

# CINEPLEX

CELEBRATING 20 YEARS

MAGAZINE

## STAR WARS

### THE RISE OF SKYWALKER

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**JENNIFER HUDSON IS ONE COOL CAT**  
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Eggs for a pre-movie  
dinner isn't weird.



Watching all the  
credits is weird.



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**PLUS:** **Billy Dee Williams** wants us to know he's the one and only Lando Calrissian

BY INGRID RANDOJA



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PUBLISHER Salah Bachir

EDITOR Marni Weisz

DEPUTY EDITOR Ingrid Randoja  
CREATIVE DIRECTOR & DESIGNER  
Lucinda Wallace

CONTRIBUTING DESIGNER  
Erin McPhee

CONTRIBUTORS  
Adriana Florida, Tanner Zipchen

DIRECTOR, CONTENT STRATEGY  
Tina Boroviak

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TORONTO HEAD OFFICE  
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Debi Kingston

## ACCOUNT MANAGERS

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Jennifer Wishart

### QUEBEC 514-868-0005

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### MAN/SASK 204-396-3044

Morgan Comrie

### CALGARY 403-264-4420

Kevin Leahy

### EDMONTON 780-919-3011

Barb Kitzan

### BRITISH COLUMBIA 604-689-3068

Matt Watson

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# Back to where we started

“No one’s ever really gone.”

Those are the words Luke Skywalker says to his sister Leia at the end of *The Last Jedi* as she laments the loss of her son Ben to the dark side, and the words repeated in the first trailer for this month’s finale, *Star Wars: The Rise of Skywalker*. Only this time they’re followed by the unmistakable cackle of Emperor Palpatine, the ultimate baddie of the saga’s first two trilogies who was killed by Darth Vader at the end of *Return of the Jedi*.

But when we’re talking about *Star Wars*, those words could just as easily apply to a little filmmaker named George Lucas.

Charting what the franchise’s progenitor thinks of each new *Star Wars* movie that’s come out since he sold Lucasfilm to Disney for \$4-billion (U.S.) in 2012 could be its own saga. There’s even a hilarious deep-fake video — meaning it’s not really Lucas, but an incredibly lifelike digital facsimile — going around that imagines the filmmaker reacting to *The Rise of Skywalker*’s trailer with sarcastic zingers like, “This thing needs more Gungans” (Jar Jar Binks was a Gungan) and “I think my favourite part of the trailer was the very beginning when it said my name. It said Lucasfilm.”

Famous for having had a tough time when the franchise’s new overseers did away with most of his ideas for the remainder of the saga, the man who thought up, wrote and directed 1977’s *Star Wars* and was instrumental in the next five films, has continued to hover in the background, much like a Force ghost, as the sequel trilogy unfurled across the *Star Wars* universe.

So I’m glad that at least part of Lucas’s original vision for the ending of the *Star Wars* saga will figure into the ninth and final film. In 2002, *Star Wars* producer Gary Kurtz told entertainment website IGN that while making the original trilogy Lucas already had outlines for the final three films and they “culminated with this big clash with the Emperor in *Episode IX*.”

The finale’s co-writer and director J.J. Abrams confirmed that he and his team had conversations with Lucas while they were deciding how this industry-changing, nine-episode behemoth should come to an end, and he also confirmed that the trailer cackle is no trick. The once dead (or thought dead) Emperor Palpatine will be in *The Rise of Skywalker*, again played by Scottish actor Ian McDiarmid.

When you really think about it, a call-back to Palpatine — the man who turned Anakin Skywalker into Darth Vader — was the right way to go. While we don’t know how big a role Palpatine will play, or in what form, we do know it’s what George had floating around in his noggin from the time Luke Skywalker was a moisture farmer on Tatooine. And whether you’re a fan of the man or not, staying true to Lucas’s vision is really the only way to end this journey.

Turn to “The End of the Universe,” page 40, where star **Daisy Ridley** and director **J.J. Abrams** tell us little, but tease a lot, about this final chapter in the *Star Wars* saga that started more than 40 years ago.

Elsewhere in this issue, **Jennifer Hudson** promises us that *Cats* is the most unique musical we will ever see (page 30), **Greta Gerwig** talks about finally directing her version of *Little Women* (page 34), and we’ve got **Tim Roth** on the Canadian drama *The Song of Names* (page 38).

Plus, we’ve got plenty to put you in the seasonal spirit, including a rundown of all the Christmas-themed movies in theatres this month (page 26), and our Holiday Gift Guide for Movie Lovers (page 46). My advice? Get that *Downton Abbey* cookbook before you plan your big holiday dinner.

MARNI WEISZ,  
EDITOR





# SAMSUNG

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# CLICK!

## ➤ SOMEWHERE UNDER THE RAINBOW

**Renée Zellweger** holds an appropriate umbrella at the London premiere of *Judy*. She plays *Wizard of Oz* leading lady Judy Garland.



## ➤ IS THAT CONSIDERED A SELFIE?

**Spike Lee** takes a picture of his portrait on stage at the Morehouse College Human Rights Film Festival Awards Ceremony in Atlanta.



## ➤ SOMETHING IN THE WAY HE WALKS

**Patrick Stewart** has fun with a famous backdrop at the 50th Anniversary Celebration for The Beatles' album *Abbey Road* in Hollywood.





### WE'RE FONDA HER

**Jane Fonda** expresses her feelings after being arrested at the “Fire Drill Friday” climate change protest in Washington, D.C.



### WHEN IN ROME

**Bill Murray** (centre) walks the red carpet at the Rome Film Festival where he received a Lifetime Achievement Award from director **Wes Anderson** (right). **Frances McDormand** was just there to make trouble.



### DOG TIRED

**Owen Wilson** gives his canine friend a ride while filming *Marry Me* in New York.



## IN FOCUS

# Eastwood at 89

With *Richard Jewell*, director **Clint Eastwood** proves he's in no mood to slow down

**T**HE FIRST TIME CLINT EASTWOOD WAS tapped to direct *Richard Jewell* he was 84 years old. It didn't work out then but life is long, especially for Eastwood, and opportunities have a way of coming around again. In May of this year, the month Eastwood turned 89, it was announced that *Richard Jewell* was back on with Eastwood behind the camera. The film tells the true story of the security guard (Paul Walter Hauser) who found a bomb during the 1996 Atlanta Summer Olympics and went from hero to prime suspect, despite little evidence, in a matter of days.

Eastwood, who's known for being incredibly efficient, started shooting the film this past June. It hits theatres December 13th, just six months later, which is an astonishingly short time for a Hollywood movie but not really a surprise when it comes to Eastwood. In fact, in the four years between when he first considered this movie and

when he signed on, the octogenarian directed three other films, *Sully*, *The 15:17 to Paris* and *The Mule* (he also starred in the latter). *The Mule* and *The 15:17 to Paris* took just six and seven months respectively to get from set to screen.

While Eastwood knows he has a reputation for being efficient, which often means filming less takes than other directors, he doesn't necessary like that image. As far back as 1996 — coincidentally, the year of the Olympic bombing — Eastwood pushed back when interviewer Charlie Rose asked him about how quickly he works, saying, "I do as many takes as I think it needs to get what I like, and I'm trying for that the first time."

The fact that *Richard Jewell* is coming out just in time for Oscar consideration makes us think Eastwood probably got what he liked. —MW

*Richard Jewell* opens December 13th.

↑  
Clint Eastwood (right) directs Paul Walter Hauser (left) and Sam Rockwell on the set of *Richard Jewell*

## SOURCE MATERIAL

The film is based on a *Vanity Fair* article by Marie Brenner, who also wrote the article behind Russell Crowe's *The Insider*

## WHERE HAVE I SEEN PAUL WALTER HAUSER?

He played thug Shawn Eckhardt in *I, Tonya*, white supremacist Ivanhoe in *BlacKkKlansman* and comedy writer Mancuso in *Late Night*





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“People have asked me for years about playing the actual James Bond. Now I can answer that question and be like, yeah, well I did it, I just did it in Playmobil form.”

—DANIEL RADCLIFFE ON VOICING SUPERSPY REX DASHER IN *PLAYMOBIL: THE MOVIE*

## BEHIND THE SCENES

# DOUBLE TIME

Forget those overproduced making-of featurettes the studios put out. If you want to see some of the prep for *Jumanji: The Next Level* go to star Jack Black's YouTube page, JablinskiGames, and check out the episode titled “Jumanji 4.”

Watch as Black and his longtime stunt double Jimmy Waitman (*Goosebumps*, *Shallow Hal*, *Nacho Libre*) have three days to get the actor into filming shape with workout sequences like kicks, followed by a tiger roll into a cat stretch and then the dreaded downward dog.

You'll also get a tour of Black's sweet trailer, follow the boys to a park for an Aerobie disc workout and watch as they try in vain to even out their weight differential by feeding Black salad while Waitman chows down on a double cheeseburger.

*Jumanji: The Next Level* opens December 13th.



↑  
Jack Black and Karen Gillan in *Jumanji: The Next Level*

←  
Black (right) with his stunt double Jimmy Waitman



Valerie Pachner and August Diehl in *A Hidden Life*

## TOP PICK

# ILLUMINATING THE DARK

Terrence Malick crafts films that fill out the screen like paintings on a stretched canvas. The reclusive director's latest, *A Hidden Life*, is no different.

The World War II film tells the true story of Franz Jägerstätter (August Diehl), an Austrian farmer who refuses to swear an oath of allegiance to Hitler, with devastating repercussions.

Malick and his longtime cinematographer Jörg Widmer

(*The New World*, *The Tree of Life* and *Knight of Cups*) decided to shoot almost every scene with natural light, creating a look that is realistic yet ethereal whether we're in a sun-drenched field or a shadowy prison cell.

It's an immersive and emotional film that deserves to be seen on the big screen.

*A Hidden Life* opens December 13th.



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## PLANT-BASED

## THEY'LL GROW ON YOU

Get your shears ready.

*Little Joe* is the latest movie to feature scary plants. British actor Emily Beecham (seen above) plays a plant breeder who helps develop a pretty red flower that can make people feel happy. But when she breaks her company's rules, taking a flower home for her son, there are unexpected consequences.

*Little Joe* follows in a long Hollywood tradition of movies about threatening vegetation. Here are three of our faves.



### Invasion of the Body Snatchers (1956)

Alien seed spores come to Earth and sprout large pods that absorb and duplicate humans, replicating their

memories and personalities, but with none of their emotions.

### Attack of the Killer Tomatoes! (1978)

A low-budget spoof of B-horror movies, in which giant, vicious tomatoes feast on people and their pets.



### Little Shop of Horrors (1986)

A musical update of the 1960 film of the same name that stars Rick Moranis as Seymour Krelborn, a flower shop

employee who owns an unusual and carnivorous plant that needs human blood to survive.

.....  
*Little Joe* opens December 6th.

## THE CHAT

## LOOKING FOR JUSTICE

*Just Mercy* co-stars Oscar winner Jamie Foxx as wrongly convicted death-row inmate Walter McMillian and Michael B. Jordan as Bryan Stevenson, the relentless lawyer who fought for his release. It's a true story. But McMillian is just one of several innocent Black men defended by Stevenson and some of Stevenson's other death-row clients appear in the film as well, including **O'Shea Jackson Jr.** as Anthony Ray Hinton. On shoddy evidence, Hinton was convicted of killing two fast-food restaurant managers in the 1980s and sentenced to death. **TANNER ZIPCHEN** spoke with Jackson about *Just Mercy* at the Toronto International Film Festival.



### This is based on a true story. Did that change your approach?

For sure. My whole goal when I'm playing anybody, whether it be my father [which he did in *Straight Outta Compton*], whether it be Anthony Ray Hinton, is to make him proud. They went through actual sacrifice. I'm doing a dramatization of his life, so if I don't pay my respect then I'm not doing my job. And so, yeah, it's just a layer of responsibility that goes into it. You're not a character, you're a person.

### Why is this such an important story to tell?

Because there needs to be something done about the injustice within the justice system. It's not

built for a certain type of people, and the more that you put a spotlight on a subject it gets people talking about it, the more people are talking about it something gets done, finally. So it's important to be a part of something like this. Usually people use the movies as an escape from real life but too much of that will leave you blind.

### What are you hoping audiences take away from this film?

Just the desire to, when you feel that something is wrong, when you feel that something needs to be changed, to get up and do it. We all have ideas, we all come up with ideas, solutions, but it's few of us that execute them. So get out there and do

what needs to be done like Bryan Stevenson.

### So does Jamie Foxx bring his Oscar [for Ray] to set and polish it in front of everybody?

No, no, no. He's in full character. I wasn't there when he wrapped, though. It might be in the trailer. I know I would.

### Yeah, if you have an Oscar you've gotta show that thing off.

If I had an Oscar they would have to call me Academy Award winner O'Shea Jackson everywhere I went. Starbucks and everything.

.....  
*Just Mercy* opens December 25th.



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## SPOTLIGHT CANADA

# Making Waves

Vancouver's **Taylor Russell** stars in *Waves*, the indie sensation about a family under pressure

**T**HE LATEST FILM FROM ACCLAIMED INDEPENDENT filmmaker Trey Edward Shults (*Krishna, It Comes at Night*), *Waves* made a gigantic impact on the festival circuit earlier this year and could end up being one of the more celebrated films of 2019. A story told in two parts, in the first part we follow Tyler (Kelvin Harrison Jr.), an athlete with a seemingly perfect life until he cracks under the pressures put on him by his father and girlfriend.

Taylor Russell plays his sister Emily who, for the first half of the film, is lingering in the background. We meet her up close and personal in the second half of the film as the narrative shifts to her perspective, and she acts as a beacon of hope. "I mean, it's so rare, especially for people of colour and young females to get a role like this," says the 25-year-old Vancouver-born actor.

It's a breakthrough performance that should definitely put Russell on everyone's radar.

## PREVIOUS ROLES

*Escape Room*,  
*Before I Fall*, TV's  
*Lost in Space* and  
*Falling Skies*

## ON THE MOVE

Russell moved  
16 times as a kid,  
eventually relocating  
from Vancouver  
to Toronto

## MULTITALENTED

She just directed  
and produced a  
documentary short  
and dances ballet

## Tell us about your character, Emily.

We meet Emily at that precious time of a teenager where you're coming into your own and you're finding out who you are and you're still a little bit awkward in your body and you care so much about what people think around you. And because of what happens in her family she becomes quite reclusive.

## What was your first reaction to the script?

There are times when you get projects and you just connect immediately to the material and you feel like you have the same voice as a character. And I felt that. The way [the script] was done, Trey synced up music to the entire thing. You'd press play beside a scene and then this music would play and you would read the scene and then you'd press the next play button and do that for the entire script. It was the coolest thing I'd ever read just because it was so unique.

## How was working with Shults?

Trey is one of those directors who is really hands off in the process in terms of letting you find your character and explore. He really lets you do your own thing and try and kind of make mistakes and fall on your face and get back up and just do it a bunch of times until it feels good.

## Did any other films inspire your process?

When we first got to Florida, it was just Lucas [Hedges, who plays her boyfriend] and I at first and we were with Trey and Drew [Daniels] the scenographer and the whole rest of the crew. Trey would be playing *Punch-Drunk Love* and *The Master*. So there was a lot of Paul Thomas Anderson influences I know for Trey. And Paul Thomas Anderson's one of my favourite filmmakers.

## What was it like to see the finished film?

I was in shock. There was so much that got cut just because we shot an incredible amount of footage. I think there could have been three movies out of what we did with this movie. It was so different from what I thought it was going to be. I just didn't know what message was going to come across. And it blew my mind and was so much more epic than anything I could've thought of. —ADRIANA FLORIDIA

*Waves* opens December 6th.



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**NICK CAVE AND THE BAD SEEDS**  
GHOSTEEN  
NOW AVAILABLE

# RED CARPET



↑  
**Natalie Portman**  
In Los Angeles for the L.A. Dance Project Annual Gala.



↑  
**Timothée Chalamet**  
In Sydney for the Australian premiere of *The King*.



↑  
**Gwendoline Christie**  
In London for the premiere of *The Personal History of David Copperfield*.



↑  
**Taika Waititi**  
At the L.A. premiere of *Jojo Rabbit*.





↑  
**Kristen Stewart**  
At the Zurich Film Festival's screening of *Seberg*.



↑  
**Michelle Dockery**  
At the Rome Film Festival for a screening of *Downton Abbey*.



↑  
**Lena Waithe**  
In Beverly Hills for the ELLE Women in Hollywood celebration.



↑  
**Shia LaBeouf**  
At the London Film Festival's screening of *Honey Boy*.

# IN THEATRES



## PLAYMOBIL: THE MOVIE

This animated feature finds Marla (**Anya Taylor-Joy**) and her brother Charlie (**Gabriel Bateman**) transformed into Playmobil figurines. When Charlie is captured by Emperor Maximus (**Adam Lambert**) and sent to fight in the gladiatorial games, Marla joins with Del the truck driver (**Jim Gaffigan**) and secret agent Rex Dasher (**Daniel Radcliffe**) to rescue him.

→ OPENS DECEMBER 6TH

## DECEMBER 6

### PLAYMOBIL: THE MOVIE

See spotlight box.

### LITTLE JOE

**Emily Beecham** picked up the Best Actress prize at this year's Cannes Film Festival for her turn as a scientist who helps create a mood-altering plant that seems to make people happy. However, she notices that the people

around her, including her son Joe (**Kit Connor**), start to act strangely after spending time in the presence of the plant.

### THE KINDNESS OF STRANGERS

Danish director **Lone Scherfig** (*An Education*, *One Day*) brings us this tale of a group of New Yorkers whose lives intertwine in unexpected ways. There's homeless mom Clara (**Zoe Kazan**), paroled criminal Marc (**Tahar Rahim**), his pal John Peter (**Jay Baruchel**),



Kelvin Harrison Jr. (left) and Sterling K. Brown in *Waves*

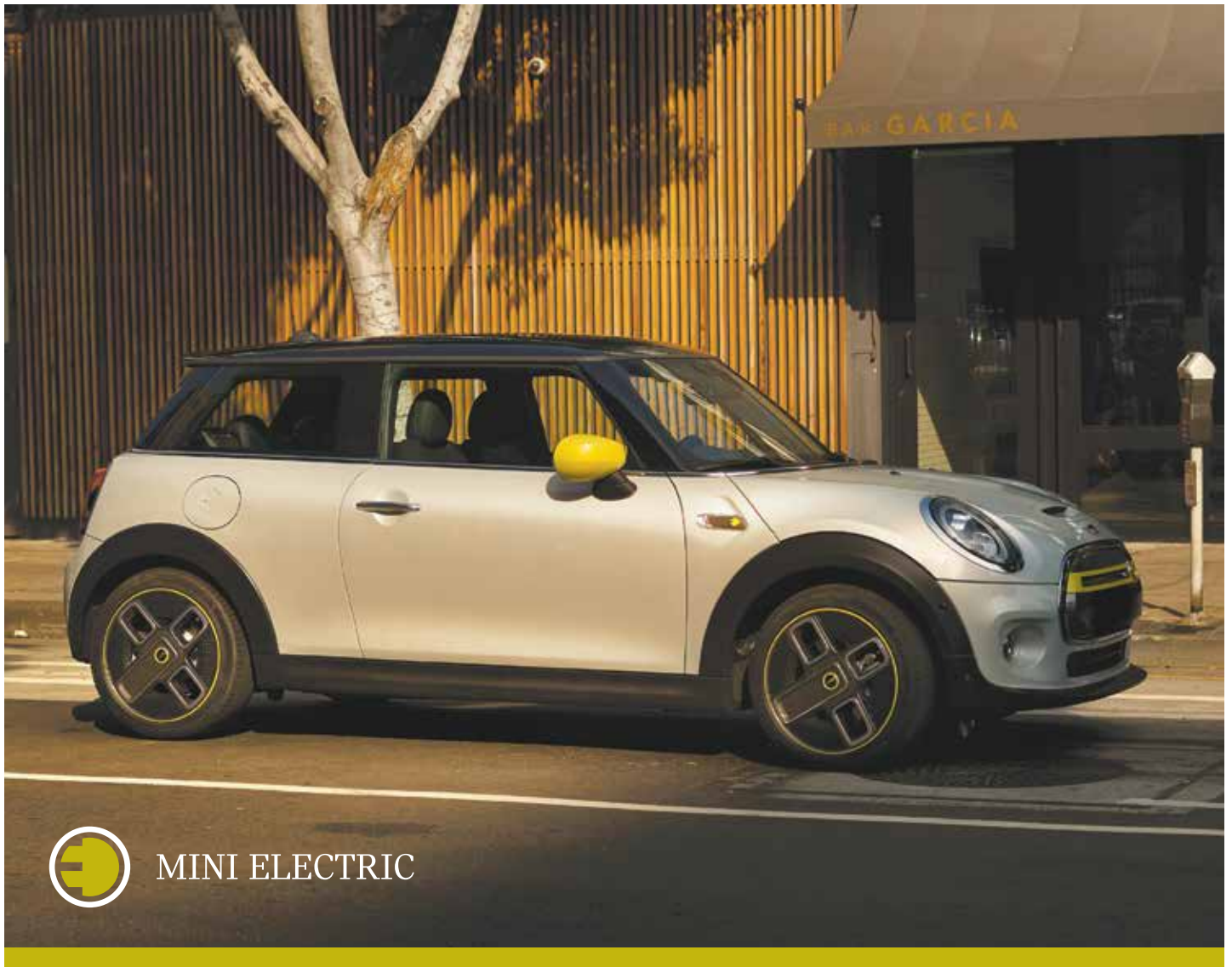
emergency room nurse Alice (**Andrea Riseborough**) and restaurateur Timofey (**Bill Nighy**).

### WAVES

This critically acclaimed drama from writer-director **Trey Edward Shults** (*It Comes at Night*) finds a

family — domineering father Ronald (**Sterling K. Brown**), stepmom Catharine (**Renée Elise Goldsberry**) and teenage kids Tyler (**Kelvin Harrison Jr.**) and Emily (**Taylor Russell**) — trying to hold on under difficult circumstances. [SEE TAYLOR RUSSELL INTERVIEW, PAGE 14.](#) →





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→ **DECEMBER 13**

## A HIDDEN LIFE

Director **Terrence Malick** (*Tree of Life*) brings us the real-life story of Austrian farmer Franz Jägerstätter (**August Diehl**), a deeply religious man who refuses to fight for Nazi Germany during World War II. His position as a conscientious objector incurs the wrath of the Third Reich.

## JUMANJI: THE NEXT LEVEL

See spotlight box.

## BLACK CHRISTMAS

This remake of the 1974 slasher flick is set on a college campus where a mysterious killer is murdering female students. Left to fend for themselves over the Holidays, four sorority sisters — **Imogen Poots**, **Lily Donoghue**, **Aleyse Shannon** and **Brittany O'Grady** — fight back and set out to unmask the murderer and the reason behind the killings.

## RICHARD JEWELL

At 89, **Clint Eastwood** directs this drama that recounts the real-life story of Richard Jewell (**Paul Walter Hauser**), the security guard at the 1996 Summer Olympics in Atlanta who discovered a bomb before it exploded. Initially called a hero, Jewell's life was turned upside down when the FBI and the press reported that he might be the one who planted the bomb. **Jon Hamm** is an FBI agent investigating the case, **Kathy Bates** plays Jewell's mom and **Olivia Wilde** portrays real-life reporter Kathy Scruggs.



Charlize Theron (left) and Liv Hewson in *Bombshell*



## JUMANJI: THE NEXT LEVEL

The sequel to the 2017 blockbuster *Jumanji: Welcome to the Jungle* finds the four teens — Spencer, Bethany, Fridge and Martha — who were previously sucked into the Jumanji videogame jumping back into the fantasy world. However, this time it's Spencer's grandad **Eddie (Danny DeVito)** who claims the avatar of Dr. Bravestone (**Dwayne Johnson**), and Eddie's pal Milo (**Danny Glover**) who becomes Mouse (**Kevin Hart**).

→ OPENS DECEMBER 13TH

**DECEMBER 20**

## STAR WARS: THE RISE OF SKYWALKER

The relentless hype and rampant speculation finally come to an end with the release of writer-director **J.J. Abrams'** epic conclusion to the beloved *Star Wars* saga as **Rey (Daisy Ridley)**, **Finn (John Boyega)** and **Poe (Oscar Isaac)** lead the diminished Resistance against the evil First Order. Expect Abrams to weave characters — Emperor Palpatine! — and storylines from the original and prequel trilogies into his rousing finale. [SEE DAISY RIDLEY, J.J. ABRAMS INTERVIEW, PAGE 40.](#)

## BOMBSHELL

Hollywood embraces the #MeToo movement in a big way with this bold, brassy drama that recounts how a group of female journalists and employees banded together to finally bring down Fox News head Roger Ailes (**John Lithgow**), a serial sexual harasser who used fear and blackmail to reign over his staff. **Charlize Theron** plays Megyn Kelly (the resemblance is uncanny), **Nicole Kidman** portrays Gretchen Carlson and **Margot Robbie** is a naïve employee named Kayla Pospisil. Look for **Kate McKinnon**, **Allison Janney** and **Connie Britton** in supporting roles.

## CATS

Composer **Andrew Lloyd Webber's** musical *Cats* — which ran for 21 years on London's West End and 18 years on Broadway — finally comes to the big screen in a most intriguing way with real actors covered in "digital fur" performing on oversized sets that mirror a cat's perspective. Director **Tom Hooper** (*Les Misérables*) works with a stellar cast that includes **Jennifer Hudson** as Grizabella, **Idris Elba** as Macavity, **Taylor Swift** as Bombalurina, **James Corden** as Bustopher Jones and **Judi Dench** as Old Deuteronomy. [SEE JENNIFER HUDSON INTERVIEW, PAGE 30.](#)

→



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Boys & Girls Clubs



## SPIES IN DISGUISE

This animated pic calls on **Will Smith** to voice suave secret agent Lance Sterling, who is turned into a pigeon when he accidentally drinks a liquid concocted by nerdy gadget inventor Walter Beckett (**Tom Holland**). The pair teams up to save the world from technology mastermind Tristan McFord (**Ben Mendelsohn**). Co-directed by **Nick Bruno** (*The Peanuts Movie*) and **Troy Quane** (*Ferdinand*).

→ [OPENS DECEMBER 25TH](#)

→ **DECEMBER 25**

### SPIES IN DISGUISE

See spotlight box.

#### 1917

The gallantry and horrors of the First World War are brought to life in director **Sam Mendes'** (*Skyfall*) visually stunning action-drama in which two British soldiers (**George MacKay**, **Dean-Charles Chapman**) are sent on a perilous mission

across dangerous territory to warn a British battalion that they're walking into a German ambush.



The March sisters in *Little Women*

### LITTLE WOMEN

Director **Greta Gerwig** (*Ladybird*) brings a contemporary, feminist eye to her adaptation of **Louisa May Alcott's** beloved novel *Little Women*, which recounts the hardships and joys faced by the plucky March sisters — Meg (**Emma Watson**), Jo (**Saoirse Ronan**), Amy (**Florence Pugh**) and Beth (**Eliza Scanlen**). The action revolves mostly around Jo, an aspiring writer who befriends the boy next door, Laurie (**Timothée Chalamet**).

[SEE GRETA GERWIG INTERVIEW, PAGE 34.](#)

### JUST MERCY

**Michael B. Jordan** portrays real-life defense lawyer and social-justice activist Bryan Stevenson, who moves to Alabama and takes on the case of Walter McMillian (**Jamie Foxx**), who was wrongly convicted for the murder of a white woman and is on death row. With the help of his assistant Eva Ansley (**Brie Larson**), Stevenson sets out to find evidence that can overturn McMillian's conviction.

### THE SONG OF NAMES

Canadian director **François Girard** helms this heartfelt drama that stars **Tim Roth** as Martin Simmonds, a man haunted by the disappearance of his friend Dovidl Rapaport (**Clive Owens**), a Jewish violin prodigy who came to live with Martin's family during World War II. Martin embarks on a quest to find out why Dovidl left just before he was to make his concert debut. [SEE TIM ROTH INTERVIEW, PAGE 38.](#)



1917's George MacKay



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# SPECIAL SCREENINGS



## FLASHBACK FILM SERIES

# One Trilogy to Rule Them All

Spend your Holidays in Middle Earth as director Peter Jackson's acclaimed *Lord of the Rings* trilogy returns to the big screen

**DIRECTOR PETER JACKSON'S SPRAWLING** *Lord of the Rings* trilogy (based on J.R.R. Tolkien's fantasy masterpiece) is at its heart a simple story about a hobbit named Frodo (Elijah Wood) sacrificing all to do the right thing. The genius of Jackson's trilogy, which unfolds in three films — *The Fellowship of the Ring* (2001), *The Two Towers* (2002) and *The Return of the King* (2003) — is that although the tale is bursting with a huge cast of characters, heart-stopping action and vast, beautiful vistas, we never lose sight of Frodo's

task — travel to Mordor with valiant friend Sam (Sean Astin) and destroy the evil One Ring.

Cineplex's Flashback Film Series presents the extended editions of all three films during the Holiday season and into the new year. —IR

→ *The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring* screens December 20th, 26th and January 4th.

→ *The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers* screens December 27th, 30th and January 4th.

→ *The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King* screens January 3rd, 4th and 7th.

↑  
Elijah Wood (left)  
and Sean Astin in  
*The Lord of the Rings:  
The Return of the King*

## LORD OF THE OSCARS

*The Lord of the Rings* trilogy won a total of 17 Academy Awards. *The Return of the King* earned 11 of them, including Best Picture and Best Director.

## METHOD MAN

Viggo Mortensen took his role as the valiant Aragorn very seriously. At the start of the shoot he camped out in costume to make his clothes look lived in. He was also allowed to make small repairs to the costume just as Aragorn would have.





Go to [Cineplex.com/Events](https://Cineplex.com/Events) for times, locations and to buy tickets

“The only true currency in this bankrupt world is what you share with someone else when you’re uncool.”

—PHILIP SEYMOUR HOFFMAN IN *ALMOST FAMOUS*

## CINEPLEX EVENTS

### FLASHBACK FILM SERIES

#### GREMLINS

Sun., Dec. 1, Tues.,  
Dec. 3, Fri., Dec. 6,  
Sun., Dec. 8

#### SCROOGED

Fri., Dec. 13, Sun.,  
Dec. 15, Tues., Dec. 17

#### THE LORD OF THE RINGS: THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE RING

Fri., Dec. 20, Thurs.,  
Dec. 26, Sat., Jan. 4

#### THE LORD OF THE RINGS: THE TWO TOWERS

Fri. Dec. 27, Mon.,  
Dec. 30, Sat., Jan. 4

#### THE LORD OF THE RINGS: THE RETURN OF THE KING

Fri., Jan 3, Sat., Jan. 4,  
Tues., Jan. 7

### NATIONAL THEATRE LIVE

#### PRESENT LAUGHTER

Sun., Dec. 1,  
Wed., Dec. 4

#### THE WINTER'S TALE

Wed., Dec. 4, Sun., Dec. 8,  
Sat., Dec. 21, Thurs.,  
Dec. 26, Sat., Dec. 28

### CLASSIC FILMS

#### A CHRISTMAS STORY

Sun., Dec. 1, Tues.,  
Dec. 3, Sat., Dec. 7,  
Wed., Dec. 11, Mon.,  
Dec. 16, Thurs., Dec. 19,  
Sun., Dec. 22, Mon.,  
Dec. 23, Tues., Dec. 24

### NFL AT CINEPLEX

#### NEW ENGLAND PATRIOTS VS. HOUSTON TEXANS

Sun., Dec. 1

#### SEATTLE SEAHAWKS VS. L.A. RAMS

Sun., Dec. 8

### GALLERIES & EXHIBITIONS

#### HERMITAGE:

THE POWER OF ART  
Tues., Dec. 3

### NATIONAL FRENCH THEATRE

#### A FLEA IN HER EAR

Thurs., Dec. 5

### EVENTS IN VIP

#### ALMOST FAMOUS

Fri., Dec. 6, Mon.,  
Dec. 9, Wed., Dec. 12

#### NATIONAL LAMPOON'S CHRISTMAS VACATION

Mon., Dec. 9

### THE MET OPERA

#### THE MAGIC FLUTE (MOZART)

Encores: Sat., Dec. 7,  
Mon., Dec. 9, Wed.,  
Dec. 11, Fri., Dec. 14,  
Sun., Dec. 15

#### MANON (MASSENET)

Encore: Sat., Dec. 14

### CONCERTS & MUSIC

#### INXS: LIVE BABY LIVE AT WEMBLEY STADIUM

Thurs., Dec. 12,  
Sat., Dec. 14

#### ANDRÉ RIEU: 70 YEARS YOUNG

Tues., Dec. 31

### FAMILY FAVOURITES

#### DR. SEUSS' THE GRINCH

Sat., Dec. 14

### BOLSHOI BALLET

#### THE NUTCRACKER

Encores: Sun., Dec. 15,  
Wed., Dec. 18, Sat.,  
Dec. 21, Sun., Dec. 22,  
Tues., Dec. 24

### STUDIO GHIBLI ANIME SERIES

#### THE TALE OF PRINCESS KAGUYA

Mon., Dec. 16,  
Wed., Dec. 18



### NFL AT CINEPLEX

## SEATTLE SEAHAWKS VS. L.A. RAMS

The hits are louder, the passes fly farther and the nachos taste better when you're watching the NFL on the big screen. The NFL at Cineplex series continues with this Week 14 Sunday night NFC West matchup featuring the Seattle Seahawks vs. the L.A. Rams. The playoffs are fast approaching and Cineplex will be screening the Divisional Round games as well as the AFC & NFC Conference Finals in January, leading to the Super Bowl LIV broadcast on February 2nd. → [DECEMBER 8](#)



### CONCERTS & MUSIC

## INXS: LIVE BABY LIVE AT WEMBLEY STADIUM

In 1991, Australian band INXS, fronted by singer Michael Hutchence, was at the height of its powers. The band's tour in support of the double-platinum album *X* saw them perform in London's Wembley Stadium in front of 74,000 fans. The concert was filmed, but the 35mm footage went missing and was only recently discovered in Australia. Now restored and presented in 4K Ultra HD, INXS fans get the rare chance to see the late Hutchence's masterful performance in what is considered the band's greatest concert. → [DECEMBER 12, 14](#)

With no less than seven Christmas-themed movies (okay, one's a ballet) playing in theatres this month you have zero excuses for not being in the festive spirit. So grab a kid, a parent, a date or a stranger off the street and celebrate the season your way at the cinema

# A Holiday Buffet Awaits at Theatres

## NOSTALGIA

### A Christmas Story



#### Classic Films

December 1, 3, 7, 11, 16, 19, 22, 23, 24

#### WHAT'S IT ABOUT?

This holiday classic that whisks you back to the early 1940s was already awash in nostalgia when it came out in 1983, and now it's 36 years old! That means Peter Billingsley, who plays little Ralphie, is 48, making us equally nostalgic for the nine-year-old Peter Billingsley. The bespectacled little actor plays Ralphie Parker, who desperately wants a Red Ryder BB Gun for Christmas, even if his mother (Melinda Dillon) is convinced he'll shoot his eye out.

#### WHO'S IT FOR?

Those who are yearning for a simpler time.

## ROMANCE

### Last Christmas



#### Wide Release

Now playing

#### WHAT'S IT ABOUT?

Kate (Emilia Clarke), who works as a Christmas store elf, is having a tough time. Until, that is, she meets handsome Tom (Henry Golding) who seems like a veritable angel. Sure, this pic that hit theatres last month sounds like your typical girl meets boy at the holidays, but what sets this one apart is the music. If you haven't already guessed from the title, *Last Christmas* is not only filled with but also inspired by the songs of the late, great George Michael.

#### WHO'S IT FOR?

Romance addicts who believe there's no such thing as too much sugar at this time of year.

## COMEDY

### National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation



#### One Nighters @ VIP

December 9

#### WHAT'S IT ABOUT?

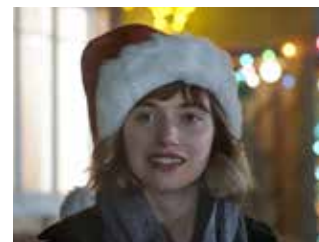
This third installment in National Lampoon's *Vacation* franchise, released in 1989, may be its most famous thanks in part to the enduring seasonal merchandise it inspired, like moose mugs and ornaments featuring the Griswold station wagon weighed down by a massive tree. This time the Griswolds, headed by dad Clark (Chevy Chase) and mom Ellen (Beverly D'Angelo), have their Christmas celebration upended by the arrival of Ellen's broke cousin Eddie (Randy Quaid) and his family. Cue the explosions.

#### WHO'S IT FOR?

Anyone who wants to feel better about their own dysfunctional family.

## HORROR

### Black Christmas



#### Wide Release

December 13 onward

#### WHAT'S IT ABOUT?

The sorority house may be filled to the brim with twinkling lights, shiny ornaments and people running around in Santa hats, but there's no joy for a group of female students (Imogen Poots, Aleyse Shannon, Brittany O'Grady, Lily Donoghue) in this remake of the 1974 Canadian slasher pic. That's because there's a masked psycho roaming the campus and he's determined to carve up our co-eds like a Christmas turkey.

#### WHO'S IT FOR?

Horror fans who don't see the most wonderful time of the year as any reason to take a break from a little blood and gore.



# et res



COMEDY

## Scrooged



**Flashback Film Series**  
December 13, 15, 17

### WHAT'S IT ABOUT?

One of many modernizations of Charles Dickens' classic *A Christmas Carol*, 1988's *Scrooged* endures because of its witty script and a compelling performance from star Bill Murray who, despite playing hardened network TV exec Frank Cross (standing in for Ebenezer Scrooge) is still so darn likable that you yearn for his redemption. Supporting players Karen Allen, Bobcat Goldthwait, Carol Kane and Alfre Woodard all bring their A-games to this comedy that's heartwarming without losing its edge.

### WHO'S IT FOR?

Fans of Bill Murray, laughing, and feeling good.

FAMILY

## Dr Seuss' the Grinch



**Family Favourites**  
December 14

### WHAT'S IT ABOUT?

Consider the half-hour TV special a mere appetizer for this full-length feature film that came out last year and casts Benedict Cumberbatch as the voice of the furry green curmudgeon who plots to ruin Christmas for the oh-so happy Whos of Whoville. This is the one to choose if you've got kiddies anxious for the big day or know someone (or are someone) who has trouble getting into the Christmas spirit.

### WHO'S IT FOR?

Children and their adult overseers.

CULTURE

## The Nutcracker



**Bolshoi Ballet in Cinema**  
December 15, 21, 22, 24

### WHAT'S IT ABOUT?

If you prefer your Christmas tales be told in tutus and toe shoes, the Bolshoi Ballet's encore production of *The Nutcracker* is here to ensconce you in a wintry dreamworld. The story sees a young girl given a nutcracker doll at a Christmas party only to have that doll come to life and accompany her to a fantastical land where they battle an evil Mouse King. And, of course, it's all set to Tchaikovsky's magical score.

### WHO'S IT FOR?

Lovers of dance, classical music and Christmas traditions.

↑  
From left:  
Peter Billingsley,  
Scott Schwartz,  
R.D. Robb and  
Ian Petrella in  
*A Christmas Story*

Please check  
**Cineplex.com** for  
times and locations.  
Some dates shown  
are only for select  
theatres and/or  
limited markets.



↑ George MacKay (centre) in 1917



# TWO HOURS AT WAR

Director Sam Mendes hopes his World War I movie *1917* will put you in the trenches and on the battlefields in a way no war movie has before.

The drama takes place in real time and Mendes and his longtime cinematographer Roger Deakins created it to look as if it was filmed in one continuous shot. While the movie was actually filmed over many days, and in various outdoor locations, the camera never looks away as, over two hours, a pair of British soldiers (Dean-Charles Chapman, George MacKay) race across dangerous territory to deliver a message that could save 1,600 men from an ambush by German soldiers.

At a panel during New York Comic Con, Mendes explained why he shot the film this way.

"I wanted to step every step with the characters, I want to breathe every breath with them, I want to be trapped on their journey with them. It's an emotional experience," he said. "And I think a kind of dream state emerges after a while where you know you can't escape and you have to go on it with them. Even though what they do is an ordeal, I did not want the movie to feel like an ordeal and I think that what Roger managed to achieve is for that camera to become a third character and for us not to be aware. If you're looking at the movie and thinking about how it was shot when you actually do see it then I think we'll have failed. I want you to live with those two characters and if you don't care about them, if you don't go on that journey with them, then what's the point?"

—MW

*1917* opens in limited release on December 25th, and wider on January 10th.



Dean-Charles Chapman (left) listens to → director Sam Mendes (centre) on set



# CATS

## CAME BACK

It's one of the most successful musicals in Broadway history and now **Cats** has found a new life on the big screen. The massive undertaking about a tribe of furry felines stars some of the biggest players in showbiz, including Oscar winner **Jennifer Hudson**. Here she tells us what it was like to live a cat's life

BY MARNI WEISZ





**THE WORLD IS DIVIDED INTO TWO** types of people; those who have seen the phenomenally popular musical *Cats* and those who haven't. Sure, you could say that about any play, movie or TV show, but there's something different about *Cats*.

It's weird, and maybe a bit polarizing.

Actors dressed up as cats with names like Mr. Mistoffelees, Rum Tum Tugger and Jennyanydots sing and dance on stage in a freewheeling narrative by the king of musical theatre, Andrew Lloyd Webber. Some people (a lot of people) just get it, while others don't.

At least not yet.

If anything can bridge the divide between *Cats* people and people who are not, thus far, into *Cats* it's this month's big-screen eye-candy musical directed by Tom Hooper (*Les Misérables*), with modern new moves from *Hamilton* choreographer Andy Blankenbuehler, and starring an eclectic smorgasbord of stars disguised as kitty cats, including Taylor Swift, Idris Elba, Judi Dench, Ian McKellen, James Corden, Rebel Wilson, Royal Ballet principal dancer Francesca Hayward, popular hip-hop duo Les Twins and, perhaps most interestingly, Jennifer Hudson.

Why is Hudson the most interesting? Because, believe it or not, this is the former *American Idol* contestant's first big-screen musical since she won Best Supporting Actress for her powerhouse performance as Effie White in her feature film debut, 2006's *Dreamgirls*.

And, as Grizabella, a cat who used to be glamorous and popular but who has since fallen from grace, Hudson also gets to sing the musical's most enduring song, "Memory."

"It is definitely the most unique musical you will ever see," says the 38-year-old Chicago native. "It is saturated with the arts, from poetry to dance to songs, and everything in between." Hudson is in a car travelling from Universal Studios in L.A., where she's just finished up a day of press for *Cats*, straight to the set of her next production, the Aretha Franklin bio-pic, *Respect*. She plays Aretha.



Jennifer Hudson as *Cats*' Grizabella

**IF YOU ARE ONE OF THE PEOPLE WHO** has never seen *Cats*, you're probably wondering what it's all about.

Inspired by a book of poems by T.S. Eliot, the action takes place within a tribe of felines called the Jellicles on the night of the Jellicle Ball, when one cat is chosen to ascend to the Heaviside Layer and come back to a new life. All the cats have to make their case for, let's call it reincarnation, to a wise senior kitty named Old Deuteronomy (Dench).

"I play the cat Grizabella, who is an outcast cat," explains Hudson. "She once was the Glamour Cat and she's trying to get back in to be able to go to the Jellicle Ball and, just like the other cats, to try to receive the ninth life from Deuteronomy. The Jellicle Ball happens once a year and only one cat gets that ninth life."

So the Heaviside Layer is like cat heaven?

"It would mean you get a new life, like a fresh start," explains Hudson. "Everything would be new again and you get to start over, you'd get a second chance."

With lyrics like, "I can dream of the old days, I was beautiful then," the song "Memory" is so powerful

because it recalls a happier stage of scraggly old Grizabella's life. "She brings the heart, the emotion and the reality to it," says Hudson. "It's relatable."

**FOR HUDSON, WHO BRINGS HEART** and emotion to pretty much everything she sings — whether it's the national anthem at Super Bowl XLIII, as a coach showing young vocalists how it's done on TV's *The Voice*, or driving around with her *Cats* co-star James Corden on an episode of "Carpool Karaoke" — learning to act like a cat may have been the more challenging part.

"I had to go to cat school to learn how to be cat-like, and move like a cat," she explains. "The nature of cats, the way they interact, engage, because it's obviously different from humans and the way we carry ourselves or communicate."

Sometimes Hudson would go to "cat school" alone, sometimes with the film's other actors and dancers. "That would probably be the most helpful, when we could mirror each other," she says. "We

all found our own version of what our cat is like, the really specific things. Like, how animals sniff things out, that's something that's common amongst all cats. But then Grizabella had a

#### A VERY GOOD YEAR

Both *Cats* and *Dreamgirls*, Jennifer Hudson's other big-screen musical, premiered in 1981, the same year Hudson was born.

#### CATS OR DOGS?

Jennifer Hudson had two cats, Fluffy Muffy and Black Knight, growing up, but switched to dogs in adulthood. She has three, Oscar, Grammy and Dreamgirl. "But I want two cats now," she says. "I want cats called Grizabella and Macavity." The latter is *Cats*' villain, also known as "The Mystery Cat."



# CAT PEOPLE

Pop stars, Oscar winners and ballet dancers make up *Cats*' eclectic cast of furry felines



**Bombalurina**  
(Taylor Swift)



**Victoria**  
(Francesca Hayward)



**Old Deuteronomy**  
(Judi Dench)

## A SECOND CHANCE

When *Cats* premiered on London's West End in 1981 Judi Dench was supposed to play Grizabella but snapped her Achilles tendon before opening night and had to drop out. In the film, Dench plays Old Deuteronomy to Jennifer Hudson's Grizabella.



**Bustopher Jones**  
(James Corden)



**Macavity**  
(Idris Elba)



**Gus the Theatre Cat**  
(Ian McKellen)



**Jennyanydots**  
(Rebel Wilson)

**CATS**  
OPENS DECEMBER 20TH

limp because she had an injury to her leg. So maybe her cat walk is different from another cat."

Another thing that helped the actors get into character was that the film was shot on sets built three to four times larger than life to evoke a cat's perspective.

Giant doors have door-knobs just out of reach for all but the most athletic cats, a massive bed seems like a plush trampoline begging to be clawed to pieces, there's a piano the size of a truck.

"I felt like a cat and a kid all in one," recalls Hudson. "The kitchen sink was like a bathtub."

And all that fur? For the most part it's digital. The actors were shown sketches of how their characters would look in the movie, but what they actually looked like during filming was much different.


"We had on green suits, we didn't have on fur, we didn't have a tail," explains Hudson. "At some points we had pieces of the cat's costume, whatever clothing the cat will be wearing, so Grizabella has a coat." They also had motion-capture dots all over their faces so that fur and whiskers could be added later.

"You're partially in costume," adds Hudson, "and then the rest is left to your imagination."

**IF YOU HAVEN'T SEEN CATS AND ALL** of this is making you feel like maybe you should have by now, don't worry, you're in good company.

Before she got this part, Jennifer Hudson had never seen it either.

"When I met with director Tom Hooper for the first time he's like, 'Do you know *Cats*?' And I said, 'No, I don't.' [He asked,] 'Well, do you know the song 'Memory'? And I said, 'I'm not sure.' And then he plays it and I'm like, 'Everyone knows 'Memory,' of course I know 'Memory!'"

And now everyone will know Hudson's rendition of "Memory" too. 

Marni Weisz is the editor of *Cineplex Magazine*.







*Little Women's* director Greta Gerwig (left) on set with Saoirse Ronan

# W O N D E R WOMEN

The story may take place more than 150 years ago, but the characters at the centre of *Little Women* struggle with issues of gender, freedom and economic inequity just like women today. Writer-director **Greta Gerwig** tells us that's exactly why she was so interested in adapting Louisa May Alcott's classic one more time

BY INGRID RANDOJA



**I T'S THE PERFECT 21ST-CENTURY PAIRING** — quirky, feminist filmmaker Greta Gerwig (*Lady Bird*) directing her version of author Louisa May Alcott's beloved novel *Little Women*. Set in 1860s New England, the story revolves around the poor but loving March sisters — fiery tomboy Jo (Saoirse Ronan), well-behaved Meg (Emma Watson), shy Beth (Eliza Scanlen) and artistic Amy (Florence Pugh). While all the March sisters deal with their own trials, it's Jo's story that draws us in as the aspiring writer searches for artistic freedom and the meaning of love, especially as it relates to the boy next door, Laurie (Timothée Chalamet).

We caught up with Gerwig on the phone from New York where the 36-year-old actor-writer-director was multitasking — talking about making the movie of her dreams while tending to her baby, a son with her partner and fellow filmmaker, Noah Baumbach.



Clockwise from top: March sisters,  
Jo (Saoirse Ronan), Amy (Florence Pugh)  
and Meg (Emma Watson)



Ronan with  
Timothée Chalamet

**How long have you been thinking about making your version of *Little Women*?**

Probably since I read the book. I mean, it's hard to say that for certain because I had no idea that I would be able to make films as a job. I think I've always had a very vivid sense of who the March sisters were and who Jo was, and they seemed incredibly real to me. It's always been very high on my list of things I would like to attempt.

**Were you daunted by the fact there have been eight movie versions, going all the way back to 1918?**

I think I'm daunted by how much I love and respect the book. That's what feels big to me because I always want to do justice to that. But I felt I had a very clear idea of how I wanted to go about this and so it was always just figuring out how best to execute that, and how to do justice to what Louisa May Alcott would have wanted.

**When you pitched the movie to producer Amy Pascal you said the story is about money, women and freedom. I love that you've boiled it down to that.**

Yeah, that was initially what I was struck by re-reading the book as an adult. It was so much about women making art, women making money and how to square the two, and how much that dictates what are the possibilities of your life. The first line of the book is, "Christmas won't be

**"IT WAS SO MUCH ABOUT WOMEN MAKING ART, WOMEN MAKING MONEY AND HOW TO SQUARE THE TWO, AND HOW MUCH THAT DICTATES WHAT ARE THE POSSIBILITIES FOR YOUR LIFE"**

Christmas without any presents. It's so dreadful to be poor." It's something that Louisa May Alcott, as a writer, had to deal with her whole life.

**It's true that Alcott's economic struggles were enormous.**

In the book, the Marchs are the genteel poor. But in life, the Alcotts were wretchedly poor. They moved something like 30 times in the course of [Louisa's] adolescence, and she went out to work, hard labour, by the time she was 15. She had to sell stories to keep a roof over their heads. Her industry is what saved her family. I think for her, that economic question was very, very close to the surface and the struggle was incredibly — oh, shoot. I just had a baby spit up all over me. Hi, baby [laughs].

**So you've directed two feature films, both starring Saoirse Ronan. Is she your muse?**

I have to say she's a real co-author to me. She's the real partner in making these films, and I couldn't be luckier. They would not exist without her.

**What is your take on Jo and Laurie's relationship? Do you bring a contemporary lens to it?**

Well, yeah. I mean, what I thought was fascinating about the Jo/Laurie relationship is Jo is a girl with a boy's name and Laurie is a boy with a girl's name. They are each other's double or twin in some ways, and that they exist a bit in a moment before gender roles are fully established, this kind

of magical time when you didn't have to choose. It's unclear to me whether Laurie wants to be a sister, or he wants to be a lover. And I think what he ultimately comes to is a place of wanting to have Jo be the woman to his man, and Jo cannot do it because that's not who she is. You hate that he wants to marry her because it means they have to leave this utopia.

**And Timothée Chalamet is a perfect Laurie.**

He's a doll and we're so happy he came to be our Laurie.

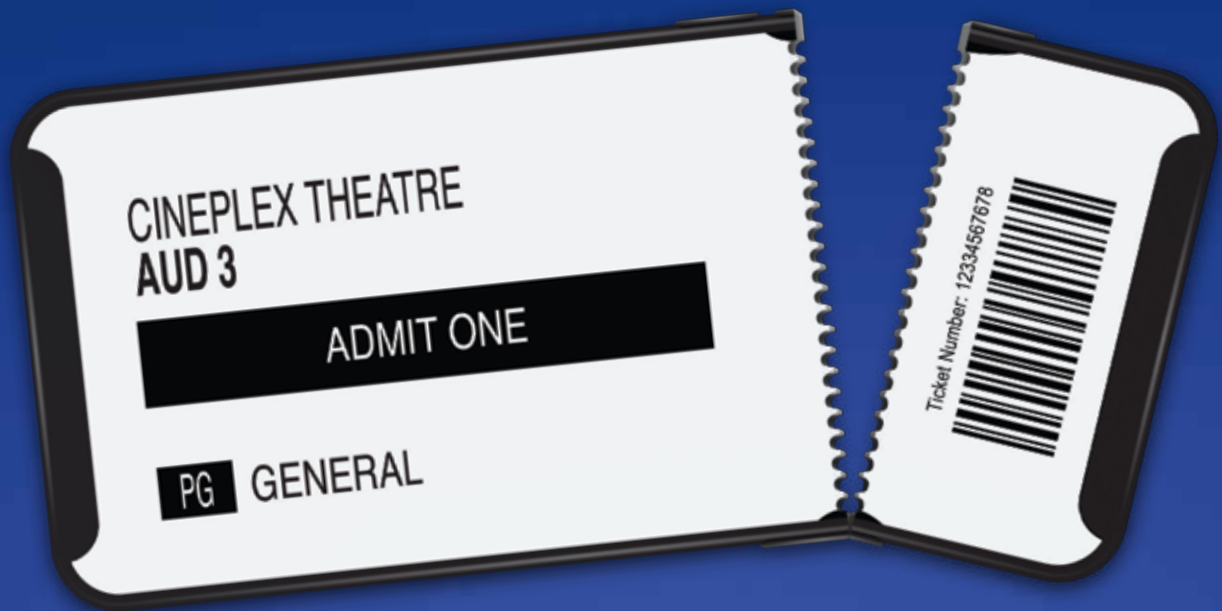
**What do you want people to feel when they leave the theatre after seeing *Little Women*?**

Oh, I know what I want them to feel. I want them to go write the book, write the song, write the play, run for office, do the thing. And now you, madam, what have you got? [Laughs.] That's what I want. I want all women and girls to walk out feeling like they got a fire under them. ☑

Ingrid Randoja is the deputy editor of *Cineplex Magazine*.



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During World War II, two boys are thrown together and form a strong friendship. Then one disappears.

**Tim Roth** tells us about playing one of those boys, now a middle-aged man, searching for answers — and his friend — in *The Song of Names*

# WHAT HAPPENED?

BY INGRID RANDOJA

**C**ANADIAN DIRECTOR FRANÇOIS GIRARD'S BEST FILMS — *Thirty Two Short Films About Glenn Gould* (1993) and *The Red Violin* (1998) — explore the emotional power of music. Girard returns to that theme in *The Song of Names*, which casts Tim Roth as Martin, a pianist obsessed with finding out what happened to his childhood friend Dovidl, a Polish violin prodigy who came to live with Martin's family during World War II. The boys formed a tight bond, but Dovidl was haunted by not knowing whether his family survived the Holocaust and disappeared in 1951, right before he was to give his debut concert in London.

We caught up with Roth during the Toronto International Film Festival where *The Song of Names* had its world premiere. The 58-year-old actor is known for his versatility — portraying villains (*Rob Roy*, *Planet of the Apes*), tough guys (*Reservoir Dogs*), comedic characters (*Four Rooms*, *Everyone Says I Love You*) and intense leading men (*Vincent & Theo*) — but as he tells us, the role of Martin required he strip away any bravado to play a man haunted by his past.

## Describe Martin.

Oh, god, I am useless at questions like these. If you asked me while we were shooting I could have given you a monologue. The movie covers the three different age ranges of the character — a boy growing up during the war when Dovidl, a refugee, comes to stay with them, and then through his teenage years, and I dealt with the last one. But what is he like? I think he would describe himself as kinda boring. I think, because of what happened, and the details come out in the film, I think he's shut down.

**We learn during the film that Martin has suffered his own share of losses, but you don't really show us that. What's it like to play such an interior character?**

I sometimes like to do that. What we were trying to achieve was to get all the acting devices, as much as possible, removed from what the camera sees and just have the conversations, have him talk and remove the dramatic from it in a sense.

**And François was on board with that?**  
Yeah.

## What is François like as a director?

I know he's an opera guy and a music guy and all that stuff, and it was a constant conversation about, "Do you need that line, do you need this line, whatya think?" It was a very open flow. It was easy working with him.

**Clive Owen portrays the adult Dovidl. What was it like working with him?**

We had a few moments when we connected acting wise, but he had a lot on his plate as well because he had to fake the







Tim Roth in *The Song of Names*

violin, so he would disappear into that world and you have to back off and let him do his thing.

So, when we connected, we connected.

**I imagine that might help both your performances, as the adult Martin and Dovidl have a strained relationship.**

Yeah that's true, but then we would have dinner and hang out, and that was great.

**The movie uses beautiful music and singing to contemplate a horrific event, the Holocaust. Is it true that your father changed his family name**

**from Smith to Roth as an act of solidarity with Holocaust survivors?**

Yeah. In solidarity with what he saw.

**How old were you when he did that? Were you born Roth?**

Yeah, I was born Roth. He did the immigration thing the backwards way. He went from America to Liverpool and then down to the south of England and they put him to work in the factories when he was a kid.


**Did he share his thinking about why he changed his name with you?**

A little bit here and there. He was of the generation where you didn't discuss the war or those things.

**Are you musical?**

No! It's appalling. I had to play a genius pianist in this movie, and I can't play chopsticks. I haven't got a clue. But I have a very musical son who is a guitarist.

**Have you ever picked up something, like a hobby or skill, after making a movie?**

No, the only time was backwards from that when I played Vincent [Van Gogh] in [director] Robert Altman's *Vincent & Theo*. I had been a painter, been to art college and done all that stuff and was just using that and I really enjoyed that experience. 

Ingrid Randoja is the deputy editor of *Cineplex Magazine*.

The background of the page is a desert landscape at sunset. The sky is a mix of yellow and orange, with some clouds. In the foreground, there are dark, silhouetted hills. A bright, diagonal beam of light, possibly from a laser or a light saber, cuts across the lower half of the image from the right side towards the bottom left.

# THE END OF THE UNIVERSE

Yes, we know the spinoffs, TV shows, books and videogames that take place in the *Star Wars* universe will probably go on for another hundred years. But this is it for the original saga. When ***Star Wars: The Rise of Skywalker*** hits theatres this month the magnificent story that started with a little sci-fi in 1977 will wrap up, one way or another. Are you ready for that? We speak with director **J.J. Abrams** and his star **Daisy Ridley** about what to expect

BY INGRID RANDOJA





↑ Daisy Ridley's Rey is ready for anything  
in *Star Wars: The Rise of Skywalker*



## THE END IS NEAR, AND THE FANS CAN FEEL IT.

Throng of *Star Wars* devotees dressed as droids, stormtroopers, Luke Skywalker and our new hero Rey are among the 7,000 Disney fans who've squeezed into the Anaheim Convention Centre's Hall D on a warm Saturday morning in August. They've gathered for the must-see presentation of Disney's D23 Fan Expo — the panel showcasing the studio's upcoming slate of films, including offerings from Disney Animation, Pixar, Marvel and Lucasfilm.

And while the crowd goes wild for *The Eternals'* cast, led by Angelina Jolie, Dwayne Johnson arriving in a boat to promote *Jungle Cruise* and Chris Pratt and Tom Holland showing a clip from Pixar's *Onwards*, it's the sneak peek of *Star Wars: The Rise of Skywalker*, the final film of the *Star Wars* saga, that sends fans into orbit.

The footage ends with Rey (Daisy Ridley) dressed in dark, Sith-like robes and wielding a double-bladed red lightsaber similar to the one used by the villainous Darth Maul in *Star Wars: Episode 1 – The Phantom Menace*. Has the hero of the franchise's final trilogy been seduced by the Force's dark side?

"Don't we all want to know!" exclaims Ridley in an interview the following day. "The reaction that shot got is indicative of how people are going to feel watching the film because it is exciting and potentially taking unexpected turns. I think people are going to be with the story, and also shocked by the story."



↑  
Director  
J.J. Abrams

Seeing Rey dressed in the dark robes even affected the film's cast and crew. "One thing I did notice is that people responded to me differently," she recalls of the days when they shot those scenes. "I'm super chatty, but people were not as chatty, which I found quite curious and quite fun. I loved it."

Ridley, a selection of her castmates and the film's co-writer and director J.J. Abrams have gathered in a posh Beverly Hills hotel the day after the D23 panel to discuss the film that will cap cinema's most popular — and scrutinized — franchise; an epic nine-film, three-trilogy series that originated in 1977 with a film simply called *Star Wars*, but that has since been rebranded *Star Wars: Episode IV – A New Hope*.

*Star Wars* has been a life-changing ride for Ridley. The London-born actor was just 21 when she was cast as the feisty orphan Rey in *Episode VII – The Force Awakens*, also directed by Abrams and which critics and audiences agreed breathed new life into the sagging franchise. Rey's noble quest to discover her identity and why the Force is so strong within her gave the series its first strong, self-sufficient female lead.

In case you've forgotten where we left Rey, at the end of *The Last Jedi* she watched in shock as Kylo Ren (Adam Driver) killed Supreme Leader Snoke. He asked Rey to join him in ruling the Empire, she refused and





## A SHORT CHAT WITH BILLY DEE WILLIAMS

At 82, **Billy Dee Williams** plays *Star Wars*' lovable rogue Lando Calrissian, a character he debuted in 1980's *The Empire Strikes Back*, one more time



**In the teaser trailer for *The Rise of Skywalker* we get to hear that trademark Lando laugh. We've missed that. Was this a fun film to make?** Listen, acting is a lot of fun.

**Yes, but it can be horrible depending on who you're working with.** Yeah, that's true. But I enjoy it, especially when I have challenges, good challenges. Things I can work with, enhance and make things more interesting.

**What did you think of Donald Glover's portrayal of your character in *Solo*?** He came and we had lunch one day and he asked me how I came up with the character and so forth, and I told him, just be charming. But he's a very fine young man and his

music is brilliant.... But when I think of Lando, I don't think of Lando other than me.

**Did you get the chance to chat with Mark Hamill about the ending of the saga?** No. I rarely ever see those folks. Now, Harrison [Ford] and I are good buddies. Whenever we see each other it's always a love fest.

**Of course there's a gaping hole in the *Star Wars* family with Carrie Fisher gone.** She was one of my good buddies.

**When you think of her, what's the first thing that comes to mind?** Funny, and a lot of fun. Witty. Smart. Very smart.

**And an underrated actress.** Yeah, she was good. And she was a good writer. I miss her.  
—IR

↑  
From left: Chewie (Joonas Suotama), Poe (Oscar Isaac), Rey (Daisy Ridley) and Finn (John Boyega) team up in *Star Wars: The Rise of Skywalker*

escaped to help the heavily depleted Resistance, which had retreated to an abandoned base on the planet Crait.

Under heavy attack, Finn (John Boyega), Poe (Oscar Isaac) and Rose (Kelly Marie Tran) led a suicide mission against the First Order, and when all seemed lost Luke Skywalker (Mark Hamill) suddenly appeared to battle Kylo Ren, creating time for Leia and her team to escape to the Millennium Falcon, being piloted by Rey and Chewbacca (Joonas Suotamo). Kylo Ren struck Luke, only to realize he was a projection. Luke was actually still on the planet Ahch-To, where, seated atop a rock, he gazed into the sunset and disappeared, becoming one with the Force.

So what happens next?

Don't expect the cast to drop any major spoilers, but what they will say is that *The Rise of Skywalker* is a high-energy, deeply satisfying ride. And they all credit director and co-writer J.J. Abrams for guiding the epic finale across the finish line.

"He's the most open, collaborative person ever," Ridley says of Abrams. "I immediately feel very, very safe with him because when you feel safe, you do your best work."

Sitting alone with Abrams after his cast has dispersed, the filmmaker says the finale was a massive undertaking.

"This movie has been, leaps and bounds, the most challenging thing I have been a part of →



The late Carrie Fisher embraces Daisy Ridley in *The Rise of Skywalker*

→ professionally,” says the 53-year-old filmmaker. “There were a lot of moments of realizing how lucky we are and how excited we all are, but it was mostly a lot of work and doing everything we can to make sure what we’re shooting is the right thing, finding ways to stay on schedule, doing some rewrites as we were shooting.”

One of the greatest challenges was deciding how to deal with the passing of Carrie Fisher, who died in December 2016 after completing her role as the beloved resistance leader Leia Organa (for many, she remains simply Princess Leia) in *The Last Jedi*.

“It’s the story telling you what it needs, and the story was saying we need Leia to be a part of it,” says Abrams. “There were some people who suggested recasting her, but we were not going to recast her. We were not going to do a CGI Leia, and you couldn’t do a thing where you’d say Leia is off somewhere or she passed away.

“Nothing worked, and we started looking at some of the footage from *Force Awakens* that we hadn’t used, and we realized if we wrote some of these scenes, like, some real stuff, if we wrote some of these scenes around her, she could be interacting with these characters, she could be in the movie in a really significant way.”

Actors were brought in to act against the footage, and the lighting, camera lenses and angles were all painstakingly recreated so the old footage would blend seamlessly into the new film.

“And the actors, I swear to God, they were in scenes with her,” recounts Abrams. “There are a couple scenes with Daisy — who is extraordinary, I mean, she’s just incredible — but she was doing scenes with Leia a hundred percent, you know? It was really amazing to watch.”

“I think J.J. kind of set up these plot points in *The Force Awakens*,” says John Boyega, who plays Finn, the stormtrooper turned good guy. “It’s a Resistance that was moving forward, that was always going to create new characters and leaders, but those new characters and new leaders still need that guidance from Leia, and that is something that echoes throughout the whole script. She really is the key to all of this, especially in the lowest moment of hope for the Resistance.”

## NEW FACES

Joining our old faves like Rey, Finn and Poe, there are several new characters in *The Rise of Skywalker*. Richard E. Grant (*Can You Ever Forgive Me?*) plays Allegiant General Pryde, a member of the First Order, Naomi Ackie (*Lady Macbeth*) plays Jannah, a fierce warrior, and Keri Russell (TV’s *The Americans*) is Zorii Bliss.



Naomi Ackie

Ackie and Russell gave some insights into their mysterious characters. “Jannah has spent a really long time honing a set of skills,” says Ackie. “And I guess in this moment her big thing is whether to use that to fight for, and support, the good of everyone.”



Keri Russell

“I play Zorii,” says Russell, “the cool-costumed, helmeted lady. And she has sort of a checkered past, slightly questionable morals possibly, and they allowed me to say she’s a little shady. The main thing is that she is an old friend of Poe’s that tells you a little bit more about where Poe came from.” —IR

## FIVE QUESTIONS WE WANT ANSWERED IN THE RISE OF SKYWALKER

**1) Who is Rey?** In *The Last Jedi*, Kylo Ren told Rey her parents were nobodies, junk traders. But how reliable a source is he? Not very. Why is she so powerful?

**2) Who is the Skywalker rising in the title?** Luke Skywalker is dead, so it could be a reference to rising from the dead, as a Force ghost, but that doesn’t seem right. Is it Kylo Ren? Is Rey also a Skywalker? Is Skywalker not a person but a movement?

**3) What is Luke’s role going forward?** We realize this is the end of his saga and we’ll likely never see him in another film, but by the end of this movie we want to know what the future holds for this Force ghost.

**4) Can Kylo Ren still turn away from the dark side and be redeemed?**

He is, after all, the son of Princess Leia and the late Han Solo. Those are some pretty good genes.



Adam Driver as Kylo Ren

**5) Why did we hear Emperor Palpatine laughing at the end of the film’s first trailer, and what will his role be?**

He died at the hands of Darth Vader at the end of *Return of the Jedi* but we know Ian McDiarmid is back (in some form) as Palpatine in the new movie.

—MW

Abrams knows that in a world of hardcore *Star Wars* fans his finale probably won’t please everyone. All he wants is that fans remember why they love the series, and honour it the same way he does.

“*Star Wars* to me has always been about the heart, the humanity, the humour, surrogate families that develop between characters that sometimes didn’t know each other at the beginning of the movie and by the end would do anything for each other.” ☐

Ingrid Randoja is the deputy editor of *Cineplex Magazine*.





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# Holiday Gift Guide

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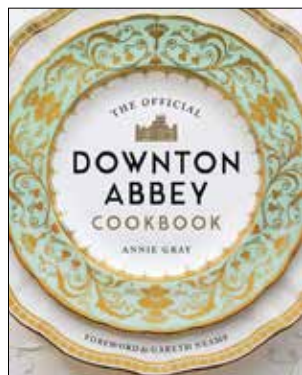
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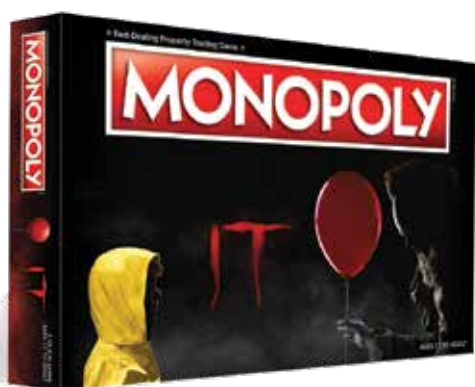
**The Official Downton Abbey Cookbook** has more than 100 recipes for Crawley household favourites, including seed cake, cucumber soup, Cornish pasties and a rice, fish and egg breakfast dish called kedgeree. **\$47, BOOKSTORES**





### STAR WARS LIGHT, STAR WARS BRIGHT

Brighten up your dark side with a **Star Wars Christmas Light Strand**. Choose from stormtroopers, Yoda Santa or R2-D2, and use them inside or out. **\$30, CANADIAN TIRE**



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Boardwalk? Marvin Gardens? What's so thrilling about that? Inject thrills and chills into an old classic with **Monopoly It**, a creepy edition of the popular board game that places you in Stephen King's terrifying town of Derry. You can even play as the balloon. **\$40, CHAPTERS.INDIGO.CA**



### YOUR OWN DUKE CABOOM

The best thing about the **Toy Story 4 Stunt Rider Duke Caboom** is that if it doesn't work that's even better! Duke and his launcher are based on the movie's Canadian character (voiced by Keanu Reeves) whose painful secret was that he rarely functioned properly. **\$30, WALMART.CA**



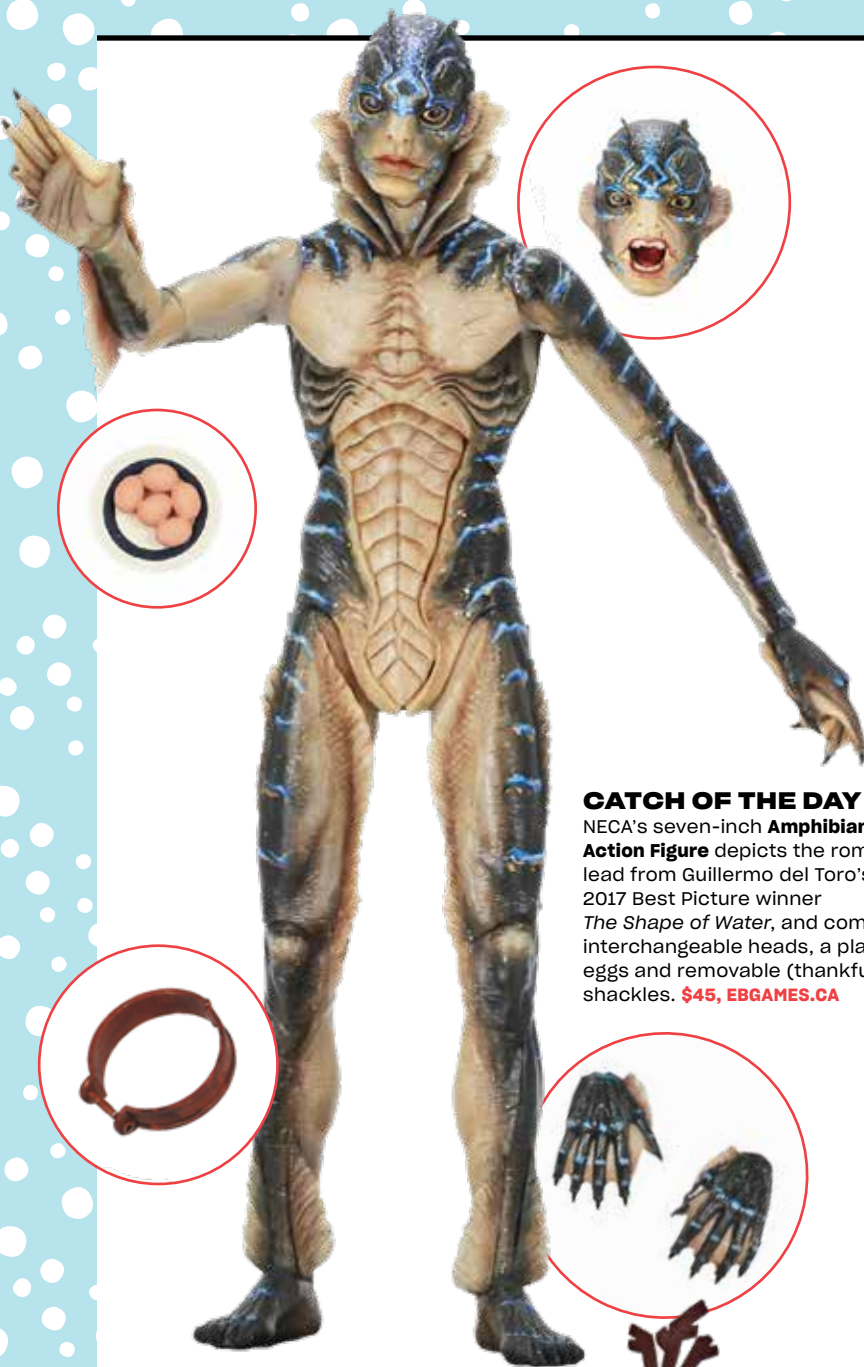
### POTTER'S MUG

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#### CATCH OF THE DAY

NECA's seven-inch **Amphibian Man Action Figure** depicts the romantic lead from Guillermo del Toro's 2017 Best Picture winner *The Shape of Water*, and comes with interchangeable heads, a plate of eggs and removable (thankfully) shackles. **\$45, EBGAMES.CA**



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# IN THE WORKS

BY INGRID RANDOJA

## Waititi Sets Goal

Writer-director **Taika Waititi**'s follow-up to *Jojo Rabbit* will be *Next Goal Wins*, based on the 2014 British documentary of the same name about the American Samoa soccer team. Considered one of the worst national teams in history — they lost one game to Australia 31-0 — they hire Dutch-American coach Thomas Rongen to help them. **Michael Fassbender** will portray Rongen and **Elisabeth Moss** is eyeing an undisclosed role.



## Gadot's Escape Plan

**Gal Gadot** will portray a real-life wonder woman in *Irena Sendler*, a bio-pic about the Polish social worker who risked her life to create a network of hiding places for thousands of Jews, mostly children, whom she helped escape from the Warsaw Ghetto during World War II. Gadot and her husband, **Jaron Varsano**, will produce the feature.





## ABDUL-MATEEN ENTERS THE MATRIX

Whoa. Our minds were blown with the news that **Keanu Reeves** and **Carrie-Anne Moss** would return to star in a fourth *Matrix* movie to be directed by

**Lana Wachowski**. Now we learn **Yahya Abdul-Mateen II** (*Aquaman*'s Manta) has landed a major role and **Neil Patrick Harris**, not someone you'd think of as a fit for a big-budget, sci-fi pic, has also been cast.



## SKARSGÅRD IS A NORTHMAN

Writer-director **Robert Eggers** (*The Witch*, *The Lighthouse*) is a master at creating unnerving, sparse historical dramas. He's now prepping his next film,

*The Northman*, a Viking saga set in the 10th century that stars **Alexander Skarsgård** as a warrior who sets out to avenge his father's death. **Nicole Kidman**, **Anya Taylor-Joy**, **Willem Dafoe** and Skarsgård's brother, **Bill Skarsgård**, are all in talks to join the project.



## KRAVITZ' PURR-FECT ROLE

Casting **Robert Pattinson** as Batman in director **Matt Reeves'** *The Batman* is seen by some as a risky move. However, choosing **Zoë Kravitz** to portray

Selena Kyle, a.k.a. Catwoman, feels like a sure bet. Kravitz (HBO's *Big Little Lies*) was actually refused an audition for Jen, Catwoman's (**Anne Hathaway**) pal in *The Dark Knight Rises*, because the producers thought she was too "urban," so there's poetic justice in Kravitz pushing past stereotypes to land the coveted role. *The Batman* hits screens June 25th, 2021.



## NOBODY LIKE ODENKIRK

**Bob Odenkirk** is known for his sly, comedic roles such as scoundrel lawyer Jimmy McGill in *Better Call Saul*. He changes things up with *Nobody*, an action-

thriller that casts him as a suburban dad whose violent past resurfaces after two thieves break into his home. **Christopher Lloyd** and **Connie Nielson** co-star and **Ilya Naishuller** (*Hardcore Henry*) directs.



### ON HOME TURF

## GOLDING WRAPS IN VAN

Vancouverites should keep their eyes peeled for *Snake Eyes*' cast as the film wraps up shooting this month. The action pic — a spinoff from the *G.I. Joe* franchise — stars **Henry Golding** as the titular commando who speaks little but carries a big sword. Golding's costmates include **Samara Weaving** as Scarlett, his love interest and fellow commando, and Indonesian action star **Iko Uwais** as martial arts instructor Hard Master.



Henry Golding



### ROLE CALL

■ **Sam Neill**, **Laura Dern** and **Jeff Goldblum** will reprise their *Jurassic Park* roles in *Jurassic World 3*, starring **Chris Pratt** and **Bryce Dallas Howard**.

■ **John Krasinski** will direct and star in *Imaginary Friends*, about a man who can see the imaginary friends people have left behind.

■ **Kirsten Dunst** replaces **Elisabeth Moss** in *The Power of the Dog*, director **Jane Campion's** drama about a pair of feuding brothers in 1920s Montana.

■ **Russell Crowe** portrays a troubled actor who unravels while shooting a scary movie in an untitled horror pic from *Scream* producer **Kevin Williamson**.

### FRESH FACE

## ELIZA SCANLEN

Director **Greta Gerwig** cast established actors **Saoirse Ronan**, **Emma Watson** and **Florence Pugh** as three of her four March sisters in this month's

*Little Women*. For the



role of kindhearted Beth March she chose the relatively unknown 19-year-old Aussie actor **Eliza Scanlen**, who made her Hollywood debut playing murderous

teen Amma in HBO's *Sharp Objects*.

Scanlen, who played piano as a kid, practiced three hours a day to play Beth, who fills the March household with music.



## JOKER

**Joaquin Phoenix** delivers a must-see turn as failed stand-up comic Arthur Fleck, whose deteriorating mental health — exacerbated by a cold, cruel world — pushes him into a life of crime as the Joker. Written and directed by **Todd Phillips**.

→ BUY IT **DECEMBER 10** → RENT IT **DECEMBER 17**



## ONCE UPON A TIME... IN HOLLYWOOD

Director **Quentin Tarantino**'s love letter to 1960s Hollywood finds a struggling actor (**Leonardo DiCaprio**) and his stunt-double buddy (**Brad Pitt**) crossing paths with Sharon Tate (**Margot Robbie**) and the Manson Family, leading to a shocking outcome.

→ RENT IT **DECEMBER 10**

## IT CHAPTER TWO

The sequel to 2017's *It* finds the now grown Losers Club, including Bill (**James McAvoy**), Beverly (**Jessica Chastain**), Richie (**Bill Hader**) and Mike (**Isaiah Mustafa**), returning to Derry to battle evil entity Pennywise (**Bill Skarsgård**). Prepare your snacks and get comfy as this scary flick clocks in at nearly three hours.

→ RENT IT **DECEMBER 10**



## DOWNTON ABBEY

Grab a cuppa, some biscuits and settle in with old friends as the aristocratic Crawley family and its loyal servants prepare for a visit from the Royal Family. Will Mrs. Patmore's (**Lesley Nicol**) cooking please the Royal palate? Can closeted butler Thomas (**Robert James-Collier**) find love? And is Downton's future safe with Lady Mary (**Michelle Dockery**)? All will be revealed.

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## ZOMBIELAND: DOUBLE TAP

It's been 10 years since we last saw zombie-fighters Tallahassee (**Woody Harrelson**), Columbus (**Jesse Eisenberg**), Wichita (**Emma Stone**) and Little Rock (**Abigail Breslin**). In this sequel the band encounters hippies, their doppelgängers and hordes of "superzombies" that are a whole lot harder to kill.

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## ROCK THIS QUIZ!

At some point in the past decade, **Dwayne “The Rock” Johnson** went from a WWE wrestler experimenting with Hollywood to a bona fide movie star. People stopped squeezing “The Rock” into his name on every reference and just let him be the action hero he was born to be. Now the multitasking muscleman stars in *Jumanji: The Next Level*, the follow-up to the wildly popular 2017 franchise reboot *Jumanji: Welcome to the Jungle*. How well do you know the twists and turns of Dwayne Johnson’s fascinating life?

**1. Which of the following is not a name under which Johnson has wrestled?**

- a) The People’s Champion
- b) Li’l Dwayne
- c) Rocky Maivia
- d) Flex Kavana

**2. With which CFL team did Johnson sign in 1995?**

- a) Toronto Argonauts
- b) Saskatchewan Roughriders
- c) Winnipeg Blue Bombers
- d) Calgary Stampeders

**3. In which film did Johnson make his big-screen debut?**

- a) *The Scorpion King*
- b) *The Mummy Returns*
- c) *The Rundown*
- d) *Walking Tall*

**4. Where is his father — Rocky Johnson, also a wrestler — from?**

- a) Prince Edward Island
- b) New Brunswick
- c) New Hampshire
- d) Nova Scotia



**5. On which of these TV shows has Johnson not appeared?**

- a) *Friends*
- b) *Star Trek: Voyager*
- c) *That ’70s Show*
- d) *Hannah Montana*

**6. Name the HBO show on which Johnson currently stars.**

- a) *Swimmers*
- b) *Ballers*
- c) *Pitchers*
- d) *Skaters*

**7. Next year he’ll appear in a movie based on a Disney theme park ride. Is it...**

- a) *Jungle Cruise*
- b) *Space Mountain*
- c) *Big Thunder Mountain Railroad*
- d) *It’s a Small World*

**8. Johnson is part of the five-timers club, meaning...**

- a) Five times married
- b) Five times WWE World Heavyweight Champion
- c) Five times in a *Fast and Furious* movie
- d) Five times hosting *Saturday Night Live*

**9. *Jumanji: The Next Level* is Johnson’s fourth film with Kevin Hart. What was the first?**

- a) *Central Intelligence*
- b) *Artificial Intelligence*
- c) *Superintelligence*
- d) *Emotional Intelligence*

**10. Who awarded Johnson “Best Actor in a Comedy” for *Jumanji: Welcome to the Jungle*?**


- a) People’s Choice Awards
- b) Golden Globe Awards
- c) Teen Choice Awards
- d) Academy Awards

*Jumanji: The Next Level* opens December 13th.

1) b, 2) d, 3) b, 4) d, 5) a, 6) b, 7) a, 8) d, 9) a, 10) c

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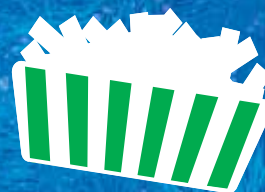
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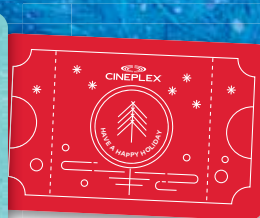
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## A Little Nutty

Steve Casino has spent the past seven years painting people on peanuts. Why peanuts? "Because many of the shells are shaped like people," explains the artist from Fort Thomas, Kentucky. "It's just a matter of matching up the correct-shaped peanut with the person I'm trying to make." More often than not, that person is actually a character from an iconic movie, either of Casino's choosing or, more and more, a commission from a fan. "Since I've started doing this I've never had to look for work," he says. "It comes to me." After choosing the right peanut Casino removes the nut and seals the shell with clear acrylic before sculpting additional details in clay. "Finally I paint all those tiny features on it with liquid acrylic paint," he says. There's one more reason he uses peanuts. "It's always been my favourite snack," he says. "Never get sick of them."



To see more go to [stevecasino.com](http://stevecasino.com)

↑  
Clockwise from top: *The Shining*, John Wick, *The Grand Budapest Hotel*, Robin Williams





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