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THE MAGAZINE

NO TIME TO DIE

007 EXCLUSIVE

NO TIME TO DIE

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Daniel Craig

PLUS

WONDER WOMAN

KEIRA KNIGHTLEY

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THE NEW MUTANTS

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A VÁCLAV MARHOUL PICTURE

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WELCOME TO TOTAL FILM

THE SMARTER MOVIE MAGAZINE



NEW PODCAST INSIDE TOTAL FILM
SEE PAGE 102

You've been expecting this issue... it's that time again, when we get goosebumps hearing that famous theme tune as the gun barrel roams across Daniel Craig for his last outing as 007. Jordan Farley was on the *No Time To Die* set twice and tried to uncover secrets of what we can expect when he debriefed Craig and cast in New York (see below) – his expansive story is a treat to read and will get you primed for this Bond's bow-out. We're also celebrating Craig's tenure as Her Majesty's coolest agent – learning how to mix the perfect martini and more; catching up with his greatest love, Vesper, in the form of Eva Green; as well as being creeped out by a major new horror helmer, getting sweary with Keira Knightley and picking up screenwriting tips from Jack Thorne. Quite the perfectly formed issue. Ah, you noticed...

ENJOY THE ISSUE!



Jane Crowther, Editor-in-Chief

CALL SHEET
THIS ISSUE'S EXTRAS



JORDAN FARLEY
NEWS EDITOR

I was on set of *No Time To Die* twice and these were my takeaways – For Your Eyes Only:
- Daniel Craig's Walther PPK gun (which will be retired from active duty with him) is surprisingly heavy.
- The Cuba set was so detailed the production team even printed the inside of the cocktail menus.
- In the scene I saw being filmed, Felix Leiter sang a very famous song from the Bond canon.
- Cary Joji Fukunaga used Lego to work out where the miniguns should go in an Aston Martin (signal lights, as in *Goldfinger*/*Skyfall* were impractical, apparently, so he moved them to the headlights).
- It was amazing to see the trailer launched on Times Square while I was in NY to talk to the cast and filmmakers.

#296 MARCH 2019

Contents



THIS ISSUE

54 NO TIME TO DIE
Two set visits. Three countries. We say a long goobye to Daniel Craig's Bond. Oh, James...

66 BONUS BOND!
Aiming our sights at the best moments of the DC (Craig, Dan Craig) Universe.

72 EVA GREEN
The Greatest Bond Woman on *Casino Royale* and her new sci-fi movie *Proxima*.

78 SAINT MAUD
The divine horror movie everyone is talking about.

84 JACK THORNE
The celebrated scriptwriter tells you how to do it.

88 PROMISING YOUNG WOMAN
Carey Mulligan goes on a rampage of revenge.

EVERY ISSUE

3 EDITOR'S LETTER
Plus News Editor Jordan opens the Bond files.

6 DIALOGUE
Mishaps, misteps and misty-eyed miscellany. Your missives are our mission.

94 TOTAL FILM INTERVIEW
Keira Knightley is on her best *Misbehaviour* as she talks about growing up on screen.

TEASERS

9 NEW MUTANTS
On set of Josh Boone's long-delayed X-pic.

14 WONDER WOMAN 1984
We (super)power up for more of the DCEU's MVP.

17 ANTLERS
Buck up, it's a Guillermo del Toro-produced horror.

20 BLITHE SPIRIT
Dan Stevens finds himself in a spirited love triangle.

22 EXTRACTION
Chris Hemsworth and Joe Russo bring their A-game.

33 IT SHOULDN'T HAPPEN TO A FILM JOURNALIST
Jamie's dreams come true.

35 TF HERO
Jim Broadbent chats about his career.

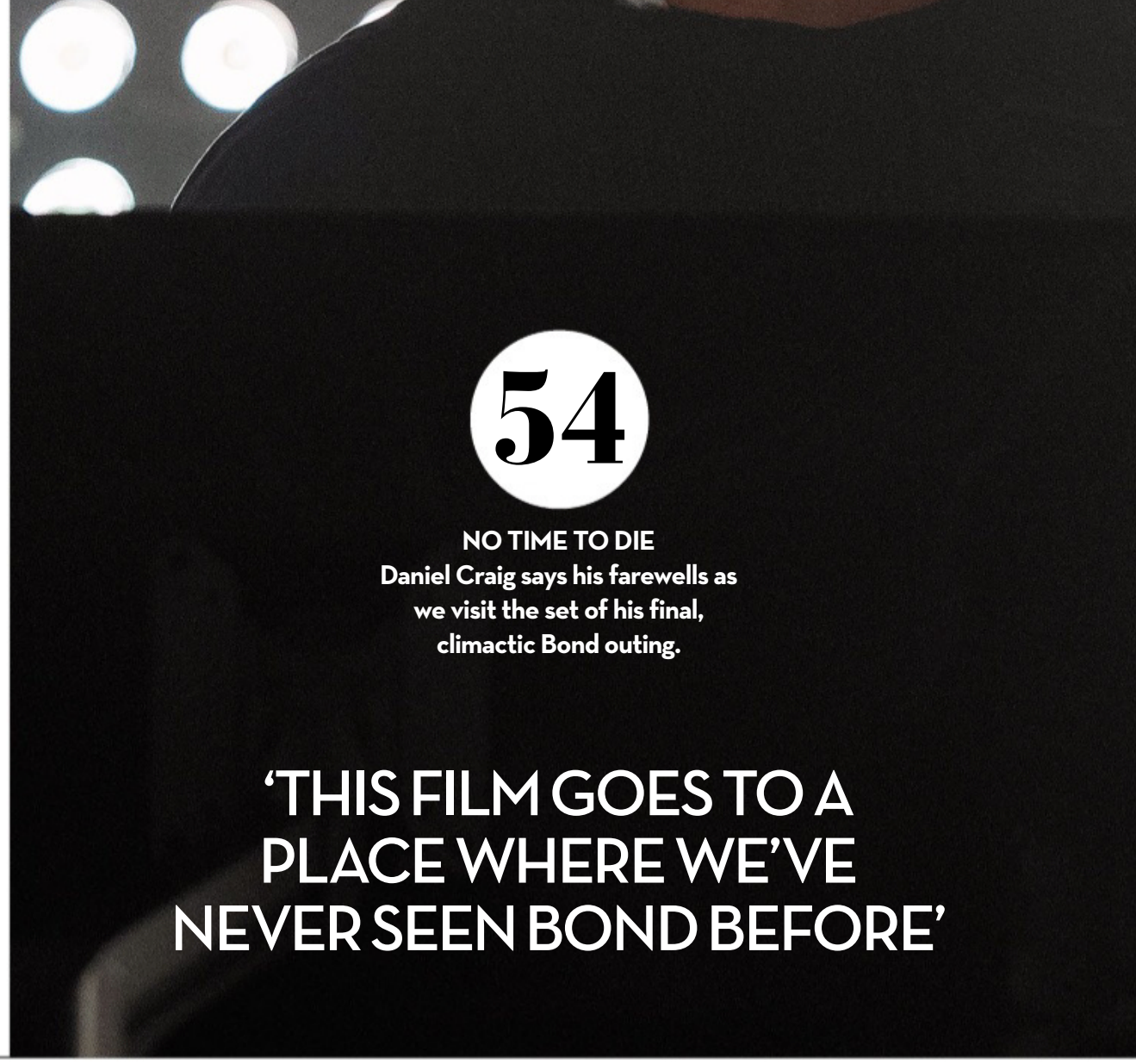
TOTAL FILM BUFF

114 IS IT BOLLOCKS?
Could Indy swim away from a submerging sub?

115 10 BEST 'TACHES
The most matchless moustaches in movies.

120 KIRK DOUGLAS
RIP the last star of Hollywood's Golden Age.

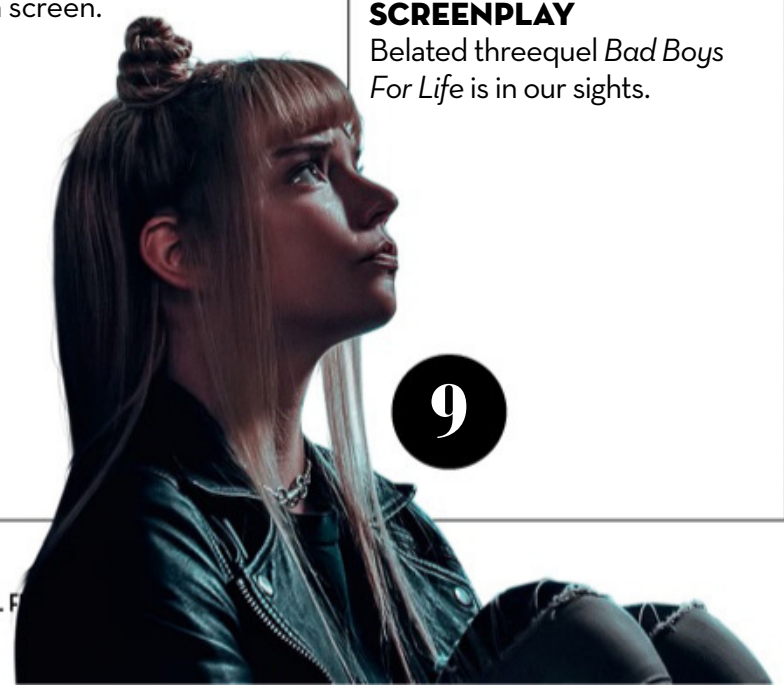
130 60-SECOND SCREENPLAY
Belated threequel *Bad Boys For Life* is in our sights.



54

NO TIME TO DIE
Daniel Craig says his farewells as we visit the set of his final, climactic Bond outing.

'THIS FILM GOES TO A PLACE WHERE WE'VE NEVER SEEN BOND BEFORE'



9













BIG SCREEN

38 CALM WITH HORSES
An Irish crime drama that's deadly serious. Oof.

40 ONWARD
Bloody elf. Expect tears. Pixar's latest is magical.

41 THE INVISIBLE MAN
We've seen it!

42 AND THEN WE DANCED
A modern gay classic that sidesteps clichés.

44 THE PAINTED BIRD
The three-hour WW2 pic that's shocking viewers.

50 DOWNHILL
Will Ferrell remakes *Force Majeure*? Should we run?

52 SONIC THE HEDGEHOG
The 'hog rushes our screens after his VFX stumble...

SMALL SCREEN

104 THE MANDALORIAN
The *Star Wars* universe is expanding as Baby Yoda finally lands on our shores!

106 SPENSER CONFIDENTIAL
Mark Wahlberg's P.I. sniffs out corruption and takes a beating or 10.

107 THE JESUS ROLLS
John Turturro is back as *The Big Lebowski*'s Jesus Quintana. Strike or gutter ball?

108 FROZEN II
Our warm-hearted heroes seek to save their wintry world. And Olaf's nose.

112 WESTWORLD S3
The sleek, cerebral TV show has its gleaming eyes on new frontiers...

Dialogue

Mail, rants, theories etc.



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TOTAL FILM WINGMAN

TF'S CINEMATIC AGONY UNCLE HAS YOUR BACK.

DEAR WINGMAN

Can someone help me? I'm trying to remember the name of a film. It's the one where an American sports team face insurmountable odds… but then a beleaguered coach manages to work miracles and they somehow triumph over adversity! So, any ideas?
PETE RENDER, YORK

WINGMAN SAYS...

Wow, that is a head-scratcher. Next you'll be asking us to think of the one where a cop on the edge and a cop in the middle meet halfway. Or the one set in a future dystopia where the young, resourceful and generally sexy must struggle against an oppressive metaphor for the present. Anyway, sports movie; we could be getting in a muddle, but was it *A Replacement Miracle Coach Of Their Own*? *Remember The Bad News Duck*? *Space Jam*? Let us know – if correct, Wingman will sweatily, slo-mo-ly raise his football helmet/hockey stick/jockstrap in bruised triumph, as spouses weep, children cheer and moose-headed mascots faint into the dugout.



STAR LETTER

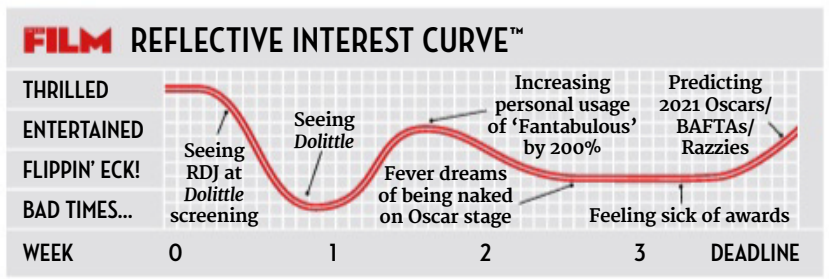
Reading issue 295, I was initially somewhat disturbed by Vin Diesel's comparison of *The Fast And The Furious* Saga with Tolkien's masterwork *The Lord Of The Rings*. But you know, the more I think about it, the more I see what he's getting at. I feel he's given us an insight into where the franchise is going: *F&F10: The Hobbs-it: There And Back Again (Very Quickly)*; *F&F11: The Fellowship Of The Rims*; *F&F12: 2 Fast, 2 Furious, 2 Towers*; *F&F13: The Return Of The King Spyder Porsche*… I can't wait for that classic line, "It's a dangerous business, Toretto, going out of your door…"
JACK HARGREAVES, ADDINGHAM



Ingenious. Not only have you shown Hollywood the hybridised way forward, you've given us an excuse to plug our subscribers' edition; Mr. Diesel's full comments on the Dom/Gollum (Dollum?) connection featured in *295*'s 'Insider' section, our regular bundle of bonus interviews and other goodies, only available via your letterbox (so don't go hounding your newsagent for more intel on the Lowriders Of Rohan). Jack and everyone with a letter printed here will receive a copy of *The Peanut Butter Falcon*, out now on DVD, Blu-ray and Digital via Signature Entertainment. Didn't send an address? Email it! It's crunch(y) time!

SCARED FOR LIFE

After reading your childhood fears feature [*TF 294*], I felt compelled to write in about a disturbing, violent, effed-up film that scarred me at the age of six and haunts me to this day (I'm 41). And it has a U certificate! I'm



ORC IN THE ROAD
There may be parallels between *F&F* and *LOTR*, although we don't remember shotguns in the latter...

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OFFICE SPACED

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

*** "I'm a fan of Banderas, big beards and big-beard Banderas" *** "I didn't know love when I first saw *Romeo + Juliet*" *** "Stop talking about Thanos' chode!"**



talking about *Watership Down*. Despite all the deranged/crazy/wrong films I've seen since, this is still the pinnacle of true horror for me, with a song that makes me shudder whenever I hear it.
DAVE MEAKIN, WILTSHIRE

I was disappointed you didn't include any of the supposedly child-friendly '80s films that still keep me up at night: 1) *Star Trek II: The Wrath Of Khan* (dear God, when the larva goes into Chekhov's ear); 2) *Jaws 3-D* (the shot inside the shark's mouth as it munches on a victim… the cracking of bones is horrifying); 3) *Superman III*: where the super-computer turns the baddie lady into a humanoid robot… I still steer clear of it on TV; probably advisable given the film's overall quality.
JOHN CARRIG, VIA EMAIL

I oved the feature, but one thing left me more scared than the films – the concluding notes by one Linda Blair. THE Linda Blair?? Surely not!! Did *Total Film* decide to use Regan's 'expertise' on the matter to help you all out? Scary stuff indeed…
TONY ALLBONES, WIXAMS

Fear not, we didn't make a deal with the devil-possessed. Although we did reflect on our choice of words after asking Ms. Blair if she could "turn things around quickly"… And thanks Dave/John – just when we thought it was safe to dip back into our childhood memories, you bring out the brain-draining, bone-cracking, 'Bright Eyes'-singing robot boogey-shark. Daaad!! Muuum!! Lindaaa!!

PARASITE LOST

I always look forward to your first issue of the year, to see the slate wiped clean on your evolving top 10 and discover which films will start the new year on it. As of *295*, your No. 1 films is the five-star *The Lighthouse* – good choice – followed by nine four-star films. All worthy contenders, but why no slot for the five-star *Parasite*?
MARK COLE, WARNINGLID

Well un-spotted, Mark. Maybe the film 'pulled a *Parasite*', deciding to leave our top 10 behind and live it up in some fancy-schmancy top 10 elsewhere, little realising that it would lead to mayhem and tragedy. Or maybe we just forgot to include it. Anyway, on p32 you'll see *Parasite* restored to its rightful ranking (unless it's snuck off to hide in Willem Dafoe's epic *Lighthouse* beard).

CIRCLE OF STRIFE

Looking through my 800-plus DVDs, thinking of what to watch (because subscribing to Netflix/Amazon/Now TV isn't enough), I choose one of my feelgood films. *Serial Mom*. Hilarious. There's gore and every member of the cast is game. Pure brilliance. However… the DVD is now skipping and will not play, which is my worst nightmare. What are we to do when our old DVDs start to burn out and we can't replace them? *cries uncontrollably*
SCOTT READING, BOREHAMWOOD

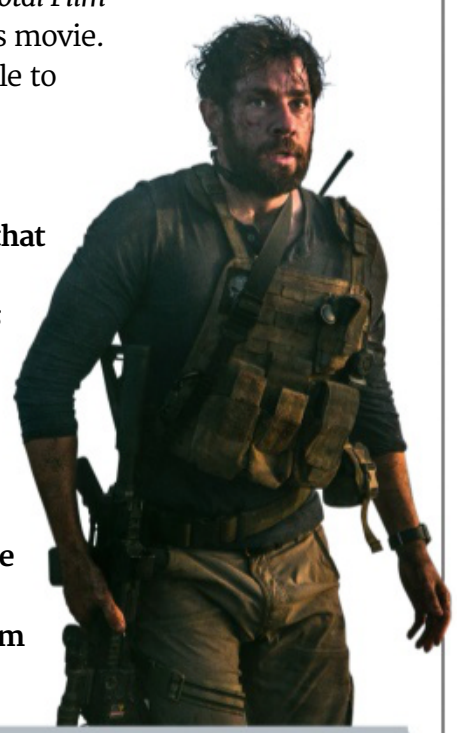
Don't come crying to us – we're busy trying to un-crinkle our first-edition VHS of *Space Camp*. We understand your love for bygone formats, but there comes a time when you have to let go, and log on to eBay. Whoa, *Serial Mom/Pecker* double-pack ex-rental! Gonna get in there before some desperado comes along.

HAVE YOUR SAY
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MISSING A TURN

I'm writing at the behest of my other half who is bereft at the omission of *13 Hours* from John Krasinski's Five Star Turns [*TF 295*]. Please tell me this is just an oversight on your part and the *Total Film* team has seen and adores this movie. If not I don't think he'll be able to sleep again.
HANNAH JONES, FAREHAM

Please assure your other half that yes, the *TF* team has seen this movie and a…nyway, *13 Hours* was certainly on the long list, so at least your partner can get a couple of hours shut-eye. Five Star Turns is often hammered out of such passionately protracted debate that by the time we're done, said star has made another film worthy of inclusion. Gah!



OUT OF 'SITE
We didn't forget to put *Parasite* on our top 10 – we were just checking if you were paying attention...

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TEASERS

COMING ATTRACTIONS

* More **Days Of Wonder** p14
* **Thor** goes to war p22
* The **hottest films** from a cool festival p28
* An **Oscar winner** battles his demons p30

EDITED BY JORDAN FARLEY



EXCLUSIVE

LOST AND FOUND

THE NEW MUTANTS | The X-Men are going to some seriously dark places. TF was on set for the film that seemed to be going a bit too well...

Like the working title?" laughs director Josh Boone, pointing to a sign that reads, 'Growing Pains'. "Actually, everything's been amazingly unpainful so far!" Almost three years later, it looks like he might have spoken a bit too soon.

In the time since *Total Film* visited the set, *The New Mutants* has lingered on to the extent that it isn't exactly that *new* anymore – dragged through a post-development hell that made most worry if it was ever going to come out at all. Now given a release date, the growing pains are over at last – and the real horror can finally begin.

Back in July 2017, *TF* was somewhere in a dark corner of Medfield State Hospital – a sprawling Victorian lunatic asylum outside of Boston, Massachusetts. Deserted in a hurry, the building (used a few years earlier by Scorsese for *Shutter Island*) is a cold mass of crumbling corridors, hidden tunnels and weird noises. It is, even in the middle of summer, utterly terrifying – and it's also the perfect place to reboot the X-Men franchise into a misfit teen horror.

"We wanted to make a movie for outsiders. For kids who've had problems," says Boone. "I had all these movies when I was a kid, like *Monster Squad* and *Lost Boys*, where all the characters were the same age as me. Most kids today are going to see comic-book movies about a bunch of 40-year-olds."

Adapting a short run of comics (mostly Bill Sienkiewicz's 'Demon Bear' series from the 1980s), *New Mutants* picks up the origin stories of five messed-up mutants who land themselves in a secret medical facility. There are no planets to save, no

TIME WARP
If the cast look younger than expected, it's because *The New Mutants* has been in post-production since 2017...

20TH CENTURY STUDIOS, TWITTER.COM/NEWMUTANTSFILM

MacGuffins to find and nothing to fight besides whatever monsters they find in their heads.

"You've seen the X-Mansion? Where everybody's all happy and nice? This is where the kids go when they're so fucked up that they can't even get through the door," says Boone. "In the same way *Deadpool* is a raunchy comedy and *Logan* is a western, this is a horror movie. It's a haunted-house movie. It's not big operatic science-fiction, like a typical X-Men film, this is much more grounded and character driven. It all goes back to Stephen King, really."

Naming influences as diverse as *One Flew Over The Cuckoo's Nest* and *Dream Warriors* to *The Breakfast Club* and *Scooby-Doo*, it's clear whose shadow is looming the largest over Boone's take on the Marvel comics.

"I was raised by very strict evangelical Christians, and King was a towering figure in my life," he says, pulling a battered copy of *The Stand* out of his pocket. "I read this under my bed when I was 12. My mum found my stash of King books and burned them all. After that I wrote King a letter and told him how much I wanted to make movies. I came home from school one day and my dad pulled me aside and said, 'there's a box here from Stephen King... I didn't tell your mum'. He'd written me the most amazing letter, split into three parts, written on the inside covers of three new books. I've loved King my whole life and my pitch to the studio was basically to do a Stephen King X-Men movie."

Casting five up-and-comers who have mostly all up-and-come in the years since the film was shot, Boone wanted his next-gen mutants to feel as fresh as possible.

First up there's Charlie Heaton (hot off the first season of *Stranger Things* at the time), nervously chewing his nails as he keeps up a thick Kentucky accent to talk about his character. "Cannonball can fly, but he can't land yet..." he says. "There's a lot of anxiety with this guy."

Then there's Anya Taylor-Joy as Russian sorceress Illyana Rasputin ("She's seen some things..."), Henry Zaga as "Brazilian hothead" Sunspot, Blu Hunt as the fear-projecting hypnotist, Mirage, and Maisie Williams as a Scottish-accented werewolf.

"I've always hated my own voice – it makes me cringe!" jokes Williams, still somewhere in the middle of *Game Of Thrones* back in 2017. "We tried a lot of tests to try and figure out what looks best for the wolf stuff, but ultimately it's a mix of practical effects and CG, along with a real wolf, who I absolutely adore."

Boone chips in that he hired "the Tom Cruise of wolf actors", going off on a tangent about how difficult it is to digitally remove a wolf's penis, and everyone starts giggling. Nightmarish old asylum or not, *New Mutants* seemed like a hoot for everyone involved – with mutant mentor Alice Braga playing pranks during takes, Taylor-Joy pulling funny faces to throw the others off, and talk of *Black Mirror* viewing parties in Zaga's hotel room.

> 'IN THE SAME WAY DEADPOOL IS A COMEDY AND LOGAN IS A WESTERN, THIS IS A HORROR MOVIE'
> JOSH BOONE

But then it all went wrong. Delayed first by reshoots (which may or may not have actually happened) apparently designed to make it less scary, and then more scary, the film was then caught up in Disney's Fox takeover and shelved for an uncomfortably long time. Unlike whatever happened to Josh Trank's disowned *Fantastic Four*, though, Boone is still confident the version being released is the one he wanted to make (telling fans on Instagram, "I wouldn't be promoting it if it wasn't").

Changes and studio switches or not, *New Mutants* looks to be just as bold a new direction for the X-franchise now as it did back in 2017. It might have been a long time coming, but at least the wait is finally, almost, over. ***PB***

ETA | 8 APRIL / THE NEW MUTANTS IS OUT NEXT MONTH.







UP-AND-COMING
Rising stars Maisie Williams and Anya Taylor-Joy play Wolfsbane and Magik (above).

BIG BREAK
Charlie Heaton is an anxious Cannonball (right).

HOSPITAL HORRORS
The New Mutants was filmed in a deserted asylum for maximum creepiness (opposite).













HOT RIGHT NOW

KUMAIL NANJIANI

IS SECURING ETERNAL FAME...

Last December, fans of stand-up comedian, actor, writer, producer and podcast host Kumail Nanjiani got a shock when he posted pics on Instagram, for in place of the nerdy coder Nanjiani played in HBO sitcom *Silicon Valley* was a hunk built from pecs, pizzazz and pheromones. "I was scrolling through Twitter, and it was just my torso, after my torso, after my torso," he says. "I was just like, 'Oh my god! What have I done?'"

The extreme makeover was the result of a year's intensive training to play godlike superhero Kingo in Chloé Zhao's Marvel-ous adventure *Eternals*, about an immortal alien race that has secretly lived on Earth for more than 7,000 years. Nanjiani would enjoy "baked goods" on his cheat days but otherwise gobbled down protein and pushed himself beyond the pain barrier with the help/barked orders of a personal trainer. "The idea that I get to play a superhero in a Marvel movie is a dream I wouldn't have even dared to entertain a few years ago," he says. "It felt impossible."

The 42-year-old is, in fact, on an impossibly hot streak. As well as *Eternals* crashing into cinemas later this year, he has action crime-comedy *The Lovebirds* arriving in April, with Nanjiani and Issa Rae playing a couple whose relationship is thoroughly investigated when they find themselves embroiled in a murder mystery. And now streaming on Apple TV+ is comedy series *Little America*, the project that Nanjiani and his creative partner and wife Emily V. Gordon chose from the endless offers they received after co-writing 2017 dramedy *The Big Sick*. *Little America* examines the lives of immigrants in the US. It resonates with Nanjiani, who left Pakistan to attend college in Iowa.

"We didn't want the show to be political, but it is undeniable that its very existence is seen as a political act," he says. "We really wanted to make a show that was entertaining, moving, funny – all the things that we like and stuff we watched. We didn't want it to feel like a medicine show, you know?"

Well, his entertainments are certainly making the world a better place. *JG*

ETA | 24 APRIL / THE LOVEBIRDS OPENS NEXT MONTH. ETERNALS OPENS IN NOVEMBER.



EXCLUSIVE

UNSAFE HANDS

GUNS AKIMBO | Daniel Radcliffe comes out fighting in a violent, stylised action-thriller...

I was like, 'What's something that hasn't been done in an action movie?'" says writer/director Jason Lei Howden (*Deathgasm*), talking to *Teasers* at the 2019 Toronto International Film Festival, where *Guns Akimbo* has just premiered.

"'What if it's an '80s style action movie where the hero is a pacifist, and he doesn't want to be an action hero, but he has to be?'" continues Howden. "And it dawned on me: 'What if he actually had the guns bolted on his hands so he had to shoot, or run?' I thought that was such a quirky visual thing, and it went from there."

Guns Akimbo isn't standard, high-brow festival fare. An adrenaline-charged blast of hyperactive action, it follows slobby videogame developer Miles (Daniel Radcliffe), who finds himself forced into a violent underground reality show/death-match called Skizm. Guns bolted to his hands, Miles becomes the target of Skizm's star player, Nix (*Ready Or Not*'s Samara Weaving).

"There was so much action involved in the stunts," Weaving tells *Teasers*. "You had to keep your energy really high – especially with my character. She's on cocaine the entire time, so I had to have a lot of energy! There was a lot of caffeine drinking."

Weaving's heavily tattooed and even-more-heavily armed Nix aims to break the mould when it comes to the objectification of these types of characters. "She wasn't sexualised at all; I look heinous," she laughs.

Combining irreverent comedy with blazing violence, *Guns Akimbo* could be a controversial sell. "For me, Skizm was a bit of a metaphor for the media in general, and wanting to push violence down people's throats for ratings in a stylised way," says Howden. "And then there's people that enjoy watching conflict and reality TV and violence. The movie is a little bit of a comment on itself," he laughs. "I feel justified in the way we approached it. We're not trying to make people imitate the violence of the film. We're trying to reflect the violence in the real world." ***MM***

ETA | 23 MARCH / GUNS AKIMBO LAUNCHES ON PRIME VIDEO THIS MONTH.

AIMING HIGH
Radcliffe is having a very bad day (above); game player Weaving has him in her sights (below).



Q&A

DANIEL RADCLIFFE

What attracted you to *Guns Akimbo*?
It really wasn't a hard sell at all. I read it, and thought, "This is really funny." It was weird and imaginative and inventive. And it was self-aware. I don't see myself as eminently believable in most action movies. So when it comes to this character, I'm like, "Yeah, I believe myself as this coward running away from a fight." I did buy that.

How was it dealing with those gun-hands and running around in a dressing gown?
Being in boxers and a t-shirt and my dressing gown for literally half the film was fantastic, and I'll never have a costume that good again. I got really good [*at using the gun-hands*], and I'm very proud of it. My favourite shots in the movie are literally shots where I'm just picking something up with them [*laughs*].

The film deals with audiences' relationships with reality TV and violence...
I'm hesitant to say that the film is making any wider, big, moral points about society, just because I think there's a lot that is *not* morally justifiable in the film [*laughs*]. But it is inspired by, I think, some of the darker corners of the internet... But, our main mission is to entertain and be crazy. ***MM***



GETTY, ALTITUDE/AMAZON



‘THIS WAS A MUCH HARDER MOVIE TO SHOOT... I WAS MORE AMBITIOUS WITH IT’

PATTY JENKINS

WARNER BROS

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EXCLUSIVE

THE GOOD FIGHT

WONDER WOMAN 1984

Diana Prince is back, in the decade when greed was good.

Records, glass ceilings, and any dusty preconceptions about the ability of women to lead blockbusters (in front of and behind the camera) were smashed when the WW1-set standalone *Wonder Woman* grossed $822m worldwide in 2017.

"It was two different brands of pressure, which was funny," says writer/director Patty Jenkins, comparing origin story and sequel. "The first time, it was a pressure to prove my belief that this could work. Because I felt passionately like, 'Why would *Wonder Woman* not succeed? I'm going to kill myself to make this movie succeed.'"

It was also Jenkins' first blockbuster, she points out, having previously directed Charlize Theron in *Monster*, so she was "doing one of these for the first time, and learning things I didn't know."

Jenkins – who co-wrote the *WW84* script with Geoff Johns and Dave Callaham – calls the '80s-set sequel "a much harder movie to shoot… I was more ambitious with it. So doing all the stunts for real on wires and things, it's extremely complicated and time-consuming. And everybody involved knows that you could say, 'Oh, forget it, we'll just do it in CG.' So it was difficult in a new way."

With Gal Gadot's Diana Prince entering the era of unchecked capitalism, bumbags and exercise videos – this exclusive image sees Wonder Woman dispatching two goons in a shopping mall – expect a tonally different film from the World War 1-set original. "We weren't trying to make a mimicry [*of the '80s*]," says Jenkins. "We were trying to make a movie as if it was a grounded movie in the '80s."

The sequel sees the stakes upped with two villains: Kristen Wiig's Barbara Minerva, aka Cheetah, and Pedro Pascal's Max Lord. Plus, old flame Steve Trevor (Chris Pine) has mysteriously returned, youthful as before, despite seemingly perishing in an exploding plane during WW1.

"The first one was, 'Can anybody make *Wonder Woman* and make it succeed?'" ponders Jenkins. "And now the question is: 'Can they follow it up? Can it ever be any good?' It's always a lot of pressure…" All the world is waiting. Again. ***MM***

ETA | 5 JUNE / WONDER WOMAN 1984 OPENS THIS SUMMER.



This is exactly how the *TF* office looks after a gruelling deadline.

TRAILER BREAKDOWN

PRESS GANG

THE FRENCH DISPATCH | The first trailer for Wes Anderson's ode to journalism...



This exterior shot of the titular magazine's headquarters could only be from a Wes Anderson movie. The colours! The symmetry! Now all we need are the wall-to-wall stars...



Anderson fave Bill Murray plays Arthur Howitzer Jr., a one-time travelogue writer who now fashions *The French Dispatch*. Howitzer is inspired by Harold Ross, founder and editor of *The New Yorker*.



Howitzer's "factual weekly report" covers "world politics, the arts, high and low, and diverse stories of human interest." Timothée Chalamet plays a student revolutionary.



Benicio del Toro is Moses Rosenthaler, "the loudest artistic voice of his rowdy generation." Del Toro joins Wes' regulars Owen Wilson, Edward Norton, Willem Dafoe, Tilda Swinton and Frances McDormand.



Other new faces include Elisabeth Moss, Christoph Waltz, Cécile de France and the aforementioned Chalamet, who's rudely interrupted by McDormand during bathtime. "I'm naked..." "I can see that."



The French Dispatch is an anthology movie, with vignettes reliving some of the magazine's best stories over the years. Anderson has cited Vittorio De Sica's *The Gold Of Naples* as an influence. ***JG***

ETA | 28 AUGUST / THE FRENCH DISPATCH OPENS LATE SUMMER.

SEARCHLIGHT PICTURES



EXCLUSIVE

BEAST MASTER

ANTLERS | Scott Cooper dips into Native American myth for his tale of a family imploding...

Oh I'm sorry!" laughs Scott Cooper, when *Teasers* informs the writer-director that we've literally just caught his latest, *Antlers*. "Wow! Is it what you expected?" Well, that's a hard one, given that Cooper's genre-hopping movies have spanned music bio (*Crazy Heart*), blue-collar thriller (*Out Of The Furnace*), gangster saga (*Black Mass*) and western (*Hostiles*). Now he's finally scratching his horror itch, with a story produced by the fantasy maestro Guillermo del Toro.

"When Guillermo approached me to consider this, he said 'Scott, your last three films – *Hostiles*, *Black Mass* and *Out Of The Furnace* – have been horror films and nobody knows it.'" True enough, although this time they will, with a tale set in a rural Oregon town ravaged by economic despair and the opioid crisis. Inspired by Nick Antosca's short story, it begins as the luckless Frank (Scott Haze) is attacked by an unseen creature in his gloomy meth lab.

The impact of this on his two boys – Aiden (Sawyer Jones) and Lucas (Jeremy T. Thomas) – is what forms the black heart of this disturbing drama. Taking its leave from Native American mythology, *Antlers* is driven by "a murderous spirit that is summoned up to seek vengeance on man", although the rest is best left unspoiled. Suffice to say, the local Sheriff (Jesse Plemons) and his teacher sister (Keri Russell) are left to wade through the gore.

This being a Cooper film, the fabric beneath is social-realism. "I wanted the film to be about all the things which Americans are experiencing today," he says. "There are many in America dying from what we call 'deaths of despair'. Mortality from these far surpasses anything we've seen since the dawn of the 20th Century, and this increase has primarily been driven by this unprecedented epidemic of drug overdoses, suicides and alcohol-related deaths. I wanted to see how I could weave all of that in."

While practical effects were provided by the workshop in L.A. that del Toro always uses, what's remarkable about *Antlers* is how much was all Scott Haze, whose cadaverous transformation after his attack is quite astounding. "There are hardly any visual effects in there," states Cooper, explaining that Haze lost around 80lbs, walking 30 miles a day and working with physicians and dieticians.

Currently prepping *A Head Full Of Ghosts*, starring Margaret Qualley as a woman traumatised by her sister's own disturbed behaviour, the 49-year-old Cooper will seemingly be stopping in the horror world a mite longer. "I'm always interested in the stories beneath the surface of these ordinary everyday lives," he says, noting it's all about mining the darkness within. "Anytime I can find myself in my work, hopefully others will see themselves." ***JM***



SHINE A LIGHT Keri Russell (above) plays Julia Meadows; together with brother Paul (Jesse Plemons, below), Julia is left picking up the pieces after a vicious attack.

ETA | 17 APRIL / ANTLERS OPENS NEXT MONTH.

20TH CENTURY STUDIOS

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EXCLUSIVE

KILLING THEM SOFTLY

THE KILL TEAM | Dan Krauss adapts his award-winning documentary to show another side of war.

After *The Kill Team* won Best Documentary Feature at Tribeca in 2013, writer/director Dan Krauss felt there was another way to tell the film's story. Teaming with beloved indie distributors A24 (*Uncut Gems*, *The Lighthouse*), Krauss adapted his documentary – about a 21-year-old soldier in Afghanistan who tried to alert the military to war crimes being committed by his platoon – as a narrative feature.

"I'm very proud of the documentary, but the documentary can't do what the feature attempts to do, which is to place the audience in a present-tense, first-person experience, asking the audience to face the same decisions that [*Specialist*] Adam Winfield makes," says Krauss.

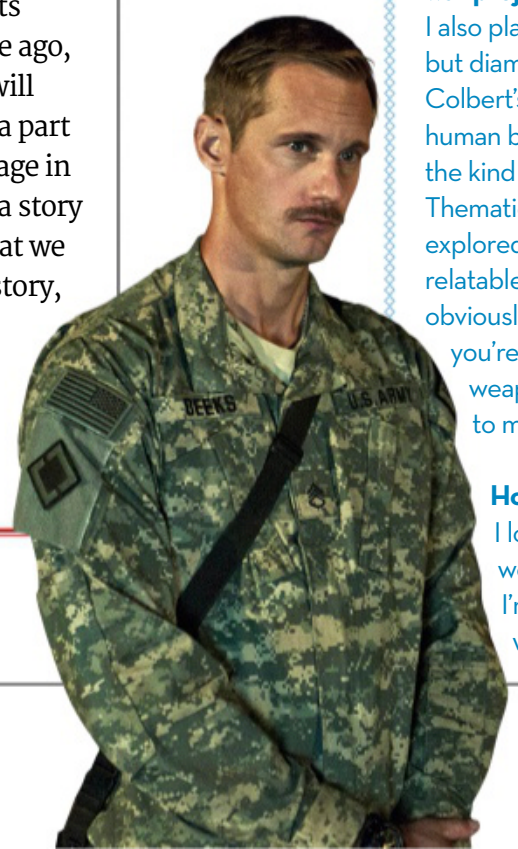
The film follows Private Andrew Briggman (Nat Wolff), whose platoon becomes enamoured with their new leader, Sergeant Deeks (Alexander Skarsgård). "There's this aura around him," explains Krauss. "This magnetic force that Alex brings with him as an actor, but also in the performance. He's incredibly careful and astute in how he rewards loyalty and punishes disloyalty."

Briggman slowly learns that Deeks is not the role model the other soldiers see, and fears for his life when he attempts to make their criminal actions public. "This young soldier has these threats that are coming at him and he is being forced to make decisions that have life and death consequences in the blink of an eye," Krauss says. "So that was the creative challenge that got me excited."

Even though the real-life events behind the film happened a decade ago, Krauss believes this type of story will never feel dated. "War crimes are a part of our history as a people that engage in armed conflict. And I think that's a story that doesn't have a timestamp, that we can examine at any time in our history, because it's about who we are as a species and the vulnerability of the human psyche that doesn't go away and then makes the story endlessly relevant." *AM*

ETA | 13 APRIL / THE KILL TEAM IS AVAILABLE ON DVD AND DIGITAL DOWNLOAD NEXT MONTH.

GRASSING OUT Skarsgård and Wolff's Deeks and Briggman find themselves on opposite moral sides.





Q&A

ALEXANDER SKARSGÅRD

How would you describe Deeks?
Deeks views himself as a warrior and subscribes to the notion of good versus evil. He's doing the right thing. He feels that the rules of engagement are written by people that are not out in the field. They have no relationship to reality. They don't know what it's like out there. He has lost friends to IEDs and that's how he justifies doing what he's doing out there.

What was it about this character that made you want to be involved with another war project?
I also played a sergeant in *Generation Kill* but diametrically opposite. Sergeant Colbert's morality is intact. He's an incredible human being and an incredible soldier. And the kind of leader you want. Deeks is not. Thematically, it was something I hadn't explored before in a dynamic that I think is relatable to people in civilian life as well. It's obviously heightened out there because you're surrounded by people with weapons, but I think it's quite relatable to most people.

How was it working with Nat Wolff?
I loved working with Nat and we're working again now on *The Stand*. I'm really excited to be working with him again. *AM*

A24



ON-SET EXCLUSIVE

PHANTOM MENACE

BLITHE SPIRIT | Coward's ghostly comedy gets an update.

It's June 2019 and *Teasers* is stifling in the Richmond Theatre watching Judi Dench (in exotic turban and robes) being wheeled front of stage on a dolly platform to a packed house of '30s-dressed extras. Emoting theatrically as Madam Arcati, Noel Coward's spiritualist lead in his frothy 1941 play, Dench is told to stand down by director Edward Hall, before a yellow weighted bag is hoisted skyward for an audience eyeline as post-prod digital trickery will see Dench levitate. Of course, the production isn't going to have actual national treasure Dench actually dangling from the ceiling: "No dames will be harmed in the making of this film!" jokes producer/screenwriter Nick Moorcroft, sotto voce.

Timed to release on the 100th anniversary of Coward making his West End debut play, *Blithe Spirit* isn't only taking care of its Dames, but also hoping to open up the work of the prolific Coward to a new audience.

"I want people to come and enjoy this and then discover who Noel Coward is," admits Hall. "People who might not normally find themselves in row E of a theatre somewhere watching *Private Lives* or whatever."

The plot follows the endeavours of narcissistic crime novelist Charles (Dan Stevens), who attempts to fix his writer's block via a séance performed by Madam Acarti only to find it has evoked the spirit of his dead first wife, Elvira (Leslie Mann). The farce sees Charles torn between his current spouse Ruth (Isla Fisher) and Elvira, who tries to kill him so she can steal him to the afterlife.

WIFE AND DEATH Mann's Elvira returns from beyond the grave, much to Charles' (Stevens) torment.



"The story always made me laugh a lot," says Hall. "It's such a such a simple but great premise for an uproarious comedy about death. I wanted to put this story on screen because it lifts my spirits – no pun intended – and I hope it lifts everyone else's a bit. This might be quite a good moment to give people a little bit of relief from the darkness around us."

Hall worked with writers Moorcroft, Meg Leonard and Piers Ashworth to open Coward's characters up – giving Madam Arcati a new, romantic backstory and ensuring the two wives orbiting Charles "get what they deserve and give [*the film*] a more contemporary feel". But that's not to say Coward purists should start to worry about the second film adaptation (after David Lean's celebrated 1945 version) veering too far from its original source material. "This adaptation is very different [*from David Lean's*]. But I was very concerned to keep the DNA of the original true and in terms of what we were doing with it, to root that in what was originally there. I wanted to make sure that we didn't throw the baby out with the bathwater!" ***JC***

ETA | 1 MAY / BLITHE SPIRIT OPENS IN TWO MONTHS.

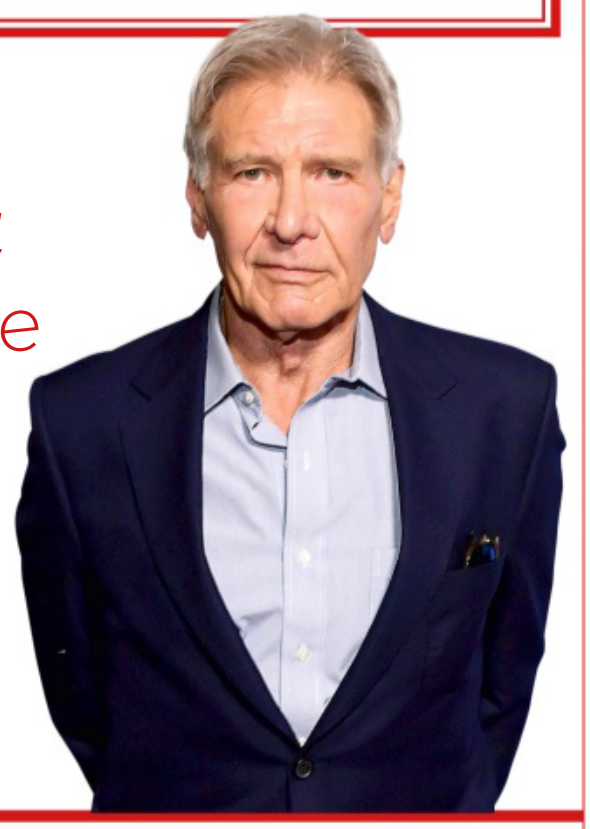
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SOUND BYTES

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

"I have no f***ing idea what a force ghost is. And I don't care."



Four decades on, **Harrison Ford** is still indifferent to *Star Wars*.

"I WOULD REALLY LOVE TO BE DONE."



If **Linda Hamilton** has her way, she won't be back as Sarah Connor.



STRANGE DAYS
Bad news: Scott Derrickson has dropped out of *Doctor Strange 2*. Very good news: Sam Raimi is being courted as a possible replacement.

GOOD THING

BAD THING

STOP FAWNING
The Disney live-action remake train rolls on with word that *Bambi* is about to get the photoreal remake treatment. Geneva Robertson-Dworet and Lindsey Beer are writing.

"I'D LIKE TO GIVE A SHOUT OUT TO MY FELLOW NOMINEES, WHO WILL NOW AND FOREVER BE KNOWN AS THE GUYS WHO LOST TO F***ING ADAM SANDLER."

Independent Spirit Award Best Actor winner **Adam Sandler** gives the funniest speech of the award season.



4

The number of Oscars won by **Bong Joon Ho** at the 2020 Academy Awards – equalling Walt Disney's record set in 1954.



£45,145

The cost of Dominic Toretto's souped-up **Dodge Charger** according to Northgatevehiclehire.co.uk.

"The last I heard free speech still exists."

The Hunt star **Hilary Swank** nods towards the controversial film's delay in the first trailer.





"1917 BEST WAR MOVIE."

Christopher Nolan won't be happy if he sees **Michael Caine's** enthusiastic tweet.

GETTY

EXCLUSIVE

AVENGERS REASSEMBLE

EXTRACTION | The A-team are back together for a hard-edged action-thriller...

Script by Joe Russo. Starring Chris Hemsworth. Directed by Sam Hargrave, the second-unit director and stunt coordinator of the last two *Avengers* movies. Yep, *Extraction* will do very nicely now that Marvel's heroes have completed their endgame.

"We were on *Infinity War* and I was talking about directing and what I wanted to do to make that leap," says Hargrave. "And Joe said, 'Hey, I wrote this script that I think will be perfect for you.' I was very much attracted to the character and the story."

That story, in true *Avengers*-style, is tightly under wraps for now, though we do know that Hemsworth plays Rake Tyler, a black-market mercenary who's enlisted to break into a heavily guarded city (a heavily guarded house just doesn't swing it anymore) to rescue the kidnapped son of an international crime lord. The film is set largely in India and Rake, at the start of the mission, is in a bleak place, harbouring a death wish that just makes him all the better at his job as he plunges headlong into danger.

"We reveal the depth of that darkness as we go on," teases Hargrave. "It's a late reveal as to what his motivations are. Joe said early on, 'He's physically extremely brave but emotionally a coward.' The truth of that and the why comes out in the story." Hargrave pauses, contemplating the differences between *Extraction* and the Marvel movies he worked on (to say nothing of *Atomic Blonde* and *Deadpool 2*). "I'd describe *Extraction* as an emotionally driven, action-packed thriller. It's a different spin on the action-drama. The focus is on the characters, and the action happens to be what they're going through."

Extraction is, he says, a film that's more in line with the recognisable-stakes action-thrillers of the '80s and '90s than world-saving superhero movies. But that doesn't mean the set-pieces are going to stint on eye-widening, breath-snatching excitement.

"It's big, it's violent," he says. "We try to bring the viewer along for the experience. When the characters are tired and taking deep breaths, hopefully you as an audience member will be doing the same as you're so invested in the story. We did try to push the envelope and think of new ways for an audience to experience something. There's one sequence in there that they'll be talking about for..." He catches himself, and laughs. "Well, at least a couple of hours after the movie!" ***JG***

ETA 24 APRIL / EXTRACTION DROPS ON NETFLIX NEXT MONTH.



NETFLIX



‘WE DID TRY TO PUSH THE ENVELOPE AND THINK OF NEW WAYS FOR AN AUDIENCE TO EXPERIENCE SOMETHING’

SAM HARGRAVE

THE NEXT BIG THING

NOAH JUPE

IS MAKING A LOT OF NOISE...

Though still only 15, London-born actor Noah Jupe has held his own opposite Christian Bale, Emily Blunt, Shia LaBeouf and Matt Damon (twice). He'll be seen next tiptoeing around highly anticipated horror sequel *A Quiet Place Part II*. "With this movie, there was a lot to sink my teeth into."

***A Quiet Place Part II* is your first-ever sequel...**

I knew they were going to do a sequel because we talked about it a little on set, what they would do. I was a little hesitant to see where they would go with it, but John [*Krasinski*] pitched it to me and then I was really excited. It definitely holds up to the first one.

***Part II* picks up moments after the first film ends – was that a challenge?**

I had to play me two years younger – that was one of the hardest parts. They had a stunt double for wide shots, because I'm taller than Emily and Millie [*Simmonds*] now! But it was really fun because when I did the first one I was quite immature and naive, but coming into the second one, I had a lot more tools under my belt.

Was it strange working with Shia LaBeouf on *Honey Boy* knowing he'd lived through many experiences you were acting out?

At first, but as soon as I met him it didn't feel strange any more. There was a moment in the audition when he was outside in the parking lot and I introduced myself and he was like, "You want to run some lines?" And he took off his hat and put it on my head. It was a mental moment, because it almost felt like he was passing a baton.

When did you know that you wanted to act?

I didn't know I loved it until I got my first role. When we wrapped I cried all the way home. That was when I realised I'd got so connected to my character, so connected to the world. I thought, 'Oh, I want to do this.' *JF*

ETA | 19 MARCH / A QUIET PLACE PART II OPENS LATER THIS MONTH.

REX



EXCLUSIVE

MELODY MAKERS

THE WHISTLERS | Thrills, titters and tunes in a captivating film noir...

You know how to whistle, don't you, Steve?" said Lauren Bacall's Vivian Rutledge to Bogie's P.I. Philip Marlowe in classic film noir *The Big Sleep*. "You just put your lips together and blow." Well, it's not that easy in Corneliu Porumboiu's Romanian noir *The Whistlers*, for it is set on La Gomera in the Canary Islands, where a group of criminals evade cops' listening devices by employing a complex whistling language that sounds like birdsong.

Almost unbelievably, the language really does exist in La Gomera – it's called Silbo Gomero – and is taught in the island's schools for heritage value.

"I saw a documentary on French television," says Porumboiu. "I was attracted from the beginning, and I started to read about it to get more information. I got in touch with the head of the department of the whistling language, Francisco Correa, and I went to the island and the classes. I saw a bit of technique. After I made the casting, Francisco came to Bucharest for two weeks and trained the actors. Then they kept in contact on Skype. Vlad Ivanov is good. I think I dubbed him just twice."

Ivanov plays Cristi, a corrupt cop who has become involved in the drug-money laundering setup that he's been investigating. His superiors soon grow suspicious, and this knotty situation becomes a whole lot, well, knottier when Cristi must leave Bucharest for La Gomera, where mattresses stuffed with cash are exported and the criminals are headquartered. Once there, he has to learn the whistling language in order to locate a missing $30m stash.

Porumboiu has always been the playful one among the otherwise sombre Romanian New Wave auteurs, but *The Whistlers* is his most flat-out entertaining movie yet. It shares themes – the individual and the state, the struggle to communicate, ethics and morality – with his earlier movies *12:08 East Of Bucharest*, *Police*, *Adjective* and *The Treasure*, and again riffs on genre. This time it is film noir that Porumboiu spies through his skewed lens, and he's having a ball.

"From the first moment I had the idea to use this whistling language, I had in mind to make a certain type of story," he says. "It would play with codes. The whistling language is coding normal language, and I had the feeling I had to play with codes of cinema. I went back to *Night Of The Hunter*, which is one of my favourite films, and also *The Third Man*, *Double Indemnity*, *Laura*, *Gilda* [*the femme fatale in* The Whistlers *is called Gilda*] and *The Big Sleep*. I like the Coen brothers a lot. I like *Inherent Vice* a lot." He chuckles as he states the bleeding obvious. "I like film noir very much." ***JG***

FEEL THE TWEET
Porumboiu's whistling criminals try to evade the law by using a secret language.



PATHÉ

ETA | 26 JUNE /
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ON-SET EXCLUSIVE

WISH FULFILLMENT

FOUR KIDS AND IT | No, Pennywise is not back scaring children in Cornwall...

Ah, there's magic in the air. It's a beautiful summer's day in rural Ireland and *Teasers* is relaxing in the grounds of a white-walled cottage overlooking a stunning lake. The reason for this visit to the Emerald Isle? *Four Kids And It*. This charming, Cornwall-set tale tells of a quartet of holidaying youngsters who discover the Psammead, a wish-granting creature that'd give *Aladdin*'s Genie a run for his money.

Today's scene sees a fracas between the children and their parents, Matthew Goode's David and Paula Patton's Alice. "I don't understand kids any more," bemoans Goode's character. Thankfully, director Andy De Emmony does. "I think there is an Enid Blyton version of this film that we didn't want to stray into," he says on a break between takes. It's doubtless why Russell Brand – currently meditating in the garden – is on board. "He is that English eccentric," adds the director. "It's purpose-built for him."

With the story adapted from Jacqueline Wilson's 2012 book *Four Children And It*, Brand's character, the aristocratic Tristan, has been added to give the kids an antagonist, as he tries to swipe the Psammead for his own nefarious ends. "We've had to take quite a lot of licence from the book," says De Emmony, who notes he's had Wilson's full support (she even has a cameo).

But the real draw will be the CG-crafted Psammead, voiced by Sir Michael Caine. "He's supposed to be very old, curmudgeonly and mischievous," explains De Emmony. "Michael loved that idea." The children – Billy Jenkins, Ashley Aufderheide, Ellie-Mae Siame and Teddie-Rose Malleson-Allen – have been acting opposite a puppet on set, with a recording of Caine's dialogue played to aid them.

The production has used facial-capture software to record Caine's expressions and blend into 'It' in post. While he enjoyed this, it was the cheeky humour that really intrigued him, as De Emmonny tells us: "He said to me, 'When the monkey farts, that's going to be really funny! My grandkids will love that.'" ***JM***

ETA | 10 APRIL / FOUR KIDS AND IT OPENS NEXT MONTH.

SHARE THE LOAD
Malleson-Allen, Aufderheide, Jenkins and Siame find themselves saving Psammead from the greedy Tristan.



Q&A

RUSSELL BRAND

How would you describe Tristan? Eccentric?
You're correct! It's a very eccentric and solitary character and in a children's film, villainy and antagonism are interesting forces to play with. I've been thinking that as a genre, children's literature and stories have a lot of parallels with horror. Like Roald Dahl, for example. There's scariness in there.

What are Tristan's reasons for evil? A bad childhood?
Possibly. But more literally, he's questing after a treasure. A treasure of the titular 'It'. He wants it. I feel like Christopher Lee as Lord Summerisle in *The Wicker Man*. Dustin Hoffman in *Hook*. And Jack [*Nicholson*] in *The Shining*.



What children's movies did you grow up on?
Elvis The Movie! I was a child when I watched it, and it was Kurt Russell as Elvis. I used to like children's books. I used to read Enid Blyton a lot when I was a boy. I used to read both the fantasy ones, like *The Wishing-Chair* and *The Magic Faraway Tree*, and the more naturalistic '50s-influenced idyllic British – let's face it, sometimes racist and identity-insensitive – [*books*] like *The Famous Five*. I preferred that to *The Secret Seven*. I can't follow that many protagonists! ***JM***

GETTY, SKY CINEMA

POSSESSOR

Brandon Cronenberg's second movie is a huge step forward from the intriguing but somewhat cerebral *Antiviral*. That's not to say this film doesn't have brains: they get splattered all over the place in a hugely enjoyable and bloody body-swap assassin romp, which sees Andrea Riseborough star as hitwoman-for-hire Tasya, who takes over other people's minds, like a drone pilot, to carry out undetectable assassinations. Christopher Abbott is the patsy whose body she inhabits in order to kill his Rupert Murdoch-style father-in-law (Sean Bean) but whose stubborn personality makes him harder to handle than her usual subjects.

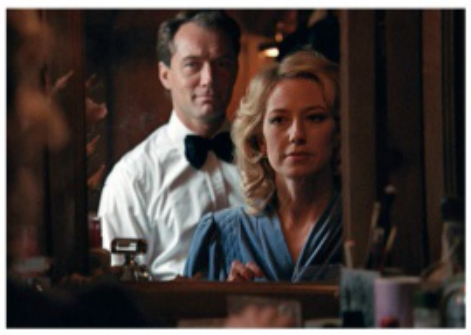
SNOW PIERCERS

SUNDANCE FILM FESTIVAL | Farmer drama wins big at the annual indie love-in.



MINARI

The big winner in the US Dramatic Competition was this gentle '80s-set tale of a Korean father who moves his wife and two young children to rural Arkansas, where he dreams of starting a new life as a farmer. Lee Isaac Chung's bittersweet drama made instant Sundance stars of its seven-year-old lead, the irrepressible Alan S. Kim, and 72-year-old Yuh-Jung Youn, as his wise yet playful Grandma, in one of a handful of titles that seem likely to make the leap to next year's awards season. An executive producer by the name of Brad Pitt can't hurt those chances, of course…



THE NEST

Writer-director Sean Durkin hasn't made a movie since 2011's *Martha Marcy May Marlene*, but it's good to see that it's been worth the wait. The setting this time is rural England, sometime in the early '80s, where city trader Rory (Jude Law) has relocated his American wife Allison (Carrie Coon) and their two kids. The family moves into a forbidding mansion, where the walls have secrets and doors fly mysteriously open, but, surprisingly, this isn't a ghost story – what ensues instead is an unsettling slow-burn psychodrama as Rory's mid-life crisis starts to eat away at his marriage.



ZOLA

Can a Twitter thread be a movie? *Zola* answers that millennial conundrum with an emphatic yes, dramatising the absurd, 148-tweet opus unleashed by Detroit waitress Aziah "Zola" Wells (played by Taylour Paige) after a chance meeting with shady stripper Stefani (Riley Keough). Stefani suggests a business holiday in the lap-dancing clubs of Florida, but what actually transpires is a jaw-dropping tale of prostitution, kidnapping and murder. Director Janicza Bravo injects this raunchy shaggy-dog story with all the balls-out adrenaline it deserves, while the two leads revel in its trashy glory.



NEVER RARELY SOMETIMES ALWAYS

Eliza Hittman followed her 2017 Sundance hit *Beach Rats* with this powerful road trip film, in which a Pittsburgh teen (superb newcomer Sidney Flanigan) travels to New York with her cousin to procure a late-term abortion. The subject matter is heavy but Hittman's touch is tender and light, handling a hot-button issue with compassion. The heart-wrenching scene that gives the film its title is a masterclass in control, evoking the tense two-hander at the heart of Steve McQueen's *Hunger* while raising key questions – who, for instance, is the father? – for the audience to chew on. ***DW***

SUNDANCE FILM FESTIVAL

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EXCLUSIVE

BANLIEUE BLUES

LES MISÉRABLES | Training Day meets La Haine in Ladj Ly's incendiary debut.

Don't be confused by that title: the feature debut of French filmmaker Ladj Ly is neither an adaptation of the long-running musical nor Victor Hugo's 1862 novel. But it is inextricably linked to the latter. "For me, *Les Misérables* is not the musical," says Ly, who's speaking to *Teasers* at the Cannes Film Festival, where his film will go on to win the Jury Prize. "First, it's a Victor Hugo novel. But moreover, it is a story that was written in Montfermeil. The important thing for me is that poverty and misery is still very much in this neighbourhood, a century after."

A snapshot of contemporary life in the impoverished East Paris suburb, the film follows Stéphane Ruiz (Damien Bonnard), a new transfer to Montfermeil's Anti-Crime Brigade. Shown the ropes by two colleagues willing to step over the line to keep the peace, Stéphane's first week goes from bad to apocalyptic after a moment of criminal malpractice is caught on camera, prompting a race to acquire the compromising footage. Remarkably, this event was drawn from Ly's own life.

"After filming this police blunder, I knew that I was in danger," Ly recalls. "The head of the police had me in his office, and threatened me if I showed the video to anyone. Straight after I went to Paris and met with the people at our [*film*] collective, Kourtrajmé. It was actually Costa-Gavras who advised me to get in touch with an independent media organisation working with *Le Monde*. Through them the video was watched a lot."



THIN BLEU LINE Bonnard, Alexis Manenti and Djebril Zonga land in hot water in Ly's feature debut.

Ly was also witness to the 2005 Paris riots – chronicled in his documentary *365 Days In Clichy-Montfermeil* – with another late-film incident drawn from the director's first-hand experiences. "The last scenes in this film really happened. That was my staircase. It was a very, very tense situation," nods Ly. Comparisons to Matthieu Kassovitz's equally furious *La Haine* are common, but not without good cause. "*La Haine* was the inspiration for us to set up Kourtrajmé," explains Ly, who was "troubled" by the fact both films address the same, ongoing concerns. "It's actually proof that nothing has changed. There has been a lot of violent actions from the police forces and it's still a problem."

A celebrated documentary filmmaker, Ly first made *Les Misérables* as a short in 2017, starring several of the same cast, "in order to prove I could do fiction." Like the short, the full-fat *Les Misérables* is a multiple award-winner, and was France's nominee at this year's Oscars. But making the film was never about recognition for Ly, it was about getting the message out. "This film is hopefully going to enable all the countries of the world to know the issues of the French suburbs better." ***JF***

ETA | 24 APRIL / LES MISÉRABLES OPENS NEXT MONTH.



EXCLUSIVE

SLAM DUNK

FINDING THE WAY BACK | Ben Affleck stars in a cathartic and coruscating tale of addiction.

Let's be honest about this," director Gavin O'Connor confides to *Teasers*, "the alcoholic part of this movie Ben knew really well." He's talking about his new drama, *Finding The Way Back*, and his star Ben Affleck. The actor plays Jack Cunningham, a former high school basketball star who spends his nights alone sinking beer after beer. For Affleck, who recently came out of rehab for the third time, it's a remarkably raw and honest performance.

"I'm not saying anything he won't talk about," qualifies O'Connor. "That was not a big stretch for Ben. He understood the addiction part really well. And the challenge was his bravery and courage to go to these very dark places, to dramatise a guy who is imprisoned by this disease." As the title suggests, Jack gets a shot at redemption when he's offered the chance to coach a high-school basketball team, the one bright spot in a life that's endured its fair share of tragedy.

Opening up "the boxes that carry the demons", says O'Connor, was a hugely cathartic experience for Affleck. "Just coming out of rehab, he was so raw… Ben had just come out the other side. So it was this weird thing of life imitating art and art imitating life. He was tapping into parts of his spirit that needed to be enlivened and enriched and also confronted in a very honest way. I'm really proud of what he did in the movie… he was always confronting his alcoholism and the addiction and the demons and he never shied away from that."



RIDING HIGH
Ben Affleck plays an alcoholic who finds redemption coaching basketball (above); with Janina Gavankar as his supportive ex-wife (below).

Ironically, the aspect of the story that was more alien to Affleck was the sport at the film's heart. "He had never played basketball," O'Connor notes. "He wasn't in a locker room growing up as a kid. So the basketball part of it was a little more nerve-racking for me to get him up to speed on, the believability of being an ex-player and a coach." Affleck spent time with real coaches, even coaching a high-school practice game, to get under the skin of the sport. "You can smell if it's authentic or not."

While O'Connor, 56, has broached sports before (in 2011's mixed martial arts drama *Warrior*, which also dealt with the demon drink), *Finding The Way Back* was a different prospect. "What I really fell in love with was doing a character study," he says. "I'd never made a movie that was just about one person, a fly-on-the-wall [*where*] we are privy to his behaviour. I want to do more than that!" He promises that he's already "pushing" his next movie *Fast* towards being more character-driven. Somehow, you know he'll find a way. ***JM***

ETA | 24 APRIL / FINDING THE WAY BACK OPENS NEXT MONTH.

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TOTAL FILM TOP 10

TF's ever-evolving 2020 movie league table...

01 THE LIGHTHOUSE

02 PORTRAIT OF A LADY ON FIRE



03 PARASITE NEW

Previously omitted from this list due to faulty wiring, Bong Joon Ho's Oscar-winner assumes its rightful place near the summit of our top 10.

04 1917

05 A BEAUTIFUL DAY IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD

06 BOMBSHELL

07 WAVES



08 CALM WITH HORSES NEW

Nick Rowland's indie crime thriller is the best debut of the year so far, and features a knockout performance from Cosmo Jarvis.

09 DARK WATERS



10 BIRDS OF PREY NEW

It didn't soar at the box office, but Cathy Yan's Harley Quinn-led team-up movie is a manic, madcap treat.



Their homemade *Sonic The Hedgehog* film was facing some hurdles.

EXCLUSIVE

HIRED HELP

FAMILY ROMANCE | Werner Herzog finds truth in a tall tale that's too good to make up...

At 77 years old, Werner Herzog is busier than ever. In the 12 months before *Teasers* enjoys his inimitable company at the Cannes Film Festival, he's made three features, conducted a workshop in the Peruvian jungle, and played a pivotal role in *Star Wars* show *The Mandalorian*. So how does he choose his projects?

"What comes with great vehemence at me," he offers in his signature apocalyptic tone. "With *Family Romance*, I understood it was so big I had to deal with it right away. We do not have a clear notion anymore about what is real and what is a lie and what is fake news. Facebook, for example, is a stylised self-representation. And there are at least 30 fake Herzogs on social media. So it poked something important and started a feeding frenzy in Hollywood. But before they wrote a 140-page deal memo, I was already filming."

Shot in Japan in just 14 days, *Family Romance* is based on the true story of the titular Tokyo company that hires out actors to play surrogate family members when the real ones are not available. Ishii Yuichi is the real-life founder of the firm, and is here seen pretending to be the father of a young girl whose actual dad abandoned her. But this is not one of Herzog's documentaries, for the scenarios are scripted.

It's a fascinating hall of mirrors, allowing the German auteur to reflect on family, loneliness and connection. It's also, he argues, a whole new way to construct a film. "When you look at cinema today, you have basic formulae. You have a scene where they're driving a car, a scene where they're having a discussion at the dinner table. Even films that are pure fantasy... it's not unexpected that a dragon comes flying. But in *Family Romance*, there's nothing you've seen before." ***JG***

ETA | 1 MAY / FAMILY ROMANCE OPENS IN TWO MONTHS.

MODERN FILMS

IT SHOULDN'T HAPPEN TO A FILM JOURNALIST

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

THIS MONTH WHEN DREAMS COME TRUE

Tell five people you're a film journalist and three of them will respond, "That must be great, getting paid to watch movies all day." In truth, 90% of the viewing is done in your own time – evening screenings, watching discs at the weekend – and the job of putting together a magazine is much like any other office job: meetings, schedules, deadlines, politics, emails, researching, planning, action points.

But while I point out the above to contend that being a film journo is perhaps not quite the dream/doddle many take it for, I'd equally like to make it clear that it's a privilege to make a living from your passion. Most of those meetings, emails, etc. are about not maths or insurance or the weather but *movies*, after all, and when you're working all night to hit a deadline, you're at least writing up a Hollywood set visit or a chat with an A-list actor or a review of the latest blockbuster. It sure beats putting together a thesis on macroeconomics.

We're lucky buggers, no doubt, so please do go ahead and shoot me if I ever become so jaded or cynical as to moan about having to interview Kristen Stewart on a beach in Cannes. Yep, this is what I once overheard, the journalist bleating, "I've done her four times before" like he was just so over it. Poor lamb.

FANTASY ISLAND

The moment I feel myself beginning to get blasé, I think of the times this job has literally made my dreams come true. The most obvious examples are the countless occasions that it has allowed me to not just meet my heroes, but to talk to them, in depth, about their work. If you'd told the teenage Jamie who was hoovering movies when he should have been doing his homework that he'd one day sit down with the likes of Tom Cruise, Robert De Niro, Meryl Streep, Drew Barrymore, Martin Scorsese, David Lynch, Arnold Schwarzenegger and Sylvester Stallone… well, shit would have been lost.

And if you'd informed him that he'd also go for a Japanese supper with Dario Argento, visit John Carpenter's house (replete with a 'Beware the occupant' sign on the gate) and be invited to Patrick Swayze's ranch to ride his horses… well, he might have exploded. Or perhaps pointed out that he didn't like Japanese food.

But my biggest-ever dream come true was the time I got to visit the offices of Castle Rock Entertainment in LA to watch my favourite movie, *Stand By Me*, with its director Rob Reiner. Together we analysed it frame-by-frame, and as the credits rolled he jested that I knew the film better than he did.



This was so much more fun than the horse-riding.



DIRTY TALES

I know that my colleagues are just as grateful for the times their dreams have come true. Editor-in-Chief Jane, who loves *Dirty Dancing* as much as I love *Stand By Me*, got to go to Kellerman's Resort (real name: Mountain Lake Hotel) in the Catskill Mountains; she not only carried a watermelon, sat in 'the corner' and was lifted out of the lake by a muscly man, but actually got to sleep the night in Baby's cabin. And the ticking of bucket-list items doesn't end there, for Jane has also been granted access to the Bond archive, with the golden gun, Jaws' metal teeth and *Dr. No*'s script up for close inspection… once she'd put on a pair of pristine white gloves.

I have colleagues who have visited Jack Nicholson's house, sat in the Batmobile, and stroked a full xenomorph suit with an animatronic head. But my favourite story is that of the film journo – the biggest *Star Wars* nut I know – who got to visit the Skywalker Ranch and made the most of the facilities while he was there. It was, as he puts it, a dream come poo.

Jamie will return next issue...
For more misadventures, follow:
@jamie_graham9 on Twitter.

'I WATCHED MY FAVOURITE MOVIE, STAND BY ME, WITH ITS DIRECTOR ROB REINER'

ALAMY



DANCE CRAZED

EMA | Chilean director Pablo Larraín returns with a twisted Gen Z family drama...

Curiosity is the key to filmmaking," notes Pablo Larraín, the Chilean filmmaker behind such acclaimed movies as *Neruda* and *Jackie*. And it this urge to explore that drew him towards the Generation Zs of his stylish new film, *Ema*. Originally intending to make a story about a failed adoption, with a much older female protagonist, Larraín then met his 29-year-old star Mariana Di Girolamo. "And it was like, 'Let's make a movie with her.'"

It meant skewing the story younger. Setting it in the lively port of Valparaíso, Larraín and his regular screenwriter Guillermo Calderón also located the tale in the world of dance. Recalling Gaspar Noé's demented *Climax* with its high-energy dance scenes, Di Girolamo's titular character performs the Puerto Rican-originated reggaetón in a company run by her husband, Gastón (Gael García Bernal).

As the story unfolds, Gastón and Ema are forced to give up their troubled adopted child, Polo, after he sets fire to their house. Larraín points out such situations are not uncommon, recalling one Italian couple who adopted a Chilean child only to return him when they discovered the boy was on Ritalin. It's just this sort of observation that marks Larraín out from most filmmakers. "I just feel I can be a witness of our time, our circumstances," he says.

Larraín admits it was a challenge to get into the headspace of those who adopt, which becomes crucial when Polo is granted new parents. "I'm a father, I know what it is to have children and to raise them and educate them, and to have all the crisis and the beauty that comes with that. But going to an institution, applying, going through all these tests, and then one day – hey, it's here. Bringing that process home, wow, that's so incredible."

JITTERY PARENTS
Ema and Gastón's life is turned upside down when they adopt a child.



Making *Ema* also gave the 43-year-old a big insight into millennials. "They are so different from my generation; people from one century looking at people from another century. It's actually like that. They are very particular. And they can be very conservative in many things. This is a generation that really cares about climate change. Not in a way that we might do – we care, we recycle and try not to pollute stuff. They are educated in the matter."

He adds that the idea of sexuality and gender is much more fluid – something seen in the film, as Ema breaks away from her husband to bed multiple partners. "They are more open to different type of relationships," he says. So what did his young cast make of *Ema*? "They're happy because the movie is not slow. That's what they think I do – slow movies! I showed [*them*] the movie and they were like, 'Oh you're good!'" ***JM***

ETA | 17 APRIL / EMA OPENS NEXT MONTH.

MUBI

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BESIDE THE SEASIDE Jim Broadbent plays a Bexhill bus driver in *Six Minutes To Midnight*.

THE HERO

JIM BROADBENT

The British legend is right on time...

He's worked with Baz Luhrmann, Martin Scorsese, Woody Allen, Steven Spielberg and had multiple encounters with Mike Leigh. There was also an Oscar for *Iris* and now he's starring as a pre-WW2 bus driver in the Eddie Izzard-scripted *Six Minutes To Midnight*. But Jim Broadbent, 70, is far too modest to believe he's one of Britain's best-loved actors. "C-List national treasure!" he chuckles.

***Six Minutes To Midnight* is a true story of Nazi party members sending their daughters to a Bexhill finishing school. Did that shock you?**
Yes! My grandmother in 1905, I think, she went to a finishing school in Belgium, which quite a lot of middle-class English girls did. But I didn't know we had the equivalent here. German girls going to a finishing school in England! I'd never heard of the concept.

Eddie Izzard wrote this and co-stars. You've worked together before, right?
Yes, [*1998 film*] *The Avengers* is a long time ago. *The Secret Agent* is a long time ago. We didn't have much to do in either of them, actually, together. I've known him a bit over the years. He had a Channel 4 evening... I was a guest on one small section. That was a long time ago as well. And at the Oscars, he was there... we shared a long car journey from the ceremony to the parties, and he was a delight. The year of *Iris*. The champagne was flowing and Eddie was entertaining us – lovely!

That was a particularly good period in your career...
I suppose leading up to the Oscars I'd had a good run, otherwise I wouldn't have been in the frame. *Gangs Of New York*, *Topsy-Turvy*, *Moulin Rouge!* – so I'd had a good run. People knew my name more. I used to get, "Are you in the police force in Kent?"



LIFE IN PICTURES (top to bottom) Gaining international attention in *Bullets Over Broadway*; having the time of his life in *Topsy-Turvy*; with Robert Downey Jr. in *Dolittle*.

'TOPSY-TURVY WAS SUCH A RICH EXPERIENCE... ALL THAT COLOUR AND MUSIC'

What was the one film that broke you internationally?
You can never quite tell. Woody Allen opened up those options. Baz Luhrmann and Scorsese were both huge fans of *A Sense Of History* [*which Broadbent wrote and Leigh directed*] which was in the New York Film Festival, so they picked up on me then. You never quite know. Woody Allen, the casting lady put in front of him *Life Is Sweet* and *Enchanted April*.

How was making Allen's *Bullets Over Broadway*?
That was a life-changing experience in a way. It gave me a recognition, certainly in America, that I hadn't had before. It was great. At that time very few Brits had worked with Woody Allen. Now they all have! I was one of the early ones.

Do you have a particular favourite experience with Mike Leigh?
I think *Topsy-Turvy* overall was such a rich experience, in just getting into that whole 19th Century, Victorian London musical theatre. Such a big cast and everyone going off and doing their research and pooling their knowledge. All that colour and music and light, and playing a fantastic character with loads of brilliant actors. That was a joy really.

You appeared memorably as Slater in several episodes of *Only Fools And Horses*. But is it true you went up for the role of Del Boy?
I was offered it. I was the second choice. I was doing a Mike Leigh play in the theatre, *Goose Pimples*, so I couldn't do it. I consider that my greatest contribution to British culture, allowing David Jason to play Del Boy. If I'd done it, we wouldn't have had his Del Boy. And if I'd done it, I'd have opted out after Season 2. That's what I get recognised for most. It's always repeated on Gold and people have the box-sets.

More recently, we've seen you in *Dolittle*. How was that?
It was extraordinary! Loads of weird animals that aren't there! 'Careful, you're walking into the polar bear!' 'Oh, sorry!' I was the baddie – trying to kill the young Queen Victoria. Not exactly based on historical fact. ***JM***

ETA | 29 MAY / SIX MINUTES TO MIDNIGHT IS OUT IN TWO MONTHS.

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ALTITUDE, EUREKA, DISNEY



40



44



38

CALM WITH HORSES

Enforcer to be reckoned with...

NEW RELEASES

OUT NOW		
The Call Of The Wild	★★★	p43
Downhill	★★★★	p50
The Invisible Man	★★★★	p41
Sonic The Hedgehog	★★★	p52

6 MARCH		
Fantasy Island	★★	p49
Immortal Hero	★	p47
Onward	★★★★	p40
The Photograph	★★★★	p47
Vitalina Varela	★★★★	p51

10 MARCH		
Nick Mason's Saucerful Of Secrets	★★★	p50

13 MARCH		
And Then We Danced	★★★★	p42
Bacurau	★★★	p47
Calm With Horses	★★★★	p38
Cunningham	★★★★	p47
The Elephant Man	★★★★★	p43
Run	★★★	p51

20 MARCH		
Astronaut	★★	p52
Dogs Don't Wear Pants	★★★★	p50
Fire Will Come	★★★	p52
The Great Buster: A Celebration	★★★★	p46
Radioactive	★★★	p46
The Truth	★★★★	p48

27 MARCH		
The Australian Dream	★★★★	p47
Koko-Di, Koko-Da	★★★	p49
The Painted Bird	★★★★	p44
The Perfect Candidate	★★★	p42
System Crasher	★★★★	p51
Vivarium	★★★	p43

3 APRIL		
Carmilla	★★★	p42
The Uncertain Kingdom	★★★	p47

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
Bloodshot	13 March
Misbehaviour	13 March
Mulan	27 March
My Spy	13 March
Peter Rabbit 2: The Runaway	27 March
A Quiet Place Part II	19 March

For more reviews visit gamesradar.com/totalfilm

CERTIFICATE 15 **DIRECTOR** Nick Rowland **STARRING** Cosmo Jarvis, Barry Keoghan, Niamh Algar, Anthony Walsh **SCREENPLAY** Joe Murtagh **DISTRIBUTOR** Altitude **RUNNING TIME** 101 mins

CALM WITH HORSES

In Arm's Way...

★★★★☆ OUT 13 MARCH

When you think of Irish crime yarns, what usually comes to mind are films that lean towards the comic: Paddy Breathnach's *I Went Down*, for example, or even Martin McDonagh's *In Bruges*. So there's something refreshing about Nick Rowland's feature debut, *Calm With Horses*. A hard-as-nails tale of a multi-generational family who laud it over an Irish rural town, this brooding drama delivers exactly what you might hope.



Jarvis and Keoghan shine like grit-covered diamonds in *Calm With Horses*.

SEE THIS IF YOU LIKED...

CALVARY *2014*
Brendan Gleeson's priest suffers death threats in a small-town Irish community.

LADY MACBETH *2016*
Jarvis' startling breakout as the lover complicit in Florence Pugh's murderous actions.

BEAST *2017*
Michael Pearce's debut depicts another insular community soaked in blood.

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Its ace in the pack is Cosmo Jarvis, the increasingly prominent British actor who takes the lead with the magnetic charisma of a young Gary Oldman. Working from a script adapted by Joe Murtagh from Colin Barrett's short story of the same name (included in the writer's 2014 collection *Young Skins*), Jarvis plays Douglas 'Arm' Armstrong, a former boxer now working as a hired hand for the Devers family.

In charge of this ruthless clan of drug-running mobsters is the foul Paudi (Ned Dennehy), though Arm spends more of his time with Paudi's nephew Dympna (Barry Keoghan), a weaselly individual desperate to gain favour with his powerful uncle. Shaven-headed and stacked with muscle, his knuckles permanently bruised from fighting, Arm is there to administer beatings to anyone who steps out of line.

Yet there are many further layers to Arm's troubled life – not least his relations to ex-girlfriend Ursula (Niamh Algar) and their young son Jack, who has autism. An early scene where Arm brings them a (stolen) plasma TV highlights his Neanderthal urge to provide, but also his deep insensitivity to his son's needs – Jack screams the moment it's turned on. But with Ursula dating Rob (Anthony Welsh), who works at the horse farm where they take Jack, Arm quickly finds himself in an emotional tailspin.

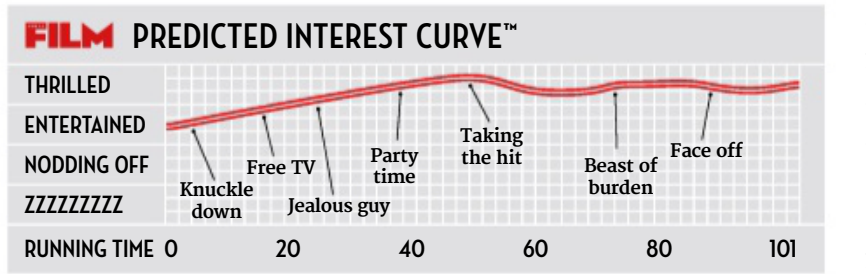
FIGHTING WITH MY FAMILY

The plot kicks well and truly into gear after word spreads about a debauched house party, where aged family friend Fannigan (Liam Carney) got so drunk that, sickeningly, he wound up in the bed of 13-year-old Charlie (Hazel Doupe), one of the Devers' offspring. The film opens with Arm dishing out retribution, smashing Fannigan's head through his own coffee table as his wife, locked in the next room, screams blue murder.

As Arm himself says in the opening voiceover, "This is my family... this is how we deal with our problems." But things soon take an even darker turn when word gets back to Paudi. He wants Arm and Dympna to take Fannigan out permanently, to save the Devers' 'honour', as he coins it. Despite his well-established penchant for brutality, Arm has never carried out a hit before. But does he have a choice? As Ursula later screams, "This is not loyalty. It's servitude."

'COSMO JARVIS TAKES THE LEAD WITH THE MAGNETIC CHARISMA OF A YOUNG GARY OLDMAN'

ALTITUDE



Like film noir, what follows feels almost inevitable – a chain of events you just know will end badly. That the plot isn't anything startlingly original doesn't really matter; Rowland pumps the film full of slow-burn atmosphere as it rolls towards its bloody climax. The final third accelerates, including a truly visceral car chase, but always keeps the story grounded.

THUGS' LIFE

Jarvis, who made a huge impression in 2016's *Lady Macbeth*, offers up a masterclass as a bruised, damaged soul, a man torn between his real family, for whom he clearly cares deeply, and the thugs who appear to have an unshakeable hold over him. His troubled relationship with his boy is particularly devastating. "Just be fucking normal!" he yells when Jack has a screaming fit at the fun fair.

Alongside Jarvis is some able support – from *American Animals* star Keoghan, who once again revels in bringing a low-life to life, to Dennehy and David Wilmot as the top brass in the Devers clan. Swirling around the film is a rumbling score from Blanck Mass (aka electronic composer Benjamin John Power), which perfectly complements the grey, overcast skies that permanently cover this part of the Emerald Isle.

Rowland, who gained valuable experience in TV directing episodes of *Ripper Street* and *Hard Sun*, also has an impressive grasp of sound. Take the moment when Thin Lizzy's version of 'Whiskey In The Jar' plays in the pub and suddenly cuts out as Dympna kicks off against a luckless lad. Or at the bar, where a coke-fuelled Arm encounters Ursula and Rob, the music draining away as Rowland skilfully plunges us into his protagonist's troubled mind.

Exploring issues of betrayal, machismo and violence – "It's just the way a fella makes sense of his world," says Arm – *Calm With Horses* never deviates from the world it so convincingly creates. It will leave you bruised but invigorated. ***James Mottram***

THE VERDICT

Tightly scripted, forcefully directed, grittily performed, this is the Irish crime film you need in your life.



Spider-Man, Star-Lord and the Invisible Man head out for a walk...

ONWARD

Pixar brings the magic...

★★★★☆ OUT 6 MARCH

CERTIFICATE TBC **DIRECTOR** Dan Scanlon
STARRING Tom Holland, Chris Pratt, Julia Louis-Dreyfus, Octavia Spencer, Ali Wong
SCREENPLAY Dan Scanlon, Jason Headley, Keith Bunin **DISTRIBUTOR** Disney
RUNNING TIME 114 min TBC

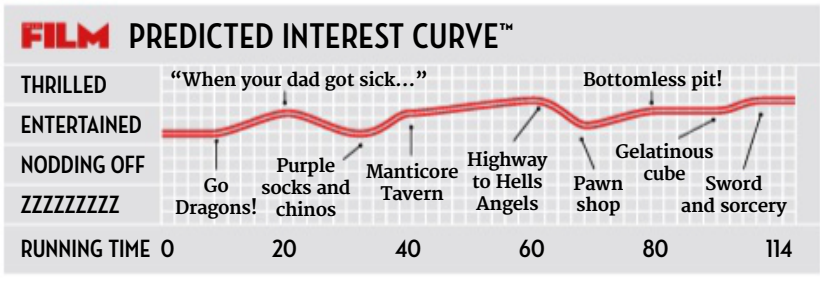
Long ago the world was full of wonder and adventure," starts the opening voiceover, going on to detail how mundanity has now replaced magic. The words are potently illustrated by dirt-streaked unicorns eating out of overturned bins, a mermaid lolling in a child's inflatable paddling pool, and an overweight cop-centaur saying, "I own a vehicle, I don't need to run." Fortunately for us, *Onward*, after a rather slow start, proves the good folk of Pixar still practise merriment and wonderment.

Opening in the fantasy (but not *too* fantasy) suburban settlement of New Mushroomton, we meet Ian and Barley Lightfoot (Tom Holland and Chris Pratt), two teenage elves who live with their mum, Laurel (Julia Louis-Dreyfus). Their father passed away when Barley was young and Ian was in the womb. But now, on his 16th birthday, Ian receives a present that his dad instructed was to be saved for this very day: a wizard's staff and a Phoenix gem. Say the included spell and their dad will materialise for 24 hours. Only the Phoenix gem breaks halfway through and their dad only appears from the waist down, meaning the brothers must urgently quest to find another magical stone in order to meet their dad's top half.

Solid but lacking Pixar's fairy-dust sparkle up until this point, *Onward* then grows ever brighter as it hits the road; like timid, straitlaced Ian, it blooms in confidence and becomes infused with magical powers. Naturally, the brothers meet all manner of colourful characters upon their journey – the Hells Angels sprites and Octavia Spencer's "winged-lion-scorpion-lady" Manticore are standouts – and multiple dangerous obstacles, including a "bottomless pit", block their true path.

Directed with verve and an eye for vivid detail by Dan Scanlon (*Monsters University*), *Onward* is one of Pixar's funniest pictures, having, in its own way, as much of a riot with the fantasy adventure genre as the Pythons did with *Holy Grail*. The Invisible Man-style gag of the brothers dressing their dad's missing top half with clothes and sunglasses is a joke that keeps on giving (the floppy 'torso' is a masterclass of physical comedy), while a couple of surprise left turns on the journey add to the liveliness. There's also a low-in-the-mix commentary on just how homogenised our world has become, and salient life lessons to be gleaned (by adults as much as kids) en route to a third act that is both thrilling and touching.

Is this A-list Pixar? No, it's several rungs below the *Toy Story* movies, *Monsters, Inc.*, *Finding Nemo*, *The Incredibles* and *Inside Out*. But it is one of the best of the rest, and that's more than good enough. ***Jamie Graham***



SEE THIS IF YOU LIKED...

RAIDERS OF THE LOST ARK *1981*
There are nods to *Raiders* and *Last Crusade* as the elves search for a treasured relic.

FIELD OF DREAMS *1989*
Costner's farmer builds a baseball pitch that attracts the ghost of his father.

UP *2009*
There will be tears... The opening montage unlocks the floodgates. Every. Damn. Time.

FOR MORE REVIEWS VISIT GAMESRADAR.COM/TOTALFILM

THE VERDICT

***Onward* builds into a galloping adventure full of amusement, excitement and enchantment.**

DISNEY, UNIVERSAL

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"Is this a bloody-great-knife which I see before me?"

SEE THIS IF YOU LIKED...

THE INVISIBLE MAN *1933*
James Whale mashes up mirth/menace for Claude Rains' reign of terror.

SLEEPING WITH THE ENEMY *1991*
Julia Roberts escapes an abusive husband in a talking-point thriller.

PARANORMAL ACTIVITY *2007*
How to make bedsheets and corridors creepy. We're not pulling your leg...

FOR MORE REVIEWS VISIT GAMESRADAR.COM/TOTALFILM

THE INVISIBLE MAN

He's behind you...

★★★★☆ OUT NOW

CERTIFICATE TBC **DIRECTOR** Leigh Whannell **STARRING** Elisabeth Moss, Storm Reid, Oliver Jackson-Cohen **SCREENPLAY** Leigh Whannell **DISTRIBUTOR** Universal **RUNNING TIME** 124 mins TBC

When it comes to genre fare, Leigh Whannell knows the value of going small. As *Saw*'s co-creator, he turned limited funds to strong advantage. And with 2018 tech-thriller *Upgrade*, he celebrated the grungy joys of lean, mean '80s sci-fi thrillers, low on budget and high on ideas.

Duly, the Aussie director is a canny choice to kickstart Universal's director-driven responses to its botched plans for a 'Dark Universe' of monster reboots. Forget *The Mummy*'s CGI-wrapped excesses. Late-third stumbles aside, Whannell's H.G. Wells overhaul emerges as a pared-back, sci-fi-tinged stalker-thriller, drawing heavily on old-school elements: unseen scares (naturally), a potent core theme and a star you can't tear your eyes off.

And no, that star is not Mr. Invisible. While previous interpretations centred on the bandaged fella, Whannell's focus alights on the emotional traumas splintering the face of Elisabeth Moss, whose Cecilia (C for short...) Kass is subjected to extreme feats of gaslighting from the titular terror.

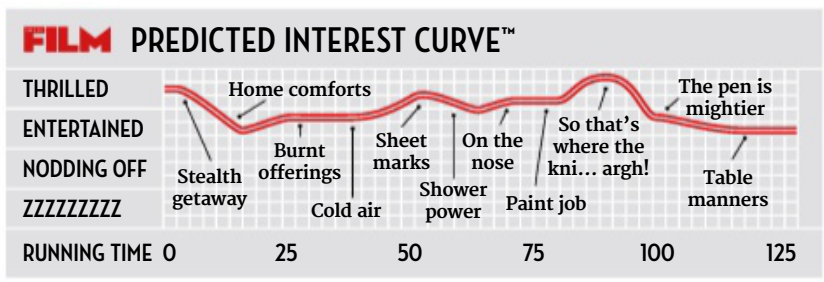
Having escaped abusive husband Adrian (Oliver Jackson-Cohen), C lives in fear until news arrives of his suicide. But why has he left her the fortune from his optics experiments? And who's leaving bum-prints on seats when she's home alone?

Ranging from panic-lashed to purposeful with expressive force, Moss gives her features a workout as someone wracked by seemingly implausible suspicions. Much of the film is practically a one-hander, though support comes from Aldis Hodge and Storm Reid as father/daughter housemates and Harriet Dyer as C's sturdy sis.

With steady character work banking our investment, Whannell tightens the screws. Dead space and dark corridors are well-used to prime our expectations; meanwhile, horror clichés are smartly tweaked to max the suspense and shock value. The bedsheet scene is ingenious, the punch out of nowhere brutal.

Other audaciously nasty twists emerge in public view, though Whannell stumbles over his confidence in the second half. Compared to Claude Rains' droll tussles with British bobbies in James Whale's 1933 adaptation, one OTT police ruckus here is unwittingly silly. And one or two elaborate developments stretch credulity.

But Moss maintains her hold on us, walking a fine line between self-certainty and nerve's-edge fear without once losing her footing. Other MVPs include Benjamin Wallfisch, whose score throbs with sustained menace, and DoP Stefan Duscio, whose deep images force us to crane in close. Where Universal's monsters are concerned, let's hope we see more of its like. ***Kevin Harley***



THE VERDICT

With Moss' brilliance in full view, this taut exercise in suspense gives Universal's monsters a jolt of life.



"You had me at '*Save The Last Dance* was severely underrated.'"

AND THEN WE DANCED

How love moves...

★★★★☆ OUT 13 MARCH

CERTIFICATE 15 **DIRECTOR** Levan Akin **STARRING** Levan Gelbakhiani, Bachi Valishvili, Ana Javakishvili, Giorgi Tsereteli **SCREENPLAY** Levan Akin **DISTRIBUTOR** Peccadillo Pictures **RUNNING TIME** 113 mins

Forbidden love is a careworn theme in gay cinema, so it's to director Levan Akin's credit that he so elegantly turns convention on its head with this heart-stopping drama about two dancers making all the right moves. Set in conservative Tbilisi, Georgia, it sees competitive dancer Merab (Levan Gelbakhiani) juggling dance classes with work and family pressures, all while attempting to do right by his girlfriend.

When handsome new student Irakli (Bachi Valishvili) pitches up, Merab is sent into an emotional tailspin, at once enthralled and irritated by the newcomer, and his inner conflict is beautifully expressed through Gelbakhiani's Disney-cartoon eyes. As Merab and Irakli circle each other on and off the dance floor, the sexual tension crackles, all lingering glances and furtive touches, and the film takes its time building up to their swan-dive into a full-blown affair.

Although the pacing is casual, the dialogue sparse, Akin's film moves with a hypnotic grace. The Swedish director excels at capturing the restrictive milieu that so muddles Merab's desire. Between Georgia's fierce dedication to tradition and the everyday poverty that sees Merab bunking on one of his grandmother's sofas, his ne'er-do-well brother on the other, *And Then We Danced* feels alluringly authentic, not least when we journey into 'gay' Tbilisi alongside Merab.

As transportive as Akin's film is, his biggest coup de grace is a narrative that knows the gay clichés and wrongfoots expectation. Come the stomping climax, Gelbakhiani dances up an emotional storm and, although its leisurely pace and lack of easy answers may irk some, this elegant and unfalteringly heartfelt drama doesn't put a foot wrong. ***Josh Winning***

THE VERDICT

This original, emotional and gorgeous drama earns its place alongside modern gay classics such as *God's Own Country*.



THE PERFECT CANDIDATE

★★★☆☆ OUT 27 MARCH

After a detour to 19th Century England for *Mary Shelley*, *Wadjda* director Haifaa Al Mansour returns to her native Saudi Arabia with this intriguing, if imperfect state-of-the-nation address. Mila Al Zahrani plays Dr Maryam, whose decision to run for local office causes consternation among the ultra-conservative patriarchy. It's a fine insight into the feminist cause in a country not known for women's rights, though the film trundles along, never really escalating in power. Al Zahrani gives a stoic performance, but it's a pity Al Mansour doesn't harness it to greater effect. ***James Mottram***



CARMILLA

★★★☆☆ OUT 3 APRIL

Inspired by a 19th Century Gothic vampire novella, and set in late-18th Century rural England, this brooding coming-of-age drama focuses on lonely, daydreaming teenager Lara (Hannah Rae). Her cocooned existence is disrupted by an unexpected house guest, a bewitching young woman who takes the name of Carmilla (Devrim Lingnau). Writer-director Emily Harris constructs a foreboding atmosphere in a world of superstition and sexual repression, exemplified by Jessica Raine's governess. Yet despite credible lead performances, *Carmilla* feels slightly circumspect in its execution. ***Tom Dawson***

PECCADILLO, MODERN FILMS, REPUBLIC FILMS, VERTIGO RELEASING, MIRACLE COMMS, STUDIOCANAL

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After paying the deposit, their budget was going to be *-this-* tight.

VIVARIUM

Home sweet home...

★★★☆☆ OUT 27 MARCH

CERTIFICATE 15 **DIRECTOR** Lorcan Finnegan **STARRING** Jesse Eisenberg, Imogen Poots, Jonathan Aris, Eanna Hardwicke **SCREENPLAY** Garret Shanley **DISTRIBUTOR** Vertigo **RUNNING TIME** 97 mins

For anyone who didn't have to study Latin at school, a 'vivarium' is an enclosed space where live animals are raised for observation or research. Its fantastical equivalent in Lorcan Finnegan's dystopian sci-fi is Yonder, a seemingly picture-perfect development whose endless avenues of identical houses offer an enticing vision of suburban bliss to those unwary enough to enter it.

Too late do would-be home-owner Tom (Jesse Eisenberg) and his girlfriend Gemma (Imogen Poots) realise Yonder is a labyrinthine prison from which they can never escape – unless they agree to rear the infant boy dumped on their doorstep by the same unseen forces that provide them with regular provisions. Said boy grows up to be an unholy terror whose high-pitched screeches and impersonations of his 'parents' drives Gemma to distraction. Tom, meanwhile, becomes obsessed with digging a hole in the garden, a literal displacement activity that makes as much sense as anything else in this Twilight Zone of deserted domesticity.

With aid from Philip Murphy's oppressively mundane production design and Kristian Eidnes Andersen's unsettling score, Irish director Finnegan presents a hellish portrait of consumerist conformity in a film that inevitably evokes the technological nightmares of Charlie Brooker's *Black Mirror*. One dazzling sequence of reality-warping dimension-hopping apart, however, *Vivarium* spends the majority of its running time in a narrative cul-de-sac, one as lacking in answers as it is in exits.

Compensations are offered by Eisenberg's nervous energy and the quiet indomitability Poots lends to her character's appalling ordeal. Don't be surprised, however, if you find yourself as desperate to leave Yonder as they are. ***Neil Smith***

THE VERDICT

Eisenberg and Poots impress in a stylish sci-fi thriller that is a little too stifled by its conceptual trappings.



THE CALL OF THE WILD

★★★☆☆ OUT NOW

It's a dog's life alright in *How To Train Your Dragon* director Chris Sanders' take on Jack London's classic 1903 tale. It stars Harrison Ford at his craggiest, but the big selling point is Terry Notary, the mo-cap maestro from the *Planet Of The Apes* reboots. He plays Buck, a domesticated St. Bernard/Scotch shepherd crossbreed who's kidnapped and sold as a sled dog – the start of an epic journey that sees him pair up with Ford's grieving loner. Smartly mixing live-action with CGI, the film is a real feat of engineering, even if the animals don't always look quite real enough. ***James Mottram***



THE ELEPHANT MAN

★★★★★ OUT 13 MARCH

It shouldn't have worked. Comedy legend Mel Brooks producing a biopic of the disabled Joseph Merrick? And directed by David Lynch, then only with cult classic *Eraserhead* to his name? These unlikely ingredients proved an inspired mix. With a career-best John Hurt noble and moving beneath ground-breaking prosthetics, the film's emotional force as a fable of humanity's best and worst remains undimmed. It's also unmistakably Lynch. His bold choices (inky monochrome images, industrial sound design) offer perhaps cinema's most distinctive, tactile vision of Victorian London. ***Simon Kinnear***



Stellan Skarsgård cameos as a Nazi officer that Kotlar meets on his journey.



CERTIFICATE 18 **DIRECTOR** Václav Marhoul **STARRING** Petr Kotlar, Stellan Skarsgård, Harvey Keitel, Barry Pepper, Julian Sands **SCREENPLAY** Václav Marhoul **DISTRIBUTOR** Eureka **RUNNING TIME** 170 mins

THE PAINTED BIRD

War child...

★★★★☆ OUT 27 MARCH

"He's a vampire," a nameless Jewish boy is told early on in Václav Marhoul's ferocious adaptation of Jerzy Kosiński's 1965 novel. After reported walkouts at festivals, Marhoul's divisive World War 2 epic has also been called many headline-grabbing things – gratuitous, pornographic, unwatchable… but its severe self-possession merits deeper consideration. As a harrowed meditation on how war erodes identity, innocence and humanity, its moral purpose is emphatic.

SEE THIS IF YOU LIKED...

IVAN'S CHILDHOOD *1962*
War is no country for young kids in Tarkovsky's transcendent feature debut.

COME AND SEE *1985*
Elem Klimov's coming-of-age war movie reimagines history as a surreal nightmare.

LORE *2012*
A teenage girl navigates post-Nazi Germany in Cate Shortland's haunting survival drama.

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With unstinting focus, Marhoul locks on to a young orphan (Petr Kotlar) as he drifts through an unnamed Eastern European country in World War 2. After the boy's screeching ferret is burnt to death before his eyes, things soon get worse when his aunt/carer dies. The adults he encounters on his subsequent journey into hell are variously cruel, savage, brutalised or deadened by experience.

Swiftly, the boy both witnesses and endures horrific atrocities. Udo Kier's jealous miller gouges out his wife's lover's eyes, which is good news for the hungry cats nearby but distressing for everyone else involved, including the viewer. A priest (Harvey Keitel) entrusts a paedophile (Julian Sands) with the boy's care; peasants accuse him of devilry and bury him neck-deep amid a circle of crows; and Júlia Vidrnáková's young woman abuses him before resorting to bestiality to stoke his jealousy. One rare case of small mercies is the episode involving hundreds of hungry, teeming rats: this horror is heard rather than seen.

The lesson involving a painted bird's suffering arrives loaded with cruel meaning, as does a sniper's pitiless act of 'generosity': played by Barry Pepper, the shooter gifts the boy a gun. Meanwhile, the boy's own behaviour after he witnesses the slaughter of a train-load of Jewish people shows what war might reduce someone to.

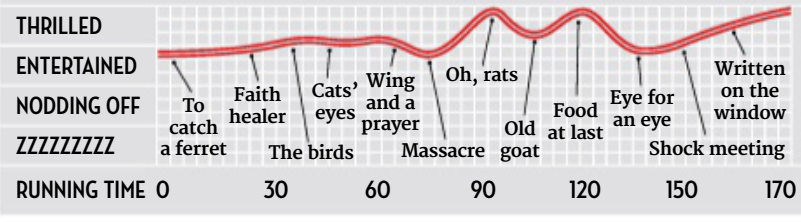
GOAT BUSTERS

Though it sounds like an endurance test, the controlled artistry of Marhoul's direction holds you tight in its grip. DoP Vladimír Smutný frames the boy's story in immaculate images, their beauty – reminiscent of arthouse giants from Andrei Tarkovsky to Béla Tarr – at pointed odds with the ugliness depicted within. The absence of a score adds to the austere pitch, as does the key of the performances. Despite several star cameos (including Stellan Skarsgård), this is no *1917*: like the impressively grave-faced Kotlar, the stars submit any whisker of vanity to Marhoul's stone-cold gaze.

The haul is undeniably long and a little repetitive, though it's fair to say the film's intention is to be just that: unrelenting, unyielding. At other times, the extremities depicted risk dipping into absurdism, particularly when a goat's grisly fate enters an already unpleasant picture. But this at least suggests that the people the boy encounters have either become severed from recognisable norms of human morality, or surrendered to their worst urges – as the boy himself may yet do.

After 170 minutes of fearing the worst, the ending lands with an affecting yet ambiguous punch. Even if hints of hope run the risk of appearing glib in this context, Marhoul recognises the value of a little light to illuminate the shadows. Meanwhile, the closing shot itself suggests something equally powerful: a faintly restorative sense of identity, haunted by a clear awareness of how swiftly and cruelly it can be wiped away. ***Kevin Harley***

FILM PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE™



THE VERDICT

Tough to watch, tougher to shake off. Marhoul's study of innocence brutalised is a demanding yet commanding experience.

EUREKA

CERTIFICATE TBC **DIRECTOR** Peter Bogdanovich **STARRING** Buster Keaton, Johnny Knoxville, Bill Hader, Quentin Tarantino **SCREENPLAY** Peter Bogdanovich **DISTRIBUTOR** Screenbound Pictures **RUNNING TIME** 102 mins TBC

THE GREAT BUSTER: A CELEBRATION

Let's get physical...

★★★★☆ OUT 20 MARCH

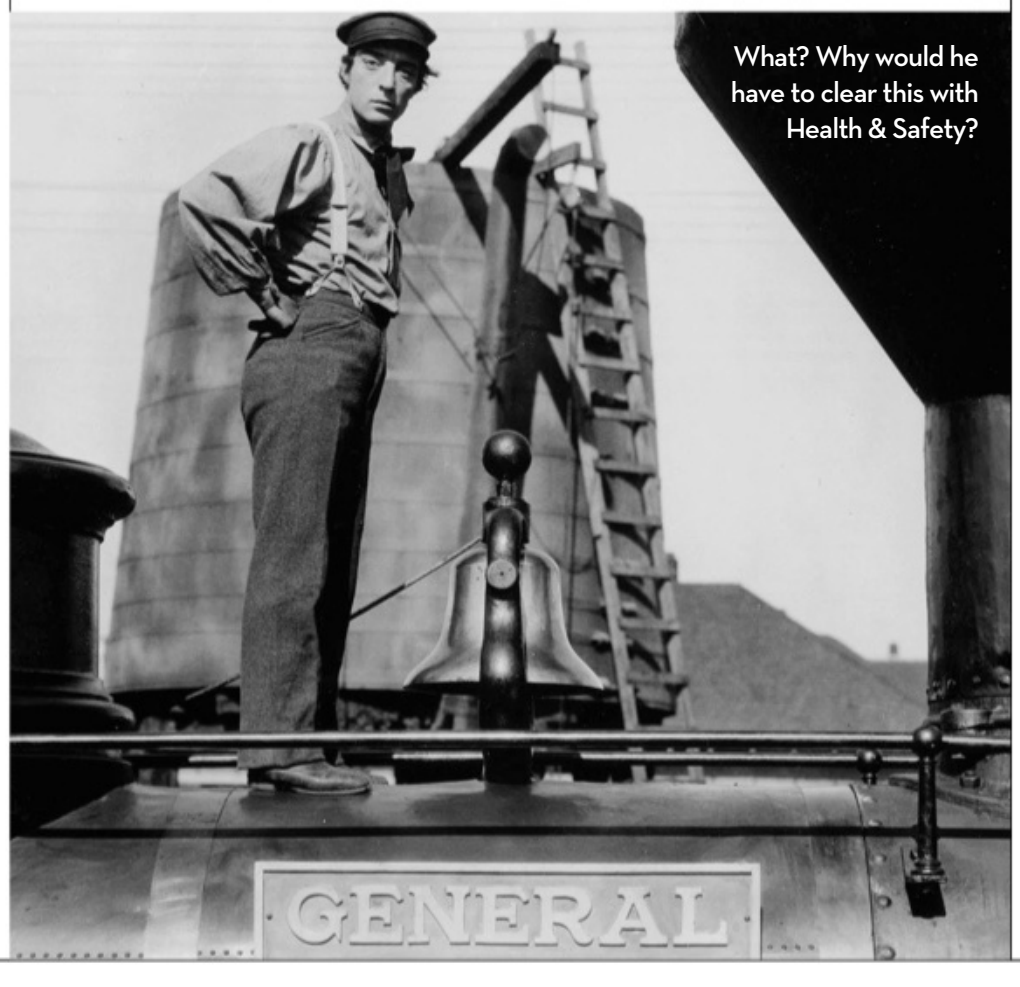
This doc by writer, director, producer, actor and all-round Hollywood authority Peter Bogdanovich makes little attempt to chisel beneath the stony surface of silent comedy icon Buster Keaton. But it makes for a strong primer to his life and work, packed with talking heads (Carl Reiner, Johnny Knoxville, Mel Brooks, Bill Hader, Quentin Tarantino) and well-chosen clips supported by Bogdanovich's contextual voiceover.

For 70 minutes, *The Great Buster* offers a chronological journey: toddler Joseph Frank Keaton (his nickname Buster was a term for a fall) being hurled about the stage by his vaudevillian parents; appearing in Fatty Arbuckle's two-reelers; making his own shorts; writing, directing and starring in 10 ace features between 1923-28; losing his independence when he moved to MGM; and the drinking, failed marriages and fitful work (from commercials and *Candid Camera* to *Sunset Boulevard*) in the sound era, until his death, aged 70, in 1966.

The final half hour, however, uses Keaton's honorary Oscar in 1960 and his Venice Film Festival award in 1965 to rewind to those incredibly fertile years in the '20s. Bogdanovich focuses on slapstick classics like *Our Hospitality*, *Sherlock Jr.* and *Steamboat Bill, Jr.*, while particular attention is rightly awarded to his stunt-packed Civil War masterpiece *The General* (1926). "The great stone-face had made a dark comedy before that term existed," says Bogdanovich, while Tarantino describes it as "one of the great action movies." ***Jamie Graham***

THE VERDICT

Crazier than Cruise, and funnier than Murray. Watch this and then all of Keaton's movies.



What? Why would he have to clear this with Health & Safety?


Marie was going to glow with joy at her surprise.

CERTIFICATE 12A **DIRECTOR** Marjane Satrapi **STARRING** Rosamund Pike, Anya Taylor-Joy, Aneurin Barnard, Sam Riley **SCREENPLAY** Jack Thorne **DISTRIBUTOR** StudioCanal **RUNNING TIME** 110 mins

RADIOACTIVE

Unstable elements...

★★★☆☆ OUT 20 MARCH

With her debut feature *Persepolis* (2008), Marjane Satrapi adapted her comic-strip autobiography into a frequently inspired portrait of her teen-rebel years. Twelve years on, Satrapi's riff on Lauren Redniss' illustrated Marie Curie biography is another portrait of a convention-busting outsider, albeit one intermittently hobbled by genre cliché.

The controlling element is Rosamund Pike; her commanding presence humanises the tenacious Curie (née Maria Skłodowska) without softening her combative edges. Despite Jack Thorne's sometimes on-the-nose script, *Radioactive* is crystal-clear on Curie's battles in male-led science institutions. Her marriage to fellow scientist Pierre Curie (Sam Riley) adds romantic chemistry to the setup. But Satrapi's main focus becomes Curie's discoveries of polonium and radium.

Although Satrapi clutters the film's lab space with biographical montages, she fares better with bold flashes forward to the effects of Curie's discoveries. Chemotherapy, Hiroshima, Chernobyl and even radioactive toothpaste enter a wide-ranging mix. Satrapi doesn't simplify Curie's findings, and DoP Anthony Dod Mantle's retro-modern images and Evgueni and Sacha Galperine's score blur past/present divides.

If the plotting plods with the introduction of Curie's daughter (Anya Taylor-Joy), compensations for Satrapi's broad biographical sweep aren't lacking. With Curie neither damned nor deified, *Radioactive* stands as a flawed but searching anatomisation of a complex's woman's work: even its contradictions come laced with intelligence. ***Kevin Harley***

THE VERDICT

Biopic stodge aside, Satrapi's Curie portrait doesn't lack ideas. Pike is bristlingly brilliant.

SCREENBOUND PICTURES, STUDIOCANAL, DOGWOOF, MUBI, MIRACLE COMMS, UNIVERSAL, VERVE



CUNNINGHAM

★★★★☆ OUT 13 MARCH

A documentary featuring interviews and archive footage might not seem like an obvious fit for 3D, but filmmaker Alla Kovgan uses the extra dimension to bring to life the trailblazing creativity of modern dance artist and choreographer Merce Cunningham. Kovgan tracks his career from solitary performer in 1944 to celebrated avant-garde artist in 1972, weaving in present-day performances re-enacting his work. Imaginative on-screen notations and clever frame-within-frame depth perception help to make this an immersive experience, doing justice to Cunningham's own inspiring innovations in the process. ***Matt Looker***



BACURAU

★★★☆☆ OUT 13 MARCH

Kleber Mendonça Filho (*Aquarius*) teams up with his production designer Juliano Dornelles to co-direct this Carpenter-inspired oddity. In the near-future, a rural Brazilian town is beset by strange goings on, not least disappearing from all maps. Worse still, the townsfolk – including Bárbara Colen's returnee – are targets for bloodthirsty tourists, led by Udo Kier's ruthless German. Musing on how dispensable people can be, in a world where human life can be sold for currency, *Bacurau*'s curious mix of satire and savagery obscures its meaning as it lurches towards a bloody, bullet-riddled conclusion. ***James Mottram***



IMMORTAL HERO

★☆☆☆☆ OUT 6 MARCH

When a businessman falls ill with a life-threatening affliction, he communes with angelic beings, self-heals and emerges as a global spiritual leader. Based on the allegedly true story of Ryuho Okawa, this fictionalised account of his life is a queasy amalgam of faith film, soap opera and propaganda. Okawa's "Happy Science" religious group – which also produced the film – have been labelled a cult by some, and given the messianic claims here that's an understandable concern. In any event, the result is dreadful: unintentionally hilarious, painfully earnest, and for true believers only. ***Tim Coleman***



THE AUSTRALIAN DREAM

★★★★☆ OUT 27 MARCH

Directed by British filmmaker Daniel Gordon and scripted by Indigenous Australian journalist Stan Grant, this timely doc tells the story of Aussie rules football star Adam Goodes. When the latter, who was raised by a single Aboriginal mother, stood up to racist abuse from a spectator during a game in 2015, he became subject to shocking vilification, eventually forcing him to retire. Incorporating a range of interviewees, alongside Goodes' trip to his ancestral lands, *The Australian Dream* examines the traumatic history that has forged Australia's racial and national identity. ***Tom Dawson***



THE PHOTOGRAPH

★★★★☆ OUT 6 MARCH

Writer-director Stella Meghie conjures a charming romantic drama about a grieving museum curator, Mea Morton (Issa Rae), reeling from the recent death of her mother, and Michael Block (LaKeith Stanfield), a lothario newspaper journalist who meets her while researching her mum's photographs. Unlike the glossy surface shmaltz of many films of this genre, *The Photograph* digs deep into Rae's complicated character and slides back and forth in time to elegantly tell its story. It's gorgeous to look at, frequently funny, and boasts a standout performance from Lil Rel Howery as Michael's wisecracking brother. ***Ken McIntyre***



THE UNCERTAIN KINGDOM

★★★☆☆ OUT 3 APRIL

Given how the recent BAFTA nominations prompted questions about the lack of diversity in the British film industry, this anthology of 20 shorts exploring our disunited kingdom (and related themes of identity and belonging) is a timely release. The collection splits into three categories – fictions, documentaries, experimenta – with the filmmakers drawing on a range of visual styles, settings and unfamiliar protagonists. Standouts include Ray Panthaki's troubling *Ernie*, in which a middle-aged school caretaker is bullied by his racist father, and Carol Salter's shame-inducing *Left Coast*, which observes the work of food-bank volunteers in out-of-season Blackpool. ***Tom Dawson***



"I'm really not sure the kitchen is the best place for a waltz, darling."

THE TRUTH

Thanks for the mum-eries...

★★★★☆ OUT 20 MARCH

CERTIFICATE PG **DIRECTOR** Hirokazu Kore-eda **STARRING** Catherine Deneuve, Juliette Binoche, Ethan Hawke, Ludivine Sagnier, Manon Clavel **SCREENPLAY** Hirokazu Kore-eda **DISTRIBUTOR** Curzon **RUNNING TIME** 107 mins

After winning the Palme d'Or in Cannes for 2018's *Shoplifters*, Japan's Hirokazu Kore-eda has done what any auteur should do in that situation: go big. His first film outside his native Japan, *The Truth* sees him take his brand of nuanced cinema international, working with two European heavyweights in the form of Catherine Deneuve and Juliette Binoche – not to mention Ethan Hawke – in a teasing Parisian confection.

Deneuve plays Fabienne Dangeville, a diva of French cinema who has just published a rather self-serving memoir titled *The Truth*. In it, she somewhat stretches the, er, truth as she sugar-coats her relationship with her daughter Lumir, played as an adult by Binoche. Now a screenwriter, Lumir has been living in America with her husband, Hank (Hawke), a middling television actor fresh out of rehab, and their bilingual daughter, Charlotte (Clémentine Grenier).

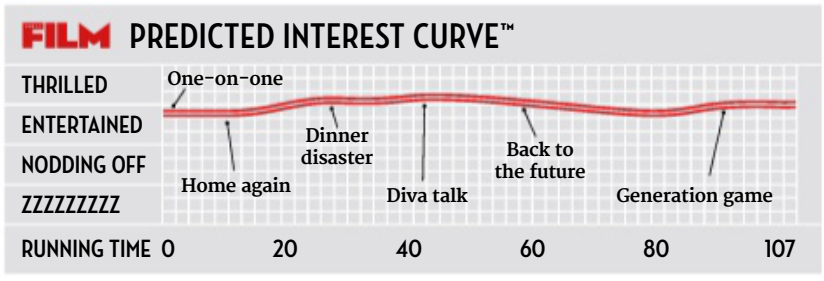
Lumir and her family are back in Paris to visit Fabienne for what is clearly going to be an uncomfortable European vacation. Fabienne thinks more of her fans than she does of her daughter (despite claiming in her book, falsely, that she used to love picking up young Lumir from school every day). Hank, who doesn't speak French, simply looks on bemused as mother and daughter scrape and scratch at each other.

Developed from an unproduced Kore-eda play dating back to 2003, *The Truth* adds layers on layers as the story unfolds. Much of this comes through a sci-fi movie about an ailing mother that Fabienne is shooting. It co-stars a young woman named Manon (Manon Clavel), whose presence recalls a performer from Fabienne's past who was both something of a surrogate mother figure to Lumir and a rival to her mother.

While this area of the script lacks clarity, Kore-eda more than makes up for it in his depiction of Fabienne, with Deneuve delivering a glorious turn. Right from the opening scene, as she dismisses dull questions from a fawning journalist in an interview, her rampant ego is hilarious. "I'd prefer to have been a bad mother and a bad friend but a good actress," she says, though it's entirely possible she's none of these things.

Featuring support from Ludivine Sagnier, who pops up during the film-within-a-film sequence, and Roger van Hool, a hoot as Fabienne's eccentric ex, the result is a delicate meditation on the nature of truth and memory. Even if the French-language setting dilutes some of Kore-eda's power, it is still a finely weighted family drama, laced with some juicy comic asides – and that's the truth.

James Mottram



SEE THIS IF YOU LIKED...

BEFORE SUNSET *2004*
Hawke and Julie Delpy talk life and love in Linklater's Parisian masterpiece.

CLOUDS OF SILS MARIA *2014*
Binoche and Kristen Stewart dive headfirst into a sly look at actorly egos.

SHOPLIFTERS *2018*
Kore-eda's Cannes winner is another small-scale gem about fractured families.

FOR MORE REVIEWS VISIT GAMESRADAR.COM/TOTALFILM

THE VERDICT

Playful, light, tack-sharp, *The Truth* may not touch Kore-eda's finest but it's a classy study of familial discord.

CURZON, PICTUREHOUSE ENTERTAINMENT, DISNEY/FOX

CERTIFICATE 18 **DIRECTOR** Johannes Nyholm **STARRING** Leif Edlund, Ylva Gallon, Peter Belli **SCREENPLAY** Johannes Nyholm **DISTRIBUTOR** Picturehouse Entertainment **RUNNING TIME** 85 mins

KOKO-DI KOKO-DA

Groundhog slay...

★★★☆☆ OUT 27 MARCH

Written, directed, produced and edited by Swedish oddbod Johannes Nyholm (*The Giant*), *Koko-di Koko-da* is a continuation of his 2017 short *The Music Box*. Though it's been billed as *The Babadook* meets *Groundhog Day*, don't be fooled – that's a better description of plot than quality.

After their daughter dies in a bizarre shellfish-related incident, grieving couple Elin (Ylva Gallon) and Tobias (Leif Edlund) go on the world's worst camping trip. When Elin gets up to pee in the night, she is attacked by a trio of sinister fantasy figures lead by Peter Belli's smirking Child Catcher-alike ("Koko-di Koko-da" is their circus-style theme song). The trio kill her and incapacitate him, and the sequence starts over again, repeating in hellish circles while the couple try all the different possible permutations of action in order to escape, most of which end with her dead and him getting shot in the balls.

Yep, it's a metaphor for grieving, although how to explain the beautiful if ultimately exasperating animation which ekes things out to feature length is another matter. The couple's plight becomes tense through a kind of filmic Stockholm Syndrome, and there's a lovely score by Olof Cornéer and Simon Ohlsson. But for all the skill and invention on display, you can't escape the feeling it might have worked better as a(nother) short rather than feature length. Though spooky and striking, it sometimes tips over from freaky to wacky. Like Elin and Tobias, you end up just wanting to go home. ***Matt Glasby***

THE VERDICT

Though it sometimes feels padded, there's Lynchian ambition at work here.



It was only at this point that he realised he'd forgotten the ground sheet.



Their desperate search for the hair straighteners continued.

CERTIFICATE 15 **DIRECTOR** Jeff Wadlow **STARRING** Lucy Hale, Maggie Q, Charlotte McKinney, Michael Peña, Michael Rooker **SCREENPLAY** Jillian Jacobs, Christopher Roach, Jeff Wadlow **DISTRIBUTOR** Sony **RUNNING TIME** 109 mins

FANTASY ISLAND

Wish you weren't here...

★★☆☆☆ OUT 6 MARCH

There is something deliciously audacious about low-budget scream factory Blumhouse Productions reimagining a '70s-era TV show for teenage casual horror fans in 2020.

The show – a weekly hour-long anthology about a resort island that allows well-heeled visitors the opportunity to live out their dreams, with twisty, *Twilight Zone*-esque results – is already a dim memory among even Gen X pop-culture obsessives, and is now remembered mostly for the white suits of the hosts, and Hervé Villechaize's infamous "De plane! De plane!" line. If ever there was a time for *Fantasy Island The Movie*, it was 1983, not now. But here we are. The reboot brands itself as an edgy horror movie, but is actually as bloodless and muted as the original TV show.

This version stars Michael Peña as the enigmatic weaver-of-dreams Mr. Roarke, who concocts elaborate wish-fulfillment scenarios for his guests based on one-page questionnaires. Said guests include Lucy Hale as a woman seeking revenge on a childhood bully, Maggie Q as a lonelyheart desperate to reunite with the one who got away, and a couple of others with even less compelling stories. They play out in a tone that's half-comedy, half slasher-lite, and mostly deathly dull. The sole bright spot in the turgid script is the addition of Michael Rooker as a private investigator, combing the island for clues to its mysterious secrets. But even that implodes. ***Ken McIntyre***

THE VERDICT

The '70s anthology series gets a freshly scrubbed, wannabe-edgy reboot but will be nobody's desert-island film.



Those awkward marital moments when you realise they left you for dead.

DOWNHILL

Piste de résistance...

★★★★☆ OUT NOW

An all-American family suffers a meltdown in the Austrian Alps in this US remake of Ruben Östlund's *Force Majeure*, here retooled by co-directors Nat Faxon and Jim Rash as a brittle comedy of marital manners.

The catalyst, as in the 2014 original, is a controlled avalanche that fleetingly seems to spell disaster for Pete (Will Ferrell), Billie (Julia Louis-Dreyfus) and their two sons as they sit down for lunch on the second day of their dream skiing vacation. When the snow dust settles, Billie is stunned to discover that Pete was more interested in preserving his own skin (and mobile phone) than protecting his family – a revelation that puts their entire existence on the slipperiest of slopes.

With help from co-writer Jesse Armstrong (*Succession*) and Louis-Dreyfus' trademark vexation, Faxon and Rash (who co-helmed 2013's *The Way Way Back*) plumb their apocalyptic scenario for all the queasy laughs they can – notably in the squirm-inducing scene where Billie exposes her husband's cowardice while two visiting friends (Zach Woods and Zoë Chao) watch on. It's a pity, then, that they feel the need to introduce characters such as Miranda Otto's randy hotelier and Giulio Berruti's studly ski instructor, two cliched creations that seem to have been airlifted in from some adolescent sex farce.

For the most part, though, *Downhill* works admirably as a pointed dissection of mid-life crisis that serves as both an effective vehicle for its well-partnered leads and a scenic advertisement for frosty getaways. It's also nice to see the original film's Kristofer Hivju (and his beard) make a cameo appearance as a safety official who couldn't be less concerned with his foreign guests' complaints. ***Neil Smith***

CERTIFICATE 15 **DIRECTORS** Nat Faxon, Jim Rash **STARRING** Will Ferrell, Julia Louis-Dreyfus **SCREENPLAY** Nat Faxon, Jim Rash, Jesse Armstrong **DISTRIBUTOR** Disney **RUNNING TIME** 86 mins

THE VERDICT

A rib-bothering riff on an arthouse fave that swaps its emotional intensity for humorous anxiety.



DOGS DON'T WEAR PANTS

★★★★☆ OUT 20 MARCH

The 'dog' is Juha (Pekka Strang), a surgeon and father, still paralysed by the drowning of his wife years earlier. When his teen daughter gets her tongue pierced in a local tattoo parlour, he encounters Mona (Krista Kosonen), a dominatrix who works out of the basement. Secretly, he begins to see this leather-clad mystery woman, finding release in increasingly dangerous asphyxiation games. Writer/director J-P Valkeapää uses the characters' BDSM connection to explore grief and pain in a potent way. It may be too kinky for some, but there's honesty and humour here. ***James Mottram***



NICK MASON'S SAUCERFUL OF SECRETS

★★★☆☆ OUT 10 MARCH

Pink Floyd's drummer focuses on his old band's lesser-visited 1967-72 era in a relatively intimate concert film from London's Roundhouse. A few fish-eye-lens tricks aside, spectacle is sidelined. Instead, the warmth between Mason's bandmates – including Spandau Ballet's Gary Kemp: WTF? – takes the strain as they dip into variably psychedelic, whimsical and rocking deep cuts. The pay-off is an amiable fan-pleaser, though it perhaps goes without saying that airings of 'Vegetable Man' and 'Lucifer Sam' are for die-hards only. ***Kevin Harley***

DISNEY/FOX, ANTI-WORLDS RELEASING, HOME ARTIST FILM, SECOND RUN, 606 DISTRIBUTION, VERVE PICTURES

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Don't expect bright sunshine and musical numbers, that's all we're saying.

VITALINA VARELA

Shadow play...

★★★★☆ OUT 6 MARCH

CERTIFICATE 12A **DIRECTOR** Pedro Costa **STARRING** Vitalina Varela, Ventura, Manuel Tavares Almeida **SCREENPLAY** Pedro Costa, Vitalina Varela **DISTRIBUTOR** Second Run **RUNNING TIME** 125 mins

Like many great directors, Pedro Costa creates a world of his own – and navigates it at his own pace too. The Portuguese auteur's latest is solemn to the point of severity, but it reiterates what a distinct register he's working in. An austere meditation on loss, poverty and existential ennui, its demands on your attention are rewarded in stealthy accretions of quiet potency. You feel as if you're watching something utterly unique unfold.

Named after its lead actor and character (who also appeared in Costa's 2015 film *Horse Money*), *Vitalina* begins with stooped figures shuffling like zombies down a black passageway. Then it gets darker and slower… Patience is required, then earned as we meet Vitalina, a woman returned from Cape Verde to the Fontainhas slums – Costa's favoured locale – to bury the husband who deserted her.

As hushed reflections on grief, recrimination and battered belief follow, Costa's near-ceremonial direction summons a liturgical intensity. Characters sit shrouded in darkness, barely lit, like penitents in eternal confession booths. DoP Leonardo Simões conjures miracles of shadow-drenched, deep-focus suggestion; between the dense images and ominous mood, you could almost call it 'elevated horror'.

Varela herself is a magnetic presence, matched by Costa regular Ventura as a priest of frail faith. Costa offers no platitudes about grief, instead favouring whispered, questioning poetic asides. Though sometimes too opaque for its own good, the result emerges as an artful reverie on struggle and endurance, heightened to a point of abstraction in which every detail counts: when light or colour are glimpsed, the impact verges on revelatory. ***Kevin Harley***

THE VERDICT

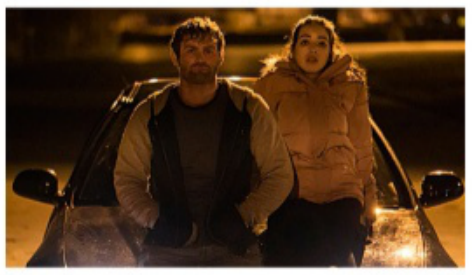
Costa's stark meditation on death, doubt and deprivation throbs with a controlled, cumulative power.



SYSTEM CRASHER

★★★★☆ OUT 27 MARCH

Evoking Ken Loach at his fiercest, Nora Fingscheidt's feature debut is an attention-grabbing take on the German child-welfare system. Abandoned by her mother, who can't cope with her outbursts, nine-year-old Benni (Helena Zengel) is pinballed around social services – a case study in how not to cope with troubled children. Zengel is extraordinary to watch in a film that – at least until the final frame – rigorously ploughs the social-realist furrow. Fingscheidt's doc background evidently stood her in good stead: this is a scrupulously researched drama, and ultimately heartbreaking. ***James Mottram***



RUN

★★★☆☆ OUT 13 MARCH

After *Blinded By The Light*, *Western Stars* and *Thunder Road*, contemporary cinema's obsession with all things Springsteen continues with this tale of a Scottish fish-gutter whose Boss-stoked desire to quit his small town intensifies when he learns his son is repeating his own mistakes. Stealing the keys to the boy racer's roadster, Finnie (Mark Stanley) takes to the streets for a nocturnal jaunt with his son's pregnant girlfriend (Marli Siu) in the passenger seat. The rain-flecked meanderings that ensue in Scott Graham's road movie have a bleak poetry, which doesn't quite make up for a paucity of drama and incident. ***Neil Smith***



Movie Sonic: now 110% less creepy.

SONIC THE HEDGEHOG

The fast and the furriest...

CERTIFICATE PG **DIRECTOR** Jeff Fowler **STARRING** Ben Schwartz (voice), Jim Carrey, James Marsden, Tika Sumpter **SCREENPLAY** Patrick Casey, Josh Miller **DISTRIBUTOR** Paramount **RUNNING TIME** 99 mins

★★★☆☆ OUT NOW

A speed demon he may be, but Sonic has had a laboured journey to cinemas. Delayed after the character's initial design met with revulsion, early signs were not promising. But the tireless work of VFX artists has not been in vain. *Sonic* won't trouble any best-of-year lists, but it exceeds the low expectations it started with.

Raised on an alien planet, Sonic's abilities are unique among his species. When discovered, the blue blur (voiced by Ben Schwartz) teleports to Montana, where cop Tom (James Marsden) dreams of a meaningful assignment. He gets one when Sonic causes a blackout, prompting the government to bring in their top tech man: sociopathic genius Dr. Robotnik (Jim Carrey).

Predictably, the script rarely rises above functional. But while *Detective Pikachu* had one eye on middle-aged audiences, *Sonic* aims younger, emulating the colourful nature of its 'hog. The appeal for older viewers is nostalgia, especially when it comes to Jim Carrey, whose performance is like the missing link between *Ace Ventura* and *The Mask*. If you can sanction his boundless buffoonery, he's a scene-stealing treat.

For a film that could have coasted on farts and flossin', there are flashes of creativity. A bar fight features a family-friendly spin on the Quicksilver scene in *X-Men: Days Of Future Past*, while Dr Robotnik's murder-bots are effectively deployed in a chase sequence.

Ending with two mid-credits scenes that confirm sequel intentions, *Sonic* should have fans doing loop-the-loops. Casual viewers' hearts might not race – but on the basis of this better-than-expected first instalment, further fast times wouldn't necessarily be a bad thing. ***Jordan Farley***

THE VERDICT

A relic of the '90s, *Sonic* offers frenetic fun for kids, and in Carrey an enjoyable shot of nostalgia for adults.



FIRE WILL COME

★★★☆☆ OUT 20 MARCH

When arsonist Amador (Amador Arias) returns home following a stint in prison for incinerating an entire mountain, his community regards him with suspicion. However, despite the affection of his elderly mother (Benedicta Sánchez) and the rhythms of country living, the film's title hangs over him like a doom-laden portent. Oliver Laxe's Galician drama was awarded the Un Certain Regard prize at last year's Cannes. But even with naturalistic performances from the non-pro cast, a brooding mood and elegiac lensing, the film remains oddly muted until the inevitable, infernal finale. ***Tim Coleman***



ASTRONAUT

★★☆☆☆ OUT 20 MARCH

Facing ill health and life in an old folks' home, retired civil engineer Angus (Richard Dreyfuss) has one dream: to fly into space. A competition to win a seat on a commercial shuttle might give him that chance, but he'll have to fake his age. Shelagh McLeod's drama trades heavily on its star's history, with a sad, shuffling Dreyfuss inevitably drawing comparison with the boyish enthusiasm of *Close Encounters*' Roy. Otherwise, it's an earnest but underpowered reminder never to underestimate the elderly. The sluggish pace isn't helped by the plot relying on – of all things – Angus' expert knowledge of limestone. ***Simon Kinnear***

PARAMOUNT, NEW WAVE, PARKLAND ENTERTAINMENT

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BIRDS OF PREY
After we needed cranes and crowbars to cram it into our last ish, *Birds*' full title got trimmed for release. Not sure we want name changes becoming a trend: what if *Cats* gets reissued as *Tenet*?



SONIC THE HEDGEHOG
Another fibby title, another change. *Sonic*'s makers rejigged their not-a-hedgehog after viewers got scared of his teeth, little knowing that Jim Carrey actually groin-dances on-screen. Shudder.



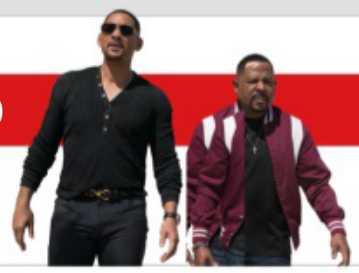
FANTASY ISLAND
After Blumhouse's horror twist on a family-friendly title, what next? Expect *In The Midsommar Night Garden*, *It 3: Mr. Tumble Rises* and *The Secret Life Of Sematary Pets* to scarify playgrounds soon.

UK TOP 10



Pos	FILM	THIS MONTH	SINCE RELEASE	WEEKS OUT
1	**1917** ★★★★	£20.8M	£39.2M	6
2	**BAD BOYS FOR LIFE** ★★★	£10.6M	£14.4M	5
3	**DOLITTLE** ★	£8.2M	£8.2M	2
4	**BIRDS OF PREY** ★★★★	£5.8M	£5.8M	2
5	**THE PERSONAL HISTORY OF DAVID COPPERFIELD** ★★★★	£5.7M	£5.7M	4
6	**PARASITE** ★★★★★	£5.1M	£5.1M	2
7	**LITTLE WOMEN** ★★★★	£4.9M	£21.3M	8
8	**SONIC THE HEDGEHOG** ★★★	£4.7M	£4.7M	1
9	**THE GENTLEMEN** ★★★	£3.6M	£11.5M	7
10	**EMMA** ★★★	£1.6M	£1.6M	1

US TOP 10



Pos	FILM	THIS MONTH	SINCE RELEASE	WEEKS OUT
1	**BAD BOYS FOR LIFE** ★★★	$122.1M	$181.3M	5
2	**1917** ★★★★	$67.6M	$144.4M	8
3	**BIRDS OF PREY** ★★★★	$59.3M	$59.3M	2
4	**SONIC THE HEDGEHOG** ★★★	$57M	$57M	1
5	**DOLITTLE** ★	$48M	$70.5M	5
6	**JUMANJI: THE NEXT LEVEL** ★★★	$35.2M	$305.7M	10
7	**THE GENTLEMEN** ★★★	$31.3M	$31.3M	4
8	**STAR WARS: THE RISE OF SKYWALKER** ★★★★	$20.8M	$512.8M	9
9	**LITTLE WOMEN** ★★★★	$20.7M	$105.3M	8
10	**FANTASY ISLAND** ★★	$12.4M	$12.4M	1



PARASITE
Two families + one cast-iron Korean genius = four Oscars. Excuse our maths, but Bong Joon Ho's beauty excited us so much we've set up a five-decade no-spoilers rule. The first rule of *Parasite* club...



THE PERSONAL HISTORY OF DAVID COPPERFIELD
The absence of Dora's fate may have upset hardcore Dickensians, but imagine our surprise when Dev Patel didn't even make the Statue Of Liberty vanish.



EMMA
Pity *The Witch*'s Anya Taylor-Joy didn't bring along some talking goats, but *Emma* at least satisfied various baseline period-pic requirements: nice balls, crisp dialogue, Bill Nighy falling asleep...

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



NO TIME TO DIE OUT 2 APRIL

What a difference five years makes. Since *Spectre*, Bond's love life has flatlined and his gammy knee has become fair game for mockery. Harsh, and there's more: can he stop Christoph Waltz and Rami Malek waving their Oscars at him? Take the Aston to p54 for our full-access feature.



THE NEW MUTANTS OUT 8 APRIL
So, what is it: *FoX-Men* overhang, stealth MCU segue, or YA standalone? Find out as Josh Boone's mutant horror finally lands, making unlike Quicksilver two years after its planned release. Map its evolutionary curve on page 9.



THE SECRET GARDEN OUT 10 APRIL
With Hogwarts alumni on-hand (Julie Walters; producer David Heyman), expect some magic in the mandrakes for this latest adaptation of the 1911 kids'-lit classic. Writer Jack Thorne shares script-pruning tips, starting on page 84.



FINDING THE WAY BACK OUT 24 APRIL
Ben Affleck's post-DCEU return begins with a drama about an ex-basketball player's bid for renewed purpose as a coach. Metaphorical, much? Redemptive-sports-drama feels await under *The Accountant* director Gavin O'Connor's watch.

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BOND

After 14 years, cinema's longest-serving 007 is packing away his Walther PPK for good. Across two film sets, three countries and with level 5 security access to Daniel Craig, Cary Joji Fukunaga and MI6's finest, Total Film reveals the inside story of No Time To Die – the film sending Craig's Bond out with a bang. WORDS JORDAN FARLEY



REVIEW

IT'S ALL OVER

Daniel Craig is sitting across from *Total Film* in a New York hotel, but his mind has wandered to 2015. When the credits rolled on the 24th Bond film, *Spectre*, Craig watched as the traditional sign-off 'JAMES BOND WILL RETURN' triumphantly flashed on the screen. But the then 47-year-old Craig had no intention of making a comeback. "I thought I probably was physically not capable of doing another," says Craig who, on top of a punishing six-month shoot, tore the meniscus in his knee during filming. "For me, it was very cut and dried that I wasn't coming back."

"He was so exhausted after that film," recalls Barbara Broccoli, daughter of Albert R. "Cubby" Broccoli who, alongside her half-brother Michael G. Wilson, runs Eon Productions, and has produced every Bond film since 1995's *GoldenEye*. "We'd had our own trials and tribulations on *Spectre*, and [*Daniel*] had a massive injury. It was very difficult. So he just needed some time."

Broccoli and Wilson waited. Almost two years, in fact, before approaching Craig about returning for one final mission. A break was exactly what the doctor ordered. "I went and did other things. I got some separation. My family forgave me for being away from home for that length of time," Craig smiles, clearly in high spirits as he embarks on his final Bond press tour. "We started talking about it and I went, 'There might be a story we need to finish here – something we started in *Casino* [Royale]. Something to do with Vesper, and Spectre, and something that was connected, in a way.' It started to formulate. And I thought, 'Here we go.'"

Two and a half years after Craig's welcome epiphany, and with just nine days of filming left to go, *TF* is standing in the vast Richard Attenborough soundstage at Pinewood. To our left, second unit is shooting close-ups of a parked Aston Martin DB5 for use as inserts during the film's Matera chase sequence. To the right, production has constructed a Jamaican nightclub bathed in dirty blue light and packed with clubbers dancing to music that drops to near-silence whenever the cameras roll. In real life and on film, it's five years since Bond drove off into the sunset with Madeleine Swann, and a very much retired, very much single James is merrily knocking back drinks with Jeffrey Wright's Felix Leiter and Billy Magnussen's fellow CIA spook Ash.

It may be Leiter's first on-screen appearance since *Quantum Of Solace*, but the old friends waste no time picking up where they left off. "We wanted to establish what is at the core of this relationship between them, which is this brotherhood," says Wright, who amusingly describes his approach to playing Leiter simply as "trying to be as absolutely cool as you fucking possibly can". Wright was there before the beginning – the pair were filming *The Invasion* when Craig got the call that he was the next Bond – and he had no intention of missing his old friend's swansong. "The surprise for me was to not be called in the previous two!" Wright chuckles in a voice that sounds like it's been dragged over gravel. "But it gives more weight to Felix's appearances if we don't see him too often."

Between rounds of Three Coin Spoof – a game Craig's pub landlord father taught him – Leiter makes it clear that the purpose of his appearance in Jamaica is business, not pleasure. "Do something for us," says Leiter, leaning in. "Pick up a package in Cuba." The package, it transpires, isn't his wayward Amazon delivery but a person – Waldo Obechev. "Didn't he defect during your time at MI6?" Ash chimes in. "Never

'WE STARTED TALKING AND I WENT, "THERE MIGHT BE A STORY WE NEED TO FINISH HERE..."'

DANIEL CRAIG



NO TIME TO DIE



NEVER SAY NEVER
Daniel Craig returns to his most famous role one final time.



Face off

Costume designer **Suttirat Anne Larlarb** on Safin's remarkable mask...

"There's a scene where we first introduce [*Safin*]. It had originally been written with him and a henchmen, and they both had masks, and the original mask idea was something completely different [*based on Siberian bear-hunting armour*]. We went through a whole process of custom-making that, but the thing that Cary pointed out about that very spiky mask, was the expression beneath the spikes, it had this creepy serenity to it. An image of a Noh mask came to mind for the second mask, it's got that same serenity; it's almost expressionless and so pure in its execution, it's really elemental, it doesn't give away anything. It was a good foil to that other mask, but still felt in the same world. As we got closer to shooting it became clear the first mask was doing too much of the work at that point in the film, and maybe the aggression we were looking for needed to be not so literally in your face. In the end Cary cut the henchmen out of that scene, and was like, 'Could you try and make that other costume work?' We had to completely re-tailor it, completely re-size the [*Noh*] mask, but it ended up being the right decision. And it ended up becoming something we kept harkening back to when we moved forward with Rami's character. It became a touchstone for everything that happened after with his look, so it was a happy accident." ***JF***

heard of him," says a visibly indifferent Bond, who tries to keep the party going. But things suddenly turn serious when Leiter drops the S-bomb: Spectre. "It'll be like old times..." Leiter adds. A glare. "My round," Bond says, before walking off, and back into a world he thought he'd left behind.

"He's got built into him this need to defeat evil," says Neal Purvis who, alongside Robert Wade, has a writing credit on every one of Craig's Bonds. "So it's intriguing when you come back, and he's not really an agent in this one, and how you deal with that. Despite wanting to relax and fish and hang out in bars, if trouble comes knocking, he can't help himself."

Back on set, Cary Joji Fukunaga looks pleased with the results of today's shoot. The *Beasts Of No Nation* and *True Detective* director became the first American hired to helm an Eon Bond in September 2018, parachuted in (no doubt accompanied by a rousing blast of John Barry) following Danny Boyle's shock exit a month prior. With the likes of Yann Demange, David Mackenzie and Denis Villeneuve rumoured as front-runners to replace Boyle, Fukunaga, at the time, was considered a left-field choice. But Broccoli and Fukunaga had been circling each other for years.

"Two years ago I took Barbara to my favourite Japanese restaurant in New York," says Fukunaga who, coincidentally, is regaling *TF* over coffee in New York. Alas, he won't reveal his culinary hotspot, lest *TF* attempt to crash his dinner. "I tried to wine and dine her. At that point Daniel said he wasn't doing another one, so we spit-balled all the potential new Bonds – that was exciting. I just told her what I loved about Bond and what it meant to me growing up. And just that I'd be honoured if they'd consider me for the next one.

"And then obviously they went with somebody else!" laughs Fukunaga, who was in the middle of shooting Netflix series *Maniac* when Boyle got the gig and, fortuitously, wrapped just as the news of his departure broke. "I was on vacation at the time, and everyone I was with at breakfast were joking: 'Come on Cary, do Bond, so I can be the next Bond girl!' I said, 'Maybe I will email Barbara...' That led to an invitation to meet with her and Michael, and a conversation with Daniel. And that was it, we were off to the races."

Boyle's script, written by *Trainspotting*'s John Hodge (which contained "some extraordinary ideas, they just needed a little pulling together," according to production designer Mark Tildesley) was scrapped, with Purvis and Wade brought in to pick up where they left off a year prior. "Effectively, we went back to what we'd done," says Purvis. "And then we changed things with Cary over several months in the attic at Eon." As well as being the first American, Fukunaga is the first director to have a writing credit on a finished Bond film. "He's fresh to it," Wade says of Fukunaga. "He's open to doing things differently, and wanted to push the boundaries as much as he could. This film feels quite different to the last one, even though it's got elements that connect it."

GOING OFF ROAD
There's always time for a classic Bond car chase, this time filmed in the Scottish Highlands.









SUPERSTARS
Craig with director Cary Joji Fukunaga (top); Ana de Armas as femme fatale Paloma (middle); Tanner, M and Moneypenny all return (above); Rami Malek is the new Big Bad, Safin (left).



Connection and continuity have defined Craig's era as 007 to a greater extent than any Bond before him. As Wade puts it, "Daniel's era has had a shape to it… a luxury that none of the other Bonds had." *Spectre* made this continuity explicit by revealing Christoph Waltz's Blofeld (now also Bond's adopted brother) as the "author" of all Bond's pain. Wilson describes Craig's five-film arc as "a little miniseries within the series", a sentiment Broccoli echoes. "This film feels like a good bookend to *Casino*, because his emotional evolution gets to a place where we've never seen Bond before. So that's pretty exciting."

themes. And I think, 'Yeah! Why not have big themes?'"

The themes of *No Time To Die*? "Love and family," asserts Craig. "Because what's bigger than that? Bond's 'family' being Moneypenny and Q and M. And then Lashana [*Lynch*] comes in, and she's like a distant cousin who you're not sure about. I've always said: in Bond movies the world needs saving in the first frame, and in the last frame, he saves the world. OK. But in the middle – what the fuck? It's got to be emotionally engaging."

As for "love", that thorny issue goes back to a question established by *Casino Royale*. "At the end of the film, when he says, 'The bitch is dead' he's

'THE QUESTION SET UP IS, "CAN HE ACTUALLY EVER FIND HAPPINESS?"'
ROBERT WADE

For Craig, the opportunity to explore a different, deeper side of Bond was a key reason to come back. "It's interesting to explore his emotions, because he's a cut-off character. He doesn't feel like other people, because he's a killer," explains Craig, who considers Bond "as far removed from me as could possibly be", though we have to note that the pair share an affinity for a well-tailored suit on the evidence of Craig's attire today. "On *Casino* he loses the love of his life, and then the shutters come down. On *Quantum*, the flawed movie that it is, it's about revenge. And *Skyfall* is about M. It's about loss. They're big

renouncing the idea of romantic love for himself," says Wade. "So the question set up by that is: 'Can he ever actually find happiness?'" The memory of Eva Green's Vesper Lynd will loom over *No Time To Die* like a storm cloud for Bond, after he's once again seemingly betrayed by a woman he loves – Léa Seydoux's Madeleine Swann.

"Working on this film felt very different from *Spectre*," says Seydoux, who's sitting across from *TF* in a black trouser suit, silk handkerchief billowing out of the jacket pocket. Seydoux has the rare distinction of being the first Bond woman to return for a second

mission since Eunice Gayson's Sylvia Trench in *Dr. No* and *From Russia With Love*. "It's very emotional this time for Madeleine. In *Spectre*, she was maybe a little more distant with Bond. But now, she's completely in love with him."

Everyone's staying tight-lipped when it comes to Madeleine's connection to Rami Malek's villainous Safin (more on him later), as made clear by her horrified reaction to Safin's shattered mask in the first trailer. Though given her father, Mr. White, moved in shady circles, it's not unreasonable to think Madeleine and Safin have history.

History in the making sums up *No Time To Die* in more ways than one. Not only is it the landmark 25th Bond film, it's arguably the first Bond film built from the ground up to be an actor's final time in the tux; only Sean Connery and George Lazenby announced intentions to hand in their licence to kill before the release of their final films, and in both cases were expected to return during filming. Craig describes the film as having a "finality to it", while Barbara Broccoli – who half-jokes she's still "in denial" about Craig's departure – states that "In terms of closing the story, the circle is complete now. It feels emotionally satisfying."

But Fukunaga wasn't going to let misty-eyed farewells and arbitrary milestones get in the way of a good film. "No one's trying to say some sort of long sentimental goodbye. It's just another Bond film. The credits still say: 'Bond will return,'" Fukunaga smiles. "I didn't approach it as a last film. I approached it as: What am I inheriting? What can we do to make this a little bit fresh and exciting, and subvert some of the expectations?" Top of the list:

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recruiting *Fleabag* genius Phoebe Waller-Bridge, who was brought in for late-stage script revisions at the behest of *Killing Eve* fan Craig.

"Phoebe came on, and she injected some brilliance into the situation, and a tone I was really after," says Craig. Specifically, Waller-Bridge punched up Ana de Armas' character Paloma – a fresh-faced CIA field agent who Bond crosses paths with in Cuba – and brought a myth-pricking irreverence to the story. The world has moved on in Bond's absence, and the former 007 is no longer revered the way he once was. "What we wanted to do was… not

SET FOR SUCCESS

Production designer **Mark Tildesley** on building Bond's world…

ON LOOKING TO THE PAST…

"I haven't shut myself away in a room trying to think of a new way to design a Bond movie at all – quite the contrary in fact. We used to put out Ken Adam's book once a week and look at his original drawings, which are so bold. And also because it's our 25th anniversary piece we've been looking at the values of all the older films."

ON BLOFELD'S PRISON

"We were thinking about how you would keep the most dangerous man in the world contained, and how you would move him around in a prison. We found some extraordinary, quite sad images from American prisons where they have a very tiny cage on wheels that they put people in and then move them. It's like something from a zoo. We did this hanging cage that gets delivered by a monorail into the room, where Bond is waiting to talk to him."

ON SAFIN'S DOMAIN

"We referenced a lot of Tadao Ando, the Japanese architect and artist, with that. It's very much a concrete world, prefabbed in the '50s and '60s by the Russians, then taken over by the Safins. It looks a bit like that concrete factory in Barcelona. Raw, brutalist, extraordinary and of the moment."

ON DANNY BOYLE'S DEPARTURE

"Unfortunately Danny's crazy, madcap ideas didn't quite tie up with what Barbara and Michael had planned. It was definitely a good thing to do. Maybe another time though. I'm revving Barbara up to have another go with Danny." *JF*









BAR FLIES
Jeffrey Wright is back as CIA agent Felix Leiter (above); while Léa Seydoux also returns, as Bond's most recent love Madeleine Swann (right, top).

ridicule him. It's sharing in the fun with the audience," Craig explains. "But you've got to be respectful of what it is." When it comes to playing with tradition, Fukunaga concurs. "That's the fun part. But it has to be the icing, versus the foundation. I prefer not to throw the baby out with the bathwater, and instead try to find ways where, if something feels stagnant, then you mix that up a little bit."

One of the key ways everyone recognises Bond has stagnated is it's often regressive portrayal of women – a reflection of the character's misogyny. With a trio of women giving Bond a run for his money in *No Time To Die* – most notably Lashana Lynch's new 00 agent Nomi – that's about to become a thing of the past. "Bond is going to be Bond no matter what happens," says Lynch, Captain Marvel's BFF about to make a major mark on another blockbuster franchise. "But it's about how people react to him. That's the difference between the earlier films. In this film we are vocal. We are opinionated. We know how to stop [*Bond*] in his tracks, and to teach him something."

Lynch underwent extensive training ("They turned me into a ninja!" she joyously exclaims) to play Nomi, who is every bit Bond's equal, albeit with a modern twist. "Bond has been doing this a long time, and he has a more old-school approach, where he might roll his eyes at Q's gadgets," says Lynch whose Nomi, if rumours are to be believed, has inherited Bond's 007 code number. "Whereas Nomi is like an updated double-O agent. She's technologically advanced, which is a bit intimidating for Bond, because he's been away from the game for a long time."

But Nomi isn't just good with gadgets, she also knows exactly how to get inside Bond's head. "The fact that Nomi calls him 'Commander' Bond is just such a shakedown," Lynch laughs. Statuesque, and with a voice that can fill a room, there's little doubting Lynch's capacity to intimidate. "She's almost got a book on James, and how to handle him. You see moments where he's like, 'How is this woman getting inside my brain?' And that's a wonderful thing about Nomi, she pushes every boundary she can. Which is women in 2019, I think."

Back at Pinewood, *TF* is touring *No Time To Die*'s staggeringly detailed open-air Cuba set – the filming location for Craig's final-ever day of filming as Bond, an action-packed set-piece, in which Nomi, Paloma and Bond converge on Leiter's 'package'. Constructed in just seven weeks (a build of this size would typically take anywhere from 12-14), brightly coloured Spanish colonial-style buildings line two intersecting streets. The remnants of a car pile-up can be found at one end, next to a collapsed wooden street light that looks convincing from a foot away, despite being soft to the touch.

Three of the buildings have fully furnished interiors, including a meticulously dressed barber shop that







will appear on screen for less than 30 seconds. Most impressive is the El Nino – a bar built over two levels, and connected by a wide, winding staircase inspired by a cafe in Havana. "We've nicked all the finer bits of Cuba and condensed them into one place," chuckles production designer Tildesley, who was initially hired by Boyle and has history with 007, having worked on the 2012 Olympic opening ceremony where Bond memorably met the Queen. Faded murals on the walls are works of art in their own right. Even the menus have a printed list of (overpriced) cocktails on the inside.

"We have really gone out of our way to make some really gorgeous big sets," says Tildesley. He isn't kidding if the top-secret production art *TF* glimpses is representative of finished builds. Tildesley and his team "bathed" in the art of legendary production designer Ken Adam (see boxout p61), while Fukunaga too was inspired by Bond's celebrated legacy. "I watched a bunch [*of the old films*] again," recalls

'BOND IS GOING TO BE BOND, NO MATTER WHAT'
LASHANA LYNCH

Fukunaga, who spent his first few weeks on the job constructing a Lego Aston Martin and revisiting the classics. "Mainly the earlier ones, from the '60s, because it was interesting to watch how they change as well. There's a certain aesthetic to films like *You Only Live Twice* that I was really drawn to."

The Roald Dahl-scripted *You Only Live Twice* shares another connection with *No Time To Die*: Ernst Stavro Blofeld. "He's back and he's badder than ever," grins Wilson. When we last saw Bond's kitty-loving arch nemesis, he was lying broken and beaten at Bond's feet on Westminster Bridge. In *No Time To Die*, Blofeld is under lock and key at MI6, and serves as a potentially useful source of information. Not that he'll ever truly help Bond unless it's in his self-interest. "He tries to always be the manipulator behind the scenes, he plays with Bond," Wilson teases. "Even being in jail for five years hasn't done much to reform him."

But Blofeld is far from the puppet master he considers himself. "Safin is pulling all the strings," Broccoli says of Rami Malek's mysterious villain. "He's controlling all of those megalomaniacs out there. He's created them." Broccoli first met Malek in 2013 following his breakthrough performance in *Short Term 12*, and "moved heaven and earth" to get him to play Safin following Malek's Oscar-win for Freddie Mercury biopic *Bohemian Rhapsody*. But being invited to join the ranks of Mads Mikkelsen, Mathieu Amalric and Javier Bardem was always a no-brainer for Malek.

"It was a real pinch-me, 'Is this even possible?' moment," smiles Malek, who's significantly less intimidating than his on-screen counterpart in a blue bomber jacket, shirt neatly tucked into his trousers. "It's an immense responsibility," he considers. "It can be nerve-racking, but from what I've learned, those are the moments that will yield the most reward. In a way, playing Freddie helped prepare me for taking on another monumental task."

Malek describes Safin as someone who "identifies himself to be as heroic as Bond". But what about those persistent rumours that Malek is secretly playing Bond's first ever on-screen adversary, Dr. No? Is he willing to shoot them down? "I would never shoot something like that down. It's intriguing," he says with a smile. So which Bond films did Malek watch in preparation? "Only *Dr. No*." For a super-villain, Malek has a very healthy sense of humour.

There's no actual evidence that Safin and Dr No. are one and the same, of course. Fukunaga teases that "there's a sense this guy could be from a large-scale chemical/pharmaceutical family" and that Safin is "someone who's not

UNMASKED
But is Safin really Dr. No? We'll have to wait to find out.



Dressed to kill

Ana de Armas on No Time To Die's subversive femme fatale...

How did you get involved?

Cary and I met probably two years before James Bond for a different project that didn't materialise. But I guess we connected, because he called to say he was thinking of me for a character that wasn't on the page yet, but she was Cuban. It was very flattering and very exciting.

How would you describe Paloma?

Paloma is something else. She's way more complex. She had another dimension. She has a different attitude about her, and a different way she carries herself, and a different background, and all of those little things that – when you're writing a female character in a movie like this – matter, and make her different. She has a purpose, and she speaks her mind, and she gets nervous, which makes it really real, and really fun for me. I'm doing my version of a Bond girl.

Were you convinced by the Cuba set?

It was pretty accurate! They did an amazing job. I wish we had done it in Cuba for real, but it still felt very special to me. For a movie like this to have a bit of Cuba in it, and then the entire world is going to see it – it means a lot.

Was it a challenge performing action scenes in that dress?

Trust me, it was not the easiest thing in the world! That dress, and carrying those guns... it was challenging, and the weather was really cold. I was enjoying it, but I also wanted it to be over so much [*laughs*]. And on top of that you have the most prepared crew in the world, so all you're thinking is, "I hope I'm not the one who fucks it up!"

Did you see a different side to Daniel after working together on *Knives Out*?

Completely different. When you get to set, and see how comfortable he is, and how much domain he has over the whole production. It's incredible.

Did you get the sense you were working on a landmark Bond film?

Absolutely. What Daniel has done with the character is very special. I was lucky enough to be there on the last day and everyone was very emotional. But we all need some closure in our lives at some point.

How have you found playing Marilyn Monroe for *Blonde*?

It was terrifying. I didn't know much about Marilyn – just everything on the surface. When I met Andrew [*Dominik*] I started reading and listening to her. I discovered someone with a big soul, and a lot of pain, and a lot to tell. I got very attached to her and her story, and gave it my all. ***JF***

necessarily a public face, but who wields a lot of power behind those people". But whatever Safin's masterplan is, one thing's clear – like most Bond villains, he will mirror contemporary concerns.

"I talked to Barbara and Michael about this a lot, because they're tuned into everything," Fukunaga says. "There's a silent agreement that within the Bond films: you're never too literal with what's happening in the world. We don't address Brexit, you know? But the dangers he deals with reflect the fears at the time." In Safin's case, Fukunaga considered how a man of means could destabilise the planet in 2020. "I worked with a futurist called Ray Kurzweil about 10 years ago on another project. He kept talking about what we're heading towards, which is neo-medievalism, the end of the nation state. I believe he's right. When you think about it, companies cross international borders all the time. They have private armies, and more money than governments."

Total Film catches a solitary glimpse of Safin on set in Scotland – Rami Malek's stunt double, anyway, who's currently commanding his private army from a helicopter. On a gloomy late July day in a remote Highland location, second unit director Alexander Witt is co-ordinating *No Time To Die*'s Norway chase scene. After reuniting with Madeleine in a safe house, Bond is rudely interrupted by Safin's sudden appearance, and takes the ensuing chase off road in a Toyota Land Cruiser. "Picture a lion hunt in the Serengeti," says stunt coordinator Lee Morrison. "They're in a very exposed, barren landscape, and they're on their own."

With two vehicles in pursuit, and more to come as the chase moves to a river bed and an "eerie" foot chase in



SONY



NAME & NUMBER
Lashana Lynch plays new OO agent Nomi (above); while Q is likely to be less than impressed with the current state of Bond's DB5 (below).

tall bracken, there are 44 cars on location today, as well as a mobile garage and enough materials to repair every hero vehicle "two-to-three times over". *TF* watches from a (very) safe distance as Bond uses the treacherous terrain, and some nifty manoeuvres, to force a pursuing Land Rover off the road, catapulting it in the air before it rolls down a small incline.

With the inclement weather forcing frequent stops, Witt is taking no chances capturing the action – there are eight cameras, a drone and a helicopter-mounted cam pointed at this particular stunt, which takes the best part of a day to film and will last seconds on screen. But as far as the action goes, this is only the tip of the iceberg. "We have six sequences that are huge," says Morrison, who has worked on every one of Craig's films, from *Casino Royale*'s parkour sequence to *Skyfall*'s motorbike chase across the rooftops. "We always try to lead the way with something new. Hopefully it's going to be amazing and set a new standard."

Early glimpses are certainly promising. A motorbike leap over a 30ft wall was performed for real in Matera, Italy – a heritage city where the roads are no wider than the average car. Fukunaga intended for the film "to feel more stripped down and classic – Bond in his purest form", which helps explain those show-stopping Aston mini-guns. "Ordinarily, when they show the trailer I get really pissed off because I'm like, 'Don't show that!'" Craig hollers. "But I watched [*the trailer for* No Time To Die] and went, 'There are some really good bits in there, but not as good as the rest of it.' We're going to do things that people have never seen."

After 2 April, there's another thing people will never see again: Daniel Craig's Bond. Craig's 14-year reign as Britain's super-spy extraordinaire is about to end, and despite his sometimes fractious relationship with the series, there's no question that he'll genuinely miss James. "While you're doing it, the tendency is just to be blinkered, and go, 'Oh, you know, this is what it is.'" Craig says. "But I've thought about it more than ever, just because it's my last one, and I'm incredibly proud and honoured to have been a part of it in the way that I was. The reason I would want to get up every day and go to work is because I would look at the people I got to work with, and go, 'These are the best people in the industry.' That's off the charts. So I just think: if you can't get excited about a Bond movie, what can you get excited about?"

'THE DANGERS HE DEALS WITH REFLECT THE FEARS AT THE TIME'
CARY JOJI FUKUNAGA

NO TIME TO DIE OPENS ON 2 APRIL.

CRAIG'S LIST

00-Dan's finest moments...

WORDS JANE CROWTHER, JORDAN FARLEY, JAMIE GRAHAM, KEVIN HARLEY, MATT MAYTUM, JAMES MOTTRAM



CASINO ROYALE 2006



Hit & run

Is there a single better set-piece from the Craig era (to date) than the one that started it all: *Casino Royale*'s high impact parkour chase? Fast, ferocious and thrillingly physical, it was the moment that separated Craig's Bond from all before him. "The very first thought that we had for *Casino Royale*, was the idea behind that whole free-running sequence," says *Casino* writer Robert Wade. "That is: he isn't as good as the guy he's up against, but he's going to keep going anyway. So you saw a different kind of James Bond. He's not the very best, but he'll keep going." In the Madagascar-set sequence, Bond is forced to pursue bomb-maker Mollaka (Sébastien Foucan) on foot after a fellow agent's cover is blown. Only Mollaka possesses superhuman athleticism, and Bond is a blunt object. Stripped of gadgets, glamour and obvious CGI, according to Wade, "It was a way of saying, 'This is a different kind of James Bond.' And with that, goes a certain level of being slightly more down-to-earth, which definitely has been easier to do with Daniel as Bond, because he does bring a realistic feel to it." Sure, it may owe a debt to Bourne, but nobody does it better than Bond. ***JF***

Money train

It's rare for Bond to truly meet his match, but within five seconds of Eva Green's Vesper Lynd making her entrance on a train to the Casino Royale, it's clear that Bond is in trouble. The series' sharpest bit of sustained badinage is a thorny meet-cute, where Vesper and Bond size each other up – literally and metaphorically – with some incisive armchair psychoanalysis. In conceiving the scene, screenwriters Neal Purvis and Robert Wade were inspired by an espionage classic. "We're both – Barbara [*Broccoli*] and Michael [*G. Wilson*] are, as well – big fans of *North By Northwest*," Wade tells *Total Film*. "There's this brilliant scene in the train dining car where it's very spiky, and we were homaging that." Vesper's unforgettable introduction – "I'm the money" – was Wilson's invention, while *Crash* director Paul Haggis also had a hand in penning their verbal sparring match. But, as Purvis points out, it's Craig and Green that truly make the scene soar. By the end, there's no question that Bond has fallen head over heels. "What's so great is just the chemistry between them. That's why that film works so well. Eva Green was really, really good casting." ***JF***



SONY

QUANTUM OF SOLACE 2008

A night at the opera

"I really think you people should find a better place to meet," says Daniel Craig's Bond, sharp as mustard. Director Marc Forster disagreed. Although the scene was scripted for "a kind of UN conference setting", says Forster, the Bregenz Opera House on Lake Constance, Austria, lent a grandiose backdrop to Bond's sassy burn of *Quantum*'s gathering. More than 1,000 extras hit the amphitheatre for a two-week night shoot, watched by a symbolic iris on-stage and Bond above as Puccini's *Tosca* mirrors the off-stage action. The art/brutality contrast is a nifty touch, but what's better is how slickly Forster splices his imprint with Bond traditions.

The Spy Who Loved Me's pyramid set-piece is lovingly echoed; meanwhile, Craig oozes echt-Bond confidence, especially in the pause-for-effect long shot facing Dominic Greene's (Mathieu Amalric) men. Some cheeky gadgetry also gets smuggled into 007's 'grounded' '00s makeover – love the goofy facial-recognition software – while Forster's debt to Hitchcock's *The Man Who Knew Too Much* shows in his navigation of the space. With Puccini filling the sound-mix, the breathless chase/fight orchestration improves on *Quantum*'s messier editing elsewhere. And there's even time for puns as Greene's gang exit the opera. "*Tosca* isn't for everyone," quips Mr White. Worked for us, though. ***KH***



SKYFALL 2012



Off the cuff

In *Skyfall*'s coolest moment, Bond – having leapt from a digger on to the back of a train he's ripped open – nonchalantly adjusts his cuff. "It was quite a thing for Bond to do, that," Craig tells *TF*. "Because the train is disappearing behind him. It's gone. He doesn't even want to look back. And I just improvised that [*moment with the cuffs*]. I jumped off and thought, 'Oh, I know why he does it. He's shit scared!' I always ask people when I meet them, people who are in the Special Forces and things like that: 'Are you scared?' Most people will say that they're terrified, but it's how you deal with it. So that's what I try to imbue him with. But what I find fascinating about it is: it's a front. And that's what makes people laugh when they see it. They go, 'Ah, he's scared!'" ***JF***



SPECTRE 2015

Day of the Dead

"It will be up there as one of the greatest pre-title sequences we have ever done," said producer Barbara Broccoli of the opening of *Spectre*, as Bond tracks an assassin through the Day of the Dead celebrations in Mexico City. She wasn't wrong. The gigantic set-piece employed 1,500 extras and required the production to liaise with the Presidential palace, government security and the army to close down the city's main Avenue and Zócalo Square. Making it trickier still, the scene was shot in one continuous take (a technique director Sam Mendes would take to the max in *1917*), following Bond through a hotel and across rooftops. The camera track system stretched across four buildings with the help of a 50ft crane, though the climactic hotel explosion was captured in Pinewood Studios. "We built a four-storey building… all the floors collapsed on hydraulics," said special effects supervisor Chris Corbould. ***JG***





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Flirting with disaster

"It's been a while since there was… a classic Bond villain," said director Sam Mendes when contemplating Raoul Silva, the former MI6 agent-turned-cyberterrorist who sports a serious grudge against M (Judi Dench) in *Skyfall*. "I wanted somebody… more flamboyant… more frightening, and so I felt like we needed a great actor to achieve that." Enter Oscar-winning actor Javier Bardem. And what an entrance, monologuing about trapped rats eating each other as he walks slooowly towards a bound Bond (Daniel Craig). Silva's blond barnet, misshapen jaw and sunken eye are all tantalisingly revealed, and then it's Bond's turn to show a little, as Silva unbuttons his shirt and gently traces his bullet wounds. "What makes you think this is my first time?" purrs James at Silva's come on. "Oh, Mr. Bond," comes the shivery reply. Mendes' wish was granted: *Sight & Sound* called Bardem's baddie "the most authentically Bondian Bond villain in decades". ***JG***



Home discomforts

For his Bond debut, director Sam Mendes didn't want to rely on visual effects: "If something blows up," he said, "it really blows up." Though not a real location, Skyfall Lodge really was blown up by the crew for the climax, where Javier Bardem's Silva laid thrillingly aggressive siege to Craig's Bond at his childhood home. Lodge exteriors were built full-scale, with Hankley Common, Surrey – a Ministry of Defence training ground – doubling for Bond's ancestral base of Glencoe, Scotland; gravestones of Bond's family members were mocked up for extra authenticity. If Mendes' desire to see Bond depending "on his wits" stoked barrages of close-quarters tension, references to *Apocalypse Now* (Silva's helicopter landing) and Kurosawa's *Throne Of Blood* maxed the sequence's epic wallop. *Straw Dogs* is equally comparable, though most critics noted parallels to a funnier film: "Some people expect Joe Pesci to jump out," Mendes quipped, gamely acknowledging those *Home Alone* echoes. ***KH***



Italian job

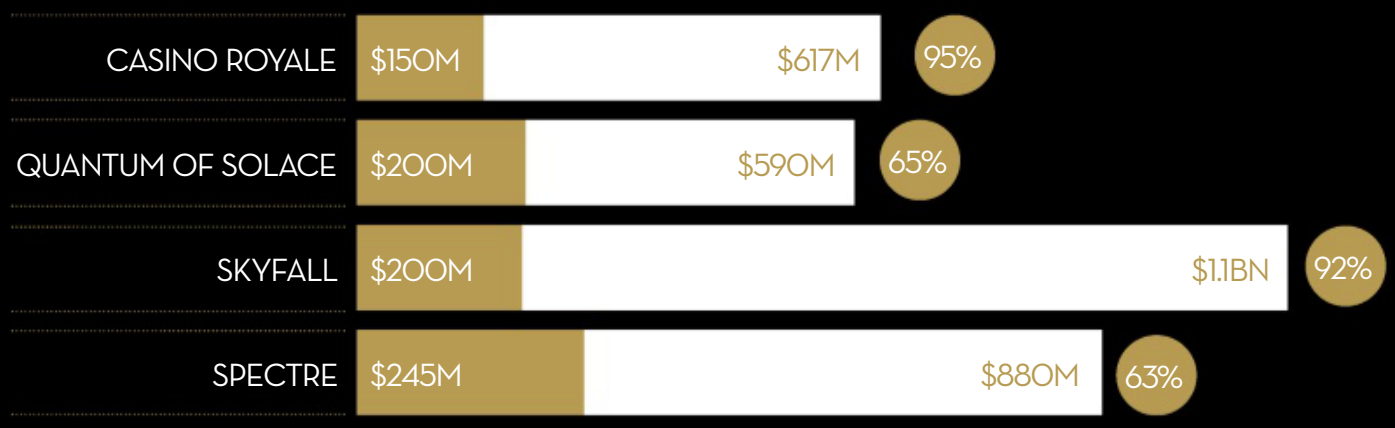
One of the great car chases in the Daniel Craig era comes in *Spectre*, when Bond is pursued through the streets of Rome by Dave Bautista's ominous Mr. Hinx. Bond is driving his Aston Martin DB10 while his man-mountain pursuer is behind the wheel of an Ochre-coloured Jaguar CX75. Especially built for the production, the Jag is "a beast" commented stunt coordinator Gary Powell, when *TF* flew to Italy to watch the action unfold. "The villain we've got is a beast and we've got a beast of a car for the villain. So it plays out the character very well in the chase." Speeding up the Via della Conciliazione, towards the Vatican from the River Tiber, the cars skid through Piazza San Pietro by the iconic St. Peter's Basilica – a unique never-been-done-before chase in the Eternal City. As Powell put it, "No-one's been allowed to do what we've done here." ***JM***



NUMBER OF TEETH (FRONT ONES) LOST BY DANIEL CRAIG FOR *CASINO ROYALE*'S FIGHT SEQUENCE IN PRAGUE...

2

Box Office Rotten Tomatoes Chart



5

HIGHEST NUMBER OF OSCAR NOMINATIONS FOR A BOND MOVIE, FOR *SKYFALL*.

£1,108m

THE HIGHEST-GROSSING BOND FILM TO DATE REMAINS *SKYFALL*.

250,000

PAPER FLOWERS USED IN *SPECTRE*'S DAY OF THE DEAD SEQUENCE.

LITRES OF KEROSENE REQUIRED (PLUS 33KG OF POWDER EXPLOSIVES) TO BLOW UP BLOFELD'S LAIR IN *SPECTRE*, MAKING IT THE LARGEST STUNT EXPLOSION EVER ON FILM.

8,418

THE DANIEL CRAIG ERA IN NUMBERS...

30

THE MOST NUMBER OF TRACKS ON A BOND SCORE, FOR *SKYFALL*.

500

NUMBER OF EXTRAS REQUIRED FOR THE TURKISH BAZAAR SEQUENCE IN *SKYFALL*.

145

MINUTES OF THE LONGEST BOND FILM, *SPECTRE*.

400

TONNES OF MAN-MADE SNOW USED TO COVER THE HILLSIDE FOR THE AUSTRIAN PLANE-CRASH SEQUENCE IN *SPECTRE*.

20

NUMBER OF HONDA CRF250R MOTORCYCLES USED FOR *SKYFALL*'S OPENING CHASE.

$36.7m

COST OF THE ASTON MARTIN VEHICLES TRASHED IN *SPECTRE*.

$120M

BOND'S WINNING POT IN *CASINO ROYALE*.

SPEED OF THE TRAIN CRAIG WAS FIGHTING ON AT THE START OF *SKYFALL*.

50KPH

24

UNITS OF BOOZE NECKED BY BOND IN ONE *QUANTUM OF SOLACE* SESH.

NUMBER OF CONTROLLED EXPLOSIONS USED BY THE SPECIAL EFFECTS TEAM FOR *QUANTUM*'S CLIMAX.

54

405

REPORTED PERCENTAGE INCREASE IN SALES OF CUTTHROAT RAZORS BY ONLINE RETAILER SHAVING SHACK FOLLOWING *SKYFALL*'S INTIMATE SHAVING MOMENT.

REPORTED NUMBER OF CANDIDATES BEATEN BY GEMMA ARTERTON FOR THE ROLE OF STRAWBERRY FIELDS IN SOLACE.

1,500

1,700

EXTRAS USED FOR THE FLOATING OPERA SEQUENCE IN *QUANTUM OF SOLACE*.

30,000

APPROXIMATE NUMBER OF GUEST ROOM NIGHTS IN TIROL, AUSTRIA, DURING PRINCIPAL PHOTOGRAPHY FOR *SPECTRE*.

5,225 DAYS

THAT CRAIG HAS BEEN JAMES BOND, MAKING HIM THE LONGEST-SERVING ACTOR.

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CHEERS MR BOND

Shaken or stirred? Twist or no? How to make 007's preferred tipple, the perfect martini.



DUKES BAR

Roger Moore famously enjoyed a dry gin martini, shaken, until he could no longer drink them due to diabetes, while Daniel Craig maintains he prefers beer; but a vodka martini – shaken, not stirred – has long been James Bond's tipple of choice. In Fleming's 1954 novel, *Live And Let Die*, 007 sups a six parts vodka, one part vermouth cocktail and discusses his preference for shaken in *Dr. No* (1958). Though Connery drank one in Bond's first cinematic outing in 1962 he didn't utter the famous line until Goldfinger in 1964 – and successive Bond's have been ordering martinis ('dirty' and 'Vespers' included) ever since.

Fleming may have got his inspiration for Bond's bevvie from Dukes Hotel bar in London, a St James cocktail lounge he visited regularly, where martinis are served tableside from a 1908 rosewood drinks trolley. Fancy toasting Daniel Craig's departure from the 007 DJ? We do, so we asked Dukes' bar manager, Alessandro Palazzi, to give us tips on knowing the lingo and making the perfect martini.

Dry or wet?

"Originally, a traditional martini was only done one way (stirred with a twist of lemon). Today, people are much more knowledgeable and curious, and there are many ways to make a martini. We are very open-minded at Dukes Bar and serve them in many ways. A dry martini has a small amount of vermouth, compared to a wet martini that has more vermouth (like the olden days)."

Vodka vs gin?

"A traditional martini has gin, but nowadays you can add vodka. It's really up to your preference."

Shaken vs stirred?

"I personally prefer a stirred martini – when you shake a martini it's lighter and easier to drink for those who may not be regular martini drinkers. Olive, twist [*a slice of lemon peel*] or Gibson [*with a pickled onion*]? I prefer twist."

How to?

"There is no secret to the perfect martini – it's about the perfect execution. A martini has three ingredients; vermouth, gin or vodka, and a twist of lemon or an olive – and you need to get it right. At Dukes we use a dry white vermouth from Sacred Spirits and only use pure spirits in our martinis. The perfect gin, in my opinion, is London Dry Gin. If using vodka, Polish vodka is my preference – there's a more vanilla and nutty flavour in Polish vodka. For infusions, we use Russian vodka. You have to have a very cold glass and a very cold spirit – we freeze our glasses and spirits – and organic fruit. We always serve our martinis in frozen glasses, so as time passes the drink warms up and the aromas open up. My team and I always use organic, unwaxed lemons from the Amalfi Coast and twist the peel over the glass to release the essential oils.

"The measurements for the 'perfect martini' depend on the style of martini you are creating. At Dukes Bar, we add about 2ml of dry vermouth and 125ml of frozen gin or vodka."

Snacks?

"You need something natural that doesn't overpower the taste of the martini. Sicilian olives (natural flavour and meaty) and a selection of non-spiced nuts are perfect."

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THE OUTLIER

EVA GREEN HAS ALWAYS BEEN ENIGMATIC. A EUROPEAN STAR WHO BROKE INTO HOLLYWOOD WITH UNCONVENTIONAL ROLES, SHE'S BEEN TIM BURTON'S MUSE AND STILL STANDS ALONE AS A BOND WOMAN WHO'S 007'S EQUAL. NOW SHE'S BACK WITH ONE OF HER MOST DEMANDING AND DARING ROLES YET AS A TRAINEE ASTRONAUT IN PROXIMA. TOTAL FILM JOINS HER FOR LIFT-OFF…

WORDS JAMES MOTTRAM **PORTRAIT** JASON KIM

Eva Green laughs. "I was thinking of Bette Davis writing in the newspaper looking for work," she says. Yes, it's true – the Hollywood legend and two-time Oscar-winner once placed an ad in the trades, just nine days after wrapping 1962's *What Ever Happened To Baby Jane?* It read: "Thirty years experience as an actress in motion pictures. Mobile still and more affable than rumour would have it."

Quite why this has popped into Green's mind right now is unclear. The French actor, who has effortlessly segued from Bond to Burton across her 17-year career, has never had to hustle for work like that. But then every actor worries where the next gig is coming from and Green is not one to oversell herself. That includes writing to directors. "I did that twice and it never worked," she sighs. "It looks too desperate. It's not attractive!"

She might not quite boast Davis' experience – her first role came in 2003's *The Dreamers* – but directors have flocked to the 39-year-old Green. Among them, Ridley Scott for *Kingdom Of Heaven*, Martin Campbell for *Casino Royale*, Robert Rodriguez for *Sin City: A Dame To Kill For*. "They're real artists," she says, admiringly. "The pressure from the studio, to be able to still express yourself as an artist and not be crushed by the studios… I think it gets harder and harder. So bless them."

Her latest film, *Proxima*, is that rare thing for Green – a lead role in a female-directed movie. It's the brainchild of French director Alice Winocour, marking her third film after period tale *Augustine* and PTSD drama *Disorder*. Winocour admits she's been "fascinated" by Green for a long time. "I think she's an amazing actress. I think she's like a Tim Burton character! She has this strangeness and at the same time, this strength."

That Green played a trio of roles for Burton, in *Dark Shadows*, *Miss Peregrine's Home For Peculiar Children* and *Dumbo*, naturally aids the comparisons. But there is something alluringly off-kilter about Green: feline-green eyes, pale skin, raven-black hair. It has, she says, led to the industry putting her in the box marked 'mysterious',

JASON KIM / TRUNK ARCHIVE

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something the contemporary-set *Proxima* should help her to combat. Starring alongside Matt Dillon, Green plays Sarah, an astronaut preparing for an arduous year-long mission. As she trains, she increasingly struggles with the idea of being separated from her young daughter. For Winocour, Green was the perfect choice. "She says herself that she doesn't belong to this planet and I think it's great for the character of an astronaut. That's what astronauts are to me; they don't really belong."

Green admits it's always been a "fantasy" to play an astronaut, though the reality is very different. Space is not her final frontier. "No! I'm very scared of heights, so that's a problem, and I don't like carousels so centrifuges are not for me! But it really reinforced the idea that these people are superheroes. I'm more in awe now than ever. I don't know how they do it. They are geniuses, basically."

Proxima – which has seen Green nominated for a French César award – gave her a genuine taste for the rigours of space training. Her Russian instructors were tough on her and didn't give her any special dispensation. Green starts chuckling. "That was very funny. Oh my god. I loved it. They treated me like I should know what I'm doing! Some Russians can be quite tough and dry."

Spending two months bulking up to handle the inordinately heavy spacesuit, Green shot the film partly at the Baikonur Cosmodrome, in southern Kazakhstan, the world's largest operational space-launch facility. "There was something quite surreal about that place," she enthuses. "Sometimes I felt like I was in *Star Wars* or entering another dimension, like the forbidden place where nobody goes. It was amazing!"

AIMING HIGH Green broke out in *The Dreamers* (above left), became a star in *Casino Royale* (above right) and is entering the stratosphere in *Proxima* (above).

Yet what really entices about *Proxima* is the emotional terrain it blasts towards, as Sarah's "armour cracks" amid the isolation she feels from her daughter. "I heard so many stories about women… when they train, they do not show pictures of their kids to the others; it's seen as something weak," she says. "Whereas the men show pictures of their wives and kids… It's hard, how to deal with guilt, how to overcome it."

Intriguingly, *Promixa* comes out just a month after *No Time To Die*, a reminder that Green featured in Daniel Craig's first outing as 007, *Casino Royale*. As Vesper Lynd, the agent who captures Bond's heart when he's still a rookie, it remains her signature role. "Lots of people only remember me just in the Bond movie," she says, earnestly. "I'm the Bond girl… for lots of taxi drivers, it's 'Oh, you're the Bond girl!'"

'"OH, YOU'RE THE BOND GIRL!" IT WAS THE FIRST TIME MY FATHER WAS PROUD OF ME'

Casino Royale was just her fourth film; Green was 25 when she took it on. "It was the first time my father was proud of me," she remembers (her parents had begged her not to star in *The Dreamers* because of the nudity). But when she was initially approached, she balked at it. "I was a bit pretentious maybe – 'Oh, I'm not even going to audition for a Bond girl, are you kidding?' And then they sent me the script and I thought, 'Ah, it's actually a beautiful story, a strong story. Bond or not.'"

After the bad old days of Denise Richards as nuclear physicist Dr. Christmas Jones from *The World Is Not Enough*, Green's Vesper was something of a revelation. "It was a very meaty role – somebody who is very strong and vulnerable at the same time." Moreover, it's been a character that's haunted Bond – and the rest of the series – ever since. "Yeah, it's been quite good to me! The ghost is there! It was a good story, a good love story. It was not just

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an action movie. It was wonderful. I loved working on it as well. Barbara Broccoli was just amazing, one of the best producers I've ever met, actually."

Taxi driver encounters aside, *Casino Royale* did not hang over Green in the way it did for some actresses who became dogged by their roles in Bond movies. A Golden Globe-nominated performance as Vanessa Ives in gothic drama *Penny Dreadful*, a mute in western *The Salvation* and a missing mother in *White Bird In A Blizzard*; she's more than managed to mix it up where she can.

"As actors, we depend on the talents of others so much," she says. "We're begging for a good role and it's quite rare when it comes. So when something good for the soul comes, I just grab it. There are not so many great things. I always like strong characters that have a real journey. But it's hard to find good roles. For me anyway. It doesn't come every day. That's why I didn't hesitate on *Proxima*."

Green is all-too aware of the difficulties of the profession. Born in Paris, acting ran through her veins. Her aunt, Marika Green, performed for nearly 40 years, beginning her career in Robert Bresson's *Pickpocket*. Her mother, the Algerian-born Marlène Jobert, also acted, even sharing the screen with Kirk Douglas in 1971's *To Catch A Spy*, though did not continue after having Green and her twin sister.

At school, Green was bookish. "I was very reserved – absolutely. I was obsessed with getting the best grades. It was a bit too much, a bit claustrophobic. Then I went to the other extreme to be an actress, and let myself go a bit." Studying acting at Saint Paul Drama School in Paris for three years, she spent time in New York and London before returning to her home town to work in theatre. Only then did Bertolucci spot her for his youthful ménage à trois drama *The Dreamers*.

Curiously, given her qualities, Green has yet to be snapped up for a Marvel movie, although there have been numerous internet-spread fan rumours along the way – everything from Lady Death to Nightmare in *Doctor Strange In The Multiverse Of Madness*. "Me? No! Not that I know of. Not at all," she says, when *TF* asks if she's involved in the upcoming sequel. She does admire the Marvel brand, though. "I like the humour in them. I saw the trailer for *Black Widow*… I'd like to see that one."

For the moment, she's next up in TV miniseries *The Luminaries*, with *Yesterday*'s Himesh Patel. Based on Eleanor Catton's Booker-winning novel, "It's about the Gold Rush at the end of the 19th Century in New Zealand," explains Green, who plays brothel madam Lydia Wells. "She's kind of manipulative; she's a kind of Lady Macbeth. And it's good – there are six episodes and you really see her change throughout the episodes."

Green is all-too aware that "TV is the future" but her restless curiosity has meant she's always been wary. "To commit for several years, it's tough for any actor. As actors we want to play different people. It's quite scary, I find. But we have to embrace TV now. Of course, the material we see now is absolutely magnificent, but as an actor, you sign on and you don't know if it will work out. It could be awful. Imagine you've signed for five years and you're unhappy!"

Having spent so much time around so many A-list directors – those artists she so admires – it's intriguing to see if Green will one day go behind the camera. "I don't know if I have the talent, but I would like to have more power," she nods. She says she has a project in mind, "something to adapt", though it's too embryonic to say what it is. But Green knows exactly what she wants: "To be more in control and to not wait for the role to come to you." That's got to be better that than placing an ad in a newspaper.



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FEAR OF GOD

Shattering horror debut Saint Maud earmarks writer-director Rose Glass as a major new voice. Total Film chats to Glass and leading ladies Morfydd Clark and Jennifer Ehle about their fearless journey to heaven and hell.

WORDS JAMIE GRAHAM



MAKING OF

When Rose Glass was in her early teens, she'd already decided she wanted to be a filmmaker and repeatedly pored over the world-building of Peter Jackson's all-conquering *Lord Of The Rings* trilogy. Then something happened. Her dad sat her down to watch David Lynch's *Eraserhead*, saying, "If you want to make films, perhaps you should watch this – it's the only film I've ever walked out of." However, Rose loved it, and her taste in movies promptly took a hard swing to the left.

"I watched loads of messed-up films," she tells *Total Film* with a gleeful chuckle. "I got really obsessed with *Pi* and *Visitor Q*. And *The Piano Teacher*!" Around that time, she also saw *Shaun Of The Dead* at the cinema, marking the first time she'd heard the explosive reactions of an audience to a bunch of gnarly kills. "I went home and made little films with my friends, throwing gore about."

Fast-forward 15 years to 12 October 2019, and Glass' first feature, *Saint Maud*, has just been awarded a Special Commendation by the jury of the London Film Festival. The nod has completed a hugely satisfying couple of weeks for the 30-year-old writer-director, for on the eve of the festival she won the £50,000 IWC Schaffhausen Filmmaker Bursary Award, presented in association with the BFI to provide meaningful support to an exciting new voice. Jury member Danny Boyle was ecstatic in his praise.

"Rose Glass is an extraordinary talent and powerful storyteller," said Boyle. "*Saint Maud* is a genuinely unsettling and intriguing film… Striking, affecting and mordantly funny at times, its confidence evokes the ecstasy of films like *Carrie*, *The Exorcist* and Jonathan Glazer's *Under The Skin*. Her skill in successfully incorporating original elements to a genre story and finding new ways to offer audiences a thrilling cinematic journey through madness, faith and death signifies Glass as a true original."

Carrie. *The Exorcist*. *Under The Skin*. Those are huge titles to raise when talking about a low-budget two-hander that takes place almost entirely in one house, as a pious carer, Maud (Morfydd Clark), wrestles to save the soul of her cancer-ridden patient, Amanda (Jennifer Ehle). But ask Glass for her influences and the titles she throws out are even more daunting: "*Through A Glass Darkly*, *The Silence* and *Persona* were the big ones," she starts, namechecking three of Ingmar Bergman's most austere titles. "Those movies for the warped, claustrophobic, dreamlike atmosphere that he conjures up. *Taxi Driver*, in terms of how the main character sees himself in comparison to how the rest of the world sees him. [*Robert Bresson's*] *Diary Of A Country Priest*. And *The Devils* and *Black Narcissus*, which are visually epic and cinematic ways of telling very intimate stories."

Do not, however, make the mistake of thinking that *Saint Maud* is just another patchwork debut that cribs shamelessly from other movies, with nothing personal to say. Glass first started working on it as she studied at the National Film and Television School in 2014, taking two years to "knock it into shape" before presenting it to Film4, who boarded for development. The script then took another two years to complete. Only then did the BFI come in with production finance.



Clark explores Maud's psyche in a visceral way.

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Live-in scarer
Maud and Amanda's carer-patient relationship is mostly confined within the walls of Amanda's claustrophobic house.



During these four years, *Saint Maud* changed a great deal. The original idea did not feature Amanda, and was instead a two-hander between the title character and God – or at least his voice in Maud's head.

WHAT IS REAL?

"In terms of the loneliness, emotionally and psychologically, a lot of the stuff in the film is stuff that I've been feeling and thinking at various points throughout my life," says Glass, who went to an all-girls Catholic school, attended church with her parents, and whose grandfather was a vicar, though he died before she was born. "It took me a while to realise how lonely the character is, because she's so wrapped up in her reality, of what's going on with God. The script really took off when I started wondering about the reality of her situation."

That reality rippled and warped until Glass saw the whole picture: Maud, a private carer living in a bleak British seaside town, her patient a once-celebrated American dancer and choreographer whose hard-drinking, loose-loving ways Maud takes it upon herself to mend. Amanda, for her part, is equally determined that her young nurse – so severe, yet shy and sweet – should lighten up, and sets out to crack the shell that Maud has encased herself within in order to keep out past trauma. What follows is part horror, part character study and part rigorous religious enquiry, by turns moving and shocking, grim yet full of grace.

Playing Maud is Morfydd Clark, the Welsh actress who has so impressed in recent months in supporting roles in the BBC's *His Dark Materials* (playing Sister Clara) and *Dracula* (Mina Harker), and with the dual roles of Clara Copperfield and Dora Spenlow in Armando Iannucci's *The Personal History Of David Copperfield*. Maud is Clark's first on-screen lead. It took her three auditions to win it, with the last designed specifically so that Glass might convince the execs that this "pure, plain" actress harboured the necessary darkness for the role.

"I got Morfydd to come in again and do a scene where she has a seizure and is vomiting and crashing round the floor and then levitates, which is a weird one to do in a brightly lit casting room with no special effects," explains Glass. "I shot a little sequence of her doing that, and cut it together and sent it to them, and they were like, 'Oh, OK…'"

It's a star-making role and one that Clark felt in her bones. "As soon as I read the script, I had this feeling that it needed to be written," she says. "I felt such empathy and sadness, for both of them. And I understood why everything happened, despite never knowing what was going to come next."

At school, Clark struggled with dyslexia and ADHD; she was anxious and socially awkward. When she moved to London, she felt desperately lonely despite millions of people crowding in on every side. Now she is in a better place – and we don't mean New Zealand, where she is currently playing Galadriel in Amazon's gigantic *Lord Of The Rings* series – but those memories were available to access.

"I've been around people who have been nice about my eccentricities," she says. "My weirdness is celebrated as an actor. But for a lot of people, it's not like that. Maud's just not been able to get away with anything. Every mistake she's made went down the worst path it could have."

'THE SCRIPT REALLY TOOK OFF WHEN I STARTED WONDERING ABOUT THE REALITY OF HER SITUATION'
Rose Glass

"Morfydd is an amazing actor," says Jennifer Ehle, for whom the same might be said given the consistent standard of her work over a 30-year career that includes films like *The King's Speech*, *Zero Dark Thirty* and *Little Men*. But the brilliance that confronted Ehle was a bonus – the main attractions, initially, were script and character.

"Amanda just seemed like she'd be a lot of fun to play," Ehle says. "She's complicated. She's got a huge ego that's now partly stifled by her circumstances and her illness. She's also on God knows whatever cocktail of drugs. She's gone from having a carefully curated empire of underlings and people who worshipped her to having a very limited audience of people to toy with and impress and seduce and charm and fascinate. And then she meets this fascinating, gorgeous young woman. I think people who are in positions of power are used to being able to have playthings of lower status than

themselves; they can sniff out somebody who could be vulnerable. Amanda senses that, but is also genuinely intrigued by Maud."

The power dynamic between the two women makes for riveting drama. Strip away the shimmering layer of religious fervour that allows *Saint Maud* to slide between reality and fantasy, the humdrum and the heightened, and the film would continue to grip.

"I thought a relationship between a carer and a patient had a lot of potential for weird power plays," nods Glass. "The carer has this power and responsibility over this incredibly vulnerable person they're caring for, but she's also an employee of this older, more successful woman."

"The scene where Maud is humiliated at the party was so interesting to me," offers Clark. "As a private carer, some people can just treat you as their property. She's treated like a servant. Amanda can use her however she wants to. That's one day to laugh at, one day to go along with, one day to use her as a prop in a horrible joke with her friends. Maud just has no agency at all."

'YOU'RE KIND OF WATCHING THESE TWO INSECTS IN THIS TERRARIUM OF A HOUSE'

Jennifer Ehle

And yet Maud succeeds in cracking Amanda's own shell, cajoling her into revealing more of her true self than she ever has done before. "Yes," agrees Clark. "You see in lots of moments why Maud is a nurse. Why she wanted to look after people and help people."

Ehle ponders, speaking slowly. "Power dynamics are generally fascinating to explore. This one was an interesting… what's the word? Terrarium? You're kind of watching these two insects in this terrarium of a house. And yes, in a way, Maud experiences more intimacy with Amanda than Amanda's ever experienced. Amanda's never let anybody in quite as much. I'm sure she's had a trillion lovers, but she's probably controlled the way they perceive her. And she's had other carers, but probably hasn't let them in anywhere near as much."

Adding to the complexity of the two characters and their relationship is the exploration of their sexuality. Ridiculous though it is to say this in 2020, it's still uncommon for a movie to so openly lay out a young woman's desires, for there are scenes here in which Maud's hungry need for connection evoke Samantha Morton's kamikaze carnality in Lynne Ramsay's *Morvern Callar*. Even more unusual, Glass' script refuses to quell Amanda's sexuality, ensuring it is still a vital part of her kaleidoscopic makeup despite her debilitating illness.

"I think it's obviously a film written by a woman," says Ehle. "I didn't find it any more comfortable doing those scenes with a female director than I would a male director, but I do think there's something in the female gaze. Never was any sexuality there to titillate. Amanda's sexuality is a huge part of her but it's an incidental part. It's not, 'Oh my god, this woman's a lesbian!' You're more interested in how it's affecting her and the people around her rather than putting labels on."

Clark concurs. "Amanda is allowed to be a whole person, and her sexuality is still a part of her," she begins, before zooming in on her own character. "I love the ambiguity. Maud wouldn't know what those feelings are particularly because she hasn't been allowed to explore them. And I found it very interesting in a film that is also about religion, because female sexuality has suffered a lot because of organised religion."

As for Glass, she always knew that sexuality would be a key part of *Saint Maud*. "When you're doing a film that's a portrait of a person unravelling, then obviously their sex life is going to come into it," she shrugs. "But I was always going backward and forward on how much to show and tell about what happened to Maud to make her the way she is. I didn't want it rammed down people's throats, but hopefully what comes across is that this new saintly persona is something that she's latched on to help her cope with herself."

Saint Maud's formal risk-taking and tonal control are remarkable. The action, often just two actors in a room, was shot in a house in London's Highgate area, and a basement of a neighbouring house standing in for Maud's bedsit. Exteriors were filmed in Scarborough. It was a five-week shoot, with a week of pickups, and all the scenes featuring Ehle were shot first so she might return to New York and the production could limit its spend.

The contained, focused shoot makes



For the love of God Glass' psychological thriller explores both the religious and the sexual within its characters.

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Dark thoughts take hold in Maud's cramped bedsit.



for claustrophobic-but-far-from-dingy viewing, as Ben Fordesman's crepuscular, claret-soaked lensing and Paulina Rzeszowska's seamy production design unnerve viewers en route to an extraordinary climax.

"The world, visually and tonally, came first," says Glass. "I wanted it to start off controlled and gradually, hopefully almost imperceptibly, to unravel stylistically, into a more nightmarish world. The last thing I ever wanted to do was a small, bleak drama. I was telling people, 'It will be fun, I promise!' The sensual and visceral side of it was something I kept banging on about to anyone who would listen. We're not just seeing things literally as they are, but are experiencing Maud's sensory emotions." Once seen, *Saint Maud* will not be forgotten.

Just ask Clark, who was as disturbed as anyone else the first time she saw it. "I find it horrifying," she admits. "I can deal with the monster in the cupboard but not in my head. Those movies really scare me."

As for Glass' parents, they were scared but also suitably proud. "They came to Toronto [*Film Festival*] for the premiere," says Glass. "They love it, and they're keeping up-to-date on every Google alert." She laughs. "My grandmother also saw it and was surprised. She said, 'Where did *that* come from?!'"

SAINT MAUD OPENS ON 1 MAY.

STUDIOCANAL, PARK CIRCUS

SAINT MAUD

DIVINE INSPIRATION

The movies that influenced Saint Maud...

BLACK NARCISSUS 1947

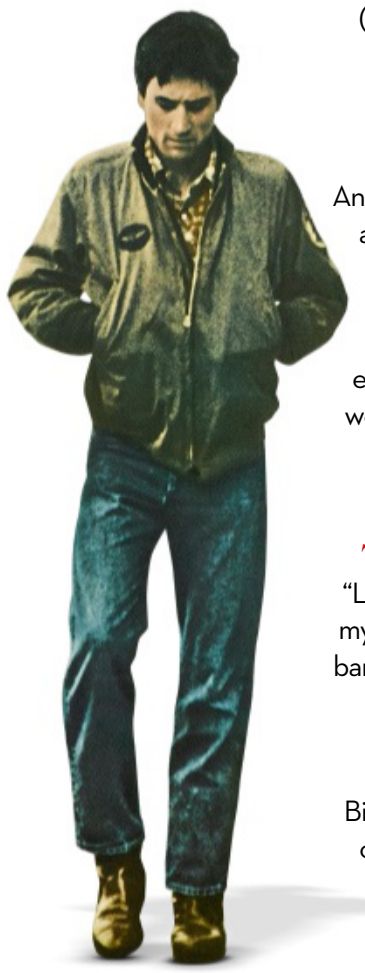
Sanctity and sin as Sister Clodagh (Deborah Kerr) is charged with turning a remote Himalayan palace, once home to the king's concubines, into a convent. A dazzling tale of loneliness and temptation, this ungodly tragedy is vividly shot in heavenly hues.

WHATEVER HAPPENED TO BABY JANE? 1962

Saint Maud tilts towards the theatrical but Robert Aldrich's dark melodrama goes all-in, pitting former child star Baby Jane (Bette Davis) against her sister Blanche (Joan Crawford) in a decaying Hollywood mansion. A cycle of 'horror hag' movies followed.

THE SERVANT 1963

Harold Pinter's acrid screenplay and Joseph Losey's claustrophobic direction make for a lethal combination in this tale of sex, shame and class, as wealthy Tony (James Fox) hires cunning, caustic Hugo (Dirk Bogarde) as a live-in manservant.



PERSONA 1966

A chattering nurse (Bibi Andersson) tends to a famous actress (Liv Ullmann) who's retreated to a seaside house in the throes of a breakdown. Power shifts, emotions swirl, and the two women's personalities begin to splice in Bergman's mind-melter.

TAXI DRIVER 1976

"Loneliness has followed me my whole life, everywhere. In bars, in cars, sidewalks, stores, everywhere. There's no escape. I'm God's lonely man." Vietnam vet Travis Bickle (Robert De Niro) sets out to clean up the mean streets of Midtown Manhattan. ***JG***

HARRY POTTER
AND THE CURSED C

HOW TO WRITE A SCREENPLAY



BY JACK THORNE

VIRTUES

THE AERONAUTS

SKINS



JACK THORNE

Jack Thorne is one of the most in-demand screenwriters across stage, TV and film, having penned the likes of Harry Potter And The Cursed Child, The Virtues and His Dark Materials. Now, with two new films – Radioactive and The Secret Garden – hitting cinemas, the award-winning scribe shares his writing secrets with Total Film.

WORDS MATT MAYTUM

Jack Thorne is a writer whose name you see *everywhere*. He exploded into the public consciousness with *Harry Potter And The Cursed Child*, the Tony Award-winning two-part Wizarding World stageplay that launched in 2016 and is still going strong. Prior to that, Thorne had written *Skins*, *This Is England* and *The Fades* on the small screen, movie *How I Live Now* and a number of plays. Since, he's tapped out scripts for movies *Wonder* and *The Aeronauts*, and TV fantasy epic *His Dark Materials*. He's also writing Damien Chazelle's Netflix series *The Eddy*, and Millie Bobby Brown's Sherlock's-sister adventure, *Enola Holmes*.

Thorne is *extremely* self-deprecating when it comes to his current workload. "I just got very, very lucky recently with stuff," he tells *Total Film*. "And it won't ever happen again. I'm just trying to enjoy it while it lasts, you know?" He has two films hitting cinemas imminently – Marie Curie biopic *Radioactive* and classic kids' story adaptation *The Secret Garden* – but claims he's "not really" that busy. "Lots of things suddenly happened at once. I mean, I wrote *Radioactive* eight years ago or something. And then it took a long time to come around. Things happen in weird clumps where nothing happens for a long time, and you're just sat there hoping."

If you want to know how he does it, and to learn from the best, here Thorne tells *Total Film* about his process, and how you go about writing a script… "There's times when it feels like a chore, but I try to sit in front of a computer excited every day."

MASTERCLASS

ESTABLISHING SHOTS

"I did a degree in politics, so that's useful for nothing. I was acting quite a lot, which helped, and I got a lot of opportunities to write plays which got put on by students. And making stuff is obviously the best training for anything.

"I did the Royal Court Young Writers Programme and the Soho Theatre Writers' Lab. I did every free playwriting programme there was. I looked into going to film school, but I didn't have the money for it.

"One of the best bits of value I got out of doing those schemes is fellow students. The people I learned so much from were the people who were in the same situation as me. There was a particular writer called Laura Wade, who's a very successful playwright: she was one of the best peers that I ever had. Getting people's time is the best thing you can get.

"I would say that the most important thing you can do before you do anything, is write. People who go on courses that haven't written a script before, I think are a bit crazy, really, spending their money doing it. Because you [*should*] write a script, and then go on a course, and then rewrite your script."



BACKGROUND READING

"Both the William Goldman books [*Adventures In The Screen Trade*, *Which Lie Did I Tell?*] are just amazing. And also, his script books, *Four Screenplays* and *Five Screenplays*, that have essays at the beginning of each one – I love those. I collect TV script books. So I've got lots and lots of those, everything from *Buffy* to *Rising Damp* to *Freaks And Geeks* to *Dinnerladies*. That's really useful, looking at those, and looking at screenplays: Tarantino, Nicolas Roeg, Scorsese, Christopher Hampton. And *On Film-making* by Alexander Mackendrick. I love that book.

"I read everything I could get hold of… how the industry works, and how different people play different games with scripts.

"I was just reading Craig Mazin's *Chernobyl* scripts. He put them online, and they're really, really worth a read. You get a huge amount from watching it on screen, but there's a particular way he writes stage direction that's rather beautiful. The great writers, the way they set out their scripts, are always fascinating."

TOOLS OF THE TRADE

"I think Final Draft [*screenwriting programme*] is really useful, because it helps you a lot with what the script should look like. It's a good investment, Final Draft, but it's a frustrating software. It's not perfect. But I find it hard to write in another way now.

"I write a lot in my notebook at the same time. The mornings when my wife is taking my son to school instead of me – we take it in turns – I try to stay in bed and write in bed in my notebook, because it keeps me away from my computer and all the distractions of the computer and everything else. So you've got a fresh head on, and you're doing fresh work, on a fresh page, without any previous writing to distract you. I find that very helpful.

"And Freedom – the internet program that cuts off your internet. I try to spend at least six or seven hours a day on Freedom, without the internet on."

DRAFT DODGING

"I'm very much [*in favour of*] writing and writing and writing and writing – and then destroying. And then writing and writing and writing. I write a lot of stuff. Overwriting, I think, is a good thing to do.

"The number of drafts completely varies. I did 46 drafts of Episode 1 of *His Dark Materials*. That was a lot. I generally don't do that much. And there has been stuff where I've written two ~~drafts~~ drafts, and it's been right.

"I always have to have two things on the go. I've always done that since when no one cared what I was writing. When you're writing something, and you go, 'This is terrible,' there's a real joy in being able to swap to another script, and to go, 'Phew, I can still do it.' When I was doing *Harry Potter And The Cursed Child*, I was also working on a TV show called *National Treasure*. *National Treasure* was about historic sex offences. *Harry Potter* was about *Harry Potter*. It was very useful to be able to ~~change~~ swap between the two, and it actually helped both, I think, a lot."



'I always write the first draft hopeful that it's going to be the one. But then the savage disappointment of my own mediocrity slaps me in the face.'



ADAPT OR TRY

"You just try to know the books as well as you possibly can [*when writing an adaptation*]. And always have them close to the first draft, and then, before you show it to anyone, do another draft that's just about you. And then look at it again. Look at the book again. Do another draft. And then it's ready to hand in.

"There's bits of both I like, about writing originally and then writing an adaptation. With *The Secret Garden*, I knew I had a door in as soon as I had a stray dog. I knew the period I wanted to go for.

"The thing that most attracted me about the story was the fact that Mary was so unlikeable and so wonderfully difficult and spiky. And by the end of it, hopefully people will see a character that's transformed. I just thought it was such a bold and brilliant piece of writing in the book.

"And then it was like, 'OK, but I've got this girl, and I need something that gives her an opportunity to show a different spirit within her.' And then it was like, 'OK, what about a stray dog?' And because there were so many stray dogs, post-war, it was like, 'OK!' Then it all went from there. It's looking for that little way in.

"And then with *Radioactive*, my main thing was… the graphic novel is so mad, the way she juxtaposes stuff. It was going, 'How do I just try to get Lauren Redniss' vision for the world inside the screenplay?' Things changed through the filming and everything else. But that was the aim. She did this great juxtaposition of the history of radioactivity alongside the history of Marie Curie. And I thought that was beautiful. So I was just trying to tell it as close to what Lauren Redniss had written as I could.

"You only do an adaptation because you're in love with the book. You want to capture the author's spirit."

AGENT OF CHANGE

"You can do lots without an agent. I've got three agents, and I love them all. They're brilliant. But some of the best advice I ever got was from the writer Dennis Kelly. He most famously wrote *Utopia* and *Matilda* [The Musical]. Right at the beginning, when I first got an agent, he said, 'Now don't expect them to get you anything for the first 18 months.'

"The idea that an agent exists to get you work is slightly crazy. An agent sits beside you and helps you, but you're the one getting the work. You're getting work through making stuff.

"And you won't get an agent before you're getting into the situation where you've got some other contacts in the industry. I think too much emphasis is put on getting an agent. They're brilliant, and they're really, really helpful. The people I'm with are amazing. But it's my job to get the work, and it's their job to tell me what work I should take."

PITCH IMPERFECT

"I still pitch. Pitching is horrible. It often feels like a massive waste of time. I went through one just before Christmas for a project which was a book that I was really passionate about. I didn't get it. I already knew how I wanted to write the film. I spent all this time preparing the pitch, and writing the film would have taken probably [*less time*].

"So I've got this film living in my head that I didn't get to write. You've just got to be sanguine about it and think, 'I probably learned something from the process of thinking about that film that will help me on other projects.' And that was with people I knew very well, that I was pitching that with.

"[*When pitching*], just tell the story of the film. It depends on who you're doing it to. I have written entire scripts for myself, where I literally was just reading it out, because the people I was talking to were so scary that I couldn't think of doing it any other way. I'll have four or five pages of notes in my book that contain the really important things I want to say. And I try to tell it in my own crazy, nervous, babbling way – and rely on the fact that that's the best way to show your passion for the story."

SENSE OF AN ENDING

"I try to avoid outlines as much as possible. [*Screenwriter, playwright and author*] Ronald Harwood said, 'I want to be excited by what the ending is.' And I think I agree with that. But you've always got a sense of what the ending should be. Do you know what I mean? There's a real joy in just going and seeing.

"I always write [*the first draft*] really, really hopeful that it's going to be the one. And then the savage disappointment of my own mediocrity slaps me in the face [*laughs*]. And I think that's the arrogant thing. It's that hunger. When you watch a film like *Parasite*, and you go, 'That's bewildering how that's structured. That's bewildering and it's beautiful. I haven't got the slightest hope of being that good.'

"And then you sit down in front of your computer, and you go, 'But maybe this time, I can be that good.' And you write it. And you go, 'Oh, no, sorry, I'm not as good as him.' It's that hunger to be special that keeps you going as a screenwriter."

RADIOACTIVE OPENS 20 MARCH. THE SECRET GARDEN OPENS 10 APRIL.

Lady VENGEANCE

Written and directed by Killing Eve S2's Emerald Fennell and starring an electrifying Carey Mulligan, **PROMISING YOUNG WOMAN** is an early contender for most provocative film of the year. Total Film meets the team behind the talking-point movie that's part candy-coloured romcom, part hot-button thriller.

WORDS DAMON WISE

"Every week I go to a club I act like I'm too drunk to stand
And every week a nice guy comes over to see if I'm OK..."

Once in a blue moon a film comes along with a premise so exquisite and simple that it's surprising no one's ever thought about it before – but one that's also so morally complex that audiences will already be arguing about it even while the final credits are rolling. Directed by 34-year-old Brit Emerald Fennell, *Promising Young Woman* is a dark superhero movie where the hero has no superpowers but the ability to shame. At the same time, it's a clever, funny and engaging film that takes familiar movie tropes and turns them so far inside out that by the end you won't know if you've just seen a truly scary romcom or a very funny horror.

Key to its charm is Carey Mulligan, who plays Cassandra "Cassie" Thomas. Cassie still lives with her parents at home in the suburbs of LA and works day shifts at a laid-back coffee shop.



MAKING OF

She's a mousey, underachieving woman who dropped out of college and never thought to drop back in, but by night she has an alter ego. Wearing a variety of disguises – office girl, club girl, hipster – she trawls the city's bars posing as a flat-out drunk. And every night she gets a bite, giving would-be date rapists the fright of their lives when she suddenly snaps into focus.

This isn't simply a lurid vigilante story, however. When Cassie meets offbeat paediatrician Ryan (Bo Burnham), things taken an unexpected turn: is Ryan the proof that Cassie needs that not all men are monsters? And will she finally move on from the traumatic past of her best friend Nina, the motivating factor behind Cassie's ever more ingenious rampage of revenge?

For a first-time writer-director, it's an incredibly assured debut that juggles some very serious topics – for one, the issue of consent, for another, the privilege of young, rich white men – while delivering lots of laughs and some *very* big surprises. But then, having sharpened her instincts writing season two of *Killing Eve*, that's to be expected from Fennell. The impetus, she says, came from looking at the world around her. "I like looking at things that we all take as kind of part of our culture – things that are ingrained in our culture – but we don't think about very much," Fennell tells *TF*. "And the thing I started thinking about a lot was this idea that there's apparently nothing wrong with taking someone home who's completely inebriated. There were lots of stories in the news, and what was very interesting was it seemed that nobody was arguing that the thing itself hadn't happened – the men weren't saying, 'I didn't do that. It never happened.' They said, 'Yeah, it did happen, but it was fine.' And that, to me, just seemed so extraordinary."

This paradox swirled around in Fennell's head until finally she found a way to express it visually: the chilling scenes in which Cassie opens her sleepy eyes wide and confronts the men who are trying to take advantage of her. "And if somebody is incredibly freaked out by that, surely that means that they do, implicitly, understand it's wrong," continues Fennell. "It's just such a kind of clear and lovely example of something that is so difficult to put your finger on until you demonstrate it."

Not surprisingly, while Fennell was pitching the movie, not everybody got it. "So many times, the people I was pitching to – both men and women – would say, 'Oh my God, so she's a fucking psycho?' And my response to that was always, 'OK, that's interesting. Why do you say that? Because, surely, it should be *good* that she's not completely inebriated. What's happened that makes her frightening?'"

Carey Movie

Frightening isn't a word that's often used to describe Carey Mulligan, but *Promising Young Woman* reveals a previously untapped seam of steel. It also showcases Mulligan's ability to spin on a dime, playing all the contradictions in a highly volatile and yet still totally relatable character.

"Part of the appeal of making this film, to me, was to make it feel like a world people would want to spend time in," says Fennell. "I didn't want it to be didactic. I didn't want it to have any





SWEET ROMANCE
Can Ryan (Bo Burnham) convince vengeance-driven Cassie (Carey Mulligan) that men aren't all bad?



PROMISING YOUNG WOMAN

answers. I wanted it to just examine a subject I find very interesting in a way that was filmic. There were two routes I was keen not to go down. One thing I didn't want to do was make something very serious, very dark, very bleak, with somebody who was incredibly intense. But I equally didn't want it to be about somebody who was – in inverted commas – 'whip-smart' or 'kick-ass' – all of those words we get now for female characters. What I wanted was an actress who knew that this was a real person and could ground quite a complicated, strange journey, but without making it easy."

On a hunch, Fennell – herself an actress, recently seen as Camilla Shand in *The Crown* – sent it to Mulligan's agent around Christmas 2018. Mulligan read it, they had a meeting, and within a few months they were shooting.

"When I was reading it for the first time," Mulligan admits, "I did think, 'How are we going to pull this off?' In a good way. I mean, it made me nervous, but it was the good kind of nervous: it made me think there were some things to navigate. They had to be done in the right way, and whoever was running the show had to know exactly what they wanted. And with Emerald, from the moment I met her, she was crystal clear about what kind of film she wanted to make."

The thing that clinched it was Fennell's take on it: why Cassie does the things she does. "At the heart of it, it's about love," says Mulligan. "It's about two best friends who practically used to be sisters. And Emerald said, when I met her, 'We've seen so many female-revenge movies where chicks get dressed up in tight leather belts and go around wreaking havoc with machetes. But, actually, what would you *really* do? What would be within your power and what would you actually do if you felt that there was an injustice that needed to be corrected on behalf of your best friend?' That's what she was interested in exploring."

Fennell is flattered by suggestions that Mulligan isn't an obvious choice. "Well, that's precisely why I thought she'd be perfect," she beams. "I mean, for me, everyone in the film is, I guess, not an obvious choice. And Carey's just so good. She's so clever, and she's so funny – we've only seen, like, 10 per cent of what she can do. And, I have to say, she's also the nicest person I've ever worked with. But because she's so good, she also puts the frighteners on lots of actors, because working with her is intimidating. And so what was so amazing was putting her with all of these unbelievably talented actors and comedians, and they just played off each other so well because they all had very different talents coming from different places. I really couldn't imagine anyone else in the role."

Indeed, the cast also features turns from the eclectic likes of Laverne Cox, Alison Brie, Molly Shannon, Jennifer Coolidge and Clancy Brown. If Cassie didn't spend her evenings playing cat and mouse, *Promising Young Woman* could easily be a sweet, lo-fi slacker movie about a dreamer who won't leave the nest. "In my limited understanding of it," says Mulligan, "I think it's easy to regress when you've been through trauma, and it's easy to almost stay the same age that you were then. That can be a response to any really traumatic event. So Emerald and I sort of imagined that staying at home and refusing to grow up was a part of Cassie not being able to move on from what had happened to Nina. That's reflected in her room – it still feels like a teenager's bedroom – because I don't think she wants to be out in the real world. She could definitely have her

'WHAT'S HAPPENED THAT MAKES HER FRIGHTENING?'
Emerald Fennell



Paris Hilton, je t'aime



One of *Promising Young Woman*'s many surprises is its eclectic pop soundtrack, featuring Charlie XCX, the Spice Girls and Britney Spears' 'Toxic'. It also showcases Paris Hilton's insanely catchy 2006 single 'Stars Are Blind', which accompanies a pivotal montage. Here, director Emerald Fennell explains her reasoning...

"The kind of music I like is so often dismissed, especially in movies. If it's even used at all, it's used ironically, or it's seen as a kind of a guilty pleasure – and, really, people only ever say that about music that girls like. So I wanted to use music in the movie in the way that it means to me, which is that I think it's very moving and very beautiful, and Paris Hilton's 'Stars Are Blind' is genuinely one of my favourite songs. It came out when I'd just gone to university, or just before, and it's just one of those songs that means so much in my life.

"When it came to making the movie, I knew I needed the most romantic romantic-comedy montage ever, and the song had to be just right. I thought: if a man knew every single word to a song, and it would make me love him more, what song would it be? And the thing that came to me was, well, it would have to be 'Stars Are Blind', because that just says everything about who they are. It means, a) they've got excellent taste in music, and, b) they don't care. They like what they like, and there's something very appealing about that.

"That was one of the greatest shooting days of my life, even though Carey and Bo were furious with me and everyone on the set was like, 'What is this song? We don't know this song. We've never heard of it.' And then literally, about 50 minutes in... [*Laughs*] I wish I had filmed it – every single person, every single member of the crew, was dancing and singing along. It was just so wonderful." DW



Director Emerald Fennell catches up with star Carey Mulligan between takes.

own place, but being in the comfort of her parents' home, all of that is a sort of safety net for her. It allows her to do what she does in the nighttime."

The nighttime, of course, is where Cassie comes alive. "We had a lot of fun figuring out how she would disguise herself every night," recalls Mulligan, "because the most important thing is that no one recognises her. And the further along it goes, the more she tries to mask herself as much as possible, with lots and lots of make-up and different hair, because her existence in the nighttime should *never* cross over into her daytime life. There's no crossover at all."

To further complicate the situation, there was the matter of playing drunk – and not only playing drunk but playing a sober person playing drunk. "The good thing about this was that it didn't matter if it looked like bad drunk acting," she laughs, "because she *is* acting. So I didn't worry about it too much because I thought, 'Well, if people think I'm faking it, I actually am faking it, so it's cool. This doesn't have to be the best acting you've ever seen. So I let myself off the hook a bit."

Conversation piece

When it comes to letting the audience off the hook, however, *Promising Young Woman* is a different matter entirely. As it weaves its web, Fennell's film invites us to reflect on how sexual assault is normalised within our lives and culture.

"What I think Emerald's done so brilliantly," says Mulligan, "is make a film about something that we do need to have an ongoing conversation about. It's not just about bad guys, it's about subtle stuff that we think of as being totally normal and acceptable. Em talked about this quite a lot. In fact, she went to great pains to make sure that there's nothing in this film that you haven't seen in a kind of bro comedy in the last 15 years. It might seem shocking from this perspective, but we've seen a guy taking advantage of a really drunk girl lots. We've just always seen it as comedy. We haven't seen it from this angle."

Fennell confirms this. "Don't forget," she says, "even 10 years ago in romantic comedies, hugely successful studio comedies, we had scenes where men took girls home who were really, really drunk, or burned through a ton of faceless, topless women just to kind of get over girlfriends or heartbreaks, whatever. There are movies that I love – genuinely love – that do not allow for those characters' humanity. They don't think about them. It's not malevolent, it's not malicious, it's just not considered. So it was important to examine that."

For all its playfulness, however, the film takes an astonishingly audacious turn in its final act that





Cassie is looking for revenge away from the violence-driven clichés.

‘IT’S NOT JUST ABOUT BAD GUYS, IT’S ABOUT SUBTLE STUFF’

Carey Mulligan

few will see coming and many will quite possibly hate. “The only way I could make this film was if I was honest about it,” teases Fennell of the divisive finale. “If you’re going to make a revenge movie that has any kind of violence in it, then you have to be very honest. I couldn’t bear the idea of people leaving the theatre feeling that things had been tied up.”

That’s not to say it doesn’t end this rollercoaster with a bang. Says Fennell, “If you’re going to make a film that’s about something as serious as this, then you want it to be as accessible, as gripping, as thrillerish, and as funny, as beguiling as possible so that the first thing it is is a good film, and underneath that is something that makes you think.

“I’ve been talking about horror a lot recently,” she continues, “but when you look at the most effective, enduring horrors, they’re all coming from a sort of fear that we feel in our gut that we haven’t maybe examined yet. You go back to *Dracula* and the fear of sex, or *Frankenstein* and the fear of science. You look at *Parasite* and what it says about capitalism, or *Get Out*, and what it says about a very specific, very finely drawn type of racism… These movies are, at the forefront, just brilliant works of art. But they come from some kind of deep gut feeling, and I really hope we managed to get somewhere towards that sort of feeling with this film. It’s its own thing, and it’s an accessible – in sort of a sick way – fun ride, but it’s something that people might have to argue about a little bit after they leave, or at least talk about it and talk about what they felt.”

Mulligan agrees. “You can’t make the same impact with something that’s didactic and dull,” she says, “or incredibly depressing. You’ve got to find a way to continue the conversation in a way that’s engaging and kind of fun, and I think that’s what Emerald has done. You’ve got to feel a certain amount of escapism in every film you watch. There’s got to be some source of release or enjoyment in it, and I think there’s heaps of that in Emerald’s film. But, yeah, it makes me feel really good about sisterhood too.”

PROMISING YOUNG WOMAN OPENS ON 17 APRIL.

UNIVERSAL

INTERVIEW MATT MAYTUM PORTRAIT ALISA CONNAN

I HAVEN'T DONE 'TWO FOR THEM AND ONE FOR YOU'. I'M DOING 'THIS ONE FOR ME AND THIS ONE FOR ME AND THE NEXT ONE FOR ME AS WELL...'

KEIRA KNIGHTLEY

Keira Knightley has never been one to adhere to the rulebook. Shooting to blockbuster stardom as a teenager, she survived the glare of the spotlight, and character work and Oscar nominations duly followed. Ahead of the release of Misbehaviour – the true tale of a Miss World contest disrupted by activists – Total Film meets the English star unafraid of shaking things up.

ALISA CONNAN / BAFTA / CAMERA PRESS



It's a crisp February day when *Total Film* catches up with Keira Knightley in London ("My favourite", as she describes the capital). Her latest film, *Misbehaviour*, tells the true story of an activist group sabotaging the 1970 Miss World ceremony, which was watched by over 100 million TV viewers. "You really realise that it was such a ballsy move," she grins. "Going in and disrupting something that is literally the biggest show on Earth." It's a feminist, socially conscious film, delivered with a light touch. It's easy to see what attracted Knightley to the role of real-life historian and activist Sally Alexander.

The 34-year-old British star became one of the most famous people in the UK, practically overnight, starring in surprise 2003 hit *Pirates Of The Caribbean: The Curse Of The Black Pearl*. But after the literal rollercoaster ride of that experience (and its sequels), Knightley has largely shied away from blockbuster material in favour of period pieces, indies, and, especially recently, dramas with pertinent messages (*Colette*, *Official Secrets*), choosing films by her own taste rather than an agent's masterplan. "If it's small budget, you have to hit the ground running, and just go for it," beams Knightley. "You just have to dive in."

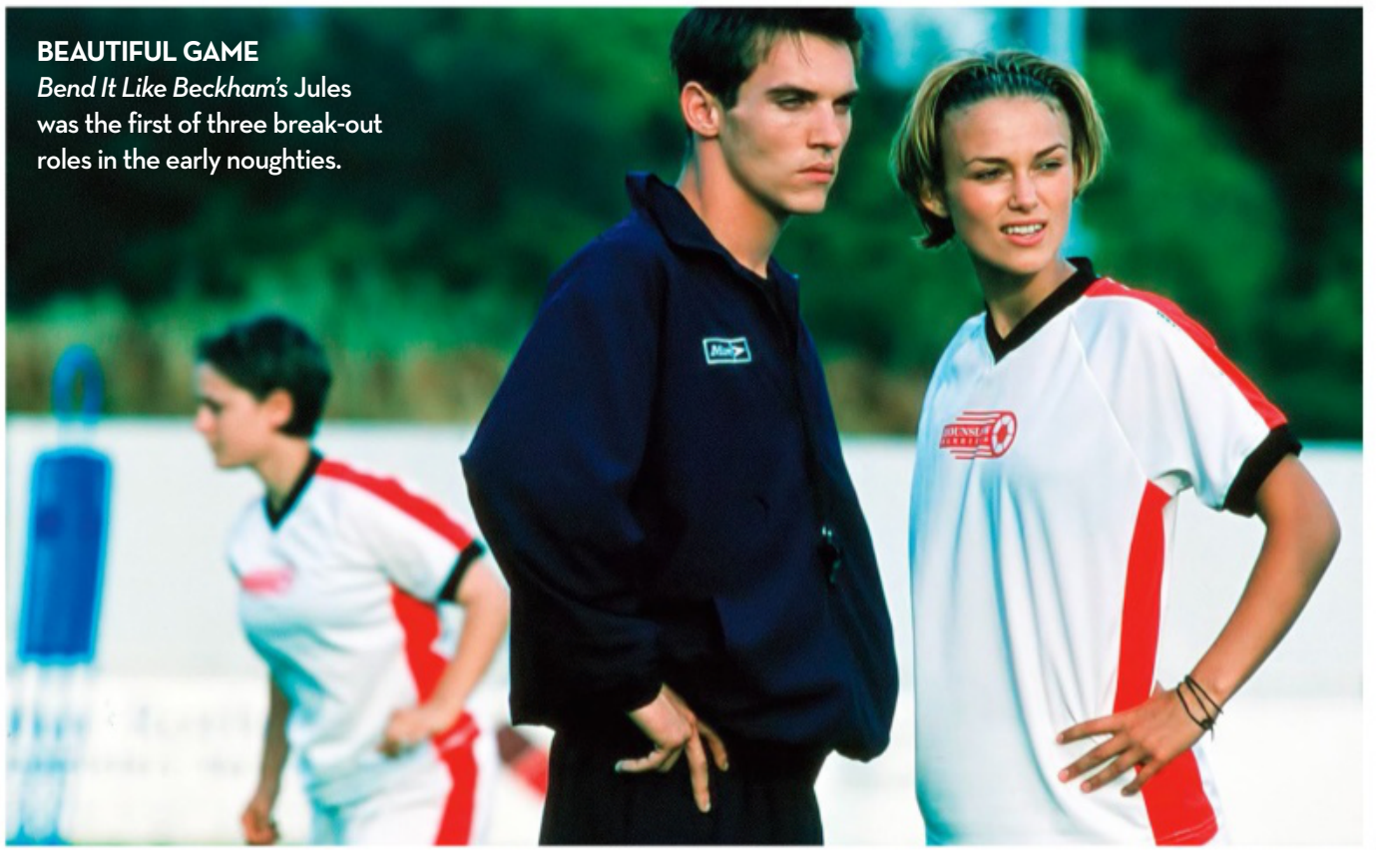
Growing up in the public eye, Knightley faced all the negative attention that entails; she recently admitted to having a breakdown aged 22, when she was diagnosed with post traumatic stress disorder. But despite allowing herself a couple of periods of respite, her work ethic has never slackened, and she has also spoken out on a number of issues.

Acting's in her blood; her mother's a writer (she penned Knightley's 2008 romantic drama, *The Edge Of Love*) and her father an actor. "We went to the theatre all the time," she remembers. "It was always a world that I found totally magical and very inspiring."

Knightley had no formal training herself, and honed her craft on the job. "That way of learning is quite… 'brutal' is maybe too much. But it's the only word that I can come up with. And, you know, you do learn," she laughs, "if you're interested – and I was desperate to get better, and I was desperate to find people that could teach me."

That learning curve took in work with directors like Joe Wright (*Pride & Prejudice*, *Atonement*, *Anna Karenina*), David Cronenberg (*A Dangerous Method*) and Tony Scott (*Domino*), as well as Oscar noms for *P&P* and Morten Tyldum's *The Imitation Game*.

Misbehaviour features an abundance of female voices behind the camera (in the directing, writing and producing roles) and in front (Jessie Buckley, Gugu Mbatha-Raw, Lesley Manville, Keeley Hawes), and gifts Knightley the role of a powerful and determined working mother unafraid to shake up the male-dominated status quo. "I think because of the subject matter of this, there was a real sense of togetherness," she smiles. "And a sense that we women know how rare it is when you suddenly realise that there are more women on set than men…"



BEAUTIFUL GAME
Bend It Like Beckham's Jules was the first of three break-out roles in the early noughties.

PARAMOUNT, UNIVERSAL

Misbehaviour feels very much like a film destined to start conversations. Is that how you felt when you first read it?
Yeah, I think so. I didn't know anything about it when I first read it. It was all new to me. And I really liked the fact that it didn't feel preachy. It felt like the film itself was a kind of conversation.

So you weren't at all familiar with the real story beforehand?
I didn't know about it at all. I was aware of the world and it being a thing. But I'd never seen it [*the Miss World competition*], and I didn't know anything about this. I spoke to my mum about it, and she remembered it happening. It's such a weird world anyway. In doing the research, I watched quite a few of them. They seem of another time. It's a little bit like the Eurovision Song Contest. They're these weird, extraordinary things. And I didn't realise how large it was. It had the largest [*number of*] viewers of anything. It was huge. So the fact that they managed to stop the biggest show on Earth, I thought was kind of amazing.

In the film, Sally Alexander has to face an all-male panel, and has to balance her career with childcare. Is that something you really responded to?
Yeah, I did. I think it's hard not to if you're a woman and a mother. I think that all of that felt very current. It's not necessarily that you can't get into the room for the interview, but that it is always a very male environment. And then even if you do get on to the course, trying to get your voice heard is a whole other thing. I think most women who work will recognise that. I did recognise certain things. And within that discussion of objectification, it's again something that we're still sort of wrestling with now. As much as it feels very of the '70s, it equally felt like all of the conversations – and also obviously the conversation about racism and visibility of different people of different ethnicities – that felt very current as well.

How was it working with Jessie Buckley? As she's newer to the industry, did you find yourself giving her any advice?



LIBERATING FORCE
Knightley takes on the patriarchy in the upcoming *Misbehaviour*.

No, you don't need to give Jessie any advice. And I wouldn't know what fucking advice I'd give to anyone. Jessie's terrific. It was really lovely to work with her. It was a really happy job. I know that every actor always says that, and often it's not true, but on this one it actually really was true. So it was really nice to have loads of stuff with her. And then equally Philippa Lowthorpe, the director – she is just wonderful. And she is just so calm. She has this sort of unflappable, really lovely air about her.

What are you looking for in a project these days?
I think this is a question that my agent would really like me to be able to answer [*laughs*]. I never know what I'm looking for. It's really, really annoying for everybody that works with me. But weirdly, I know it as soon as I find it. I'm incredibly instinctual, and it doesn't always make sense what will be the thing that will suddenly grab me. I did *Official Secrets*, and then I did this one. Both of them have a definite political vibe. I think that those two projects definitely reflected the world around, and therefore that's where my interest went. Right now, the next one I'm doing isn't political. It's fucking weird [*laughs*]. It's also slightly funny but very dark. So you know, I have no idea. I'm always looking for the writing. I'm always looking for good dialogue. I'm always looking for characters that aren't obviously one-dimensional. And I think I'm at a point where I'd really like to work with filmmakers who will push me, because I don't want to just do the same thing.

> **I'M CRAP AT TRYING TO PREDICT WHAT IS GOING TO BE SUCCESSFUL**

Have you always been instinctual when it's come to choosing roles?
I think I tried early on to have some sort of game plan, and that very quickly went out of the window. If there was a game plan, it would mean predicting which ones are going to be successful and which ones aren't. And you can't ever really predict that. I think what I learned is, I'm a crap businesswoman. I'm crap at trying to predict what is going to be successful. The only thing that I can do is reflect what interests me at that particular moment, because that's the only way that I'm going to be good, or have the chance of being good, within it. I've done that for a very long time.

Was there a particular turning point when you realised acting could actually be a career?
It all kind of happened in a bit of a whoosh. I can't entirely remember. I didn't mean to leave school after *Bend It Like Beckham*, and then I had *Love Actually*, and I didn't mean to leave school after *Love Actually*. Even when I did the first *Pirates*, I meant to go back to school after it. I didn't stop working for another five years after that. I don't really think I had a chance to really think about it. I definitely didn't think that it would take off in that way. I always imagined that it would be theatre, and I would go to drama school, and maybe I'd be lucky and get a few bits here and there. So it was quite a shock. But I also did recognise from my parents that there's a space in the world that opens up for you. And just because it opens up at that particular moment, it doesn't mean that it will ever open up again. If you get one of those, you've just got to jump in and hold on for dear life. And that's kind of what I did.

When you were younger you once said you didn't think you could call yourself an actor because you didn't think your skill level was high enough. Was there a stage when you did feel confident calling yourself an actor?

I think it was the technical side, really. I think that once I'd done theatre, I'd found the people that I'd like to work with. I found a way of working. When I was really young, I had no idea, and sometimes I was really lucky, and I'd be good, and other times I'd be terrible, and I would have absolutely no idea why I would have been good… I didn't go to drama school, so I didn't have a clue. Once I hit 24 or 25, I did have a clue. I did a couple of jobs around there where I was not necessarily like, "OK, now I'm going to be good." But it was, "I have a way of working that will give me a skeleton of something that is more solid than just being blown this way and that way."

And I think that theatre was a big one for me. It was seeing other people prepare, and understand how to prepare. And then there was a dialogue coach called Jill McCullough who I've been working with since I was 19, who just gave me tools for how to build a character, and how to do all of that. And I still work with her now. Finding those people that can actually help you prepare as an actor is a good one.

> **I HAD A DOLLHOUSE WHERE I USED TO PLAY ELIZABETH BENNET**

***Star Wars: The Phantom Menace* was one of your earliest film experiences. What do you remember about that?**

I mean, I was 12. I literally don't remember… I remember the headdress being so heavy, it gave me a headache. I really remember the headache from one of the headdresses. And I remember being in the background for such a long time that I'd actually fallen asleep. I was just sitting in a chair, and I was in the background, but I couldn't keep my eyes open. I really remember that. But apart from that, I don't remember anything else about it.

Was the first *Pirates Of The Caribbean* an overwhelming experience?

The first *Pirates*, I was 17. I don't remember it that well. Overwhelming? Yeah. The problem is, I don't really know what I remember, and what I just talked about. I know I said that I felt like I was going to get fired. Which sounds like me. But I don't really remember that feeling. I think I just felt like I was really lucky. I didn't anticipate that that would mean that I then would just have an amazing career in Hollywood films afterwards. That's not where I thought my career was going to be. [*On the first one*] we got left quite alone, because Johnny Depp hadn't had a commercial success, and a pirate movie hadn't worked in probably generations, and it was based on a Disney theme park ride. No one was particularly going, "This is going to be a big hit." So actually, relatively speaking, it was quite a chilled-out set. But when it got to 2 and 3 after that one had made like a billion dollars or whatever it was, I think that's when it was suddenly a very different thing.

After that run of *Bend It Like Beckham*, *Pirates* and *Love Actually*, were you able to make choices in a different way?

Yeah. The first one that I chose was a film called *The Jacket*. And then the second one was *Pride & Prejudice*. *The Jacket* was a very dark thriller, and then *Pride & Prejudice* was a period film. And then *Domino* was this mental, ultraviolent sort of thing. They were very conscious decisions to go, "Well, they are all really different. So that'll be very interesting layers." But of course, you get defined by the one that does well. And as much as you try and do lots of different things around it, they get slightly lost. So that was the first time that I'd chosen. And they were very, very conscious decisions – that triple. And obviously *Pride & Prejudice* did well. So that was good. And the other two, I think are extraordinary things, but obviously didn't do as well.

Did receiving Oscar nominations for *Pride & Prejudice* and later *The Imitation Game* mean a lot to you?

Yeah, it did mean a lot. I think that the *Pride & Prejudice* one was confusing, because I was 19 when I did *Pride & Prejudice*. So I was nominated when I was 20, and I got, obviously, the best reviews that I ever got for that and an Oscar nomination. But it came out around the same time as, I think, *Pirates 2* was coming out, and I got the worst reviews I'd ever had in my life. It was all so extreme at that point, and I didn't stop for two seconds. Again, I don't really remember much of that [*laughs*]. I'm realising I don't really remember much of anything. For *The Imitation Game*, it did mean a lot. Both of



FIVE STAR TURNS

PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN 2003
"Bang, there you go, instant bloody stardom," said Knightley. Despite Johnny Depp's full-wattage lead, the 17-year-old nailed the leap to super-fame with charisma and gusto.

PRIDE & PREJUDICE 2005
Self-confessedly "obsessed" with Elizabeth Bennet, Knightley silenced her doubters' prejudices with a generous and alert, proud and personable performance for director Joe Wright. A first Oscar nomination followed.

ATONEMENT 2007
Brittle on top, soulful below, Knightley struck up old-school erotic and emotional sparks with cross-class lover James McAvoy in Wright's ambitious adaptation of Ian McEwan's wartime romantic tragedy.

A DANGEROUS METHOD 2011
In her self-declared "Russian moment" (see also *Anna Karenina*), Knightley took bold risks playing hysteria patient Sabina Spielrein for David Cronenberg. Her performance grows as Spielrein evolves.

THE IMITATION GAME 2014
Reunited with *Atonement*'s Benedict Cumberbatch for the biopic of Alan Turing, Knightley brought warmth and intelligence to fellow code-buster Joan Clarke: a reminder of her character-acting abilities. ***KH***



them meant a lot. It really got to a point, when I was 19 or 20, I was getting a lot of negative press, and a lot of bad reviews. The fact that there was this amazing thing of this Best Actress nomination in there, I was kind of going, "OK, well, I must be alright occasionally if I've managed to get an Oscar nomination for a performance I did at 19." That definitely gave me a boost of, "OK, I'm not terrible. Or at least, I'm not always terrible. There's something here that I can work with."

You went on to work with Joe Wright twice more. Did you click straight away?
No, we didn't click straight away. When I was making *The Jacket* in Montreal, he came out to meet me, and his flight was about two or three hours delayed, and I had a 5am pick-up the next morning. And I knew that he wanted somebody else for it anyway, and I knew that he'd been forced to come out. I was just pissed off, and he was just pissed off. So we had this really terrible meeting in Montreal, where it was freezing cold, and he was so angry, and I was so angry, and it wasn't nice at all. And then my agent kept pushing, and the producers wanted me for it, and they said, "Try to meet him again." And then we met in London, and then we sort of clicked. The moment we clicked was when we started swearing at each other – and that's always a good sign, isn't it, if you're both swearing at each other, and nobody's taking offence. And that was it!

You've taken on a couple of literary titans with him: Lizzie Bennet and Anna Karenina. Was that daunting?
No, it's just kind of fun, really. If you're lucky enough to get the opportunity… again, I was 19. Was I probably daunted by playing Lizzie Bennet? Yes, I think that, probably, I was, because I was in a mesh of insecurity. But I think that equally I'd been completely obsessed by *Pride & Prejudice*. And the whole thing about *Pride & Prejudice* is that everyone sees themselves as Elizabeth Bennet. I had a dollhouse where I used to play Elizabeth Bennet. I was completely obsessed. I was probably terrified but equally quite confident. And then *Anna Karenina* was totally a different kettle of fish. I was in my late twenties when I played that, and we had a good relationship. It was definitely the hardest to shoot of the three films that we did together. But it was just really interesting. I got the opportunity to play a character that is so complex and so famous, and I had the best research in the world – I had Tolstoy; you can just dive into this novel. Weirdly, because of the subject matter, it

KEIRA KNIGHTLEY IN NUMBERS

6
The age she secured her first agent was also the age at which she was diagnosed with dyslexia.

$1.066bn
Biggest box-office figure to date, for *Pirates Of The Caribbean: Dead Man's Chest*.

5th
Youngest person ever to be nominated for the Best Actress Oscar.

2018
Year she gained an OBE for services to drama and charity.

9
Teen Choice Awards nominations, including wins for 'Liplock' and 'Choice Scream' (among others) in the *Pirates* films.

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was really fun. It was really intense. It was probably the most difficult thing that I've ever done. But that's the kind of stuff that you have to relish because it doesn't come around every day, and I was really fortunate that I got to play two of them.

What are you generally looking for in a director?
Just to get on. I think that that's why, as an actor, it's really important to know how you prepare a role. Because actually, the way directors work is really different. Some don't like to talk to actors at all. Some really like to be on you, every step of the way. So ultimately, I just want to find somebody I like, and whose work I like. I think that personal connection is always going to be the most helpful. And then however they work, it's knowing that I've done my work in the background. You know that you're coming into something feeling pretty confident that you're going to be able to perform. So essentially, really, I'm looking for somebody that I like, and whose vision I like. And it's sort of as simple as that.

You've spoken about how you and John Carney didn't get on on *Begin Again*...
Yeah, you basically want to make sure that that doesn't happen [*laughs*]. It is that unfortunate thing where you can't really second guess it until you start working. That's not an experience that I'd want again, and I'm sure he wouldn't either. I think we both wish we could have handled it differently, and I think we've both probably learned a lot from it. I've been super-lucky, because that's the only time it's happened. Generally speaking, when you do meet people, you can tell whether you get on or not from a first meeting. I've had one meeting with a director where I went, "Absolutely, I know I can't work with that person." And then thank God, we didn't work together. But generally speaking, it has been great. I've been really lucky. But life is what life is. You're going to have times where it doesn't quite turn out that way.

As a British actor who's been drawn to a lot of period dramas, did you ever fear being typecast?
Yeah, I definitely did. And I think that's why when I talk about those first three films that I actually made a choice about, two of them were modern-day. But then, I wanted my career to be predominantly in Europe and predominantly in England. And that is what we export, mostly. That's just a reality of the work that you're going to get. Equally, they were always the more

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interesting roles that I was offered. So, I did then have to go, "Well, I can't turn down *Anna Karenina* because it's a period piece. I can't turn down Cronenberg because it's a period piece." So yeah, I think I was worried. I don't worry about that anymore. I mean, I worry about it only because I now really know that the day starts so much earlier, because hair and makeup takes so much longer. But I think if you're lucky enough to be offered really interesting characters, then it doesn't really matter if they're in a big dress, you know? [*laughs*]



RUSSIAN ROULETTE
With Aaron Taylor-Johnson as Vronsky in *Anna Karenina*.

When you took the decision to step away from blockbusters, was that to move away from the fame side, or did you prefer working on smaller films?
It was both. It was definitely the fame side of it, which I just couldn't handle. So that was a very conscious decision. But equally, I think I get bored quite easily. So I like working on the smaller end of it, because I'm busier more, and there's less time to think about everything. You just have to kind of dive in and do it. I really enjoy that feeling of being against the clock. And there's an excitement in that you can't go back and reshoot it; you have to get it right. I think with my personality, that works better than something that can be infinitely changed. I like that feeling of, 'OK, it's sink or swim, so you better fucking swim. What are you going to do? Go!' I find that exciting.

Could you ever be tempted back to a big franchise film?
You can never say never. I find it difficult saying yes to anything where I don't know what the end is. I find that it's an open-ended contract where you have to sign for however many movies, and you have no idea what that movie is, or what your character is. I find that difficult. And I think that because of the way I work, it's got to be something I'm interested in, otherwise I'm just not any good. That is constantly what would make me very nervous about going back into something where I go, "God, what if I wasn't interested in it?" [*laughs*] That's no way to spend a life. So I think I am always very cautious. And I've been very lucky that I've been able to have a really interesting career where I have largely chosen smaller films. I haven't stuck to that "do two for them and one for you". I've gone with, "I'm going to do this one for me and this one for me and the next one for me and the next one for me as well – and I'm really hoping at some point, somebody else will be interested in this." I did have an American agent that once said to me, "I can't believe that you've been allowed to have this career." And he didn't mean it in a nice way. He was like, "People should be stopping you from doing these films, because you should be doing studio films." I do understand that, but I can't do it like that.

> **I JUST COULDN'T HANDLE THE FAME SIDE OF IT**

Are there any of those smaller films that you wish more people had seen?
God, probably most of them [*laughs*]. I think *Never Let Me Go* and *A Dangerous Method*, and actually *Last Night*. I think that those three [*movies*] are really interesting things.

And finally, if you were to able to time-travel back and give advice to your teenage self, what would it be?
Fucking chill out! [*laughs*] Chill out. Put your head down. Work. Watch lots of movies, and just chill out. Just really, really chill out. But I think you can probably say that to most people's younger self, can't you? It's just really anxiety-making, being a teenager, or in your early twenties. It's so much nicer being older [*laughs*].

MISBEHAVIOUR OPENS ON 13 MARCH.

KEIRA KNIGHTLEY FAN CLUB

"She is brilliant. She's as good as any actress I've ever worked with and I have worked with some of the best actresses in the world."
David Cronenberg

"I first met Keira when she was 17. She was a goofy kid then. But she's always had a fiercely inquisitive nature. It's been a privilege to bear witness to her development."
Joe Wright

"Keira is a perfect paradox. On the one hand, she is a youthful, energised beauty, and on the other, an incredibly experienced, controlled professional."
Jude Law

ALISA CONNAN, UNIVERSAL

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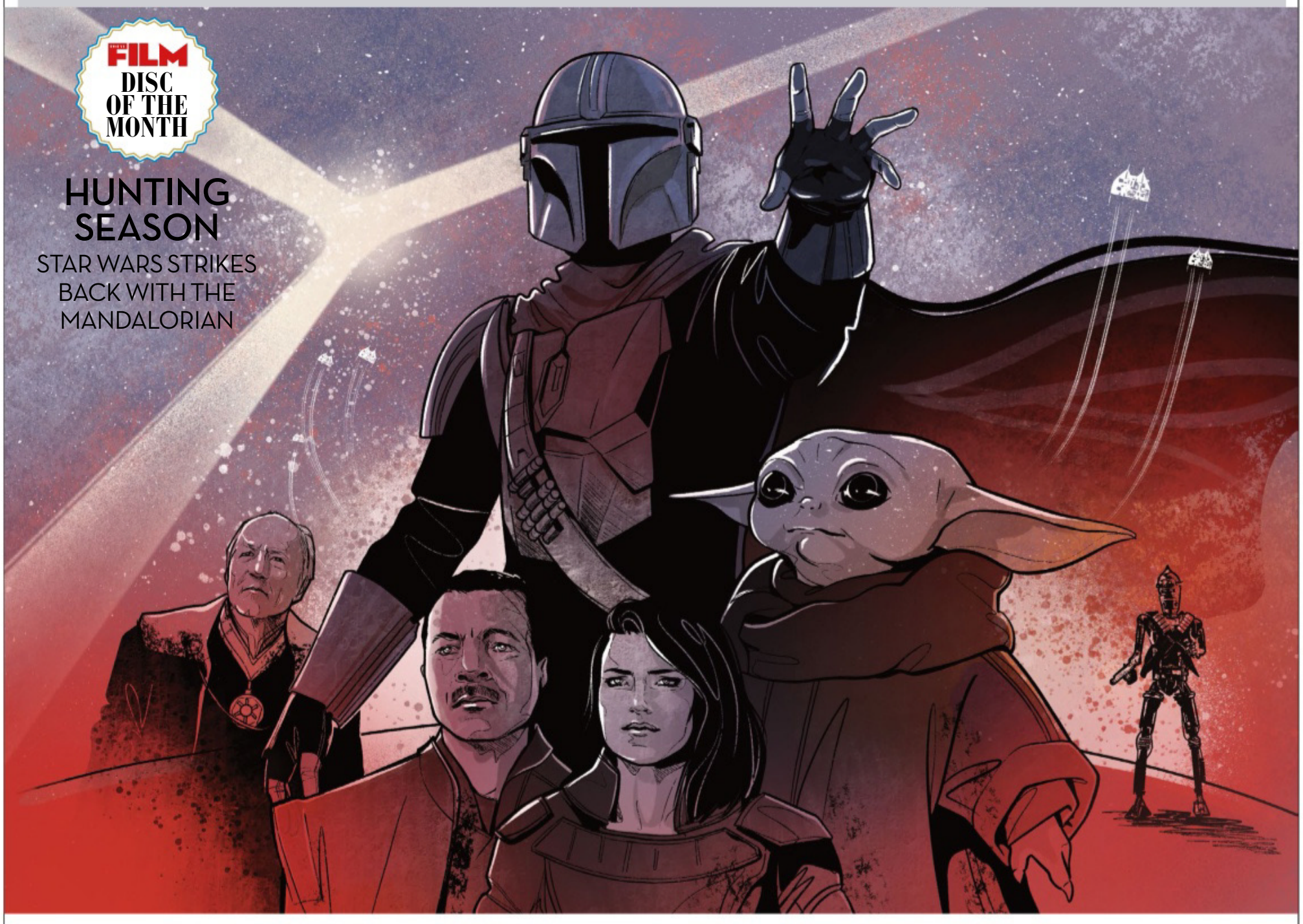
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CUE OPENING CRAWL... 'It is a dark time for the franchise. *The Last Jedi* did boffo box office, yet haters pursued it across the internet. But at least people went to see it, which is more than you can say for *Solo*. Meanwhile, *The Rise Of Skywalker* was branded "a billion-dollar disappointment". And yet... *Star Wars* has established a new subscriber base on streaming platform Disney+. Fans, obsessed with The Child, have dispatched thousands of memes into the far reaches of your social-media feed...'

Following its US launch last November, *The Mandalorian*, created by Jon Favreau, finally swaggers onto our shores. Frustrating though the wait has been, its belated UK debut could be seen as good timing, from a certain point of view: the premise feels like a 40th-anniversary fanfiction tribute to *The Empire Strikes Back*. Imagine Boba Fett and Yoda buddying up and having adventures all over galaxy! With Boba's fellow bounty hunter IG-88 doing more than just standing still!!

But there's more to *The Mandalorian* than what-if whimsy. The eponymous character, his unexpected ward, The Child (aka 'Baby Yoda' – he's 50 years young) and assassin droid IG-11 may share their silhouettes and certain attributes with earlier *Star Wars* icons, but they soon carve their own niches. Introduced as something of a Mando With No Name, lead actor Pedro Pascal readily taps into Boba Fett's feted air of mystery. He says little, but means what he says. He's money-motivated and armed to the teeth (assuming he has any under that helmet).

SHOCK PUPPET

Yet he also has a sense of honour and a deep, at times touching respect for the tenets of his 'tribe'. Basically, he's a more soulful breed of badass. True, there's a bit of Jango Fett in his emerging parental sensitivities – but *Episode II*'s father-clone bond ("Get 'im, Dad!") has nothing on the mostly non-verbal connection between Pascal and puppet, which delivers heart and laughs (every cockpit scene is a keeper).

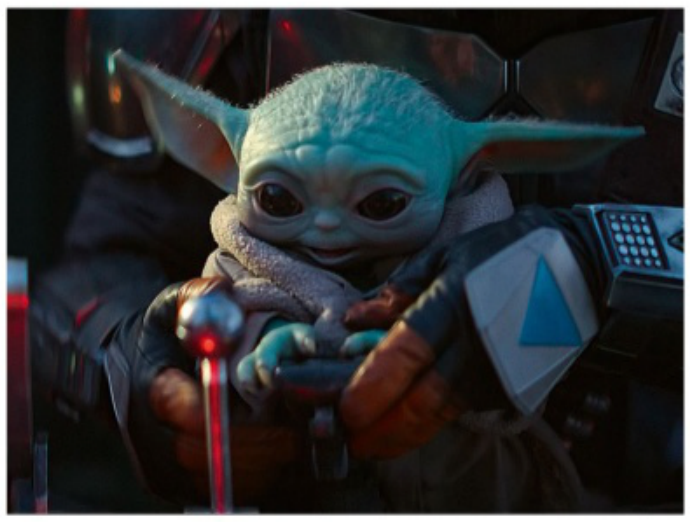
The Child itself is a saucer-eyed enigma wrapped in an adorably oversized robe. He's the show's crowning technical glory, a seamless mix of (mostly) animatronics and CGI. His infant-accurate reactions and unpredictable actions are ample substitute for any Yoda-esque profundities or zingers. And without any Jedi mastery, his toddling vulnerability allows for moments of shock as well as 'awww'. The third corner of the *Empire*-love triangle,

DISNEY

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This was not the first Blue Man Group stalker he had apprehended...







THE GOOD, THE BAD AND THE IG-11 Pascal's titular bounty hunter is flanked by the disarmingly cute Child (above left) and literal killing machine IG-11 (above).

IG-11, is another big FX win, the static model from 1980 brought to life with dizzying Terminator-like tendencies.

Taika Waititi is at his most dryly comic as the droid's voice; he's also one of the eight-episode series' seven directors (small-screen *Star Wars* veteran Dave Filoni helms two instalments, including the slow-burn, big-reveal opener). Waititi's season finale is a belter, unleashing spectacle on land, on lava and in air. While the action here is especially intense and explode-y, production values are blockbuster-level across all episodes. It's taken four decades for *Star Wars* to reach live-action TV (give or take a couple of Ewok specials), so it gratifies to see the far-away galaxy retain its customary lustre. The occasional greenscreen glitch aside, *The Mandalorian* easily rivals *Game Of Thrones* for cinematic impact involving unconventional warfare and fantastic beasts (Chapter 2's rhino-like Mudhorn is a standout).

HE FLUTES, HE SCORES

Still, for all its scout walkers, sandcrawlers and sweeping locales (this being *Star Wars*, no one's ever more than 50 yards from a forbiddingly barren landscape), *The Mandalorian* feels bracingly small. Favreau's show is set five years after *Return Of The Jedi*, as the New Republic is rebuilding the galaxy after the Emperor's (apparent) death – but that's mostly by the by. It doesn't share the same sense of galactic consequence as series like *The Clone Wars* and *Rebels*. Rather, it's one of the few *Star Wars* narratives to feel genuinely character-driven. Ludwig Göransson's terrific score is a key asset in dialling down the epicness, its flute-driven, future-western mood a departure from John Williams' full-orchestra grandeur.

Several episodes are self-contained, involving straightforward quests/goals/MacGuffins. The itinerant, 'another week, another adventure' vibe is perhaps why some have drawn comparisons with '90s adventure serials like *Xena* and *Hercules*. Yet *The Mandalorian* doesn't go in for the same level of tongue-in-cheekiness. If the tone isn't quite as gritty as the first Stormtrooper-helmets-on-sticks trailer hinted, it's still on the dark side; scum and villainy far outweigh uncomplicated heroism.

The show also makes for supremely easy viewing. With only two of the eight episodes exceeding 40 minutes in length, it's a brisk opening season, generous with hair-trigger action and light on the political or mystical gubbins that have sometimes stifled the saga. Even the most throwaway instalment – 'Sanctuary' – is a fun callback to the franchise's Kurosawa-riffing roots. But *The Mandalorian* is less about the past than a template for the post-Skywalker future, lean, mean and adorably green. It seems apt that The Child's anti-grav crib is ovoid in shape, while one episode centres on the quest for a treasured egg: no doubt about it, this is *Star Wars* reborn.

Matthew Leyland

'IT GRATIFIES TO SEE THE FAR-AWAY GALAXY RETAIN ITS LUSTRE'





boston illegal

WAHLBERG AND DUKE 'TEC ON CORRUPTION...

SPENSER CONFIDENTIAL *TBC*

FILM ★★★☆☆

OUT 6 MARCH NETFLIX

Man, you get beat up a lot!" marvels Hawk (Winston Duke) as his roommate Spenser receives yet another pummelling for sticking his nose where it doesn't belong. Indeed, between getting jumped in a prison library, thumped in a pub toilet and attacked by a machete-wielding gang, it's a wonder Mark Wahlberg's wannabe P.I. has any time for detecting in this resurrection of the Boston-based shamus that Robert Urich played in '80s TV series *Spenser For Hire* (based in turn on Robert B. Parker's crime novels).

Here, Spenser is a disgraced former cop whose dreams of driving big rigs in Arizona are halted when he gets a whiff of corruption in his native Beantown. He's soon on the trail of drug shipments, dirty officials and shady deals, but his toughest customer may well be girlfriend Cissy (Iliza Shlesinger), who gives as good as she gets.

With Alan Arkin adding grandpa humour as Spenser's cantankerous landlord, it's clear Peter Berg's film is intended to be the first of several. You wonder, though, if audiences will have as much affection as Wahlberg has for a hero whose main USP is a gluttony for punishment. There's the makings of a promising double act in Spenser's bickering relationship with Hawk, an aspiring MMA fighter who can't abide cruelty to animals. However, the buddy comedy doesn't quite gel with the noir-ish genre trappings, resulting in a film that's big on laughs yet low on drama. ***Neil Smith***

HEY BIG SPENSER
Duke, Arkin and Wahlberg find themselves in hot water – and on public transport.



ZOMBIELAND: DOUBLE TAP *15*

★★★☆☆

OUT NOW | VARIOUS

The CG splatter rings fake, but cast chemistry is real in a sequel that makes welcome additions to the gang (Zoey Deutch, Rosario Dawson). Beware cameo-spoiling featurettes if you'd rather go in cold...



THE PEANUT BUTTER FALCON *12*

★★★★☆

OUT NOW | VARIOUS

Huck Finn meets WWE in this tale of a care-home runaway (winning newcomer Zack Gottsagen) whose misadventures en route to wrestling school stay the right side of indie-quirk cliché. Extras? Not even a Peanut gallery.



MIDWAY *12*

★★☆☆☆

OUT 9 MARCH | VARIOUS

Roland Emmerich's WW2 movie reduces quality actors to square-jawed stoicism, plonking them in battle scenes that are more digital than visceral. Bonus interviews with real-life veterans help fill the emotional void.



THE CLIMBERS *12*

★★★☆☆

OUT 9 MARCH | VARIOUS

Real-life conquest-of-Everest epic that follows two Chinese attempts (1960, 1975) to reach the summit and goes dramatically over the top. Cheesily spectacular, with heart-pounding training montages, Indy-esque peril and a megastar cameo.



SUPERMAN: RED SON *15*

★★★☆☆

OUT 16 MARCH | VARIOUS

What if Superman had landed in Russia? Compelling enough on its own terms, this adap retains the boldness but loses a bit of the complexity of Mark Millar's story on its Flash-like dash through a decades-spanning storyline.



TERMINATOR DARK FATE *15*

★★★☆☆

OUT NOW | VARIOUS

Setting aside corny callbacks, clods of direlogue and air of redundancy, this is a worthy vehicle for Linda Hamilton's punchy comeback. Top extra 'World Builders' explores de-ageing and turning Madrid into Mexico.



SORRY WE MISSED YOU *15*

★★★★☆

OUT 9 MARCH | VARIOUS

Rock-and-hard-place predicaments are familiar turf for Ken Loach, but this is a painfully relevant dig at the gig economy that doesn't sugar the pill. Extras include behind-the-scenes paintings (makes a change from stills).

NETFLIX, SIGNATURE, SONY/CRITERION, WARNER BROS, BLUE FINCH FILM RELEASING, ARROW, 20TH CENTURY FOX, CINE ASIA, EONE, LIONSGATE



HARPOON *18*

FILM ★★★★☆ EXTRAS ★★★☆☆

OUT NOW BD **EXTRAS** Commentaries, Making Of, Featurettes, Deleted scenes, Booklet

Situated somewhere between *Donkey Punch* and *Dead Calm* in the canon of tense, sea-faring thrillers, Rob Grant's witty effort pits a triangle of frenemies against each other in a stranded boat. The first act sees loser Jonah (Munro Chambers), spoilt Richie (Christopher Gray) and over-it Sasha (Emily Tyra) becoming irretrievably lost at sea. Cut to five days later and they're spilling personal secrets, performing amateur surgery and killing seagulls for sustenance, resulting in much vindictive fun. ***Matt Glasby***



KNIVES OUT *12*

FILM ★★★★☆ EXTRAS ★★★☆☆

OUT 30 MARCH DVD, BD, Digital HD, 4K **EXTRAS** Commentaries, Featurettes, Deleted scenes, Viral ads

Rian Johnson's murder mystery soon gooses any expectations of a clear-cut homage to Cluedo, Columbo or Christie. After writer Harlan Thrombey (Christopher Plummer) pegs it at his country pile, we're told 'whodunit' early. But the fun lies in why, how. Daniel Craig certainly has a ball as clever (or is he?) dick Benoit Blanc. Harlan's toxic extended family may verge on boardgame stereotypes, but there's heart to balance the haters in Ana de Armas' bright, likeable Marta. Factor in one last lovely knife-twist and you've got a wickedly pleasing play on genre rules. ***Kevin Harley***



ROMA *15*

FILM ★★★★★ EXTRAS ★★★★★

OUT NOW BD, DVD **EXTRAS**
Documentaries, Featurettes, Trailers, Booklet

The Blu-ray release of this Oscar-winning '70s-set drama will only deepen your appreciation of Alfonso Cuarón's modern masterpiece. On top of the feature-length *Road To Roma* documentary (already available on Netflix), this hi-def Criterion platter serves up several fascinating new extras that dig even deeper into the film's production – the two most vital exploring the astonishing amount of work that went into creating its striking visuals and audacious Dolby Atmos sound mix (reproduced here in its full majesty). ***Anton van Beek***

unholy roller

COEN, COEN, GONE: A SPIN-OFF TURTURRO FAR...

THE JESUS ROLLS *15*

FILM ★★☆☆☆

OUT 20 MARCH CINEMAS **23 MARCH** DIGITAL HD

Nobody fucks with the Jesus!" …except maybe the actor who brought him to life. John Turturro appeared for just two minutes in the Coen brothers' classic *The Big Lebowski* (1998), yet his memorable cameo as champion bowler and convicted sex offender Jesus Quintana has become his most iconic role. Now, two decades on, Jesus takes centre stage in a belated spin-off, with Turturro also writing and directing.

Without Joel and Ethan on board, Turturro finds inspiration even further back – specifically, by remaking Bertrand Blier's infamous 1974 sex comedy *Les Valseuses* (aka *Going Places*). There, Gérard Depardieu was the sleazy lothario involved in a ménage à trois. Here, it's Jesus, newly released from prison, embarking on a series of episodic misadventures, with Bobby Cannavale and Audrey Tautou in tow.

It's a bold but perplexing mash-up. Any point beyond fan service is hard to glean and even that is compromised. Jesus' exuberant antics soon wear thin amid the story's latent misogyny. Surprisingly, Turturro misses the chance to subvert or update the boorish original, making for a charmless throwback to a world before #MeToo.

That Coen-y feeling exists only in a ridiculously strong cast, with Jon Hamm, Christopher Walken and Susan Sarandon queuing up for whimsical walk-ons. But where the TV adap of *Fargo* emulated and extended its source's depth, this is a pale facsimile of *Lebowski*'s picaresque perfection. ***Simon Kinnear***



Turturro's cheerleader audition wasn't going great.



freeze frame

FII'S DIRECTORS REVEAL THE COLD TRUTH ABOUT THEIR SEQUEL...

This is the first musical sequel Disney has done," says *Frozen II* co-director Chris Buck. With "no model" to follow, as Buck's co-helmer Jennifer Lee puts it, the duo carved their own path, treating it as "act two of a Broadway musical" (Buck). Here, the directors and producer Peter Del Vecho reflect on their journey, erm, into the unknown...

Which of the deleted scenes was hardest to lose?

JENNIFER LEE: There's a scene about the discovery of a secret room in the castle. That didn't make it into the final cut, probably because it answered too many things too quickly. There are elements of it you see, like, two-thirds into the movie.

CHRIS BUCK: One of our favourites is the Anna/Kristoff duet, 'I Want To Get This Right'. It's him proposing; it was going to happen in act one, as a sort of prelude to 'Lost In The Woods'.

Talking of 'Lost In The Woods', which '80s pop videos did you take inspiration from?

JL: All of them! [*laughs*]

CB: Every single one. The challenge was to take that inspiration, but not go too far. We had versions where Kristoff was cartwheeling through the forest...

JL: Taking his shirt off... yeah, it was a little too far.

Any Easter eggs we can look for?

CB: Not big ones, but when the sisters are playing with little snow creatures at the start, you can see Dumbo and Baymax from *Big Hero 6* in there.

Did you discuss bringing Prince Hans back in a major role?

JL: Yeah, we talked a lot about Hans. There were people that kept asking me on Twitter to redeem him. But I was like, 'He's a sociopath. He tried to murder Anna and Elsa – I think it's best to accept that and move on!' But early on, there were moments where we thought he could show up.

Was it always the plan not to have a front-and-centre villain?

JL: The grandfather played a bigger role at one point. But really, in the *Frozen* world, fear is the enemy, fear is the villain. There's a lot of antagonism in life; so I think we wanted to stay in that realism. There are many great Disney villains, but I think it was nice for *Frozen* to stay different, more thematic.

SEE THIS IF YOU LIKED...

PRINCESS MONONOKE *1997*
Forest spirits and eco-subtext light up Miyazaki's masterpiece.

FROZEN FEVER *2015*
The tiddly 'Snowgies' make a (small) comeback in *Frozen II*.

RALPH BREAKS THE INTERNET *2018*
Anna and Elsa chill out with their fellow Disney princesses.

Was the 'Show Yourself' sequence tough to nail?

JL: Yeah. It's an important song for Elsa – very emotional, very ethereal, so making that literal was hard. And where 'Let It Go' was the beginning of act two [*in* Frozen], this is the end of act two of the second film, so it's carrying everything that's come before it. We wanted to take her to a place where her powers are not just pretty and blasting but have a a role to play in the world. Cracking that combination took many, many drafts. It's a big sequence.

PETER DEL VECHO: I think we had to borrow some rendering power from Google just to finish making it. And by 'borrow' I mean 'pay for'! [*laughs*]

Was it a big decision to make Anna the queen?

CB: We did these personality tests for the characters; Anna came back a leader, Elsa a protector. So we knew Anna was perfect for it. She's so much of the people, so we pictured her running around town, knowing everyone personally and being able to delegate.

JL: And I think Kristoff won't be intimidated by her being queen. Although he's not going to like wearing the royal outfits! [*laughs*] ***Matthew Leyland***



DISNEY

FROZEN II *U*

FILM ★★★☆☆ EXTRAS ★★★★☆

OUT 16 MARCH DIGITAL HD **30 MARCH** DVD, BD, 4K **EXTRAS** Sing-Along version, Featurettes, Deleted scenes, Music videos, Outtakes

This is not a Blu-ray. It's a *Frozen* karaoke party. There's a singalong option; a jump-to-song option; you can even hear 'Into The Unknown' in 29 languages. Other tuneful extras include a deleted-ditties section, featurette on Christopher Beck's score and two music vids, one of which – Weezer's 'Lost In The Woods' – is a send-up of a send-up. The musical focus feels apt – living up to expectations, the songs are the sequel's crowning glory, whether sincere, jokey or jokey-sincere. The story strains for an emotional hook as strong as the original's sibling estrangement. Yet the Arendelle gang remain loveable, themes are thoughtful, and bold leaps into abstraction defy merch opportunism: one of the best new characters, Gale, is literally the wind. ***Matthew Leyland***

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demy monde

THE (INCOMPLETE) HOUSE THAT JACQUES BUILT...

THE ESSENTIAL JACQUES DEMY *12*

FILMS ★★★★☆ EXTRAS ★★★★☆

1960-1982 **OUT NOW** BD **EXTRAS** Short films, Documentaries, Featurettes, Video essay, Booklet

Describing any selection of a filmmaker's body of work as 'The Essential…' is asking for trouble. Doing so implies anything left out is therefore redundant, and when it comes to French auteur Jacques Demy, that's a pretty bold claim. OK, so you could make a case for skipping 1973's *The Slightly Pregnant Man*. But anyone who doesn't consider *Model Shop* (1969) or *Troi Places Pour Le 26* (1988) essential needs their head looking at (good thing Arrow Academy put out a *Model Shop* Blu-ray last year).

Still, you'll struggle to find many flaws with this Criterion Collection boxset. The HD transfer of Demy's debut feature *Lola* (1961, ★★★★) looks rough in places, but that's because the original negatives were destroyed, leaving only inferior materials for the restoration. And you wouldn't notice, if the other five films – gambling melodrama *Bay Of Angels* (1963, ★★★★), musical classics *The Umbrellas Of Cherbourg* (1964, ★★★★★) and *The Young Girls Of Rochefort* (1967, ★★★★★), incestuous fairytale *Donkey Skin* (1970, ★★★), and the tragically operatic *Une Chambre En Ville* (1982, ★★★★) – didn't look so fantastic.

There's still scope for more, though. The standalone BFI release of *The Young Girls Of Rochefort* includes a number of features either not included or cut down here. So Essential-ly welcome - but not quite definitive Demy. ***Anton van Beek***



Before she left, she spotted one more blue item in the shop...



UNDER THE SHADOW *15*

FILM ★★★★★ EXTRAS ★★★★☆

2016 **OUT NOW** BD **EXTRAS** Commentary, Featurettes, Short, Essays

Pitched smartly between Polanski and *Poltergeist*, Babak Anvari's '80s Tehran-set horror refreshes familiar scares by relocating them. A steady domestic set-up – popping toast is a jump shock - gives us bonding time with harrowed mum Narges Rashidi, banking our investment as missiles, missing dolls and malign djinns up the manifold stakes. The result emerges as a high watermark of home-based horror, executed with resonance and precision. Anvari and *TF*'s own Jamie Graham dissect every detail on an engagingly incisive commentary. ***Kevin Harley***



EDGE OF THE AXE *15*

FILM ★★★☆☆ EXTRAS ★★★★☆

1988 **OUT NOW** BD **EXTRAS** Commentaries, Featurettes, Gallery, Booklet

Anybody hoping for more of the transgressive, psychosexual thrills of his earlier *Vampyres* (1974) or *The Coming Of Sin* (1978) will be left nonplussed by this slasher from director José Ramón Larraz. Evaluated on its own merits, however, this oh-so-'80s mix of brutal axe murders and *WarGames*-style computer geekery is a cut above many of the era's genre flicks, with the oddball cast of characters and its Spain-standing-in-for-America locations lending *Edge Of The Axe* an enjoyably off-kilter vibe. ***Anton van Beek***



FAIL SAFE *PG*

FILM ★★★★☆ EXTRAS ★★★★☆

1964 **OUT NOW** BD

EXTRAS Commentary, Featurettes

Pipped to the post by *Dr. Strangelove*, Sidney Lumet's straight take on nuclear tensions suffered at the box office. There's a small-screen feel, but the sense of what's at stake – as computer error starts the countdown to Armageddon – is conveyed horribly well. Alarming but not alarmist, it's distinguished by lack of music, arty-flourish bookends and great, grave turns from Henry Fonda, Larry 'JR' Hagman and a before-he-was-funny Walter Matthau. Extras offer Cold War context and George Clooney. ***Matthew Leyland***

SONY/CRITERION, SECOND SIGHT, ARROW



THE WINSLOW BOY *U*

FILM ★★★★☆ EXTRAS ★★★★☆

1948 **OUT NOW** BD, DVD **EXTRAS** Featurettes, Gallery

The first of two big-screen adaptations of Terence Rattigan's stage play, *The Winslow Boy* tells the story of a father (Cedric Hardwicke) fighting to clear the name of his son (Neil North) after the latter is excluded from naval school for a crime he maintains he didn't commit. In opening up the story beyond the confines of the play, Anthony Asquith's film loses some of the focus of the original, but the sharp direction and superb cast bring its criticism of the immutability of military bureaucracy to life in gripping style. ***Anton van Beek***



THE LEGEND OF THE STARDUST BROTHERS *15*

FILM ★★★☆☆ EXTRAS ★★★☆☆

1985 **OUT NOW** Dual format + CD **EXTRAS** Making Of, Interview, Soundtrack

Imagine *Tommy* retooled as kids' TV and you'll get the gaudy flavour of this cheap, cheerful J-pop musical. Inspired by songs made by Haruo Chicada for an imaginary movie, helmer Macoto Tezuka spices up a rote plot – a pop duo's ego-fuelled rise and fall – with cult-ish trappings: lurid images, trippy fantasy detours, arch dialogue. The fizzy pop songs and game leads add charm, though Tezuka's taste for artifice as an end in itself does wear thin. Solid extras. ***Kevin Harley***



JUDGMENT AT NUREMBERG *15*

FILM ★★★★☆ EXTRAS ★★★★☆

1961 **OUT NOW** BD **EXTRAS** Commentary, Featurettes, Booklet

Stanley Kramer takes the courtroom drama to a chilling new level in this dramatisation of one of military tribunals the US held post-WW2. Spencer Tracy is chief judge in the trial of four members of the German judiciary (including Burt Lancaster) accused of involvement in Nazi atrocities. Maximilian Schell won an Oscar for his defending lawyer, but the cast – Judy Garland, Marlene Dietrich, Montgomery Clift – are universally excellent. Be warned: the documentary footage of concentration camps is harrowing. Impressive extras include lengthy Schell chat and propaganda shorts. ***James Mottram***



dream weaver

ITALIAN AUTEUR GETS SOME CENTENARY LOVE...

FELLINI: FOUR FILMS *15*

FILMS ★★★★☆ EXTRAS ★★★★☆

1953-65 **OUT NOW** BD **EXTRAS** Commentaries, Documentaries, Featurettes, Video essay

There are few filmmakers as influential as Federico Fellini. Terry Gilliam, David Lynch, Stanley Kubrick and Martin Scorsese have all taken cues from the Italian filmmaker, who would have turned 100 this year. Cult Films' celebratory boxset brings together four of Fellini's best works, each filled with autobiographical delights showcasing the themes that carry through the director's filmography.

The earliest film in the collection, *I Vitelloni* (1953, ★★★★) centres on five friends idling around a remote seaside town, suffering from discontent with their lives. Second is *La Dolce Vita* (1960, ★★★★★), about a showbiz journalist (Marcello Mastroianni) as he enjoys seven nights of debauchery in Rome. Filled with iconic moments, it's Fellini at his most euphoric and approachable.

Winner of the Best Foreign Language Film Oscar, *8½* (1963, ★★★★★, also available separately) remains the high-water mark of Fellini's career – an exquisite, autobiographical look at a director struggling with his own genius.

Then there's *Juliet Of The Spirits* (1965, ★★★). A comedown after two classics, Fellini's first full-length colour film rehashes several pet themes: dream sequences are plentiful, while Giulietta Masina's lead character searches for purpose after her husband runs amok. These four films offer a beautiful introduction to one of the finest filmmakers of all time. ***Jack Shepherd***

CULT FILMS, THIRD WINDOW FILMS, STUDIOCANAL, BFI

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In *Save Me Too*, Lennie James' Nelly has to deal with the consequences of his actions.

MAKING OF

lost souls

CATCHING UP WITH THE STARS OF DRAMA SERIAL SAVE ME TOO...

The BAFTA-nominated first series of *Save Me* saw South London barfly Nelly (creator and star Lennie James) hunting in vain for the mysteriously missing Jody, his 13-year-old daughter with estranged partner Claire (Suranne Jones). Follow-up *Save Me Too* finds them – along with fellow estate residents including Stephen Graham's sex offender and Jason Flemyng's strip-club bartender – coping with the fallout.

Where do we find Nelly and Claire?

Lennie James: We're 17 months on, seeing what time has done to Jody's nearest and dearest while everyone else has moved on. Having that focus of looking for his daughter has made Nelly take responsibility where he wasn't taking it before. But it's also made him take risks.

Suranne Jones: Claire's stuck because she hasn't got answers about Jody, so she can't grieve properly. If grieving can be 'fun' in any way, Lennie's given me an interesting take on it!

What are their relationship statuses?

SJ: Claire never belonged in Nelly's world, either on the estate or [*local pub*] The Palm Tree – so she's moved back with her husband Barry [*Barry Ward*]. They're aware of each other's pain but they're not dealing with what's happened. Both of us slightly dread going back to their house because it represents a certain type of scene.

LJ: Nelly's trying to be monogamous, which is a fundamental shift. He talks about "this bird I'm trying to take myself seriously with" – he's trying to be the man this woman deserves.

Lesley Manville has joined the cast…

LJ: I'm really fucking smug! I wrote Jennifer with Lesley in mind and no one believed we'd get her, but I bumped into her at a function, sent her the script and, after she watched series one, she said yes. Jennifer is blindsided by what she learns about her husband Gideon [*Adrian Edmondson's businessman/sex trafficker*] – she questions everything about herself. I needed someone who, when she's quiet, you can hear what she's thinking. Lesley does that virtually better than anybody else on the planet. And she's been a great addition to the WhatsApp group!



SEE THIS IF YOU LIKED...

THE WALKING DEAD *2010-PRESENT*
James scored international fame with a S1 cameo that morphed into a regular gig five years later.

ATTACK THE BLOCK *2011*
Vastly different in tone – but like *Save Me*, Joe Cornish's sci-fi makes several salient points about London estate life.

THE MISSING *2014-16*
Grief and confusion as two sets of parents search for their missing children.

SJ: We think she might leave the group at some point… When she agreed to come in she woke up to 40 messages and was like, 'Fucking hell!' We do put some shit on there.

How hard, mentally, is this material to write and film?

LJ: It can take a toll. It's a weird thing to say, but if I'm uncomfortable writing it and you're uncomfortable watching it, I'm probably doing something right. It's a story of redemption, the costs of it and what you'll do to get it. But I want to do justice to the story of a missing child: what it does to marriages, friendships, communities and people.

SJ: I'm in no rush to do anything else about missing children, but I've lived in Claire's world already and in a sense the worst has already happened. Her arc from now is the right arc.

Do people react differently when you walk into pubs now?

LJ: My brother asked me down his local and they gave me a standing ovation. A lot of them had watched the first series in the pub – it was on instead of the football a couple of times!

SJ: I don't often go to pubs these days. I go to ball pools because I've got a three-year-old. My life is soft play and Pizza Express! ***Gabriel Tate***

SAVE ME TOO STARTS IN APRIL ON SKY ATLANTIC AND NOW TV.

SKY

SPOILER ALERT!

the hidden world

HOW WESTWORLD S3 WILL EXPAND THE SHOW'S HORIZONS...

In case Alexa's chilling cackles didn't scare you enough, *Westworld* co-creator Jonathan Nolan has a warning about the "stealth-mode" development of AI. "These intelligences are being created out of the public eye," he says. "And that may not be a big deal, or it may be the single biggest mistake humanity ever made, right? There isn't a lot of oversight there..."

For S3 of Nolan and Lisa Joy's cerebral, suggestive Michael Crichton upgrade, "stealth mode" is more than just a buzz phrase. On the showrunners' parts, the secrecy levels surrounding series spoilers suggest a near-religious adherence to stealth. But at least that's in keeping with the setup for the eight-episode third run, aka The New World, where stealth AI developments seem to be a core theme.

When we last visited tech corporation Delos' Westworld, violent delights did indeed have violent ends. Following the AI uprising of S1's climax, many of the robotic 'hosts' had been forcibly reclaimed by Delos forces. Some other hosts ascended to the Valley Beyond or 'The Sublime', a kind of virtual afterlife free from humans.

HOST WORLD

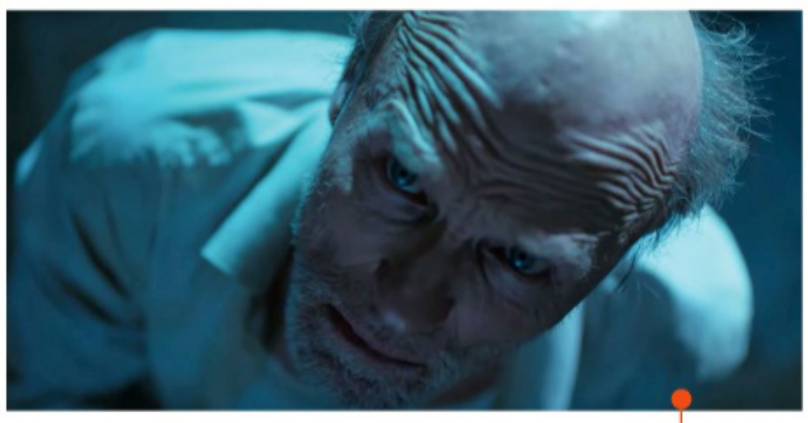
Meanwhile, Evan Rachel Wood's host-turned-revolutionary Dolores escaped into the 'real' world with five mysterious 'pearls', each containing the memory module of an unknown host. For a while, Dolores' consciousness took over a host body modelled on Tessa Thompson's dead Delos exec Charlotte Hale; now, the Hale-bot formerly known as 'Halores' is out of the park but under control of a new host-mind. Also free is Dolores' enemy Bernard (Jeffrey Wright), the host modelled on park co-creator Arnold Weber. And one further, well-seeded twist revealed Luke Hemsworth's security boss Ashley Stubbs to be a host. In short, hosts now move among humans in the 'real' world - "If indeed," cautions Nolan, the tease, "that is where the show is."

Somehow, two dead characters also return. In new park Warworld, Thandie Newton's former brothel host Maeve duffs up Nazis; Ed Harris' Man In Black William is also back, most likely in black. But early footage suggests the most action takes place outside the park. There, Aaron Paul (a self-confessed "psychotic fan" of *Westworld*) plays pivotal series newcomer Caleb, a construction worker engaged in criminal work. He's also accompanied by a Chappie-lookalike robo-buddy.

Teaser trailers have suggested that tech systems Incite (creepy quote: "We know you") and Solomon (begun in 2039 at an "undisclosed location") have been beavering away in the background while humanity has endured various











BEST OF THE WEST
Thompson (top) returns, Paul (middle) enters and Harris (bottom) is revived into a troubled world.



"divergence" moments: eco-disasters, civil wars, political assassinations… In 2058, another "divergence" moment occurs, presumably booting up The New World's narrative.

MAD WORLD

While online theories argue that Solomon is an Incite initiative launched to take control of humanity's chaos, Nolan makes it clear that the trailers' surface sheen is deceptive. "When I grew up, my brother [*Christopher*] made me watch *Blade Runner* once a week. That is such a brilliantly designed and produced film. When you think of what the future looks like, you think of that film. We wanted something a bit different… The thing about dystopias is, they can look beautiful. Just because the world is corrupt on the inside, doesn't mean it can't be smoothed over and pretty on the outside."

The trailers drop plenty of hints about that corruption. A looming 'riot-control' robot points towards brutal policing methods; a utilitarian 'bot being shot suggests further tensions. Does this make the environment ripe for Dolores to rouse trouble? Perhaps, but *Westworld* rarely does the obvious. "She is a fish out of water this season, she's truly on her own," says Wood. "She's still full of surprises, still pretty ruthless. But I think her actions with Aaron[*'s character*] make her challenge her views about humanity."

Similarly, Nolan and Joy want to challenge our views on where humanity is at. And that means bringing the resonances close to home. "One of the fun things about this show is you get to play around with big ideas and present them to the audience as if they're far in the future," says Nolan. "But they're not. They're right now. And one of the fun things about the third season is we discard the idea of metaphor and deal with the world for what it is – which is a giant shit-show."

Should that sound grim, Nolan promises a silver lining. Turns out the stealth approach may have one advantage. "Elon Musk talks about the need for transparency in the development of AI. If we're going to build a god, it might be good if everyone gets a bit of a voice into how that's being developed." He smiles. "But it makes for a much better TV show when you don't do that…" ***Kevin Harley***

WESTWORLD SEASON 3 STARTS ON SKY ATLANTIC AND NOW TV ON 16 MARCH.

SEE THIS IF YOU LIKED...

1984 *1984*
Questions... Could Incite be the equivalent of George Orwell's INGSOC?

THE MATRIX *1999*
Could the 'real world' outside Westworld simply be an AI simulacrum?

BREAKING BAD *2008-13*
And the biggie: can we get a "Yeah, science!" from Aaron Paul's Caleb?

'THE THING ABOUT DYSTOPIAS IS, THEY CAN LOOK BEAUTIFUL'
JONATHAN NOLAN

SKY/HBO



mae flowers

THE JOY OF COMEDIAN MAE MARTIN'S NEW SITCOM FEEL GOOD...

Blackpool beach feels like an incongruous spot to find a Canadian stand-up, a British TV actor and an icon of US situation comedy hanging out. But somehow Channel 4's new six-part sadcom *Feel Good* just makes sense. The brainchild of comedian Mae Martin and writing partner Joe Hampson (*Skins*), it's the semi-autobiographical story of recovering addict and struggling stand-up Mae (Martin) and lost soul George (*Fresh Meat*'s Charlotte Ritchie). Both are plagued by insecurities, with George a child of divorce and on the periphery of a friendship group with whom she has increasingly little in common. Mae, meanwhile, is a recovering addict with an overbearing but distant mother and wide-open heart.

The meet-cute comes at one of Mae's gigs. The attraction is mutual and instant, but both are holding back: Mae won't discuss her addictions and George refuses to introduce her first girlfriend to her awful pals. *Small Screen* watches as Mae and George have a boozy heart-to-heart in a beach hut. It's powerfully intimate, very touching and often swooningly romantic, but avoids getting navel-gazey thanks to humour that both undercuts and bolsters the raw emotion in play.

"It's been a four-year project, so it's beyond thrilling that everyone will finally get to see it," says Martin, blinking into the sunlight as she emerges from the hut. "I've been writing pilots that never went anywhere for years, and I'm really glad none of them got commissioned because I wasn't ready then. They were full of so many fart jokes. This opportunity came along at a time when I really felt like I knew myself and the type of story I wanted to tell. The character Mae is a lot more manic, a lot more unhinged, and a lot less self-aware [*than me*]... She's sort of where I was at about 10 years ago, I think."

SEE THIS IF YOU LIKED...

FRESH MEAT *2011-16*
Charlotte Ritchie's student Oregon is a sort of prototype for her *Feel Good* character: self-conscious, slightly confused, funny and affecting.

BOOKSMART *2018*
Kudrow steals scenes again as the mum of an out gay girl in Olivia Wilde's superb comedy.

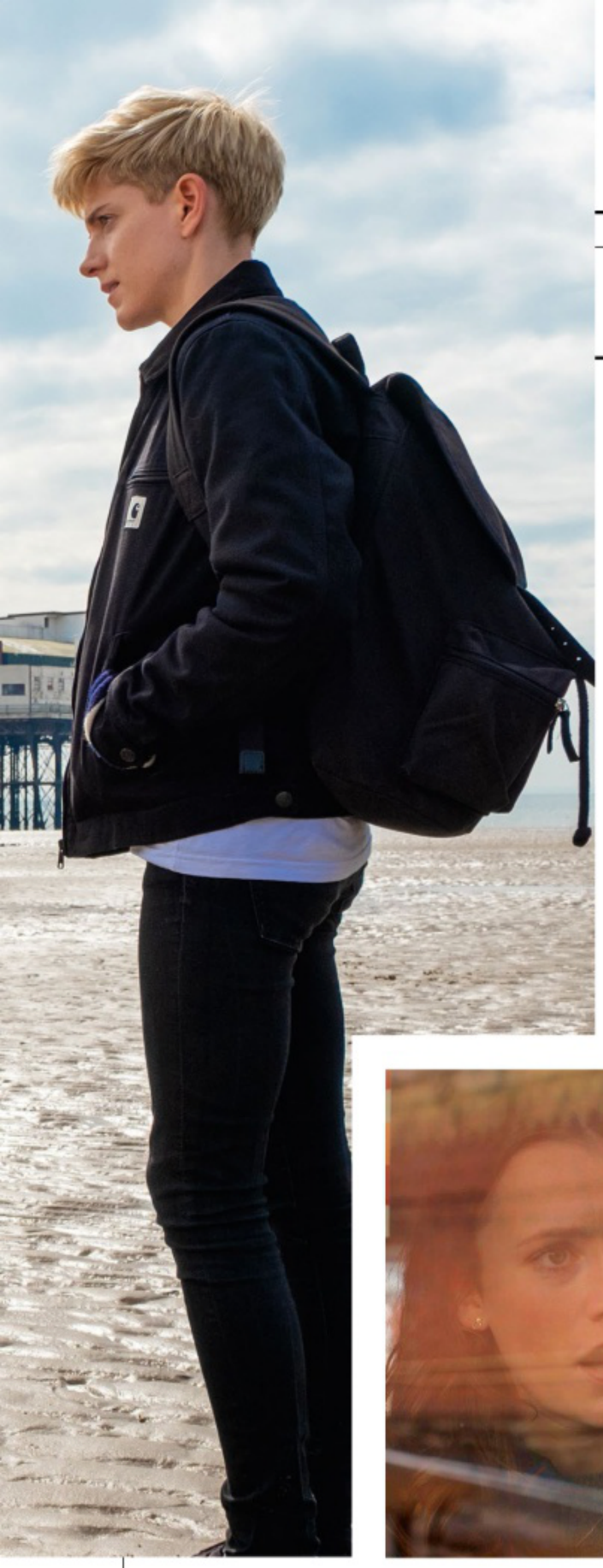
THE BISEXUAL *2018*
Desiree Akhavan's taboo-busting TV comedy is devoted to defying labels with glee and empathy.

"When Mae first asked me to help, she knew she wanted it to be about the difficulties she's experienced with various relationships," recalls Hampson. "It was taking her stand-up material relating to gender and sexuality, the labels we put on ourselves and others, and putting them into the narrative. We didn't want it to seem like 'just' a queer show. It's a show about people in love."

SERIOUSLY FUNNY

Ritchie, a long-time friend of Martin and Hampson, is delighted to be involved. "The show is about what we're searching for to make us feel good and how healthy that pursuit is: you could say that Mae is trying to replace addiction with a really dramatic relationship. But also, my favourite thing is saying a completely ridiculous line, deadly seriously – I get to do that a lot here. That kind of charged emotion in the context of comedy can be hard. But I love it."

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Kudrow and Lukis prepare for a take.





‘WHEN THINGS ARE DISCUSSED WITH OPEN HEARTS, WE MAKE PROGRESS’

LISA KUDROW

Then there’s that sitcom icon. Mae’s distant mother Linda is played by Lisa Kudrow. The *Friends* alumnus is holding court in her trailer complete, to her bemusement, with faux fireplace. “Mae had some challenges in her teenage years, and parents do get a little defensive about that stuff,” says Kudrow. “Everything with Linda is a reaction to what she thinks people are thinking about her, but deep down she does blame herself for Mae’s troubles. When it comes to her daughter, it can seem like Linda’s creating distractions to make it easier to pretend everything’s good.”

FELINE LOST

As Mae’s parents live in Canada, most of Linda’s parenting comes via Skype with husband Malcolm (Adrian Lukis). However, the couple have travelled to Blackpool to scatter the ashes of the family cat. Mae the actor is rather more excited to see them than Mae the character. A fan of Kudrow’s other renowned sitcom *The Comeback*, Martin describes Kudrow as “fantasy casting”.

“She manages to make the most outrageous characters so grounded and full of pathos. But she’ll also take a line and say it in an unexpected cadence that makes it 10 times funnier than it was on the page. I spent my birthday riding a ghost train in Blackpool with Lisa Kudrow. What could be better?”

The admiration is mutual. “The scripts are well observed and fun,” says Kudrow. “There’s something about [*Martin*] that’s wonderfully patient with a world that can react to things like sexual or gender fluidity by putting up walls. When things are discussed with open hearts and minds, that’s when we make progress. The main characters are good people trying to figure things out while they’re carrying whatever damage every human being does.”

Feel Good is not, Martin stresses, a message comedy. But she does hope that, if nothing else, it will broaden a few minds. “If you don’t see stories that reflect your experiences you can feel a bit isolated from the world,” she says. “But our dream is that people from all walks of life connect with and relate to the characters – and that by default it breaks through the barriers of any labels that might separate us.” ***Gabriel Tate***

STAND BY MAE
Mae and George find themselves supporting each other – emotionally and literally.



FEEL GOOD STARTS ON CHANNEL 4 THIS MONTH.

CHANNEL 4







CORGI BOND CARS

COLLECTIBLES **OUT NOW/COMING SOON**

Daniel Craig may be the longest-serving 007, but Corgi's been making Bond cars since before he was old enough to play with them. The die-cast specialist has produced a new version of its most famous four-wheeler, the Aston Martin DB5 from *Goldfinger*, complete with functioning ejector seat (we're not joking) and vintage '60s packaging. Other Aston Martins are also available or coming soon, including a replica of the one from *No Time To Die*, with brand-new Italian registration plate. Bellissimo.

LEGO MARVEL MECHS

TOYS **OUT NOW**

To paraphrase Stan The Man, mech mine Marvel. Especially the Thanos one! Mind you, with a hand that massive, he might be able to dust half the universe, but he wouldn't be able to wipe his… but anyway, there's a good mix of Big Bads and Big Goods, with Iron Man and Spidey getting in on the super-size-me action. Meanwhile, the Spiderjet set features a four-armed Venom facing off against Spider-Man Noir, who's flying a somewhat anachronistic super-plane. On the other hand, that's so Nicolas Cage.







CORGI, LEGO, DISNEY, LOUNGEFLY, FUNKO

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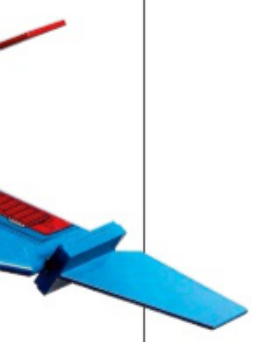


THE MANDALORIAN MERCH

VARIOUS **OUT NOW**

Kitting yourself out like an actual Mandalorian would cost you an arm and leg (literally, if you have a flamethrower mishap). So why not show your allegiance to 'The Way' by coughing up for a t-shirt instead (or a hooded sweatshirt, if you want to flex a bit of Mando-esque mystique). There's a ton to choose from, capturing The Child's full range of expressions (gurning/not gurning). Beware of confusion at the tills: "I'd like a child's Child t-shirt and an adult Child t-shirt." "Huh?" See shopDisney.co.uk.





LOUNGEFLY MULAN BAG

ACCESSORY **OUT 3 APRIL**

As New-lan makes her live-action bow, let us not forget her animated predecessor. Pictured between bouts of ass-kicking, Mulan's on one side of this bamboo-fan handbag, while the other features her sidekick Mushu and his sidekick Cri-Kee (who's all over the cloud-print interior, too). It's made from premium faux leather, topped with a bamboo handle and finished with a metal 'Disney Loungefly' badge, so certainly a bag worth fighting for. Truffleshuffle.co.uk will make a consumer out of you.





TROLLS WORLD TOUR FUNKO POP!

COLLECTIBLES **OUT NOW**

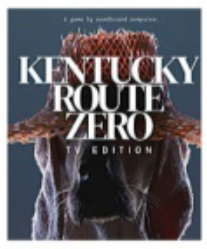
The Trolls: on tour, in cinemas and jazzing up your mantelpiece. Or techno-ing it up, in the case of EDM fancier King Trollex. If you only buy (two-for-)one, make it Guy Diamond, who's accompanied by Tiny Diamond, wearing specs that make him look like a glitter-encrusted Joe Pesci. There's also a perky Poppy and a Branch, who looks like he's in a bit of a funk (again), and not in the get-on-up sense. Can't stop the feeling you should visit emp.co.uk.



revolutionary road

MAGICAL-REALIST ADVENTURE IS 2020'S FIRST ESSENTIAL GAME...

KENTUCKY ROUTE ZERO: TV EDITION



GAME ★★★★★

OUT NOW | PC, PS4, Switch, Xbox One

Seven years since the release of its first episode, developer Cardboard Computer's adventure finally comes to the end of the road. A rambling journey along the titular Zero, a highway that stretches through the caves below Kentucky, it offers a daringly experimental twist on the classic point-and-click adventure. *KRZ* plays out as a surreal theatrical ghost story of sorts, though plot comes secondary to character in a captivating road trip that takes a number of surprising diversions.

It begins with Conway, an antique deliveryman looking for an address that may or may not exist. He's soon joined by Shannon, a TV repairwoman seeking her estranged cousin, and Ezra, an imaginative youngster whose parents have apparently left him behind. Your band of mismatched drifters grows throughout the episodes, and at various stages you'll get to control them all. There are no traditional puzzles here – unless you count the challenge of figuring out the more opaque exchanges – though you're invited to find your next destination from directions you're given rather than simply following a waypoint. You can make a few unscheduled stops, but you ultimately head down a single path.

You're given much more control over the dialogue. Where choices in most narrative games simply determine which story branch you head down next, here you're given a greater degree of authorship over these characters, including their backgrounds. It starts as simply as letting you name Conway's dog, but by the fourth episode you not only get to guide both halves of a conversation, but the memories it dredges up. While none of the dialogue is voiced, a trio of bluegrass musicians provide a Greek chorus of sorts – though the standout musical moment comes during a captivating performance from a synth-pop duo where your lyric choices are sung back to you.



It's an exultant moment that offsets the melancholic mood, as economic uncertainty bites and buried tragedies are unearthed. But the playfulness of the storytelling makes sure it's never too much of a downer. Five interstitial minisodes offer further experiments in form, including a VR-compatible piece of interactive theatre, a gallery showcasing artworks from a minor supporting character and an unsettling set-piece involving a local TV station filming in a rickety shack buffeted by a torrential storm. It may have taken longer than expected to reach the finish line, but in this complete and unabridged form, *Kentucky Route Zero* has set a dauntingly high bar for the year in games. ***Chris Schilling***

two more

Recent thumb-twiddlers...



JOURNEY TO THE SAVAGE PLANET

★★★★☆

PS4, Xbox One, PC

As its B-movie title suggests, there's a campy sense of fun to this light-hearted space adventure – think *No Man's Sky* with farting aliens or *Metroid Prime* with a sense of humour. Prioritising exploration over combat (your goal is to assess the planet's suitability for habitation), it's a breezy, entertaining romp.



THE WALKING DEAD: SAINTS & SINNERS

★★★★☆

PC

Robert Kirkman's blockbuster franchise has had its share of duff videogame spin-offs, with Telltale's episodic adventure series the exception. Well, now there's another – *Saints & Sinners* is no snack-sized shooter, but a VR survival game of genuine substance. Despite a few rough edges, it's a brutal, atmospheric and anxiety-inducingly tense ride.

ANNAPURNA INTERACTIVE, CARDBOARD COMPUTER, 505 GAMES, SKYDANCE INTERACTIVE, SKYBOUND ENTERTAINMENT

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CLASSIC SOUNDTRACK

studio ghibli and joe hisaishi

RANKING THE ANIME MAESTRO'S GREATEST CUES...

1 'ONE SUMMER'S DAY'

Spirited Away (2001)

Ghibli's crossover Oscar winner contains the Japan-imation studio's most recognisable melody. With his signature rolling piano, composer Joe Hisaishi evokes heroine Chihiro's querulous uncertainty with a gentle touch. Duly, *The Simpsons* paid tribute.

2 'THE PATH OF THE WIND'

My Neighbour Totoro (1988)

For his third film with director Hayao Miyazaki, Hisaishi merged magic and melancholy with childlike wonder. 'Path' is a miracle of tonal balance: the heart of an intimate score, its synth melody brims with charm, hope and sadness.

3 'THE LEGEND OF ASHITAKA'

Princess Mononoke (1997)

Hisaishi maxed the grandeur for Miyazaki's eco-fantasy, splicing Romanticism, Japanese folk music and Hollywood adventure scores with muscular majesty. Between suspended chords, ominous drums, emotive oboe and sumptuous strings, the expansive opener sets the mood.

4 'DEPARTURE'

Kiki's Delivery Service (1989)

Hisaishi brought a Euro-waltzing sensibility to Miyazaki's fable of teen-witch self-discovery. After the plaintive twirl of 'On A Clear Day', the sorrow-dappled optimism of the accordion/piano combination on 'Departure' casts a heart-bursting spell.

5 'CASTLE IN THE SKY'

Laputa: Castle In The Sky (1986)

Expanded for its 1999 re-release, Hisaishi and Miyazaki's first Ghibli team-up proper grew from synth compositions to an orchestral score. Hisaishi's fluttery synths leaven the regal strings and John Williams-ish march of the title track.

6 'SORROW'/'FATE'

The Tale Of The Princess Kaguya (2013)

Two entries: we're cheating, but these minimalist pieces are inseparable. While the former's woodwind warms the soul, the latter's plucked guitar showcases Hisaishi's sensitivity to emotional space. 'The Procession Of Celestial Beings' offers frisky contrast.

7 'ASHITAKA AND SAN'

Princess Mononoke (1997)

After the intense demon/battle themes before it, Hisaishi goes for emotional broke on his piano with *Mononoke*'s love theme. Positioned near the film's climax, the rolling keys arrive with the emotional force of a tearful reunion.

8 'MERRY-GO-ROUND OF LIFE'

Howl's Moving Castle (2004)

Hisaishi proves both adaptable and unmistakeable on Miyazaki's Diana Wynne Jones adaptation. The opening theme mixes Victoriana, a playful Euro-waltz melody and a wheezy organ with Hisaishi's signatures: *Mononoke*-esque drums, poignant piano lines.

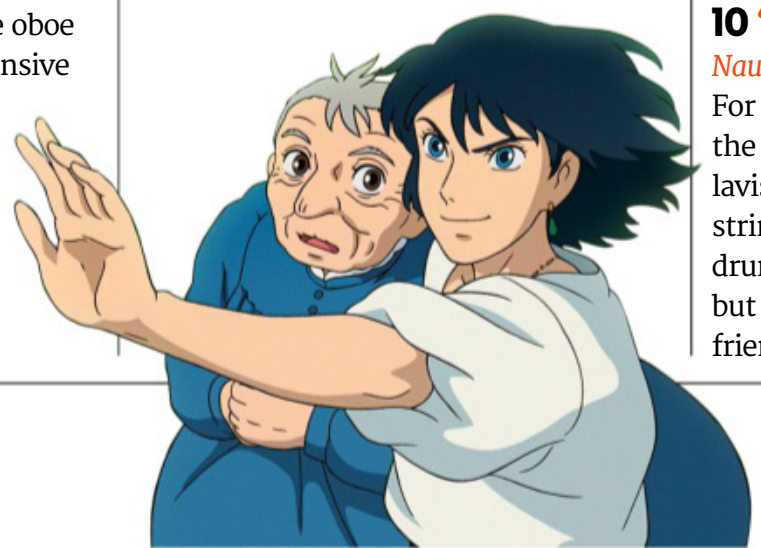
9 'BYGONE DAYS' *Porco Rosso (1992)*

Steeped in nostalgia, this tipsy barroom waltz shines in Miyazaki's piggy-pilot pic. Sequenced alongside 'A Picture In Sepia' on the album, Hisaishi's piano-led reverie for life's could-have-beens evokes deep emotions lightly.

10 'LEGEND OF THE WIND'

Nausicaä Of The Valley Of The Wind (1984)

For his debut Miyazaki gig, Hisaishi set the eco-story's mythical scene with lavish yet tender combinations of strings, piano and call-to-action drums. It's not a Ghibli film proper, but a beautiful director/composer friendship took wing here. ***Kevin Harley***



STUDIOCANAL, WARNER BROS, PICTUREHOUSE ENTERTAINMENT

fresh spin

TF scores the latest soundtracks...



PROXIMA

Despite its multi-layered electro-acoustic sounds, Ryuichi Sakamoto's score for the Eva Green-starring mother/daughter astronaut drama favours emotive minimalism over sci-fi grandeur. Warm ripples of synths, strings and chorales dominate, merging the personal/celestial. 'Rescue In The Water' – tense, percussive – is the outlier: otherwise, Sakamoto evokes vast interior and exterior spaces with a tender touch.



BIRDS OF PREY

The girl-gang riot of Cathy Yan's DC headbanger extends to the soundtrack's mixed-bag volleys of electro-R&B, rap, rock and pop-art pastiche. Standouts among established/emergent stars include Doja Cat and Charlotte Lawrence, scorching and slow-burning, respectively. CYN and Halsey deliver emphatic "knuckle-sandwich" riff rock, while actor Jurnee Smollett-Bell rises above the filler with a confident 'It's A Man's Man's Man's World'.



BOOKS

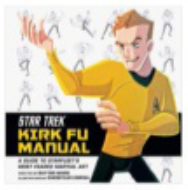
two more

Location, location, dislocation...



NATIONAL TRUST ON SCREEN

What do Jonathans Pryce, Depp and Nettles have in common? All have played characters who carked it in the bedrooms of National Trust houses. NT film-location managers Harvey Edgington and Lauren Taylor share plenty of anecdotes in a lively guide to UK shoots that'll appeal to fans of *Harry Potter* (Hertfordshire's Ashridge Estate takes the triwizard cup), *Downton Abbey*, *Doctor Who* and Keira Knightley in period finery.



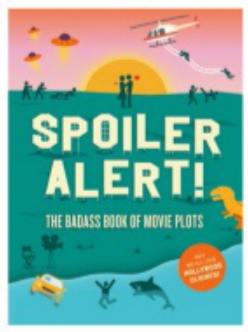
STAR TREK: KIRK FU MANUAL

Yes, this is a thing. No, you shouldn't try it at home ("The methods in this manual can cause serious injury or death, particularly if employed in variable-gravity environments"). Written both in-universe and tongue-in-cheek, it's a loving send-up of James T. Kirk's habit of getting into scraps. Wry text ("Jack the Ripper? Who saw that coming?") sits well with how-to illos that capture Kirk's smirk and fetchingly torn uniform.

SPOILER ALERT! THE BADASS BOOK OF MOVIE PLOTS

BOOK

STEVEN ESPINOZA, KATHLEEN KILLIAN FERNANDEZ AND CHRIS VANDER KAAY | LAURENCE KING



Sporting the sub-sub-title *Why We All Love Hollywood Clichés*, *Spoiler Alert!* is a graphic celebration/skewering of 38 of the best-worn movie genres, from Animal Attack Horror to Zombie Film. It seeks to highlight cinema's most familiar tropes through an illustrated style that reads like an emoji comic-book.

The format is extremely easy to dip into: each cinematic genre is broken down into three acts, replete with a mock poster and indispensable ingredients (key characters, locations, soundbites...). While more hardcore film buffs won't find anything too enlightening or earth-shattering inside, they'll also struggle not to smirk through some of the pithier observations. What's more, the tone is affectionate enough that it never feels too snarky.

The 1950s Melodrama and Disaster Movie entries lay their genre trappings particularly bare; when assembling your melodrama, you're asked to 'Choose Your Dream That Will Change Everything', while the disaster stock characters are spot-on. Others more obviously lampoon just one film: the Young Adult Dystopian Romance is simply *The Hunger Games* with all trademarked elements removed, and the Alien Invasion Film is a beat-for-beat *Independence Day* retread.

Reading too closely might raise some eyebrows (is *Star Wars* really a Spaceship Thriller in the vein of *Alien* and *2001*?), so this is better enjoyed in small doses. Keep it in proximity of the toilet or refer to it specifically after watching an extremely generic flick to make the most of its fun but limited charms. ***Matt Maytum***



ARE SNAKES NECESSARY?

BOOK

BRIAN DE PALMA, SUSAN LEHMAN | HARD CASE CRIME

It's like having a new De Palma picture," gushes Scorsese in the blurb for his peer's first novel (co-written with Lehman). That oversells it somewhat – although many De Palma tropes are present (illicit sex, Hitchcock nods, plot twists), his trademark visuals are necessarily absent in this transition to print. The result tantalises the reader with how the director might have shot it, but asks them to settle for a breezy yet underwritten crime yarn. ***Tim Coleman***

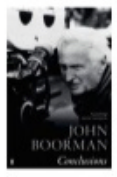


BLACK WIDOW: SECRETS OF A SUPER-SPY

BOOK

MELANIE SCOTT | DK

Assassin, Avenger, leader of short-lived super-team Champions... Natasha Romanoff's comic-book history is unpacked in a primer that'll save you a ton on back issues. Shame, though, that the strictly in-universe chronology rules out any secrets of the character's creation and evolution since the 1960s. Still, it's a handy pre-movie heads-up on storied characters like Yelena Belova and Red Guardian. ***Matthew Leyland***



CONCLUSIONS

BOOK

JOHN BOORMAN | FABER & FABER

Seventeen years on from *Adventures Of A Suburban Boy*, the director of *Deliverance* gifts us a ruminative second memoir in which he analyses his craft, recalls his childhood and spins choice yarns about John Hurt, David Lean and Toshiro Mifune. "I am a man I never had time to get to know," he muses in a book whose star-studded first half will delight cineastes. If you don't warm to poems about trees, though, the second will be a knottier proposition. ***Neil Smith***

LAURENCE KING, FABER & FABER, PITKIN/PAVILION, TITAN, DK, HARD CASE CRIME



















TOTAL FILM BUFF

CINEMA CELEBRATED AND DEBATED. BOOSTING YOUR MOVIE GENIUS TO SUPERHERO LEVELS...

this issue

U(BOAT) JOKING?
TACHE TITANS
FREE GUY
UNHAPPY HOUR
LENGTH MATTERS
KIRK DOUGLAS
TRIP TEASE
GOOD BOYS?
ID4: REGRETS

INVESTIGATION

IS IT BOLLOCKS?

Film Buff investigates the facts behind outlandish movie plots.

THIS MONTH
RAIDERS OF THE LOST ARK



Q In Indy's first adventure he swims out to a descending Nazi U-boat and stows away on it as it submerges. But would that be possible? Ja or nein?

A **DAVID FARRIER**
U-BOAT ARCHIVIST

Audiences assume that Indy finds a way inside the U-boat which would be possible as there were hand wheels on the outside of the hatch as well as inside – but he would be discovered by the crew inside if he opened it. The original script actually indicates that Indy merely clings to the periscope and the boat doesn't full submerge for the journey to the secret island base. So is this bollocks? When submerging, the periscope would be fully retracted so he'd have to hold onto something else, plus he'd likely be seen by the crew who would use the periscope to get an overview before surfacing. Typically, when a boat submerged for transit it would not stay at periscope depth because it might be seen by an enemy aircraft from above (especially in the clear Mediterranean water) and it could also be accidentally rammed there. Moreover, when submerging the boat typically went below periscope depth to oscillate the boat and get residual air out the ballast tanks, so it's most likely the journey they make would be submerged. Typical submerged speed was about 2-3 knots so he could probably hold on – but he'd need a lot of breath to do that underwater.

VERDICT BOLLOCKS

Want us to investigate if a movie scenario is bollocks? Ask us at totalfilm@futurenet.com



ALTERNATIVE BOX OFFICE

THE BIGGEST MOVIES... **STARRING DANIEL CRAIG**



01	**SKYFALL** 2012	$1.11B
02	**SPECTRE** 2015	$880.7M
03	**CASINO ROYALE** 2006	$609.4M
04	**QUANTUM OF SOLACE** 2008	$586.1M
05	**THE ADVENTURES OF TINTIN: THE SECRET OF THE UNICORN** 2011	$374M
06	**THE GOLDEN COMPASS** 2007	$372.2M
07	**KNIVES OUT** 2019	$286.7M
08	**LARA CROFT: TOMB RAIDER** 2001	$274.7M
09	**THE GIRL WITH THE DRAGON TATTOO** 2011	$232.6M
10	**ROAD TO PERDITION** 2002	$181M

ON LOCATION

REEL SPOTS BEHIND THE CAMERA



WHAT? In 1984's *Once Upon A Time In America*, a young Noodles and Max (played as adults by Robert De Niro and James Woods) strut through Brooklyn after successfully starting their own gang, but tragedy is about to strike.
WHERE? Washington Street in Dumbo, Brooklyn.
GO? One of New York's trendiest neighbourhoods, Dumbo's cobblestone streets are lined with boutiques, restaurants, cafes and tech startups. The nearby Dumbo Archway can also be seen in *Joker*. ***Thanks to Jordan Farley***

Snapped yourself at a film location? Send us the details at totalfilm@futurenet.com

PARAMOUNT, WARNER, SONY

10 OF THE BEST

MOUSTACHES

The best face furniture in movies



01

THE HATEFUL EIGHT

As John 'The Hangman' Ruth, Kurt Russell sports some unchained face-fuzz in Tarantino's snowdrift western. A serial 'tache overachiever (*Tombstone*, *Bone Tomahawk*), Russell attains a career-best here for sheer unruliness.



02

GANGS OF NEW YORK

Facing stiff competition from *There Will Be Blood*'s Daniel Plainview, Bill the Butcher is Daniel Day-Lewis' soup-straining highlight. The 'tache accentuates his wild facial expressions, and impressively doesn't diminish his menace.

M:I – FALLOUT

Dodgy CGI removed Superman's lip rug for *Justice League* reshoots as Henry Cavill was contractually banned from shaving his majestic *M:I* mouser. But when it billows freely during the helicopter chase, *Justice League* seems like a worthwhile sacrifice.



03

THREE MEN AND A BABY

The list could've entirely comprised Tom Selleck efforts, but his most iconic big-screen role remains reluctant dad Peter in this 1987 classic. It's a cookie-duster of such integrity that of course you'd trust him to take care of your only child.



04



05

PULP FICTION

Jules Winnfield's 'tache perfectly complements his sideburns and Jheri curl; it's Samuel L. Jackson's most iconic look. So many moustaches make the wielder look wimpy, but Jules' horseshoe only increases his intensity. Jackson landed an Oscar nom for his performance.



06

SMOKEY AND THE BANDIT

Burt Reynolds' most memorable moustache, his *Bandit* lip fuzz was majestically groomed, and perfectly framed his shit-eating grin as he hits the road in his black Pontiac on a mission to deliver a job lot of bootlegged beer.

GONE WITH THE WIND

No one sports a pencil moustache quite like Clark Gable, who carries off a slender lip caterpillar with panache. It's an era-defining look that says, "Frankly, my dear, I *do* give a damn (about my personal grooming regimen)."



07

OPEN RANGE

The western is fertile territory for face fuzz; Kevin Costner's underrated 2003 film was a fine showcase, not only for Robert Duvall's sturdy handlebar, but also Costner's own classic cowboy adornment. It's a natural progression from his *Dances With Wolves* look.



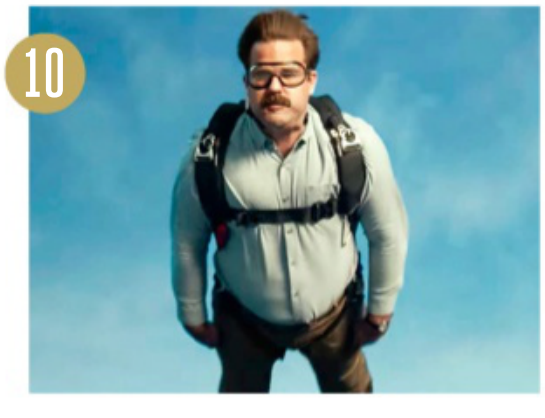
08



09

THE BIG LEBOWSKI

Sam Elliott's hirsute upper lip is as distinctive as his drawl, and so densely bristly it'd turn the Lorax green with envy. His broomstick-deserving 'tache peaked in his performance as The Stranger, narrating the Coens' cult comedy noir.



10

DEADPOOL 2

Nothing could sum up Peter's (Rob Delaney) unsuitability as a have-a-go superhero better than his luxuriant dad-stache. More worried about skin cancer than supervillains, nerdy Peter survives the X-Force's parachute jump before being killed by acid vomit. *MM*

ENTERTAINMENT, PARAMOUNT, DISNEY, PARK CIRCUS, CIC, BFI, WINCHESTER FILM DISTRIBUTION, UNIVERSAL, 20TH

BACKGROUND ARTISTRY

Celebrating the extras and bit parters stealing scenes



JURASSIC WORLD 2015

WHO Margarita man

SPECIAL SKILLS Peckish pterosaurs swoop over Isla Nublar's shopping area and parkgoers leg it for their lives – but this guy isn't going without his cocktails. That's Jimmy Buffett cameoing in a nod to his US restaurant chain, Margaritaville. Hic.

HINDSIGHT CORNER!

Stars eat their words…



ROLAND EMMERICH
INDEPENDENCE DAY: RESURGENCE

JUNE 2016 "I could see I could do something very special and different in this one… and on top of it, it's 20 years later, it's very unique in that way to continue a story."

NOVEMBER 2019 "I just wanted to make a movie exactly like the first but then in the middle of production Will [*Smith*] opted out because he wanted to do *Suicide Squad*. I should have stopped making the movie because we had a much better script, then I had to cobble another script together. I should have just said 'no' because all of a sudden I was making something I criticised myself: a sequel."

PLAIN TALKING

Learn the movie lingo

THIS MONTH
BLONDE

Slang for a 2K open-face light (without a lens) used on-location to create hard light and shadows. A less powerful version is known as a 'redhead'.



CAREER INJECTION

GUY PEARCE

Long after the highs of Priscilla, Memento and Iron Man 3, the Neighbours grad's profile has slipped. Is it time for a comeback?

When Guy Pearce made his leading-man bids in the early-2000s, he had a bumpy ride in *The Time Machine*. But he was also under consideration for another H.G. Wells variation. In retrospect, would Paul Verhoeven's take on *The Invisible Man*, *Hollow Man*, have been a better fit for Pearce's evasive talents?

In a recent interview with *The Guardian*, Pearce noted that people still sometimes stop him in the street and ask if he's done any acting since *Neighbours*. We wouldn't go that far, but it's been a while since his screen profile has matched his talent. While he struggled with an expository role in *Mary Queen Of Scots*, recent projects such as *Spinning Man*, *Domino* and *Equals* passed by without exciting much attention.

Whether or not that low visibility has been an indication of Pearce's shape-shifting approach to acting, these roles are a long way from his fluent early promise. As a slippery character actor with a leading man's charisma, he earned his big-screen breakthrough with *The Adventures Of Priscilla…*, *L.A. Confidential* and *Memento*. He could be camp, macho, broken and more besides, all without the seams showing.

Although his failed A-list bids left him frustrated with fame, his versatility later steered him to many fine off-mainstream choices. He's been strong in cop drag (*Animal Kingdom*, *Lawless*) and desolate settings (*The Road*, *The Proposition*, *The Rover*). He rose above mere imitation as true-life characters Harry Houdini and Andy Warhol in *Death Defying Acts* and *Factory Girl*, respectively.

A terrific genre return came via *Iron Man 3*, even if his Aldrich Killian was outshone by Ben Kingsley. Elsewhere, though, he's been underused in minor roles (*The King's Speech*), sci-fi duds (*Lockout*, *Prometheus/Alien: Covenant*) and movies beneath him. *Disturbing The Peace* was a streaming content-filler. And he was a highlight of the BBC's grim-dark *A Christmas Carol*, even if his emphatic jaw seemed locked in 'humbug' mode.

Perhaps the solution would be to unlock Pearce's enlivening range once more. A successful redeployment of his comic chops could help, as hinted at (if not fully expressed) by Stephan Elliott's *Swinging Safari*. Or, perhaps he could have good, tormented fun with a Universal monster, since *The Invisible Man* didn't happen. Dexter Fletcher's *Renfield*, maybe? Either way, it's time for Pearce to be restored to full visibility. *KH*

FIVE POINT FIX

1 Tantalisingly, his old pal John Hillcoat is prepping a *Witchfinder General* remake. Reunion?

2 Have more fun. Pearce is good at brooding, but he can be a warm, lively presence when needed.

3 The adap has been canned before, but could Pearce's Exley return for *L.A. Confidential* sequel *White Jazz*?

4 *L.A. Confidential* fan Edgar Wright once said Pearce should get more action on screen. Give him some: *Baby Driver 2*?

5 If he fancies another comic-book workout, *Justice League Dark*'s Constantine seems made to measure…

GETTY, 17TH & OAK, UNIVERSAL



IS IT JUST ME...

OR DO WE NEED MORE LONG FILMS?

asks Tim Coleman

Don't get me wrong, I love a short movie. *High Noon*, *This Is Spinal Tap*, *Toy Story*, *Rashomon* and *Eraserhead* all clock in under 90 minutes and are absolute classics. And in an age where bloated blockbusters routinely pass the two-hour mark, many studios would do well to remember the beauty of a taut tale told well. However, there are stories that cannot be spun with such surgical precision, narratives that require three hours or – gasp! – longer to unfurl.

Back in the day, this wasn't so controversial. *Gone With The Wind* is just under four hours, while *Lawrence Of Arabia*, *The Ten Commandments* and *Ben-Hur* all pass three hours 30 minutes. But since ticket prices for longer films are the same as shorter ones (which can be screened more times per day and thus generate more moolah), there's a financial incentive to rein in runtimes. Couple this with modern audiences' supposedly diminishing attention spans, and you have the popular belief that two-hour (or less) movies are the best way forward.

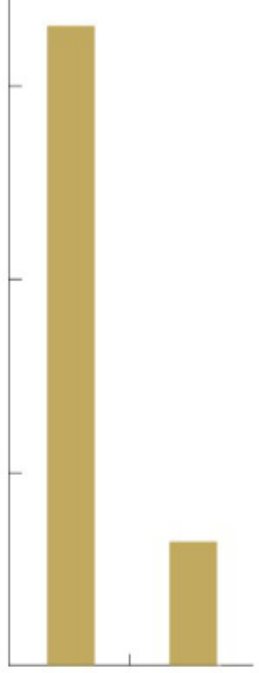
There is, however, evidence to the contrary. Peruse the list of top-grossing films of all time and you'll find the top three (*Avengers: Endgame*, *Avatar*, *Titanic*) are all whoppers. Similarly, IMDb's leaderboard of top-rated movies is dominated by titles of two hours plus (The *LOTR* Trilogy; *The Godfather* Parts I & II; *The Dark Knight*). It appears that, despite the received wisdom, punters still love an epic.

Now, I'm not advocating that everything needs to be like *The Innocence* (the 21-hour Bangladeshi film and current record-holder for longest theatrical movie ever). But the recent explosion of long-form TV – particularly with Netflix and Amazon's season-dump model – means that audiences are more accustomed than ever to bingeing four hours of viewing in a single go. It's a trend that streamers seem to be waking up to, with Netflix also releasing Martin Scorsese's gargantuan passion project *The Irishman* late last year to widespread acclaim.

You see, watching a film is like having a meal: sometimes you want a fast-food fix, but other times you want to kick back, luxuriate in the atmosphere and feast for hours. Or is it just me?

Share your reaction at www.gamesradar.com/totalfilm or on Facebook and Twitter.

OFFICE-OMETER
THE TF STAFF VERDICT IS IN!



LAST TIME IS BLADE RUNNER 2049 BETTER THAN THE ORIGINAL?

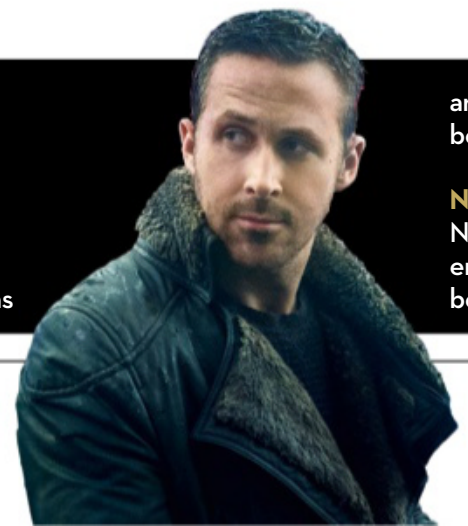
FREDRIK LYBECK
Its just you, unfortunately. The new one was quite boring and sort of fake deep. The original is a slow gut punch and a visual masterpiece. Not just through sepia grading.

ALAN MUIR
Blade Runner is my favourite movie and my heart sank when I heard talk of a sequel, but I loved *2049*. The first one will always be king, but *2049* is next in line for the throne.

JASON SMEETS
Not better, but as good as. I think *2049* makes *Blade Runner* a better film.

MICHAEL LANSU
The original's visuals and ideas are amazing. The second is a better and more cohesive film.

NICKY WARD
No, it's not better, but equally enjoyable. You can't ask for better than that, really.



DISNEY, NETFLIX



1916-2020

KIRK DOUGLAS

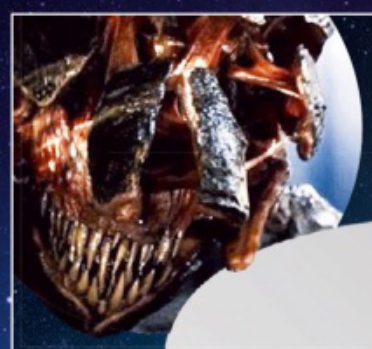
One of the last great stars of the Hollywood Golden Age, Kirk Douglas, died last month at the age of 103.

Born into poverty in the city of Amsterdam, New York, on 9 December 1916, Issur Danielovich Demsky was the son of Jewish immigrants. One of seven siblings, he worked more than 40 jobs in his youth, and paid his way through the American Academy of Dramatic Arts by wrestling professionally and working as a bellhop and a car-park attendant. Going by the stage name Kirk Douglas, he was several plays into a Broadway career when he enlisted in the US Navy in 1941. Two years later he was medically discharged and married former classmate Diana Dill, with whom he had two children – actor-producer Michael and producer Joel.

Douglas made his screen debut in 1946, playing opposite Barbara Stanwyck in *The Strange Love Of Martha Ivers*. The following year he made a strong impact as the villain in Jacques Tourneur's classic corkscrew noir, *Out Of The Past*. But it was in 1949's *Champion* that the cleft-chinned actor found his groove, essaying virility and vulnerability as washed-up boxer Midge Kelly. For his performance, Douglas received the first of his three Oscar nominations – the others were for playing a vicious film producer in 1952's *The Bad And The Beautiful*, and a tormented Vincent Van Gogh in 1956's *Lust For Life* – though he was not awarded a gong until he collected an honorary Oscar in 1996, just weeks after suffering a stroke.

A driven actor who, by his own admission, frequently played "sons of bitches" – his standout performance is as a ruthless, mercenary journalist in Billy Wilder's scathing 1951 satire *Ace In The Hole* – Douglas was as tough off the screen as he was on it. In 1955 he formed his production company Byrna so that he might escape the studios' iron fist ("No one's my boss," he growled), and Byrna's 1960 Roman slave epic *Spartacus*, in which Douglas also starred, defied the anti-communist witch-hunts of the McCarthy era by hiring blacklisted screenwriter Dalton Trumbo. *Spartacus* was helmed by Stanley Kubrick, who had previously directed Douglas in Byrna's seminal 1957 anti-war drama, *Paths Of Glory*.

A Hollywood power player who fought injustices, served four US presidents as a special ambassador and created a charitable foundation, Douglas' career was nonetheless dogged by allegations of sexual harassment and worse. True or false, it casts a deep shadow on a life and career that was otherwise heroic. ***JG***



A QUIET PLACE PART II

Shhh! Emily Blunt and John Krasinski return to take on the monsters

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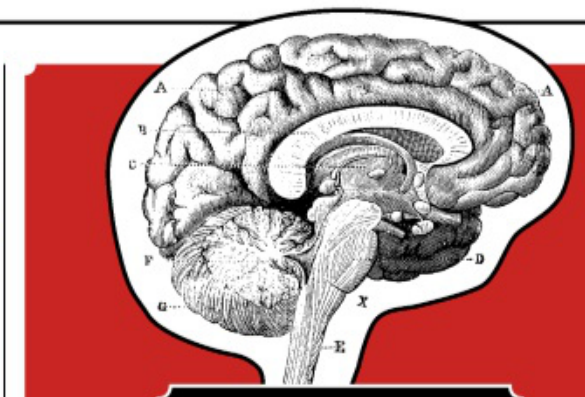


EASY

1. *Harold & Kumar Get The Munchies* was released under what title in the US?
2. What's the superheroic name of Peter Fonda's bike in *Easy Rider*?
3. *Onward* director Dan Scanlon previously helmed which Pixar prequel?
4. Who directed 2000's *Road Trip*?
5. Which road movie won David Lynch his sole Palme d'Or to date?

MEDIUM

1. Which road movie won Frank Capra his first Best Director Oscar?
2. *The Motorcycle Diaries* (2004) centres on which real-life political icon?
3. Which sportsman-turned-actor plays 'Mad Maynard' in *EuroTrip*?



THE TF BRAIN

ROAD MOVIES

Mechanics! Motorcycles! Munchies! Can you go the distance?

4. Which actor links *The Road* and *On The Road*?
5. Which two 1980s road movies were back-to-back Best Picture winners?

HARD

1. In *Planes, Trains And Automobiles*, John Candy's character is a salesman who sells… what?



2. What are Thelma and Louise's respective surnames?
3. *Two-Lane Blacktop* stars which Beach Boy as 'The Mechanic'?
4. Who was the regular female lead of the Hope/Crosby *Road To…* series?
5. *Fanboys* is about a cross-country quest to sneak an early viewing of which (real) movie?

ANSWERS **EASY** 1. *Harold & Kumar* Go To White Castle 2. Captain America 3. *Monsters University* 4. Todd Phillips 5. *Wild At Heart*
MEDIUM 1. *It Happened One Night* 2. Che Guevara 3. Vinnie Jones 4. Viggo Mortensen 5. *Rain Man* and *Driving Miss Daisy*
HARD 1. Shower curtain rings 2. Dickinson and Sawyer 3. Dennis Wilson 4. Dorothy Lamour 5. *Star Wars: Episode I – The Phantom Menace*

DOUBLE TAKE

SPOT THE DIFFERENCE

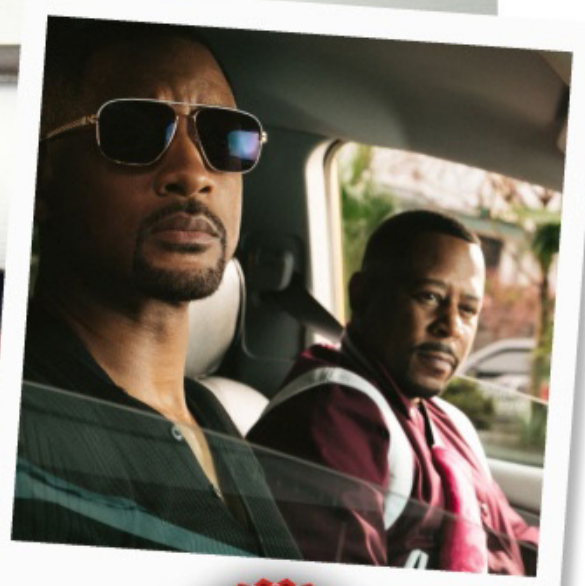
There are 10 to find...



SEE THE NEXT PAGE FOR THE ANSWERS...

20TH CENTURY FOX, PARAMOUNT, ALAMY

60 Second Screenplay



SPOILER ALERT!

TF SAVES YOU A NIGHT OUT EVERY MONTH. THIS ISSUE: **BAD BOYS FOR LIFE...**

FADE IN:
EXT: MIAMI
Seventeen years after *Bad Boys II*, detective BFFs WILL SMITH and MARTIN LAWRENCE are still nowhere near the end of that film's interminable car chase.

MARTIN LAWRENCE
Is it too early for a 'too old for this shit' joke?

WILL SMITH
Nah, go for it grandpa. Be careful sinking your dentures into those one-liners, mind – some of them are as ancient as we are!

BOTH
[SINGING] 'Bad Boys, Bad Boys, whatcha gonna do? / Gonna wait for my pension in the post office queue!'

INT: MATERNITY WARD
The detectives arrive at the hospital as MARTIN's daughter gives birth to his first grandchild.

DOCTOR
It's a... n excuse for a comedy montage or three!

MARTIN LAWRENCE
Fine, just hose me in baby sick and get it over with...

EXT: OMINOUSLY JOYFUL PARTY
From out of nowhere, assassin JACOB SCIPIO violently guns down WILL. Good news is, the hospital set from earlier is still available for him to lie at death's door.

AUDIENCE
Whoa! This shit just got real!

Two scenes later, WILL springs out of a wheelchair like a baby gazelle.

AUDIENCE
Whoa! This shit just got unrealistic!

WILL SMITH
Martin, please come out of slapstick retirement and help me catch my would-be killer. I'm begging you: One. Last. Time (pending opening-weekend box office, obvs).

MARTIN LAWRENCE
Nope. I swore to God that if you survived, I would forever renounce violence for at least 20 minutes.

WILL SMITH
OK, you watch telly and trip over carrycots while I meet our market-tested youth-appeal co-stars!

INT: SPECIAL FORCES CONTROL ROOM

PAOLA NUÑEZ
Will, meet your new team; they're Fast, they're Furious and they specialise in stealth auditions! I mean missions!

VANESSA HUDGENS
Let's crack on; Kurt Russell says he needs this room back by 5pm...

WILL SMITH
Ha! I'll show you whippersnappers how it's done!

WILL chases down an informant but fails to prevent his death. Then does the same thing again.

WILL SMITH
Ha! I'll show you whippersnappers how you pad out an action movie!

CUT TO: FOREBODINGLY JOLLY CONVERSATIONAL INTERLUDE
WILL and veteran captain JOE PANTOLIANO reach peak bantz, thus signing JOE's death warrant.

CUT TO: CAPTAIN JOE'S FUNERAL

WILL/MARTIN
[SINGING] 'Bad Boys, Bad Boys, whatcha gonna do? / Gonna grieve 20 seconds then promptly forget Captain... who?'

INT: NIGHTCLUB
WILL, MARTIN and the *F&F* wannabes take their investigation to the next, gratuitous level, in a bangin' joint full of scantily clad women.

WILL SMITH
It's what he would've wanted. Michael Bay, I mean.

In a startling twist, the film expands its scope by copying a different blockbuster.

MARTIN LAWRENCE
WTF – evil Jacob is your secret son?!? Being targeted by an assassin who's effectively your younger self... I'm so sorry, Will – no one deserves to go through *Gemini Man* once, let alone twice!

EXT: MEXICO CITY BADDIE HQ
WILL and co. confront JACOB and his mother-slash-handler-slash-cartel-boss KATE DEL CASTILLO, who's also a witch on the side.

AUDIENCE
Whoa! This shit just got eldritch!

Honouring their new code of non-brutal methods, the cops ensure KATE dies not by their own hands, but in a raging fire. JACOB switches to Team Dad.

WILL SMITH
Nice one, son! We're going to send you to prison while setting you up as the hero of the next film; not so much doing time as doing a Statham!

AUDIENCE
[SINGING] 'Bad Boys, Bad Boys, whatcha gonna do? / Gonna hope Vin Diesel doesn't see this and decide to sue...'

FIN
NEXT ISSUE: DOLITTLE

NEXT ISSUE ON SALE 3 APRIL

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