot, and the others are... you might get to work with a really great director. But it's worldwide recognition, that's the only thing that changes. You make a film in France, and you get to work with a really great director and you earn your living. You just don't get worldwide recognition – just France, Québec, Belgium and Switzerland! It's just a question of what you want. In America, you're constantly being asked to be appealing – feminine and a woman. In Europe, you get the chance to be different and a real person on screen.

When you returned from Hollywood, you made *Gosford Park* with Robert Altman. Were you concerned about playing another aristocratic role?

With Robert Altman, the joy in that is that I really felt like I could finish them off. When I got the script, my first reaction was: "Ah, at last!" I just felt like he was somebody I should've worked with

– which is probably a bit pretentious of me but that’s how I felt. But when I read ‘Lady Sylvia McCordle’ I nearly died. I was so disappointed. Another 1930s aristocrat! I was very disappointed. But then I read the script, and it was so brilliant and neatly tied up and interwoven, it was really gripping. So I thought: “Flipping heck! I’m just going to do it – but this is the last one.”

Are you good at shaking off your characters after filming?

You tend to digest them very quickly. That’s something you have to learn to do. There are ones that are more difficult to shake off. *The English Patient* was a tough one. It was a very important film for me acting-wise, it was a very important film for me, the experience of going to the desert and working with these people – it was a big event in my life. Later I did two French films that were very affecting. One was *I’ve Loved You So Long*, about the woman who comes out of prison. When I did that, I was completely shut out of the rest of the world. And then the other film that was difficult to shake off, because it was so weird, was *Leaving*, which is about this woman who deserts her family. That was exhausting. You need so much energy to keep that level of intensity going. It was a six-week shoot, and we were shooting six-day weeks, and a really intense heat down in the south of France, and the director uses up a lot of energy.

You became increasingly embraced by the French, acting in the language, but you haven’t stopped acting in the UK. Notably, you played John Lennon’s aunt in 2010’s *Nowhere Boy*. Were you a massive fan of *The Beatles* while you were growing up?

No, not at all. I read the screenplay, really liked it, saw Sam Taylor-Wood’s *now*

PARK LIFE

A showstealing turn, alongside Ryan Phillippe in Altman’s *Gosford Park*.



Taylor-Johnson film, saw a documentary about John Lennon, and thought: “This man is a complete genius and I want to tell this story.” So we did. And I’m really, really proud of that one.

You were also terrifying in Nicolas Winding Refn’s *Only God Forgives* as a mafia godmother. What was the experience like?

I was aware of the character being particularly nasty, and it’s the sort of character when I thought about her and what I had to do

to be her, it filled me with shame. I felt slightly grubby having done it.

What was it like working with Refn?

I loved working with him. It was so freeing and really good fun. And this feeling of danger, because I was very far from my comfort zone! I felt like I was having to really, really stay very, very

focused. Nothing was not controlled; it was very, very hard work... there was a writer who was on Skype all the time, but he was back in England, we were in Bangkok, so he was busy churning out pages. But sometimes there’d be stuff that didn’t quite sound mean enough. I’m thinking of one scene in particular where Ryan [*Gosling*, my co-star] was particularly helpful with some of the [*bad*] language – things that I never knew existed!

Do you think playing in films such as *Only God Forgives* shows your bravery?

I don’t know whether it is bravery or something else. Not brave so much as careless perhaps. Not careless... maybe it’s because I don’t feel I have to talk about myself. As a younger actress, I felt I had to explain who I am in these films. Now I don’t feel like I have to do that at all. I think adventurous is a better word than brave.

THE PARTY OPENS ON 29 SEPTEMBER.

I GOT BORED WITH THE THINGS I WAS BEING ASKED TO DO

KRISTIN SCOTT THOMAS FAN CLUB

“I’m afraid of seeing her again. She has no problem turning on the bitch switch.”

Nicolas Winding Refn

“Kristin has a sharpness to her persona that was perfect for the beginning of *The Horse Whisperer*, and she could take that to a softer, vulnerable beauty at the other end of the film.”

Robert Redford

“Kristin is a fantastic actress. She’s a very strong woman who knows what she wants.”

Aaron Taylor-Johnson

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APOCALYPSE NOW 1979

Martin Sheen journeys deep into Cambodia to look for Marlon Brando.

Percy Fawcett would venture into these blank spots on the map with little more than a machete, a compass and an almost divine sense of purpose," says David Grann, author of the 2005 *New Yorker* article and the 2009 book that lend their shared title and true-life tale to James Gray's mesmerising adventure movie. He's chatting on a behind-the-scenes featurette, which, at six minutes in length, is hardly the *Hearts Of Darkness*-style *Making Of* that Gray's movie, with its shades of *Apocalypse Now*, deserves. Grann pauses, eyes glinting. "He inspired the character of Indiana Jones..."

That might be so, but if this instant classic sailed past you on its cinema release – despite some rave reviews, it soon vanished over the horizon – don't go into it now expecting a roguishly charming hero who cracks whips and wise. Sure, Fawcett's journey up the Amazon River and deep into the

uncharted jungle comes with its fair share of cannibals, piranhas and toothsome beasts, but *The Lost City Of Z* is not the stuff of matinee serials. Nor is it akin to the sweeping, galvanising epics of David Lean, whose eye for a set-piece so shaped Steven Spielberg. Gray, a classical filmmaker, instead

channels the rampant-human-ambition-set-against-the-indomitable-wilderness epics of Werner Herzog (*Aguirre*, *The Wrath Of God*, *Fitzcarraldo*) and then forces his own will upon them to fashion something a little more muted yet entirely engrossing.

After a career of crafting '70s-flavoured movies that are always admirable (*Little Odessa*, *We Own The Night*, *The Immigrant*), sometimes excellent (*The Yards*, *Two Lovers*), but never as monumental as the films they inspire to, *The Lost City Of Z* is the masterpiece he's always threatened to make.

JUNGLE FEVER

Spanning two decades, the action begins in 1906 when Fawcett (Charlie Hunnam), an archaeologist and colonel in the Royal Artillery, is sent by the Royal Geographical Society to settle a land dispute between Bolivia and Brazil.



They quickly realised they probably should have brought more paddles.



while the themes of class, gender and ethnicity still felt sadly relevant: “We haven’t moved past them one bit,” he says in a short but fascinating interview included on the disc, before detailing how he at first resisted the suggestion of Hunnam for Fawcett as he’d only seen him in *Sons Of Anarchy* – he was hugely impressed but thought the Newcastle-born actor was American.

ACTING UP

Here, Hunnam is 10 times the performer we saw in *Pacific Rim*, *Crimson Peak* or *King Arthur*, losing 40lb for the role and going full Method. “He was Percy,” says Miller in her on-disc interview. “I don’t know that I met Charlie until recently.” Not that she’s too shabby herself, her small windows of screen time packing real wallop as she “studies the arc of a woman’s life... a feminist, forward-thinking, brave, resilient woman”, whose own sacrifices were as heroic as those made by her husband.

The only other extra is a superficial featurette on Fawcett himself. Better to lose yourself in the grandeur of the movie, to embrace its beauty, terror and mystery as it glides steadily upstream towards a denouement that takes an always transporting story into the realms of the transcendental.

If you missed it writ large, be comforted to know that the Blu transfer is gorgeous, doing full justice to the glorious filmmaking. Watching it fill your screen is rather like stumbling upon El Dorado with just the click of a button. **Jamie Graham**

Promised a bump of status upon his successful return – his father was a drunk and a gambler; class thwarts his ascent – Percy leaves his wife (Sienna Miller) and young son (played as the years slip past by Tom Mulheron, Bobby Smalldridge and Tom Holland) and sets off with aide-de-camp Henry Costin (a heavily bearded Robert Pattinson, excellent) and a small party of men.

Upon this initial voyage, Fawcett happens upon pottery, carvings and remnants of sculptures that convince him of the existence of the titular metropolis of maize and gold. He returns to England to share his treasures and to speak of his theory – that these South American ‘primitives’ beat the British Empire to civilisation – and is naturally derided. And so he

returns to the jungle again and again to delve ever deeper in his quest for proof.

In the time-honoured tradition, *The Lost City Of Z* tracks an inner and outer journey, painting Fawcett as a decent, sincere man whose ambition as much serves a high-minded desire to elevate mankind as to increase his own rank. Some viewers might yearn for the anguish to be intensified, but Gray by no means ignores the darkness, with each of Fawcett’s returns to his family underlining the years he’s sacrificed. Save for one pained outburst from his son, the hurt is tamped down but terribly affecting.

This “interesting, conflicted, screwed-up guy” was Gray’s main attraction to a project he’s been trying to realise since 2009,

UP THE CREEK...

(top) Charlie Hunnam’s Fawcett, with son Jack (Tom Holland), struggles to win over the locals; (above) Robert Pattinson, and beard, as Costin.



‘IT’S THE MASTERPIECE THAT GRAY’S ALWAYS THREATENED’



reign and gain

ALL HAIL THE RISE OF THE MONSTERVERSE...

Kong's unimpressed when he learns how much more Brando got paid for playing Kurtz.

KONG: SKULL ISLAND ¹²

FILM ★★★★★ EXTRAS ★★★★★

OUT NOW DVD, BD, 4K, 3D, Digital HD EXTRAS Commentary, Galleries, Featurettes, Deleted scenes



For one of cinema's defining icons, King Kong hasn't actually appeared on screen all that much. There's the original 1933 movie, plus occasional sequels, two remakes and a handful of guest appearances with Godzilla. Really, though, it's odd that Hollywood hasn't made more of its super-sized simian – until now. *Kong: Skull Island* is a very modern feat of blockbuster engineering, peeking over the Empire State Building to see what Marvel, DC and Universal are doing with their characters.

Avoiding yet another version of the Ann Darrow story, it instead shakes paws with the Gareth Edwards' 2014 *Godzilla* reboot to build a new franchise, the MonsterVerse, based around the notion that the Earth is home to a menagerie of ancient, giant monsters. This isn't quite at the level of the Marvel Cinematic Universe, but references to *Monarch* – the scientific programme at the heart of the earlier film – are no coincidence.

So how do you reinvent *King Kong* without all the usual props and plot points? In this case, it's a shameless grab-bag from the classic movies of

director Jordan Vogt-Roberts' (*The Kings Of Summer*) formative years. Have a gang trapped on an island, under threat from prehistoric predators? That's *Jurassic Park*. What about a sequel that ups the stakes by taking on the iconography of a war movie? Try *Aliens*. And why not set the story – in which military types head up river looking for a god-like monster – during the '70s, during the politicised aftermath of the Vietnam War? That way, *Apocalypse Now* gets a look-in, too.

The cinephilia is shameless but well-judged, because it's the fluidity of these references that makes *Skull Island*

SEE THIS IF YOU LIKED...

KING KONG 2005
Mo-cap king Andy Serkis showed how to do Kong for modern audiences.

THE KINGS OF SUMMER 2013
Vogt-Roberts' debut also involved showing strange creatures in the wild. In this case: teens.

GODZILLA 2014
Dawn of the MonsterVerse, as Gajira discovers he must fight for his right to prey.

such fun to visit. On one level, it creates the fuel for potent big-screen imagery, notably the initial "unconventional encounter" between Kong and the team's helicopters, a thrilling mash-up of genres. On the other, it makes this a potent allegory for non-intervention.

The subplot in which Samuel L. Jackson's gung-ho Lieutenant Colonel Preston Packard wants to kill Kong, despite the great ape actually being the last line of defence against something considerably worse, is an astute metaphor for American foreign policy. It's noticeable that the heroes are Tom Hiddleston's eco-savvy tracker and Brie Larson's socially conscious photojournalist.

The casting is a throwback to Jerry Bruckheimer's old policy of head-hunting from recent indie hits, with the stars of *Straight Outta Compton* (Corey Hawkins, Jason Mitchell) and *Me And Earl And The Dying Girl* (Thomas Mann) in support, alongside the godfather of indie, John Goodman. But then look at the headliners: that's Nick Fury, Loki and the future Captain Marvel together on screen. Maybe they are tilting at the Marvel Cinematic Universe, after all. **Simon Kinnear**

balboa begins

LIEV SCHREIBER ROLLS WITH THE PUNCHES...

THE BLEEDER 15

FILM ★★★★★ EXTRAS ★★★★★

OUT 21 AUGUST DVD, BD, Digital HD EXTRAS None

In *Rocky* sequel *Creed*, Liev Schreiber made do with a voice role. But, with a pleasing circularity, he dominates the ring in a lower-key boxing movie that tells the frayed-at-the-edges tale of the bum who inspired *Rocky*. As played by Schreiber, Chuck Wepner is a Noo Joisey fighter who's too sweet to hurt anyone but loves putting on a show. Usually, said show involves bleeding on opponents – hence his nickname 'the Bayonne Bleeder'.

Wepner isn't great at family business either; cover Stallone's ears, but he cheats on wife Elisabeth Moss (reliably excellent) and neglects his daughter. Yet when he gets to fight Muhammad Ali in 1975, he lasts 15 rounds, becomes a local hero and snags Sly's attention.

Wepner's modest post-*Rocky* celebrity descends into drugs and drink, yet director Philippe Falardeau (*Monsieur Lazhar*) enriches the clichés. Wepner's low-key life is smartly contrasted with romanticised movie boxers, especially at his nadir, where

he shares the ring with bears for money and arrives coke-blitzed for a school-teacher meeting.

Character-based intimacies take the plot weight, well-served by nimble-footed casting: Ron Perlman and Naomi Watts aside, Morgan Spector is a note-perfect Stallone. But the show belongs to the often unsung Schreiber, who keeps Wepner engagingly human and likeable without diluting his flaws. Hollywood should make a film about the guy... **Kevin Harley**

The new protective headwear wasn't proving effective.



FREE FIRE 15

FILM ★★★★★ EXTRAS ★★★★★

OUT 7 AUGUST DVD, BD EXTRAS

Commentary, Featurette, Interviews

Fuck the small talk. Let's buy some guns, eh?" Well, quite. Ben Wheatley's sixth feature strips away the arthouse veneer of *High-Rise* and *Kill List* for something lean and mean that pops right off the screen. It's arguably his most entertaining yet: the single warehouse location echoes with artillery fire and cherry-bomb dialogue, while the '70s-togs-donning cast (Cillian Murphy, Brie Larson) practically whoop with glee as they're mashed through the meat grinder. Tarantino-lite it may be, but when has anybody else got this close? **Josh Winning**



THE BOSS BABY U

FILM ★★★★★ EXTRAS ★★★★★

OUT 31 JULY DVD, BD, 3D, 4K EXTRAS Shorts, Featurettes

Abesuited newborn (voiced by Alec Baldwin) battles his older brother Tim (Miles Bakshi) for the love and attention of their parents (Lisa Kudrow, Jimmy Kimmel). Forget the titular tyrant's Trump echoes: Tom (*Megamind*) McGrath's ani-romp hews closest to *Toy Story*'s Buzz/Woody dynamic, only with nappies on, until it stifles Pixar's clarity for arc-matter involving corporate conspiracies. The plot gets messier than loose meconium, but it's mildly redeemed by flutters of bouncing set-piece joy, including a deliciously daft Elvis skit. In the baby-pic league table, think better than *Storks* but hardly *Prevenge* for kids. **Kevin Harley**



LIFE 15

FILM ★★★★★ EXTRAS ★★★★★

OUT 31 JULY DVD, BD, 4K EXTRAS

Featurettes

There may be life on Mars but don't expect there to be much of it in this sub-*Alien* knock-off from Daniel Espinosa (*Safe House*). The International Space Station setting lends authenticity, but when a newly found single-cell organism nicknamed Calvin starts getting nasty, Espinosa's film swiftly reverts to formula. Ryan Reynolds, Jake Gyllenhaal and Rebecca Ferguson head this rag-tag team, though Ariyon Bakare gets the best scene – a real golden handshake. The B-movie finale almost redeems, but it's not enough. **James Mottram**



carry on up the cyber

SCARLETT JOHANSSON'S MAJOR PROBLEM...

GHOST IN THE SHELL 12

FILM ★★☆☆☆ EXTRAS N/A

OUT NOW Digital HD 7 AUGUST DVD, BD, 4K, 3D EXTRAS Featurettes, Interview

Manga goes to Hollywood in an eye-popping sci-fi that aims to re-tool Mamoru Oshii's 1995 anime as a sleek action vehicle for Scarlett Johansson. Directed by Rupert Sanders with none of *Snow White And The Huntsman*'s kitsch, it's a sombre, purposeful and visually stunning affair with a driven central performance supported by an impressively pan-global cast.

For all that, *Ghost* never escapes the charge of cultural appropriation, mostly due to a grotesquely misconceived third-act reveal that comes across as both racially insensitive and crass.

In a futuristic megalopolis known as New Port City, Major Mira Killian (Johansson) is a new breed of cop – a cyber-enhanced humanoid uniquely qualified to thwart a mysterious terrorist hacker (Michael Pitt) with the ability to mind-control his targets. The closer Major gets to her quarry, however, the more she suspects the

omnipotent Hanka corporation for which she toils is a far more serious threat – though it takes an awful lot of face-punching, window-smashing and leaping from impossibly tall buildings for her to latch onto what anyone who's seen *The Matrix* would have realised inside five minutes.

Sanders serves up some stylish mayhem, while ScarJo once again shows her aptitude for ballsy kickass heroine-ism. None of this, alas, makes *GITS* more than a hollow copy of a far superior original. **Neil Smith**

The invitation to go get off their faces suddenly seemed less appealing.

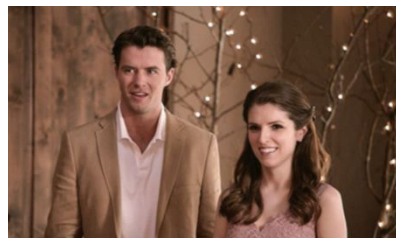


TABLE 19 12

FILM ★★☆☆☆ EXTRAS N/A

OUT 31 JULY DVD, Digital HD

EXTRAS Featurettes, Deleted scenes

A Duplass brothers script isn't enough to elevate this nuptials comedy from the doldrums. Anna Kendrick is Eloise, freshly dumped and relegated to the table of oddballs at her ex's sister's wedding. These single-serve friends – including Craig Robinson, Lisa Kudrow and Stephen Merchant – soon become her lifeline as she soldiers on through the indignity of it all. Director Jeffrey Blitz (*Rocket Science*) spoons plenty of '80s nostalgia (yes, there's a covers band playing) but, Kendrick aside, this is hardly wedded bliss. **James Mottram**



THE LEVELLING 15

FILM ★★★★★ EXTRAS ★★☆☆☆

OUT NOW DVD, BD, Digital HD EXTRAS Interviews

An astonishingly assured first feature – as both writer and director – from Brit talent Hope Dickson Leach. We're on the Somerset Levels after the catastrophic flooding in 2014. Trainee vet Clover Catto (*Game Of Thrones*' Ellie Kendrick) returns to the family farm following the death (accident? suicide?) of her younger brother, to confront her estranged father, Aubrey (David Troughton). Grief, anger and guilt clog their fraught confrontations; secrets physical and emotional lie buried, waiting to be unearthed. Kendrick and Troughton are on searing form, while Leach's script cuts deep. **Philip Kemp**



THE HANDMAIDEN 18

FILM ★★★★★ EXTRAS N/A

OUT 17 AUGUST DVD, BD, Digital HD

EXTRAS Interviews, Extended cut, Making Of, Featurette (BD Special Edition)

Park Chan-wook's exquisite, erotic thriller binds its writhing bodies with intricate plotting, as pickpocket Sook-hee (Kim Tae-ri) poses as a servant to tease Hideko (Kim Min-hee), the niece of a wealthy book dealer, into eloping with a fake count (Ha Jung-woo). Based on Sarah Waters' Victorian-set novel *Fingersmith*, it moves the head-spinning action to Japanese-ruled Korea in the '30s, equating porn and sexual dominance with colonial subjugation. It's slippery, sensual and electrifying. **Jamie Graham**



POWER RANGERS 12

FILM ★★★★★ EXTRAS ★★★★★

OUT NOW Digital HD 31 JULY DVD, BD, 4K

EXTRAS Commentary, Deleted scenes, Outtakes, Featurette

Strong *Breakfast Club* vibes morph into a giant-sized fantasy adventure filled with training montages in this big-screen update of the silliest TV action property around. When five high-school misfit detentionees discover an ancient alien ship, they are imbued with multicoloured superpowers to defend the Earth from an evil sorceress. What could have easily been all-gloss, forgettable fare is made much more fun thanks to the likes of Bryan Cranston, Bill Hader and a wonderfully over-the-top Elizabeth Banks embracing the nonsense. **Matt Looker**



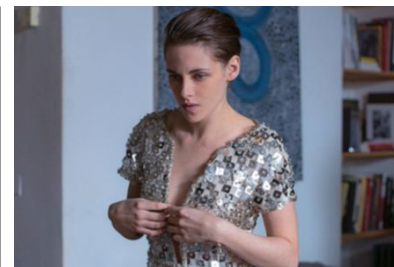
THE AGE OF SHADOWS 15

FILM ★★★★★ EXTRAS ★★★★★

OUT NOW DVD, BD, Digital HD

EXTRAS None

Like any good spy thriller, this handsomely directed Korean thriller, set during the Japanese occupation of the '20s, features duplicitous trickery and surreptitious shenanigans aplenty, as Korean turncoat Lee Jung-chool (Song Kang-ho) aides the resistance. The 140-minute running time is a little long, but each scene flows into the next at a brisk-enough tempo to keep the stakes high throughout. A tense, Hitchcockian centrepiece set on a train is a highlight. **Stephen Puddicombe**



PERSONAL SHOPPER 15

FILM ★★★★★ EXTRAS ★★★★★

OUT NOW BD, DVD, Digital HD,

EXTRAS None

An iPhone. A train. And a scared Kristen Stewart. Those are the key ingredients in one of the year's most nail-biting set-pieces, delivered with verve by director Olivier Assayas (*Clouds Of Sils Maria*) in this atmospheric genre-blender. *Personal Shopper's* 'creepy text' sequence is a highlight, but it's just as effective elsewhere, as Stewart's bored PA hunts ghosts in Paris. There are stretches with zero dialogue, and masterful scares, which combine to create something ethereal and unforgettably unique. **Josh Winning**



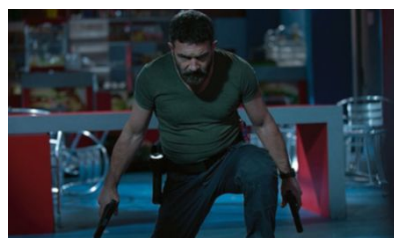
NERUDA 15

FILM ★★★★★ EXTRAS ★★★★★

OUT NOW DVD, BD, Digital HD

EXTRAS Interview, Trailer

You don't go to Pablo Larraín for a conventional biopic. Small wonder then that his year-in-the-life of on-the-lam Chilean poet Pablo Neruda is something else entirely: a surreal combo of road movie, western and existential puzzler that has the titular character (Luis Gnecco) play an elaborate game of cat-and-mouse with the incompetent copper pursuing him (Gael García Bernal). "The movie is like going to Neruda's house and playing with his toys," explains the *Jackie* director helpfully in an accompanying interview. **Neil Smith**



SECURITY 15

FILM ★★★★★ EXTRAS ★★★★★

OUT NOW DVD, Digital HD EXTRAS None

Antonio Banderas becomes the latest ageing action star to play a super-skilled badass who happens to be in the wrong place at the right time. He plays Eddie Deacon, an ex-special services captain now working as a night-shift mall cop who is forced to save a young girl from Ben Kingsley and a mini-army of trained killers. There's a promising preamble before the action situation kicks in, however it's eventually betrayed by a series of repetitive shootouts and a lack of interesting character moments. Less *Die Hard*, more *Try Hard*. **Matt Looker**



A QUIET PASSION 12

FILM ★★★★★ EXTRAS ★★★★★

OUT NOW DVD, BD, Digital HD

EXTRAS Commentary, Deleted scene, Featurette

Director Terence Davies (*Sunset Song*, *The Deep Blue Sea*) takes a deep dive into the life of 19th Century American poet Emily Dickinson (Cynthia Nixon) and her struggles with the dual tyrannies of puritanism and patriarchy. Davies draws out timeless themes of oppression and identity, and shots are composed with a classical formalism, but it's wordy, didactic and ultimately restrained to the point of suffocation. Perhaps that's the point, given Dickinson's own life, but it makes for frustrating viewing. **Tim Coleman**

Groucho Marx in
1933's *Duck Soup*.



marx and restoration

'BLU-RAY FOR CAPTAIN SPAULDING!'

MARX BROTHERS COLLECTION *PG*

FILMS ★★★★★ EXTRAS ★★★★★

1929-33 **OUT NOW** BD

EXTRAS Commentaries, Documentary, Interviews, Video essay, Essays

Mercilessly lampooning everything from love to dictatorship, the Marx Brothers' first movies obey the motto of film's funniest family: "High pressure, first, last and always." Starting with their stagily hilarious early-sound-cinema hit *The Cocoanuts*, this covetable limited edition of the fab four's Paramount offerings (*The 4 Marx Brothers At Paramount: 1929-1933*) shows their frantic comedy developing from fast-paced Broadway shtick to classic satire full of filmic flourishes.

Zany '30s high-society satire *Animal Crackers* gets two minutes of risqué gags restored, until it pops with sly pre-Hays Code innuendo. The bulging extras, with commentaries from experts such as Harpo's son Bill Marx, show how stowaway comedy *Monkey Business* got its skittish, even surreal feel.

Comic innovation surfaces in the lesser-known college comedy *Horse Feathers*, in which Groucho's intolerance

skewers vamp Thelma Todd, feeling like the granddaddy of short-fuse comedies such as *Curb Your Enthusiasm*.

Hard to believe their now-iconic, anarchic take on war and diplomacy, 1933's *Duck Soup*, opened to mediocre box office, as this package's classy feature-length doco reveals. All five rib-ticklers have been buffed up splendidly in 4K restorations on Blu-ray. **Kate Stables**



ONE-EYED JACKS *PG*

FILM ★★★★★ EXTRAS ★★★★★

1961 **OUT NOW** BD

EXTRAS Commentary, Featurettes

Marlon Brando's only film as director came with a formidable pedigree – both Sam Peckinpah and Stanley Kubrick helped develop it. Brando does a fine job, creating a revenge western as raw and wild as his own tortured performance as bank robber 'Kid' Rio, locked in an Oedipal duel with Dad Longworth (Karl Malden), the outlaw-turned-lawman who left him for dead. The brutal, brooding atmosphere is backed by distinctive coastal settings and lurid colours that pop in a Scorsese-supervised restoration. **Simon Kinnear**



THE AMITYVILLE HORROR *15*

FILMS ★★★★★ EXTRAS ★★★★★

1979 **OUT NOW** BD

EXTRAS Commentary, Interviews, Documentary, Intro

In 1979, Stuart Rosenberg (*Cool Hand Luke*) directed this adaptation of Jay Anson's book *The Amityville Horror*, charting the alleged real-life haunting of the Lutz family in Long Island, with James Brolin and Margot Kidder playing the parental roles. The film was a financial success but died critically, and with good reason. It's overlong, ropey and – most damning of all – boring, playing like a cheap *Exorcist* wannabe with neither depth nor substance. Extras focus on the film (cast retrospectives) and its inspirations (chat-track by paranormal researcher; feature-length doc). **Tim Coleman**



LOLA *15*

FILM ★★★★★ EXTRAS ★★★★★

1981 **OUT NOW** BD **EXTRAS** Interviews

Glossy, candy-coloured and richly cynical in its view of post-war German society, Fassbinder's reworking of *The Blue Angel* stars Barbara Sukowa as Lola, glamorous blonde nightclub singer and call-girl, mistress to cheerfully corrupt building contractor Schukert (Mario Adorf). When the city appoints a new, reputedly straight-arrow building inspector (Armin Mueller-Stahl), Schukert sees a use for Lola's charms – and the poor naïve guy all too readily succumbs. Fassbinder's take on the German 'economic miracle' dazzlingly blends satire and melodrama. **Philip Kemp**



JEREMIAH JOHNSON 12

FILM ★★★★★ EXTRAS ★★★★★

1972 **OUT NOW** Dual Format **EXTRAS** Commentary, Featurette, Postcards

Stunningly shot in the wild mountains of Utah, the second of Sydney Pollack's seven movies with Robert Redford tells the tale of a real-life 1850s mountain man whose mysterious fate made him something of a legend. Redford morphs convincingly from tenderfoot to rugged survivor, taking on all odds, with Will Geer as the grizzled old-timer who teaches him the lore of the wilderness. Warner Bros pushed for a back-lot shoot, but Pollack stubbornly held out for the real thing. **Philip Kemp**



THE MURDERER LIVES AT 21 PG

FILM ★★★★★ EXTRAS ★★★★★

1942 **OUT NOW** Dual Format **EXTRAS** Interview, Featurette

The directorial debut from until-then-screenwriter Henri-Georges Clouzot (*The Wages Of Fear*, *Les Diaboliques*) is a noir-tinged murder mystery with straight-faced touches of farce. Discovering that the serial killer terrorising Paris lives in a rooming-house at 21 rue Junot, Inspector Wenceslas Wens (Pierre Fresnay) moves into the pension disguised as a priest. His girlfriend Mila (Suzy Delair) moves in too, and between them they investigate their eccentric fellow guests, with the tone lacing Clouzot's penchant for black humour with hints of the paranoid mood of Nazi-occupied Paris. **Philip Kemp**



BLOW 18

FILM ★★★★★ EXTRAS ★★★★★

2001 **OUT NOW** Dual Format

EXTRAS Commentary, Deleted scenes, Outtakes, Production diary, Interviews, Documentary, Trivia, Music video

In release, Ted Demme's biopic of '70s drug-runner George Jung (Johnny Depp) resembled *Goodfellas* cut with talcum powder. Post-*Breaking Bad*, it plays like pure talc. The main USP is a reminder of Depp's pre-*Pirates* form; despite a predictable arc (and some silly wigs), Depp invests fully. Yet the casting of Ray Liotta rams home how much Demme's stolid direction lacks *Goodfellas*' amoral rush: instead, a climactic party for Jung falls to 'Just say no' cliché. Old extras. **Kevin Harley**



MADHOUSE 18

FILM ★★★★★ EXTRAS ★★★★★

1981 **OUT NOW** BD **EXTRAS** Commentary, Interviews, Alternative opening, Booklet

One of the easier-to-follow international knock-offs directed by Egyptian-Italian opportunist Ovidio Assonitis (*Tentacles*, *The Visitor*), this soft-focus 1981 slasher – one of the 'video nasty' films banned in the '80s – combines the plots of *Sisters* and *Happy Birthday To Me* to eccentric effect. Trish Everly is Julia Sullivan, the innocent school teacher for deaf children who's menaced by evil twin Mary (Allison Biggers) and her hungry hound. Despite some full-throttle SFX scenes, it's for completists rather than casual fans. Ample extras. **Matt Glasby**

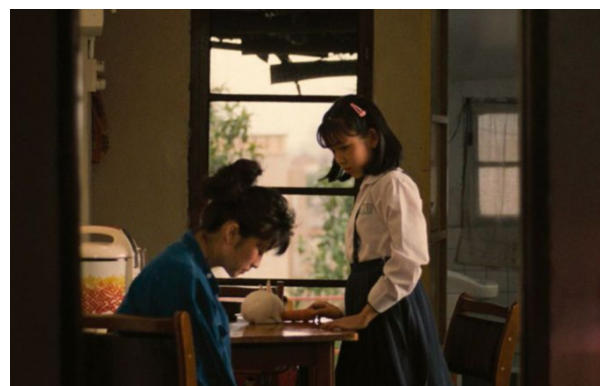


THE DIRTY DOZEN 15

FILM ★★★★★ EXTRAS ★★★★★

1967 **OUT NOW** Dual Format **EXTRAS** Commentary, Sequel, Introduction, Making Of, Documentary, Featurette

Lee Marvin leads 12 "deadheads" – an unruly gaggle of lifers and Death Row inmates – on a suicide mission into Nazi-occupied France, in a bid to win their freedom. But first, they must succeed... Robert Aldrich's hugely influential action-classic set the template for a new breed of war movie, where the 'heroes' are just as brutal as the villains (or, in Telly Savalas' Maggott's case, a serial killer with a government-issued gun). As purely thrilling as it is downright nasty. **Ali Catterall**



DAUGHTER OF THE NILE 15

FILM ★★★★★ EXTRAS ★★★★★

1987 **OUT NOW** Dual Format **EXTRAS** Featurette, Booklet

Hou Hsiao-hsien's calm, contemplative study of '80s Taiwanese youth recasts the crime movie as a soulful domestic melodrama. Night school student and KFC waitress Xiaoyang (Lin Yang), who's been left to look after her younger siblings, is the worried observer to a gang involving her brother (Jack Kao), who she imagines sharing the fate of the doomed Pharaoh in her favourite manga. Hou contrasts the steadfast, stoic Xiaoyang with the men's uncertain temptation by romance, crime and gambling, creating resonant patterns of conformity and rebellion through his plaintive, painterly images. **Simon Kinnear**



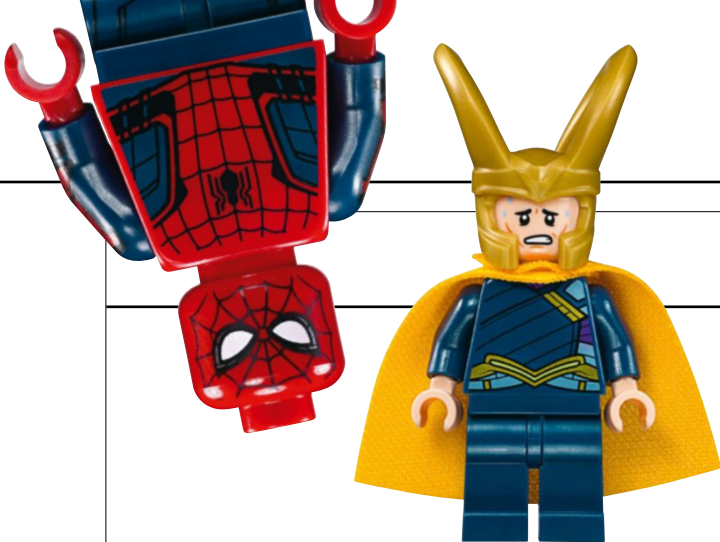
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DEADPOOL UMBRELLAS

ACCESSORIES **OUT NOW**

The one essential you need for a British summer is, of course, a brolly. But why keep wrestling with that tatty old Sports Direct number? Time to invest in something way funkier. Available at tvstoreonline.com are two Deadpool designs: one with a handle in the shape of a chimichanga sauce bottle, the other modelled on the Marvel antihero's katana. The latter's got a carrying bag and strap, so you can be the coolest-looking *and* most weatherproof mofo in town.





MCU LEGO

TOYS **OUT NOW**

Thor: Ragnarok's not out for another three months, but you can pre-imagine it with two Lego sets. The Ultimate Battle For Asgard features the movie's Big Bad in a Big Headdress, Hela, but if you're after the Thunder God's 'friend from work', then it's got to be Thor Vs. Hulk: Arena Clash, which also has Lego Jeff Goldblum. Also available are *Spider-Man: Homecoming* sets ATM Heist Battle and the fancier Beware The Vulture, with Iron Man, The Shocker and more studs than a *Magic Mike* convention.

GAME OF THRONES MERCHANDISE

APPAREL/STATIONERY/MUGS **OUT NOW**

Winter is coming... and so is the latest merchandise onslaught! Celebrate GOT's return by nailing your colours to your chest and/or drinking utensil with the new range of t-shirts and mugs. There are four house-crest-branded tees (Stark, Baratheon, Lannister, Targaryen), so you can switch allegiances for almost the entire working week. Also out: the Stark ballpoint pen. Made by luxury pen-producers Montegrappa, it retails for £185.95 (from hboostore.co.uk), but you'll be sorry you don't have one next time you send a letter by carrier raven.



SPHERO ULTIMATE LIGHTNING MCQUEEN

PLAYSET **OUT NOW**

From Sphero, makers of the app-enabled BB-8, comes another Disney fast-roller: Cars star Lightning McQueen. It's got animated eyes, an animatronic mouth and "emotive suspension", which sounds good, whatever it is. Basically, you get the app then make Lightning bolt around the living room. When he's not bothering the skirting board, you can pop *Cars* on the Blu-ray and let him "react". Nothing indiscreet about Mater (sadly). Ka, and indeed, chow. **ML**



LEGO BRICKHEADZ

TOYS **OUT NOW**

Do you find Lego's minifigures a tad vertically challenged? Well, a) don't be so sizeist, and b) check out the new BrickHeadz range. Each character stands two inches tall, comes with its own baseplate and looks a little like a Cubist Pop! Vinyl. There are DC, Disney and Marvel icons to choose from; bonus marks for the Black Widow one, who's having an exceptionally Good Hair Day.



Woodley's Taylor Swift obsession was getting out of hand...



trouble in paradise

REESE WITHERSPOON AND NICOLE KIDMAN FRONT HBO'S LATEST MUST-SEE...

BIG LITTLE LIES 15

SHOW ★★★★★ EXTRAS ★★☆☆☆

2017 OUT 31 JULY DVD, BD, Digital HD EXTRAS Featurettes

We all do bad things sometimes," intones Nicole Kidman's Monterey lawyer-turned-mother Celeste in the final episode of this gripping seven-episode limited series about perfect lives turned inside out. Right off the bat, you're made aware that there's going to be a murder in this California beach spot. Who gets killed, by whom, and for what? Well, that would be telling... but the beauty of *Big Little Lies* is looking into the 'who' in the whodunit.

This adaptation of Liane Moriarty's 2014 novel arrives with heavyweight talent, both in front of and behind the camera. Created/scripted by *Ally McBeal*'s David E. Kelley, it reunites director Jean-Marc Vallée with Reese Witherspoon. She plays Madeline, wife to stable computer guy Ed (Adam Scott) and a mother-of-two who takes centre stage in this privileged, insular community of high achievers, who all seem to live in impossibly beautiful houses overlooking the ocean.

Well, all except Shailene Woodley's new-in-town bookkeeper and single

mother Jane, whose boy Ziggy is accused of throttling fellow pupil Amabella, daughter to Laura Dern's Google exec, in the first episode.

Befriended by Madeline and Celeste, Jane's presence immediately causes a rift and the gossip starts: the show frequently cuts to minor townsfolk reflecting on the incidents leading up to the murder, speaking in police interview rooms.

At first, *Big Little Lies* looks trivial, as competitive parents bicker over children's birthday parties. But as the episodes unfold, secrets spill and



SEE THIS IF YOU LIKED...

WILD 2014

Vallée and Witherspoon take a walk on the wild side in this Cheryl Strayed adaptation.

THE DESCENDANTS 2011

Woodley's best role until now, as the troubled daughter of Clooney's Honolulu attorney.

THE NIGHT OF 2016

Riz Ahmed spearheads this wonderful must-watch HBO murder-mystery.

violence brews – notably in Celeste's relationship with Perry (Alexander Skarsgård), her handsome husband and wonderful father to their twin boys, whose penchant for rough sex escalates into something darker. Abuse is a theme writ large, as are the sins of the father being visited upon their children.

For Kidman, it's another great role in a banner year: but Witherspoon hasn't been this good since her Oscar-winning turn in 2005's *Walk The Line*. Madeline is a brilliant creation – an intensely coiled, wicked-tongued beast of a character whose façade gradually cracks, partly due to the presence of Nathan (James Tupper), the father to her older child Abby, and his new younger partner Bonnie (Zoë Kravitz).

With Woodley also on career-best form, it's compelling TV all round. Splicing in potent flashbacks that become increasingly haunting, Vallée keeps the mystery engine ticking over superbly. By the final episode, as everyone gathers for a fundraiser trivia night, you'll be gagging to know who did what to whom. **James Mottram**

true faith

NEIL GAIMAN'S DEITIES EXCITE BELIEF...

AMERICAN GODS 18

SHOW ★★★★★ EXTRAS ★★★★★★

2017 OUT 31 JULY DVD, BD, Digital HD EXTRAS Interviews, Panel footage, Featurettes

What if gods were real, because people believed in them? And in the face of dwindling followers, what lengths might they go to survive? That's the premise of *American Gods*, a dazzling drama/anthropology lesson that might be the answer to sci-fi fans' prayers. Given our irrational times, it's fitting that the two best shows currently on the box – *The Handmaid's Tale* and *American Gods* – are concerned with the power of belief, whether weaponised and absolute, or tangled and fragile.

Ingeniously adapted from Neil Gaiman's novel under showrunners Bryan Fuller and Michael Green's watch, *Gods* sees Ricky Whittle's ex-con hired by Ian McShane's grizzled conman Mr. Wednesday in a cosmic war between gods old and new (plus djinns, leprechauns and zombies).

Cleverly using America's religious melting pot as backdrop and battleground, it's a story of immigration, assimilation and enterprise. Some gods are just better at

adapting; whether that means driving taxis, working as escorts, or robbing banks – anything, in fact, to exist.

Super-smart, riotously funny, even rather profound, it's also teeming with the kind of brilliantly inventive visuals that call to mind Kubrick's dictum, "If it can be written, or thought, it can be filmed." Hammers bleed, the Moon's plucked out of the sky like a silver sixpence – and the Queen of Sheba definitely swallows. May Season 2 prove as heavenly, God willing. **Ali Catterall**



Shadow Moon's not sure he wants to be Mr. Wednesday's Man Friday...

123



DUNKIRK 15

SHOW ★★★★★ EXTRAS ★★★★★

2004 OUT NOW DVD EXTRAS None

This revisionist docudrama drew fire on transmission for suggesting the evacuation of Allied troops from French soil in May 1940 was not quite the glorious act of selfless defiance it was subsequently depicted as. Should Christopher Nolan's latest leave you wanting more, though, you'll take what you need from a grittily unsentimental three-parter that comes with clenched narration from Timothy Dalton, a pre-stardom Benedict Cumberbatch showing courage under duress and Simon Russell Beale giving his best British bulldog as Churchill. **Neil Smith**



DC'S LEGENDS OF TOMORROW: SEASON 2 TBC

SHOW ★★★★★ EXTRAS ★★★★★

2016-17 OUT 14 AUGUST DVD, BD

EXTRAS Featurette, Comic-Con panel, Gag reel, Deleted scenes

The ragtag group of Flarrow-verse leftovers and DC almost-rans is on much more solid footing for this second season. Following the previous year's cliffhanger and the disappearance of leader Rip Hunter, the Legends work to stop a trio of *Flash* and *Arrow* villains from discovering the Spear of Destiny and shaping all of reality. Less encumbered by the angst of its sister shows, this is a ripping yarn with lots of fun nods to its own influences. **Matt Looker**



THE TRIP TO SPAIN 15

SHOW ★★★★★ EXTRAS ★★★★★

2017 OUT NOW DVD EXTRAS None

The joke is wearing a little thin in Steve Coogan and Rob Brydon's latest foodie road trip, in which the gastronomic, historical and scenic delights of Spain take second place to the pair's mock bickering, middle-age crises and celebrity impressions. Their improvised banter throws up some amusing juxtapositions: *Star Trek* starring Pierce Brosnan, for example, or Woody Allen doing the 'Spanish Inquisition' skit from Monty Python. More often than not though, you wish they'd just shut up and eat. **Neil Smith**

best of e3

THE HIGHLIGHTS FROM LA'S ANNUAL GAMING SHOWCASE...



XBOX ONE X

OUT 7 NOVEMBER

Microsoft's latest hardware refresh is a power-grab in the most literal sense. The surprisingly compact Xbox One X is a bit of a beast under its diminutive hood, usurping Sony's PlayStation 4 Pro for technical grunt and 4K visuals. It's aimed at the kind of fans who were flown into the front rows of its press conference, sporting t-shirts bearing the legend 'I Witnessed the Most Powerful Console Ever'. Cringeworthy garb aside, the demos that followed offered a persuasive flex of the X's technological muscle, with the nigh-photorealistic *Forza Motorsport 7* and mutant-stabbing apocalyptic adventure *Metro Exodus* impressively leading the charge.

A WAY OUT

OUT EARLY 2018 | PC, PS4, Xbox One

Rubbing shoulders with the big guns at EA's show was this comparatively modest jailbreak drama from Josef Fares, the man behind the outstanding *Brothers:*

A Tale Of Two Sons. It abandons *Brothers'* heartfelt whimsy for something altogether grittier as a pair of cons, Leo and Vincent, pool their skills to escape prison. It can only be played in split-screen co-op, and you'll need to communicate with your fellow escapee to survive. Leo can start a fight to distract guards while Vincent sneaks by; later, one player will need to pacify frightened hostages at a petrol station as the other cracks the safe. It's tense, clever and thrillingly original.

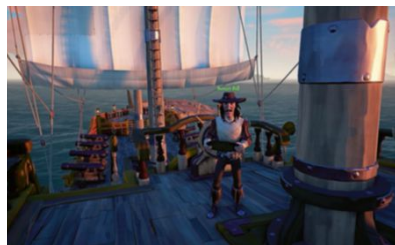


SUPER MARIO ODYSSEY

OUT 27 OCTOBER | Nintendo Switch

Though the briefest of teasers for a new *Metroid Prime* game was Nintendo's biggest surprise, its best game was its mascot's latest. *Odyssey* is a vibrant, world-hopping adventure, set in a series of diverse, sprawling worlds of a scale we've not seen in a *Mario* game since 2002's *Super Mario Sunshine*. Not content with simply going bigger, Nintendo has thrown in a killer hook: the plumber can sling his cap at everything from enemies to inanimate objects to possess them. Catch a Bullet Bill mid-flight and you can guide it to destroy obstacles. Elsewhere, you'll steer a boss' fist into its own face, and even inhabit a roaring T-rex.





SEA OF THIEVES

OUT EARLY 2018 | PC, Xbox One

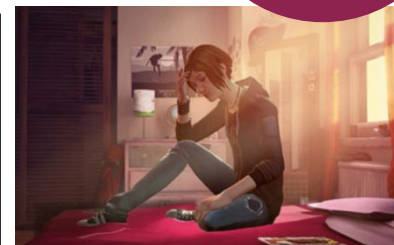
Rare's multiplayer piratical adventure is a game of high-seas tomfoolery, as you and a host of friends (or strangers) plot a course for loot-filled waters. It helps to have an organised captain: even something as simple as lowering the sails can descend into chaos, while you'll have to board up holes when you're hit by a fusillade, or else abandon ship and swim to shore. When you're on the attack, meanwhile, you can load yourself into a cannon and launch yourself onto a rival vessel. If you fancy something a little less Jack Sparrow, Ubisoft's more serious swashbuckler *Skull & Bones* promises to indulge your inner Barbarossa.



MARVEL'S SPIDER-MAN

OUT EARLY 2018 | PS4

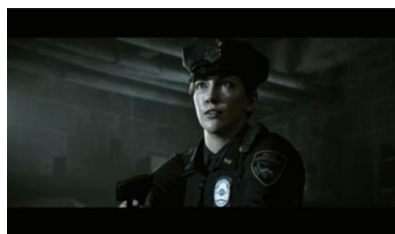
Setting aside cameo roles, superheroes have had surprisingly short shrift from games. The *Arkham* series is the obvious exception, and so it's no great shock to see *Ratchet And Clank* creator Insomniac lean on Rocksteady's peerless Batman titles for inspiration. The fluid attack-stringing approach – complete with judicious use of slo-mo for acrobatic showboating – is familiar, but here it's faster. It also offers such slapstick pleasures as binding heavies with your webbing, before whipping a girder around to knock them on their backs. With Spidey rattling off one-liners as he leads these goons on a merry dance, it nails the tone, too.



LIFE IS STRANGE: BEFORE THE STORM

OUT 31 AUGUST | PC, PS4, Xbox One

A surprise episodic prequel to the unlikely hit of 2015, *Before the Storm* explores the past of tearaway Chloe Price during her time away from original protagonist Max. New developer Deck Nine Games promises to focus on Chloe's tempestuous relationship with Rachel Amber, whose fate will be familiar to anyone who finished the first game. It's another deeply human slice of teen drama, which, despite a change at the helm and in the recording booth (Chloe's original voice actor Ashly Burch was unavailable thanks to the SAG-AFTRA strike) seems to have recaptured the original's dreamy, wistful feel.



HIDDEN AGENDA

OUT LATE 2017 | PC, PS4, Xbox One

Strangely absent from Sony's presser – perhaps its high concept was deemed the wrong fit for a whooping conference crowd – this ingenious thriller from the studio behind interactive horror *Until Dawn* pits a homicide detective and a DA against a serial killer called The Trapper. So far, so schlocky, but there's a twist: the decisions made by both leads depend on the choices of a group of players watching the action with smartphones in hand. And twist number two: one of the group will occasionally be given a secret objective, and must surreptitiously cajole the others into making the 'right' choice.



WOLFENSTEIN II: THE NEW COLOSSUS

OUT 27 OCTOBER | PC

Taking place five months after the events of MachineGames' unexpectedly brilliant revival *The New Order*, this follow-up opens with an electrifying set-piece, as a now wheelchair-using B.J. Blazkowicz rolls around a U-boat, blasting Nazis with an SMG in his free hand. It's violence as jet-black comedy, and shows the developer in confident, freewheeling mood as it offers up another slice of high-quality pulp, this time with free rein to stray further from the series template. Assuming it can once again find the right balance between silly and dark – and its predecessor barely put a foot wrong in that regard – this could be the year's finest shooter. *Chris Schilling*

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GLOW: SEASON 1 18

SHOW ★★★★★

AVAILABLE NOW | NETFLIX

How about this for a pitch? Women. Wrestling. In spangly leotards. “They’ll be wrestling with their own female stereotypes... metaphorically!” enthuses shady B-movie producer Sam Sylvia (Marc Maron) during an early episode of *GLOW* (aka Glamorous Ladies Of Wrestling), pitching his hair-brained TV project to cynical execs. “The guys’ll watch it ‘cause girls wrestling is fucking

hot... It’s porn you can watch with your kids!” As pitches go, Sam’s ain’t subtle, but the same can’t be said of this more-ish Netflix original series.

Creators Liz Flahive and Carly Mensch (both of *Orange Is The New Black*) have a keen eye for energetic, diverse ensembles, and they strike gold with *GLOW*’s gung-ho cast, led by Alison Brie as actress Ruth, who climbs into the ring with 13 other women

RIGHT-ON RASSLIN’

Alison Brie as actress Ruth Wilder, who becomes one of the Glamorous Ladies Of Wrestling.

– including her ex-bestie (Betty Gilpin, brilliant) – for a 1985-set throwdown. Riffing on ’80s WWF, soap operas and glam-rock, *GLOW* hits the nostalgia button hard with big hair, big tunes (Roxette, Pat Benatar, Tears For Fears) and big themes (racism, adultery) as Ruth and co train for the pilot.

The main problem: much of the fighting is saved for the finale, which finally delivers the neon-powered kicks promised by the marketing. The good news: the verbal sparring is just as hard-hitting, and by the time the fist-pumping final episode rolls around, *GLOW* has evolved into an acid-tongued dramedy that packs a punch when it counts. **Josh Winning**



ARRIVAL 12

★★★★★

11 AUGUST |

AMAZON

After *Nocturnal Animals*, Amy Adams’ other cerebral beauty of 2016 casts her as a grieving linguist communing with tentacular aliens. Denis Villeneuve directs with such emotional clarity, you forget how much your brain’s aching.



RICKI AND THE FLASH 12

★★★★★

28 JULY | NETFLIX

Shut up, Trump. As an ageing rocker in Jonathan Demme’s family dramedy, Meryl Streep proves she can play anything, guitar included. Come for the ‘reconnecting with daughter’ plot, stay for Streep owning the in-concert footage.



IT FOLLOWS 15

★★★★★

29 JULY | NETFLIX

Between its artful framing, creeping dread and messed-up images, David Robert Mitchell’s horror brings Lynch-grade abstract intensity (and a nerve-frazzling score) to an old slasher bugbear: post-coital teens stalked to death.

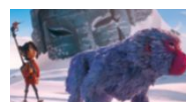


ROGUE ONE: A STAR WARS STORY 12

★★★★★

11 AUGUST | SKY

Forget *Episode III*’s “Nooooo!” and say “yes” to Gareth Edwards’ *Episode IV* prequel. The Rebel spies are sketchily drawn, but the final battle roars, Ben Mendelsohn oozes charisma, and Darth Vader’s nifty moves are Sith hot.



KUBO AND THE TWO STRINGS PG

★★★★★

19 AUGUST | SKY

Coraline stop-mo studio Laika keeps up the child-mare work with this kid-spooking fable of a feudal Japanese lad’s quest. Spectacular images and gorgeous scoring are sumptuous; the J-horror aunts, meanwhile, add lank-haired scares.



DOCTOR STRANGE 12

★★★★★

28 JULY | SKY

Marvel’s ‘multiverse’ entry doesn’t radically alter the state of origin stories, but it messes with the views nicely. Benedict Cumberbatch brings droll humbled arrogance to the neurosurgeon with a cloak habit.



MOANA PG

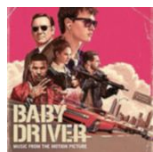
★★★★★

29 JULY | SKY

Eye-popping ocean views, clipped quest plotting and a girl-power thrust stack up nimbly in Disney’s Polynesian adventure. The melodies glow, too: Dwayne Johnson croons up a storm, though Jemaine Clement’s crab rules the waves. **KH**

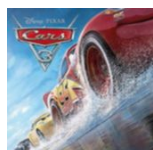
fresh spins

TF scores the latest soundtracks...



BABY DRIVER ★★★★★

Edgar Wright's joyride is precision-synced to the playlist soundtrack, which oozes funk-soul style, rap swagger, classic-rock clout, surf-pop swoon-song and more besides. Between Jon Spencer Blues Explosion's hard-gunned opener and an engine-punching new cut from Danger Mouse/Run The Jewels/Big Boi, its tank of alterna-cool fuel runs over: plus, Queen provides a killer *Shaun Of The Dead* connection with 'Brighton Rock'.



CARS 3 ★★★★☆

Swerve around the patchy drive-time rock soundtrack (warning: contains James Bay) and pull up alongside Pixar vet Randy Newman's score instead. Newman doesn't overhaul the studio's chassis, but his playful, wistful score brims with classic Pixar optimism and frolicking frontier spirit: 'A Career On A Wall' and 'If This Track Could Talk' are sweet-hearted charmers.

Horns without mouthpieces?!
The crowd was dumbstruck...



planet of the apes

JERRY GOLDSMITH / VARÈSE SARABANDE

CLASSIC
SOUNDTRACK

Sometimes, there's method in 'method' immersion. Much as we chuckle at tales of Viggo Mortensen sleeping rough for *The Lord Of The Rings*, or Robert De Niro gaining weight like pudding was going out of fashion for *Raging Bull*, the results brook no argument. Same goes for Jerry Goldsmith, who method-scored *Planet Of The Apes* (1968) by wearing an ape mask while conducting. The jovial composer was goofing about, but his primeval score sounds like what might happen if apes occupied a studio and played merry havoc with the instruments. And the kitchenware.

Goldsmith channelled his time on westerns, war movies and weirder material (*The Twilight Zone*) into *Apes*, but he pushed these influences to avant-garde extremes unprecedented in Hollywood; Stravinsky's riot-stoking ballet *The Rite Of Spring* is an oft-cited comparison. "I did not want to do the obvious," Goldsmith explained.

Though it opens with a Goldsmith-ian low-end piano, 'Main Title' soon escapes known moorings. As horns whoosh, pianos hustle, flutes flutter and percussion bustles, Goldsmith's aim to unsettle certainty's foundations rings out.

He started as he meant to continue, because you never know where the score will go next. 'Crash Landing' issues sensory assaults of snare drums and attack-mode trumpets, before 'The Searchers' boosts suspense and mystique through reverberant strings, haunted horns and bold percussive gambits. Goldsmith stopped short of including the kitchen sink, but he didn't stint on kitchenware: he used his own stainless-steel bowls to intense, nerve-rattling effect.

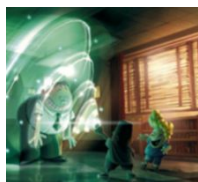
More diverse sounds drive 'The Hunt', a thrilling action cue featuring ram's horns and the cuica, a Brazilian

drum head used to create ape-like grunts. Elsewhere, few traditional instruments emerge untweaked: horns were blown without mouthpieces, while strings were played with the wrong side of the bow and filtered through the Echoplex delay device.

It all sounds like chaos on paper, but Goldsmith recognised when to roar and when to retreat. After the bracingly frenzied 'No Escape', 'The Trial' broods and 'The Forbidden Zone' hums with restrained mystery. That sense of tonal control extends to 'The Revelation, Pt. 2', in which the horns, flutes and alien echoes gradually withdraw, giving the film's twist some room to resonate.

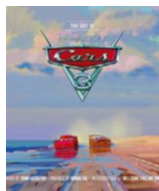
The score's influence itself has resonated in the work of composers including James Horner (compare *Avatar*) and Michael Giacchino, though its mix of immersive world-building and outer-limits ambition has rarely been matched. Must have been a good mask. **Kevin Harley**

BOOKS



THE ART OF CAPTAIN UNDERPANTS: THE FIRST EPIC MOVIE

RAMIN ZAHED
TITAN BOOKS



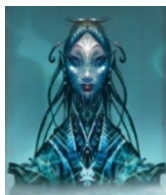
THE ART OF CARS 3

VARIOUS
CHRONICLE BOOKS



THE ART AND MAKING OF ALIEN COVENANT

SIMON WARD
TITAN BOOKS



THE ART OF THE FILM: VALERIAN AND THE CITY OF A THOUSAND PLANETS

MARK SALISBURY
TITAN BOOKS



eye concepts

IT'S TF'S SUMMER '17 ART-OF BOOK AWARDS!

MESSIEST BATHROOM

Although *Captain Underpants* opens with a view of a school toilet (carnage), *Alien: Covenant's* shower scene wins this one. The detail of the turmoil left behind by a xenomorph is impressively gross. Ew, that's an eyeball. These guys certainly didn't slip on the soap.

MOST MOVING STRIP-BASED BACK-STORY

Underpants auteur Dav Pilkey details the struggles of growing up with ADHD and dyslexia in strip form. School was cruel; teachers were crueler. But Pilkey finds himself through comics and "a mom who never stopped believing in him", and thus a book with "pants" in the title made us tear up.

BEST CHILD'S-EYE VIEWS

Underpants packs in a range of puerile puns, toilet gags (including actual toilets), idyllic tree-houses, ruthlessly parodied hairstyles, and rebuffs to the idea that school was the best time of your life. "NO," blares an instructive notice on a school wall, "asking questions, running around, having fun, smiling." Class dis... turbed.

MOST DETAILED CREATIVE PROCESS

Cars 3 lays out a road map of Pixar's 'journey'. Early sketches are singled out for their "clear silhouette and environment", but the pursuit of an immersive world leads to visual marvels where roads reach into the horizon with astounding depth. Plus, cool cars.

CRAZIEST CRITTERS

Valerian takes the sci-fi creature-feature biscuit. From the fishy Martapurai to the space-hippie Pearls, this guide to Luc Besson's other-worldly wonders bulges with alien life. Still, points are docked for the Bromosaur of Blaafarn – did any thought go into the 'Blaa' place-name there?

DAFTEST SPACE CONCEPT

Consider the upside-down apple orchard in *Valerian*. As Besson reasons, "If the tree is upside down, then when the fruit is ready, it falls and it's much easier to collect." But apples fall anyway, and they're not difficult to collect, so what's he on about here?

MOST EXTREME WORLD-BUILDING

Ridley Scott and his crew built and scouted out hellishly vivid worlds to make *Covenant* more immersive for cast-members. Air-bellows under the ships shook the hell out of the actors, some of whom (the sensible ones) had taken motion-sickness medicine. As for the New Zealand locations, "The weather was fantastically bad," remarks VFX supervisor Charley Henley, "which is really Ridley's style."

MOST BACK-HANDED COMPLIMENT

Talking about the accelerated life cycle of the xenomorph, creature design supervisor Conor O'Sullivan notes, "It is a beautiful thing, but I do think it's going to be very controversial to the *Alien* and [H.R.] Giger aficionados – it already is with the people who worked on the film."

MOST SPOILERY IMAGE

Why is Michael Fassbender wearing his Dr. Evil face as he walks away from the pods after putting Katherine Waterston to bed? Hmm... **Kevin Harley**



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INVESTIGATION

IS IT BOLLOCKS?

Film Buff investigates the facts behind outlandish movie plots.

THIS MONTH

FAST & FURIOUS 8'S HIGH-SPEED REVERSE



Q

In *Fast & Furious 8*'s opener, Vin Diesel's Dominic Toretto wins a Cuban street race in reverse, his car on fire as it rattles along like a bat out of hell. Nonsense?

A

BEN COLLINS, RACING DRIVER AND STUNTMAN,
FORMERLY THE STIG ON TOP GEAR

I worked on *Fast 6* and had a great time doing some gravity-defying stunts. One scene we were drifting two cars sideways around Piccadilly Circus – 70mph in a contained space. The keyboard warriors said, “It’s CGI,” but it wasn’t; it was absolutely real and we were bricking it all the way. They film some really gnarly stunts; colossal crashes.

In that scene, he’s using nitrous oxide and the engine catches fire so he ends up going backwards. Reverse gears, in terms of speed, tend to be somewhere between first and second. It’s like a long first gear; 45mph is a pretty fast first gear. But if you stuck a long gear in it, you can do whatever speed you want. If you stuck a gear ratio that is equivalent to third, sure, it could work. They probably did adapt the car, and flew it backwards as fast as it would go. So it’s possible.

I did *Kingsman: The Secret Service* and did a whole chase sequence in reverse. It’s very difficult because you have rear-wheel steer and the car becomes very unstable. I was going high-speed with a police car three inches off the bumper. You have a sore neck by the end!

VERDICT NOT BOLLOCKS

How To Drive by Ben Collins is now available to download on Audible.

ALTERNATIVE BOX OFFICE

THE BIGGEST BLOCKBUSTER MOVIES...
BASED ON MARVEL COMICS (NON-MCU)



1. SPIDER-MAN 3 2007	\$890.9M
2. SPIDER-MAN 2002	\$821.7M
3. SPIDER-MAN 2 2004	\$783.8M
4. DEADPOOL 2016	\$783.1M
5. THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN 2012	\$757.9M
6. X-MEN: DAYS OF FUTURE PAST 2014	\$747.9M
7. THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN 2 2014	\$709M
8. BIG HERO 6 2014	\$657.8M
9. LOGAN 2017	\$618M
10. X-MEN: APOCALYPSE 2016	\$543.9M

ON LOCATION

REEL SPOTS BEHIND THE CAMERA



WHAT? In *S1, E3* of *House Of Cards*, Kevin Spacey’s South Carolina Democrat heads back to his state to deal with a scandal after a teen dies texting at the wheel while gazing at a famous peach-shaped water tower.

WHERE? Peachoid Road, Gaffney, South Carolina.

GO? The peach just got a facelift thanks to its popularity with *HOC* tourists but that big ol’ 1 million gallon-er fruit still looks like a giant butt and is fondly known locally as ‘the moon over Gaffney’. *Thanks to Hal Oscar.*

Snapped yourself at a film location? Send us the details at totalfilm@futurenet.com

TOP 10

MOVIE ENTRANCES

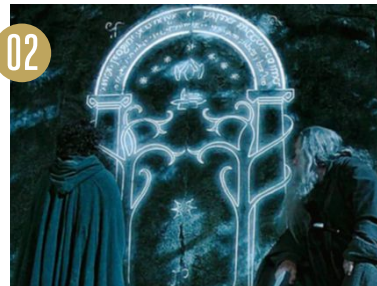
Doorways to heaven (and hell)...



01

JURASSIC PARK

Big dinos, big park, *biittiiiig* gates. “What have they got in there?” asks Malcolm (Jeff Goldblum) on the approach. “King Kong?” Almost. With torches ablaze and the promise of adventure, this gate’s so perfect they barely changed it for *Jurassic World*.



02

THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE RING

The entrance to the Mines of Moria just looks like a bare rock face, until the Moon comes out, revealing a riddle. “What’s the Elvish for ‘friend’?” asks Frodo (Elijah Wood). “Mellon,” intones Gandalf (Ian McKellen), opening the rock-door...

BATMAN BEGINS

The Dark Knight’s so cool that his man-cave has two entrances, and they’re both batshit awesome – the one from inside his manor is opened by a tinkle on the ivories, while the second is niftily secreted behind a thundering waterfall.



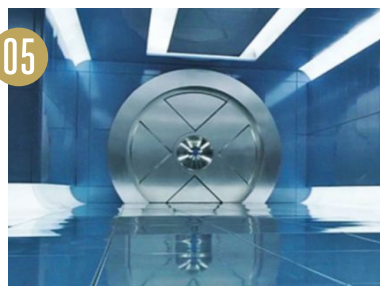
03

THE WIZARD OF OZ

It looks like a regular front door, but when Dorothy opens it after a tornado spin-cycle, she discovers she’s travelled from dreary black-and-white Kansas to the dazzling Technicolor of Oz. A single, gorgeous tracking shot takes us into the magical new world.



04



05

X-MEN

It’s fitting that the retina-scanning entryway to Professor X’s futuristic chapel is a giant cross. The cathedral-like Cerebro, which enables him to connect with other mutants across the globe, is a thing of near-religious importance for the super-psyhic.



06

THE LION, THE WITCH AND THE WARDROBE

Wee Lucy (Georgie Henley) discovers looks can be deceiving when she happens upon a wardrobe that plunges her head-first into Narnia. Inspired a generation of kids to poke about in granny’s closet.

STAR WARS: EP. IV – A NEW HOPE

A corridor hazy with gunfire smoke. The hiss of a door. Turns out this is the most important door in the *Wars*-verse, because it deposits Darth Vader on the Rebel ship carrying Princess Leia (Carrie Fisher). The rest is history.



07

GHOSTBUSTERS

We’ve discovered some pretty horrific things at the back of the *TF* fridge, but never a gateway to hell. Poor Dana (Sigourney Weaver) finds exactly that when she cracks her coolbox and discovers it’s become a portal to a nightmare dimension.



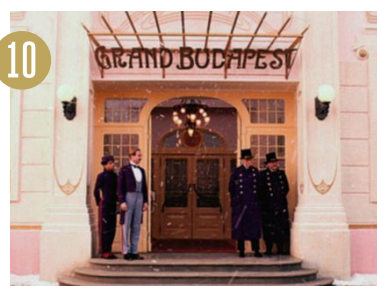
08



09

BEING JOHN MALKOVICH

Craig (John Cusack) heads to the 7½th floor to meet Floris (Mary Kay Place) but, this being a half-floor, everything’s half the size, including doorways. Then, of course, there’s the portal to the New Jersey turnpike. Masterful.



10

THE GRAND BUDAPEST HOTEL

A vision in powder pink, the Grand Budapest Hotel resembles an exquisite cake tin – and the door looks like something you’d see on a chocolate box. Wes Anderson part-based it on the Czech Republic’s Grandhotel Pupp. *JW*

FLIXOLOGY VODKA GIMLET



ABOUT SCHMIDT

Unimpressed by his own retirement party, schlubby Schmidt (Jack Nicholson) heads to the bar for a lone Gimlet to drown his sorrows...



INGREDIENTS 2oz ice-cold vodka, 2 tablespoons of Rose's lime juice, lime wheel for garnish.

MIX Shake ingredients together, strain into a chilled martini glass and slide the lime wheel on the rim. Team with bewildered/miserable expression.

HINDSIGHT CORNER!

Stars eat their words...



SARAH JESSICA PARKER SEX AND THE CITY 2, 2010

DECEMBER 2015: "I think what was surprising was the level of vitriol that... was levelled at it."

MAY 2017: "I understand it. I actually get it. I can see where we fell short on that movie, and I'm perfectly happy to say that publicly."

PLAIN TALKING

Learn the movie lingo

THIS MONTH: PAY-OR-PLAY

A guaranteed payment for an actor or director on a film contract that's made even if they don't do the work, due to being let go from the production, either because the entire project is cancelled or they are simply replaced (though not if they pull out themselves). In other words, they could be paid millions for doing nothing. Kerching!



CAREER INJECTION

KATHERINE HEIGL

Romantic comedies, camp villains and kitty litter haven't helped. Could indie character work be the saving of Katherine Heigl?

In 2016, Katherine Heigl found herself dispensing advice. Anyone glancing at her choppy history might wonder at the wisdom of taking tips from Heigl, except she wasn't offering careers guidance. She was selling kitty litter in ads.

No one seems to be caring for Heigl's career right now. This year, an attempt to re-package her as a camp villain in *Unforgettable* failed to bank memorable box-office and drew poor-to-middling reviews. And in February, her second attempt to re-establish herself on telly (NBC cancelled 2014's CIA drama *State Of Affairs*) stumbled when CBS pulled legal drama *Doubt* after just two episodes.

For survivors of Heigl's romcom lows, this might answer long-held questions about her talents. Yet her breakthrough in 2007's *Knocked Up* served breezy notice of light comic appeal and an ability to make detached (and faintly under-written) characters likeable. So what went wrong?

Off-screen, Heigl ruffled feathers. Besides rumours of diva-like behaviour, she criticised *Knocked Up* ("A little sexist") and withdrew herself from Emmy consideration for TV's *Grey's Anatomy* on the daft grounds that she

hadn't been given sufficient material to deserve awards. True, it seems cruel that a little gracelessness could kill a career: many male actors have recovered from worse. But her outspoken front isn't balanced by good films. *One For The Money*, *The Ugly Truth* and *The Big Wedding* were hardly models of progressive thinking.

Part of the problem is bad timing. She dished solid schmaltz in *27 Dresses*, but late-2000s audiences were souring on shrink-wrapped romcoms just as Heigl joined the production line, the actress showing little interest in stretching herself beyond wedding-party pratfalls and drinks-sloshing japes, awful quasi-actioner *Killers* aside.

Attempts at a villainous rebrand began with *Home Sweet Hell*, two years before she struck unlucky with *Unforgettable*. Flexing some character chops could be more promising. When Heigl played a fallen singer in 2015's rootsy indie yarn *Love Me Like You Do*, she banked something shocking: good reviews. *Variety* praised her "intelligence and responsiveness". Character acting is the way forward. Give audiences one attention-grabbing comeback turn and we'll soon forget the tabloid (and kitty) crap. **KH**

FIVE POINT FIX

1 Stop apologising. Heigl has back-tracked on her professional gripes, but viewers need proof of ability, not contrition.

2 Forget mass-reach studio pics and TV: find auteur-led indie scripts and climb the ladder again.

3 Do a Sandra Bullock: find a *Crash*-style ensemble movie to test her worth among top-drawer talent.

4 Target stronger, villain-based scripts. Weak films, but she played vicious persuasively in *Home Sweet Hell* and *Unforgettable*.

5 Heigl's talent for comedy shouldn't be neglected, but it needs steering away from the 'rom'-prefixed variant.

Simon Pegg rounds up the gang for one last pub crawl.



IS IT JUST ME...

OR IS THE WORLD'S END THE BEST OF THE CORNETTO TRILOGY?

asks Tim Coleman

In 2004, Simon Pegg, Nick Frost and director Edgar Wright – fresh from their cult Channel 4 sitcom *Spaced* – gave the world *Shaun Of The Dead*, “a romantic comedy with zombies”, as the poster famously put it.

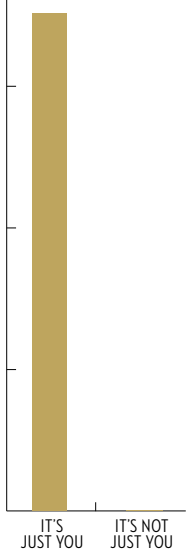
In 2007, they reloaded with *Hot Fuzz*, a ballistic action movie set in – er – Gloucestershire. And then, in 2013, they delivered *The World's End*, a sci-fi flick about estranged friends on an apocalyptic pub crawl who battle *Body Snatcher*-esque robots that have taken over their home town. Known collectively as the Three Flavours Cornetto Trilogy (like Krzysztof Kielowski's *Three Colours* cycle, geddit?) these films are love letters to genre cinema, full of belly laughs and meta-nods.

As reflected in its Rotten Tomatoes and IMDb scores, trilogy-ender *The World's End* is largely considered the weakest of the lot. I would argue, however, that it's actually the best, and here's why.

Firstly, the rapid-fire script crackles as the reunited pals descend into boozy banter. Infinitely quotable dialogue is standard in the Cornetto films, but the key here is the way these lines hook you into characters: so when Nick Frost's Andy finally knocks back a line of shots and announces “Let's Boo-Boo” – an in-joke set up several scenes prior – we're invited in as one of the guys.

Secondly, the chemistry between the ensemble is effortlessly charming. Real-life besties Pegg and Frost are joined by Paddy Considine, Martin

OFFICE-OMETER
THE TF STAFF VERDICT IS IN!



Freeman and Eddie Marsan, and the evident affection between them all makes it easy to believe they are genuine friends. It also ensures that third-act revelations about alcoholism and mental health hit home with surprising emotional heft.

And lastly, *The World's End* is full of wistful nostalgia: for friendships, films and the promises of youth. As such, it acts as the perfect series closer, wrapping up the themes of *Fuzz*, *Shaun* and even *Spaced*, while also looking forward to the future (albeit one filled with “smashy smashy egg men” and inky blue blood).

So pull me a pint and I'll meet you at the bar, because this might just be the best night of your life. Or is it just me?

Share your reaction at www.gamesradar.com/totalfilm or on Facebook and Twitter.

LAST MONTH ARE SEETHING CGI BADDIES SPOILING BLOCKBUSTERS?

JON BEESON

A 21st Century audience is much less likely to accept Lou Ferrigno in green paint. CGI's a tool and it can either be done well or done poorly.

KELVIN1980

Practical effects are always better. *Jaws*, *Predator*, *Alien* all look so much better when something is in front of the camera.

PURPLE BUTTERFLY

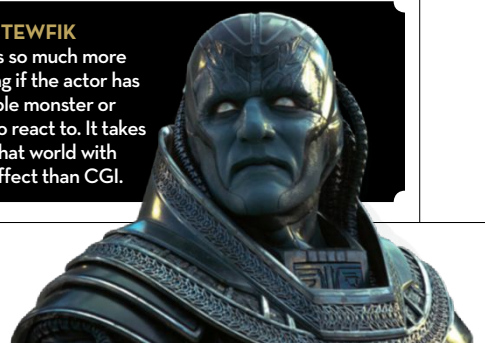
Villains based on creeping tension (*Alien*) benefit from 'less is more', but Ultron, Apocalypse or Darkseid need screen time.

BENJAMIN YATES

It all depends on how it's done. The way James Cameron pioneered CGI with *The Abyss* and *T2* was the way it should be done. Serving the story.

EWAN TEWFIK

A film is so much more involving if the actor has a tangible monster or villain to react to. It takes me to that world with more effect than CGI.



WITHNAIL

The story of two boozy out-of-work '60s actors rejuvenating in rural England, Bruce Robinson's hedonistic *Withnail And I* is turning 30. Ignoring a bastard behind the eyes, Total Film meets director and cast to talk the finest comedy known to humanity.

WORDS JAMES MOTTRAM

BOOSTING YOUR MOVIE GENIUS
TO GOD-LIKE PROPORTIONS

137

and I

TF CLASSIC

I'm 30 in a month and I've got a sole flapping off my shoe." Withnail is 30. So is 'I' – or Marwood, as he's called in the script. And Danny, Uncle Monty, Jake the poacher and even Miss Blenehassitt – all characters from Bruce Robinson's cult comedy about two 'resting' actors who escape the grime of 1969 Camden Town for a delightful weekend in the country. After three decades, its popularity remains undiminished. Like *The Big Lebowski* and *The Rocky Horror Picture Show*, *Withnail And I* screenings are gatherings for hardcore devotees, repeating lines verbatim.

Robinson, along with his 'Withnail', Richard E. Grant, recently attended one such showing in Birmingham. "Here's the audience," he recalls, "all sitting there with these fucking Tesco carrier bags on their feet, and five or six Uncle Montys in the audience, and there were three huge thug-like men dressed as the Scrubbers [schoolgirls insulted by *Withnail*, in a rare female encounter], with little girls' dresses on! And throughout the whole picture, the audience were just shouting the dialogue at the screen, and then laughing and then shouting it again."

Already this year, long-time fan Johnny Depp ("Who knows the script



True, the plot is threadbare, as this booze-fuelled duo head to the rundown Penrith cottage owned by Withnail's Uncle Monty, who soon follows, hoping to sexually conquer Marwood. Shot in 1986, the year *Crocodile Dundee* ruled the box office, this terribly British tale of debauchery and desperation was hardly a gilt-edged money-spinner. As Grant puts it, "The idea of a film with an unpronounceable title, people in it who nobody had ever heard of – no women, no car chases, and certainly

TAKING HIGH TEA

The cake-demanding protagonists (Paul McGann, Richard E. Grant) stress their multi-millionaire status to Penrith Tea Rooms' proprietor (Llewellyn Rees).

that time, with my mates in Camden Town. But we were all Withnail and we were all 'I'."

For all the "comic dramatisation", says Robinson, it was stirred in with truths. A year before writing, like Withnail and Marwood, he did take a trip to the Lake District with another flatmate, Mickey Feast, driving in a Jaguar belonging to Robinson's then-girlfriend, actress Lesley-Anne Down. That same year, he'd landed the role of Benvolio in Franco Zeffirelli's *Romeo And Juliet*, and faced the Uncle Monty-like predatory attentions of the director off-set.

Bashing out *Withnail And I* in story form on his old Olivetti typewriter, Robinson then put it in his drawer and went back to his misery. It would take another decade-and-a-half for the film to become a reality, by which point Robinson had gained an Oscar nomination for his script for *The Killing Fields*. With the story now a script, and debutant Robinson attached to direct, *Withnail* producer Paul Heller found half the £1 million budget from a property developer in Washington.

The rest came from HandMade Films (or "HandJob Films" as the team nicknamed them), the company behind Monty Python's *Life Of Brian*, *The Long Good Friday* and *Mona Lisa* co-founded by The Beatles' George Harrison and his business partner Denis O'Brien. "George, he was one of the good guys," remembers Robinson. "Without him,

'They were massively influenced by the life I was living'

BRUCE ROBINSON

literally back-to-front," says Grant) introduced a screening at Glastonbury. Grant also returned to the Edinburgh International Film Festival this year for an anniversary screening (he first appeared here with the movie in 1987). Sitting in the bar of the Caledonian hotel the next morning, he's still at a loss to explain its longevity. "Seeing it last night... the plot is almost non-existent. You spend time in the company of somebody [*Withnail*] who is so selfish, cowardly and entitled and think, 'Why do you put up with that?'"

no crocodiles... it seemed as unlikely a prospect as anything."

Robinson had been working on the story, on and off, since his days as a struggling thesp in '69, living with actor-friends, including the late Vivian MacKerrell – said to be the chief inspiration for Withnail. "I didn't scurry around in my mate Viv's wake with a notebook copying the epithets," corrects Robinson. "There isn't a line of Vivian's in the whole film. Of course, they [*the characters*] were massively influenced by the life I was living at



it would never have been made.” As for O’Brien, “I don’t think Denis for a moment understood what it was... I just don’t think he got it at all.”

That was never more apparent than on the first day of shooting. Ralph Brown, cast as Danny – the drug dealer who skulks around Withnail and Marwood’s flat – recalls “the famous story” of his director, in the Lake District, “standing on a stool and saying, ‘Hello, good morning everybody, my name’s Bruce Robinson and I’m the director of this film and I don’t know what the fuck I’m doing so any help you can give me is gratefully received!’ For which he got a round of applause and a great deal of support.”

CASTING CALL

Unfortunately, O’Brien didn’t see it that way. In his eyes, those early rushes, as Withnail and Marwood arrive at Uncle Monty’s cottage at night, “were as black as your hat and as funny as cancer”, as Robinson puts it. “So this delegation comes up to the hillside in Penrith at Wet Sleddale where we were shooting the fucking thing, and they say, ‘Uncle Monty has got to be

a Kenneth Williams-type character and you need to flood the thing with light.” Robinson called their bluff. “I just said, ‘Fuck off! If you want that type of movie, you’ve got the wrong guy.’”

By this point, Grant was approaching meltdown. Withnail was his very first film, his very first audition even, and getting the role had been traumatic. Predictably, he was not first choice, with Robinson offering it to Daniel Day-Lewis. “I had lunch with Dan in the Pontevecchio restaurant in the Old Brompton Road,” says the director. “I’d done absolutely bugger all and Dan was a fast-rising film star. I did offer it to him and he turned it down. I think he’s a smashing actor but I’m rather pleased he did; I don’t think anyone could’ve done as well as ‘Fatty’ Grant did!”

Robinson calls his star this name “affectionately”. When he first saw a picture of Grant, shown to him by the film’s acclaimed casting

SWIFT ROUND

Uncle Monty (Richard Griffiths) hands over a couple of fivers to buy Wellingtons, but Withnail has his eye on the pub and some quadruple whiskies.

director, Mary Selway, he looked “like a young Dirk Bogarde with chops on him. I said, ‘For Christ’s sake, I’m looking for Byron. I don’t want a porky boy!’” Eventually, he auditioned him – and became increasingly impressed when Grant read the film’s famous “FORK IT!” line, throwing the script at Robinson in his excitement.

As for Marwood, Robinson offered it to Kenneth Branagh, who declined. “And who would blame him?” he shrugs. “Obviously the fireworks and the champagne are in the Withnail character. And so again Ken Branagh

was on his way up and a major, major talent that I’m deeply respectful of, but he wanted to be Withnail and I just didn’t see him as that.” Paul McGann, then hot off BBC series *The Monocled Mutineer*, was called in.

McGann’s agent had misheard the title, telling him it was called ‘Whistler and Me’ – about the painter. When he read it, realising what it was,





he was desperate for it. "Even if it had been some awful, obscure dog, it wouldn't have mattered," he previously explained to *Total Film*, noting just how much he wanted a movie – any movie – then. "We didn't know anything – we were fresh. And I can safely say, 'If I'd never done another movie, it would've been alright.' It was just such a buzz to be in a picture."

Similarly, the character of Danny – inspired by a hairdresser who later went into the City – was shopped around. Even Timothy Spall went up for the role. "I was pretty much at the end of the queue," smiles Brown, who turned up to the audition wearing 'loons, a waistcoat, nail varnish and a gypsy bandana. He then spent all his prep time working on saying, "You're looking very beautiful today, man" – Danny's opening line. "I did it a million ways before I found it, the way I do it in the film."

In Robinson's eyes, *Withnail And I* was a family affair, with his former drama school pals on board, such as David Dundas, who provided the sweetly melancholic score, and Michael Elphick, cast as Jake, the poacher who threatens Withnail "with a dead fish" when they enter the Crow pub in Penrith. "Elphick turned up at about half-past seven in the morning raging on some fucking gin or whatever he'd had that night... cocaine... and it was a very weird shoot, that day," says Robinson. "Fucking great actor but he was a wild bloke!"

In many ways a movie about two men – rather like late-'60s London – coming down off their trip, the film isn't as hedonistic as its reputation suggests, says its creator. "There are no drugs in the film. At the top of the movie, Marwood is referring to the fact they had taken some amphetamines, some speed. He's sitting in the bath... you never see them thereafter take a drug until the Camberwell Carrot [see *Close Up*, opposite] turns up. When it does, Marwood – i.e. me – gets the horrors on it. I've never been into drugs at all in my life, except for red wine."



A STAR IS BORN
While McGann was already established on TV, and Griffiths a household name, the film offered Grant his breakout role.

If Robinson was partial to more than the odd bottle of '53 Margaux ("Fucking nectar," purrs the filmmaker, who you suspect, like Monty, has kept a sensational cellar), Grant was not so inclined.

He didn't smoke and he was teetotal, but one night Robinson plied him with vodka and champagne – getting him so drunk he got dizzy and vomited. "We have a very combative relationship," smiles Grant, noting it wasn't the only bit of sick-inducing sadism inflicted on him by his director.

Take the scene in which Withnail, demanding to have some booze, swigs some lighter fluid (something Robinson reports that MacKerrell did "on a very bleak Sunday

afternoon"). "[Bruce replaced it with] this unbelievable industrial strength vinegar in the lighter fluid can after rehearsals, where it'd been water," recalls Grant. "That was the thing that was the most uncomfortable. It burned my throat and I vomited all over Paul's shoes. Just as the take happened."

PULLINGS STRINGS

Then there was the Sunday lunch scene in Penrith. "My character hadn't eaten for three days, I had to eat very, very fast and stuff my face with drink the whole way through," says Grant. It didn't help that Richard Griffiths, fresh from a film in Italy, hadn't learnt his lines to play Uncle Monty. He kept messing up, while Grant had to keep eating. "Eventually, [I] had to have a vomit bucket – I had three legs of



lamb and eight kilos of potatoes and I couldn't fit it down anymore.

The rest of the shoot? "It was a bloody nightmare, the whole thing," says Robinson. Fortunately, however, George Harrison made things easier when it came to post-production. Engineering use of his own Beatles' track 'While My Guitar Gently Weeps' for the soundtrack, he also helped acquire snippets of Jimi Hendrix's 'All Along The Watchtower' and 'Voodoo Child' for the driving scenes (shot on the newly opened M25). "Hendrix's estate won't allow anyone to use Hendrix music in the context of drink and drugs and rock 'n' roll," notes Robinson. "George managed all of that kind of stuff."

The film's distribution was somewhat mishandled; *Withnail And I* suffered one particularly disastrous test screening (the audience made up of German students unable to speak English), and would disappear from cinemas after just four weeks. "It didn't do anything for six or seven years," said McGann. But absence makes the heart grow fonder, with the film finding a life on VHS and revival screenings. A further boost came in the 1990s, with a re-release in the cinemas and the inaugural *Loaded* magazine

featuring an article titled 'Withnail You Cult' by editor James Brown.

By this point, it was already a student rites-of-passage. "Living in Bristol, you can set your calendar by it," noted McGann. "That part of September when the new intake has just come in, and they've drunk their first grant cheque and seen *Withnail*... and I know when they've seen it. They usually holler across the street." It even got (affectionately) abusive. "Some kid had chalked outside my house, 'Perfumed Ponce,' with an arrow pointing to my front door! I love that!"

Then there was the *Withnail* drinking game – match the characters' beverage consumption across the movie (not easy when they're knocking back quadruple whiskies). "I'm just grateful

STEPPING UP

Neither lead was first choice for their role, with Daniel Day-Lewis turning down *Withnail* and Kenneth Branagh rejecting Marwood.



CLOSE UP

THE CAMBERWELL CARROT: A BRUCE ROBINSON JOINT

One of *Withnail And I*'s most famous scenes,

Danny rolls a 12-skin joint – invented in Camberwell and "shaped like a carrot" – so powerful it leaves Withnail in hysterics and Marwood getting the fear. So did Brown have to brush up on his rolling skills? "I did have to roll one, but I kept being given them by the props guy. He rolled a large number of them – none of which had any weed in."

With the scene given an unnerving rhythm by Danny's associate Presuming Ed, spinning the globe and reciting "Hare Rama" from the Harrison-produced song 'Hare Krishna Mantra', Brown strove for authenticity. "I'd been studying Rastas smoking weed," he remembers, "which is to say... exhale through the nose and inhale through the mouth – almost doing cyclical breathing with ganja smoke."

The upside of high soon gives way to paranoia as Danny intones that the '60s are over. "It's a representation to me, and was then when we shot it, of a terrible sadness about what had happened to England," says Robinson. Marking the end of the idealism of the decade of peace and love, "I think [the line] 'They'll be selling hippy wigs in Woolworths' was a total betrayal of what we all believed in the late '60s."

nobody died from doing it," nods Grant. "That's the horror." Auctions saw Chris Evans pay £8,000 for Withnail's ragged Harris check coat, while another buyer snapped up Uncle Monty's cottage – Sleddale Hall – for £265,000 (bidding started at £145,000).

Yet it's survival over the years is about more than simply "students eating a curry, getting pissed", as the director puts it, reciting his endlessly repeatable dialogue. A poignant tale of male friendship, it's also a wonderful state-of-the-nation snapshot. "Somehow he's managed to do England in all of its complexity," says Brown. "It's north v. south, city v. country, it's class, it's race, it's education and it's gay and straight. There's a lot going on, even though it feels on the surface to be an anecdotal jolly and people trying to get wasted."

WITHNAIL AND I IS AVAILABLE ON DVD AND BLU-RAY.

1933-2017

BARRY NORMAN

Generations of film fans know veteran broadcaster Norman's twinkly eyed catchphrase of "and why not?" (not actually spoken by him, but invented by Rory Bremner in his impression of him) and will have decided their weekend cinema trips based on his measured reviews on the BBC's *Film...* show. He was the go-to critic for many years, largely because – in the pre-internet world – this mild, pullover-wearing man was the most prominent celluloid dissector in the country who didn't suffer Hollywood fools gladly.

Never starstuck nor sycophantic, Norman's workmanlike respect for the industry was born of being the son of a film producer and director, Leslie (*The Cruel Sea*, *Dunkirk*), and an Ealing Studios assistant editor mum. Used to mixing with the likes of Richard Attenborough and John Mills, he recalled seeing the stars as good-looking folk who were ultimately "working stiff".

Brought up in London, Norman began his career on local newspapers and in Africa before becoming showbiz editor, then film reviewer, for *The Daily Mail* and later, *The Guardian*. In 1972 he joined the Beeb's new film show, by 1973 becoming its face, which he remained until 1998 when he moved to Sky, leaving the chair to Jonathan Ross. Norman interviewed all of the great and the good; nearly getting

punched by Robert De Niro and John Wayne, seeing Richard Burton fall asleep and flirting with Michelle Pfeiffer. All with the insouciance of an amiable uncle. "Anyone can do television adequately; there's no great skill," he said of his trailblazing show, "But I put a lot of effort into making it look effortless."

Unapologetically mainstream in his reviews, Norman's cosy, unpretentious style attracted criticism for being vanilla, safe and soft; but for many a burgeoning movie obsessive, he provided an indispensable window on the world of film and validated the passions of square-eyed, sun-dodging kids who spent every minute consuming cinema. And for that, the creators – and readers – of *Total Film* will always be grateful. He died in his sleep, aged 83. **JC**

INSTANT EXPERT

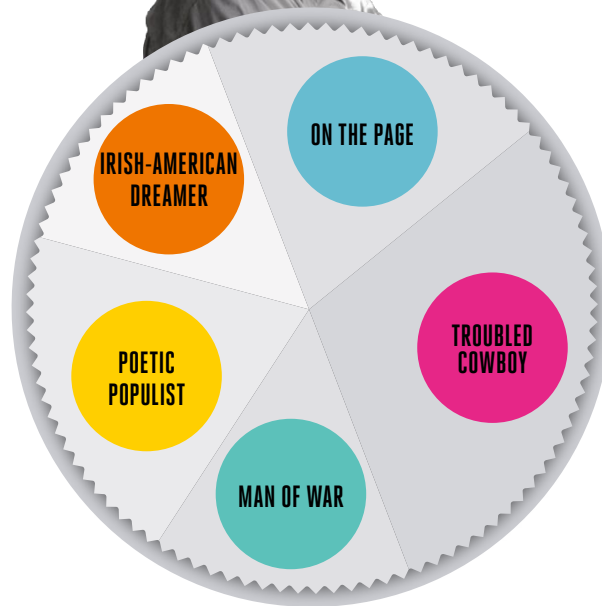
JOHN FORD

The man who shot westerns. Lots of westerns...



The 11th child of Irish immigrants, John Ford (real name Sean O'Fearnna) absorbed the American dream when he followed older brother and silent-movie director Francis Ford to California. Once there, Ford played (ouch) a klansman in D.W. Griffith's notorious *The Birth Of A Nation* and began directing in 1917. He scored an early hit with 1924's railway epic *The Iron Horse*, and, in the late '20s, met Marion Morrison, aka John Wayne.

All four of his Best Director Oscars were for literary adapts, not westerns. First was Liam O'Flaherty's *The Informer* (1935). Next, in 1940, was John Steinbeck's *The Grapes Of Wrath*. A year later was Richard Llewellyn's novel *How Green Was My Valley*, pipping *Citizen Kane*. Orson Welles probably didn't mind, having once said: "I like the old masters... John Ford, John Ford and John Ford." His last win was for Maurice Walsh's *The Quiet Man*, in 1952.



Ford brought ambition to works such as the defiantly non-commercial *The Informer* and he made populist films for studios. Yet he thrived when his more artistic tendencies drew ballast from sturdy narratives and accessible themes. Accusations of sentimentality do an injustice to the tensions – civilisation/wilderness, tradition/progress – he explored with great clarity, framing works of subtlety and sensitivity.



Ford took patriotic pride in his naval intelligence work for WW2 and bagged awards for his wartime documentaries (including *The Battle Of Midway*). He also made arguably the finest contemporary WW2 movie in *They Were Expendable*, a profoundly heartfelt movie about servicemen in the Pacific.

My name's John Ford," he said. "I make westerns." Even if they weren't all he made, oaters were a perfect channel for his talent. After earning his spurs in the silent genre, in 1939 he made western template-setter *Stagecoach*, plus *Drums Along The Mohawk* and *Young Mr. Lincoln*. He honoured American myth-making yet also exposed its problematic nature, a contradiction often given form in John Wayne's conflicted leads. **KH**

KEY MOVIES



STAGECOACH

1939 ★★★★★
In its mature balance of mythology, character, landscape, spectacle and John Wayne, Ford's first sound western set the genre's route-map with depth, thrills and delicacy.



THE GRAPES OF WRATH

1940 ★★★★★
A deep empathy for Depression-era economic migrants courses through Ford's Steinbeck adap. DoP Gregg Toland's images brim with poetic lyricism.



MY DARLING CLEMENTINE

1946 ★★★★★
Ford's take on the OK Corral showdown is sheer poetry: a mythic study in wilderness/civilisation tensions, fronted with authority by Henry Fonda's Earp.



THE SEARCHERS

1956 ★★★★★
Lyrical and fraught, Ford's psychological western frames the tensions in Wayne's vengeful, racist lead with precision and clarity. From Scorsese to *Logan*, its influence is expansive.

THE BIG SHOT**SHARIF'S
LAWRENCE
OF ARABIA
ENTRANCE**

When it comes to movie intros, Omar Sharif's desert trot in *Lawrence Of Arabia* remains the one to beat, more than 50 years after director David Lean lensed it. First appearing as little more than a smudge on the horizon, Sharif's Arab leader parts curtains of rippling heat, gradually growing in size and threat with every passing second.

It's a masterly example of quietly escalating tension. As British lieutenant T.E. Lawrence (Peter O'Toole) lounges on a rock, his guide drawing water from a well, the peace is disturbed when a black speck appears in the distance. Is it a woman? A mirage? A devil? As it

flickers and approaches, it solidifies into a man riding a camel. The silence breaks with the patter of hoofs. Then BANG, Lawrence's guide is shot dead and he's alone facing the man in black.

Filming in Jordan, Lean tasked Oscar-winning director of photography



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Freddie Young (*Doctor Zhivago*) with capturing the shot. “I’m anxious to get a mirage shot,” the director told him. “I don’t know how the hell we do it, but give it some thought.” Luckily, Young – who was aged 60 at the time – had experience shooting in the desert, having also lensed 1945’s *Caesar And Cleopatra*, starring Vivien Leigh, for Gabriel Pascal in Egypt.

“He gives you an inspiration,” Young said of Lean years later, “so you go out of your depth and try [to] do something extraordinary.”

Nobody would argue he didn’t succeed. Using a special 482mm PanaVision lens (now known as the ‘David Lean lens’ in cinematography circles), the telephoto optical enabled Young to shoot long-distance while capturing the ripples of warm air dancing across the desert. “We had him go practically out of sight until he was a little pinpoint in the distance and David told him to ride straight toward the camera,” he recalled.

The shot lasted for a total of 10 minutes. It was later chopped up in

the editing bay, with Lean opting to intercut Sharif’s dramatic debut with O’Toole’s increasingly drawn reaction, a decision the director would later rue. “Originally, I had Omar coming out of the mirage at double the length and it was better,” he admitted.

“I lost my nerve and cut quite a bit,” Lean added. “Wish I hadn’t.” While he was disappointed, the scene undeniably retains its power a full half a century later, and remains the yardstick against which iconic movie character intros are still measured. *JW*

60 Second Screenplay

SPOILER
ALERT!TF SAVES YOU A NIGHT OUT EVERY MONTH. THIS ISSUE, WE TEAR STRIPS OFF **THE MUMMY...**

FADE IN:

LONDON, 1157AD

INT: WHITE ROOM

CRUSADER KNIGHTS entomb one of their own, clutching a ruby that holds the dark power to make audiences not care.

Cut to the present. Then cut to the past for some stuff involving blood and bonking and mercury. Then cut back to the present, with all the seamlessness of a patchwork quilt sewn by cross-eyed monkeys.

EXT: MODERN-DAY IRAQ

ADVENTURER TOM CRUISE

Thank God all that back-and-forth business is out the way... now we can get on with some proper, linear nonsense!

ADVENTURER TOM CRUISE and SIDEKICK JAKE JOHNSON jauntily prompt an airstrike that reveals an abandoned Indiana Jones set (as in the cheaper TV show where he's a kid, not the Spielberg flicks).

ANNABELLE WALLIS

Hmm... this appears to be the tomb of a noughties franchise that started off OK then went disastrously downhill. My archaeological expertise tells me this is what's known as 'foreshadowing'.

ADVENTURER TOM CRUISE

Enough with the digging and dusting! Let's trade some cringey sex banter!

INT: TRANSPORT PLANE

Bitten by a camel spider, SIDEKICK JAKE JOHNSON mutates into a monstrous homage to An American Werewolf In London. A ton of batshit crows attack the plane, sending it into a nosedive.

ANNABELLE WALLIS

Hey Sofia! Wake up! You're missing the only good bit! Abandon script, everyone!

INT: MORGUE

ADVENTURER TOM CRUISE wakes up in a body bag, discovering that he is cursed to still be in the movie.

EXT: CRASH SITE

English stereotypes posing as rescue workers comb the wreckage.

RESCUE WORKER

[singing] 'Maybe it's because I'm a Lahn-don-er...' 'Ere, I've gorn and found a sarcophagus! Would you Adam and Eve it! 'Ang about, and a reanimated corpse, too! 'Elp! She's sucking me soul out! And I didn't even 'ave time to get a brew on!

EVIL SOFIA BOUTELLA and her army of ZOMBIE COCKNEYS stalk ADVENTURER TOM CRUISE and ANNABELLE WALLIS, who seek out the ruby that holds the key to making the story stupider.

DR. RUSSELL CROWE

Now then, let's have no more of this malarky, what? Soldiers, apprehend this ancient filly! Good show!

INT: DR. RUSSELL CROWE'S UNNATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM

DR. RUSSELL CROWE

Welcome to my secret lair, where plans for a shared cinematic universe are cack-handedly afoot. Now, let's give this undead minx a dash of the silver stuff! Tally ho!

EVIL SOFIA BOUTELLA

More bloody mercury! What you trying to turn me into, a thermometer?!

DR. RUSSELL CROWE

Welcome to a new world of gods and monsters! [SUDDENLY MUTATES] Monsters with gor-blimey accents! Gertcha!

ANNABELLE WALLIS

Oh my God... it's the strange case of Doctor Jekyll and Mrs Potts!

TOM stops DR. RUSSELL before he can fully transform into Dick Van Dyke. TOM and ANNABELLE WALLIS flee; an escaped EVIL SOFIA BOUTELLA pursues them in an epic chase that stretches from one end of Cromwell Road to halfway along Cromwell Road.

ANNABELLE WALLIS

Argh! So much CGI in my eyes!

ADVENTURER TOM CRUISE

Sorry - I did tell them to just re-use the sandstorm from Ghost Protocol...

INT: UNDERGROUND TUNNEL

ADVENTURER TOM CRUISE

Let's use that big ruby to plug some plot holes! Nooo! So many!

TOM snogs EVIL SOFIA BOUTELLA into a shrivelled husk, then revives a drowned ANNABELLE WALLIS by using the arcane power of shouting well loud.

EXT: DESERT

SIDEKICK JAKE JOHNSON

You brought Annabelle back from the dead... You brought me back from the dead... Any chance you could swing by the editing suite?!?

FIN

NEXT ISSUE:

TRANSFORMERS: THE LAST KNIGHT

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