

MAY 2012 | VOLUME 13 | NUMBER 5

CINEPLEX

MAGAZINE

Inside

CHRIS
EVANS

TIM
BURTON

JOSH
BROLIN

EDWARD
NORTON

ALEXANDER
SKARSGÅRD

WHY
EVERYTHING'S
ROSY FOR
Elizabeth
BANKS

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THE 10 MOVIES YOU ABSOLUTELY MUST SEE THIS SUMMER, **Page 42!**



BATTLESHIP

THE BATTLE FOR EARTH BEGINS AT SEA

MAY 18

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FROM THE PRODUCER OF ALICE IN WONDERLAND



SNOW & WHITE THE HUNTSMAN

JUNE 1

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Elizabeth Banks has become a Hollywood player. She landed the sought-after role of *The Hunger Games*' Effie Trinket, and stars in this month's baby-crazy comedy *What to Expect When You're Expecting*. Plus, she's a new mom herself and runs a production company
BY BOB STRAUSS

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COVER PHOTO BY DALE MAY/CORBIS

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Hello Tomorrow



Emirates



AND IN HER SPARE TIME...

Elizabeth Banks has a lot going on.

It's only May and her third movie of 2012, *What to Expect When You're Expecting*, is about to hit theatres — just two months after her scene-stealing performance in the pop-culture phenomenon *The Hunger Games*. Next month she'll star in *People Like Us*, and later this year *Pitch Perfect*, a musical comedy she produced, comes out. She also directed one of the short films in the upcoming *Movie 43*, and her comically neo-con newscaster Avery Jessup returns to *30 Rock* this month. Oh yeah, and she has a one-year-old son.

You wouldn't think Banks would be looking for stuff to do in her spare time. That's why I was a bit surprised to come across www.elizabethbanks.com, a rather grassroots entry into the celebrity website genre, but — unlike many celeb sites — one that Banks seems to run largely herself.

What do we find out about Elizabeth Banks from her website? She likes gold shoes, Frito pie, heart-shaped balloons and unhindered access to the pill. "People, if you feel like I do, do something about it and tell Congress to stop trying to block women's access to birth control," she writes in one of two posts on the subject.

Celebrity websites are nothing new, of course, but it seems like famous people have a renewed interest in having their own sites, perhaps spurred by positive experiences they've had interacting with fans on Twitter. Banks only launched her site this past January, and Twitter was one the reasons she gave in a welcome video.

For a while it felt like actors were only building websites for one of a few reasons: they were also musicians and had an album to promote (Jennifer Lopez), to highlight a pet cause (Leonardo DiCaprio), they'd gotten some bad press and wanted an unfiltered forum in which to represent themselves (Charlie Sheen), or they were just starting out in showbiz and needed all the attention they could get (Someone You've Never Heard Of).

But that seems to be changing. What's refreshing about Banks' site — which is still in its infancy — is that it's not really pushing anything. Sure she's posted trailers for her upcoming movies, pictures of what she wore to premieres and held a *Hunger Games* fan-art contest. But that contest probably contravened all sorts of official promotional strategies rather than being part of the big marketing machine.

The question is, will she keep it up, or is this just a temporary diversion? Celebrity websites usually end when the star either gets bored and stops posting, or runs into some scandal and disappears, turning the site into a broken-down relic tumbling alone through cyberspace — a marker of the last day its owner wanted to share anything so publicly.

For a more traditionally media-filtered take on the busy Ms. Banks, turn to page 38 for our interview, "Pregnant With Possibility."

Elsewhere in this issue we have **Chris Evans** talking up *The Avengers* (page 22), a Q&A with *Dark Shadows* director **Tim Burton** (page 32), **Josh Brolin** on playing a young Tommy Lee Jones in *Men in Black 3* (page 30), **Edward Norton** on making *Moonrise Kingdom* (page 26) and **Alexander Skarsgård** on suiting up for *Battleship* (page 36).

Plus, on page 42, we present you with "Summer's 10 Must-See Movies," our countdown of this season's refreshingly eclectic (they're not all franchises, we swear!) crop of great pics.

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SNAPS



DARLING DANIEL

Daniel Radcliffe as a young Allen Ginsberg on the Brooklyn set of *Kill Your Darlings*.

PHOTO BY SPLASH NEWS



LILY & PHIL

Dad **Phil Collins** applauds while **Lily Collins** celebrates her birthday at *Mirror Mirror*'s L.A. premiere.

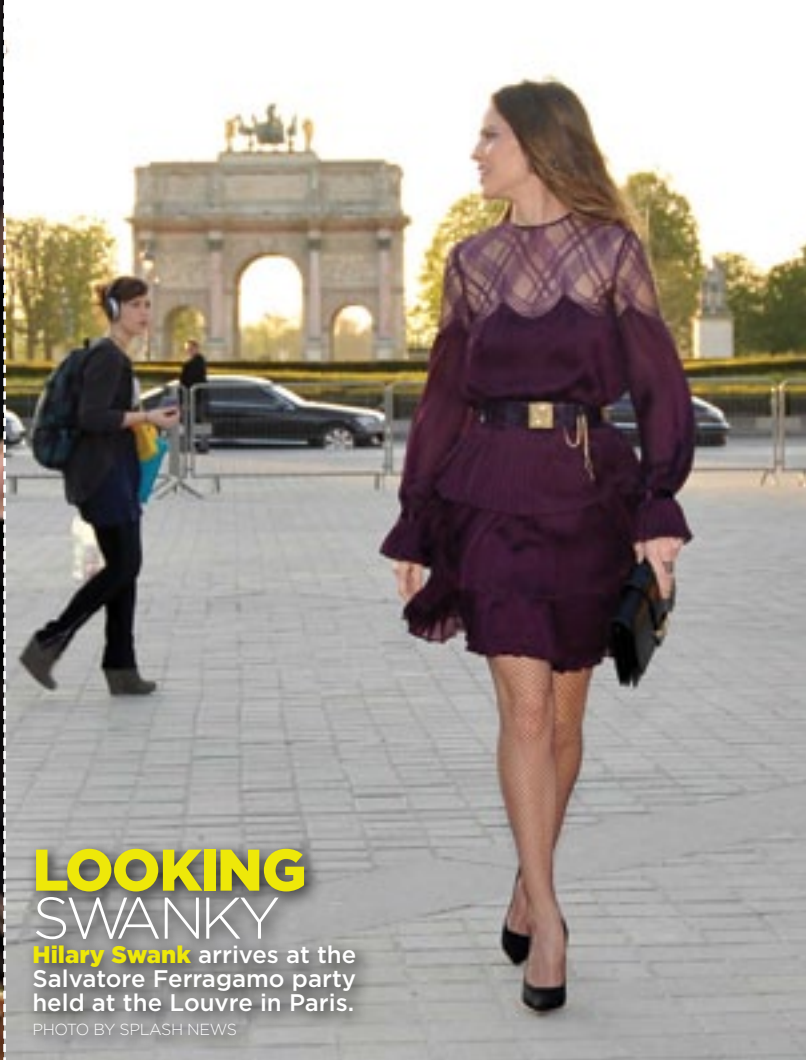
PHOTO BY SPLASH NEWS



ALBA SHOPS

Parisians react as **Jessica Alba** departs the Monoprix department store in Paris.

PHOTO BY MARC PIASECKI/GETTY



LOOKING SWANKY

Hilary Swank arrives at the Salvatore Ferragamo party held at the Louvre in Paris.

PHOTO BY SPLASH NEWS



RIHANNA TUBES IT

In London to promote *Battleship*, **Rihanna** takes the tube to a Drake concert.

PHOTO BY KEYSTONE PRESS



IN BRIEF



YOU QUESTIONED MY BATTLESHIP!



It's the question that had to be asked.

Do you really need the classic board game Battleship — in which players try to guess the location of their opponent's little plastic

pieces — to make a movie about aliens attacking a battleship?

Bennett Schneir, one of the producers of this month's big-budget movie *Battleship* was willing to answer.

"You could also ask why you would need *Pirates of the Caribbean* to make a movie about pirates and skeletons, or why you would need *Transformers* to make a movie about robots from space who come to Earth,"

he says. "There is so much in the core DNA of *Battleship* that is a source of inspiration for filmmakers. There are signposts along the way of the concept of the blind reveal, of knowing nothing and then knowing everything.... I like the notion of fighting against an enemy you can't see. Little by little, the curtain is raised, and you learn where your enemy put his ships and where you should strike next. That's what leads you to victory." —*MW*

On Home Turf: I'LL FOLLOW YOU DOWN

Haley Joel Osment

He's older, he's taller and he's in Toronto from mid-May to the end of June shooting the sci-fi thriller *I'll Follow You Down*.

Former child actor **Haley Joel Osment** (*Pay It Forward*, *The Sixth Sense*) — now 24 years old and a university graduate — is here to film Canadian director **Richie Mehta's** (*Ama!*) sci-fi drama.

Osment plays a young man whose father, a scientist, mysteriously disappeared during a business trip years earlier. But now a bizarre discovery may just bring dad home. **Victor Garber** is also in town to play Osment's grandfather. —*MW*

THE ART OF FILM

If you're hoping to buy one of Bashir Sultani's movie-inspired portraits (clockwise from top left, Bruce Lee, Heath Ledger's Joker and Yoda), you're out of luck — they no longer exist. For the past year, Sultani has been making short films (more than 90 at last count) for his "Art With Salt" series posted on YouTube. Each film captures the creation of one portrait, lasts only a few minutes, and ends with the piece being swept away. "I picked salt as the medium because it's white, which is a good contrast on a black surface, and it's very simple and available to everyone," says Sultani, who moved to Toronto from Russia in 2009 and is currently a student, freelance illustrator and pastry chef at an Italian restaurant. —*MW*





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► A ROLE FOR DE NIRO?

Intouchables — the true story of a wealthy quadriplegic

(François Cluzet) injured in a paragliding accident and the young black ex-con (Omar Sy) he hires to be his assistant — is the highest-grossing French film of all time within France. So it's no surprise that The Weinstein Company acquired it for international release (it hit theatres in Quebec last month and opens in the rest of Canada May 25th). But at the same time, Weinstein also bought the rights to remake it in English.

Since that Hollywood remake has yet to be cast, in an interview during "Rendez-Vous with French Cinema" in Paris, we asked Cluzet who he sees assuming his role.

"The biggest stars in the American movies don't need the exposure. I would love to see some people less known taking the parts," said Cluzet. "In France, I did over 50 films. But it's only because of this one that people recognized me on the street. I wish the same could happen to an American actor. But I know that the Americans love movies with big stars in them. So I guess I would pick Al Pacino or Robert De Niro to play my part, and Will Smith to play the other main character."

—MATHIEU CHANTELOIS



DID YOU KNOW?

Although the two don't seem to have much in common now, Sacha Baron Cohen's satire *The Dictator* was initially inspired by the allegorical novel *Zabibah and the King*, which is believed to have been written by the late Iraqi President Saddam Hussein.

Quote Unquote

“I get a little flushed and funny every time I talk about the movie. It just goes to show that we still don't really know how to speak openly about women's sexuality.”

—MAGGIE GYLLENHAAL ON *HYSTERIA*, ABOUT THE INVENTION OF THE VIBRATOR





LOOK AT US!

◀ Are they smiling because they're so close to *The Hunger Games* star Alexander Ludwig, or 'cause they're so close to the March issue of *Cineplex Magazine*, which featured the movie's Jennifer Lawrence on the cover? Ludwig signs autographs at the film's red carpet Toronto premiere held at Cineplex's Scotiabank Theatre.

PHOTO BY GEORGE PIMENTEL/GETTY



BARRYMORE'S RETURN

In 2011, 81-year-old Christopher Plummer stepped onto the stage of Toronto's Elgin Theatre to reprise his 1997 Tony Award-winning role as actor John Barrymore in *Barrymore*. But this time, cameras were present to capture his performance on film, and what a performance it was as Plummer rages, charms and breaks our hearts playing a larger-than-life, alcoholic actor who let his immense talent go to waste.

Barrymore screens on May 23rd. Go to Cineplex.com/events for participating theatres and to buy tickets. —IR

Centre of Attention

The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel assembles a cast of renowned British actors, including esteemed Oscar-winner Judi Dench. We all know British thespians work together a lot, but 77-year-old Dench has co-starred with each of her *Marigold* cast mates over a dozen previous projects that, amazingly, don't overlap —IR



CELIA IMRIE
Cranford
(BBC miniseries, 2009)



TOM WILKINSON
The Importance of Being Earnest (2002)
Shakespeare in Love (1998)
Wetherby (1985)



MAGGIE SMITH
Ladies in Lavender (2004)
Tea With Mussolini (1999)
A Room With a View (1985)



PENELOPE WILTON
Pride & Prejudice (2005)
Iris (2001)



RONALD PICKUP
Absolute Hell
(TV movie, 1991)
Behaving Badly
(TV miniseries, 1989)



BILL NIGHY
Notes on a Scandal (2006)

SPOTLIGHT

WHAT A TRIP

Adrian Wills has the flu. On this spring morning, the Quebec filmmaker is in a Montreal café sipping tea with a double dose of honey and lemon. But when the conversation turns to his documentary *Toucher le ciel* (*Touch the Sky*), about billionaire Cirque du Soleil founder Guy Laliberté's 2009 trip into space, his eyes light up like stars.

"I was in my dentist's chair, mouth frozen solid, when they called me for an interview with Guy Laliberté," recalls the Montreal-raised director who first collaborated with Cirque for the Grammy-winning documentary *All Together Now*, about the company's Beatles-inspired show, *Love*.

"It was not the right time, but my producer really insisted. When I went to meet him they made me sign a confidentiality agreement and Guy told me, 'I'm going into space, I would like you to film me.'"

And so the adventure took off, even though Wills still wasn't sure what he was getting into. As it turned out, he and his team followed Laliberté to Russia, where the wealthy entrepreneur trained for nearly five months before taking a Soyuz spacecraft to the International Space Station and back.

"Guy Laliberté, yes, he is a billionaire, a fascinating character. But in the world of astronauts, he's a nobody," Wills says with a laugh.

Space tourists usually prepare for nine to 12 months, explains Wills. "Guy learned the basics of Russian, he attended survival courses and trained for four-and-a-half months. He slept only four hours a night. He worked all the time."

Laliberté, who became the third Quebecer in space (and paid about \$35-million for the honour), still had his moments of weakness. "You meet a Guy that feels the immense challenge he faces and its risks. We see him manage his fears, his anxiety, throughout the film."

But a documentary about space without images of the cosmos wouldn't have been right, and yet there was no way Wills was leaving our atmosphere. "So we taught Guy to use the camera," says Wills. "I gave him a four-page shot list of what I wanted: a time-lapse of the Earth, him looking out the window, interaction with other astronauts.... He did everything. Guy has a good eye. He is an artist."

With these images, Wills says the film — which opens in Quebec theatres this month, with possible expansion in English Canada later this year — takes us all into space.

—MATHILDE ROY



Guy Laliberté in *Toucher le ciel*

TOUCHER LE CIEL
HITS THEATRES IN
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ALL DRESSED UP

AMBER HEARD

In New York for
The Metropolitan Opera's
premiere of *Manon*.

PHOTO BY KEYSTONE PRESS

KATE WINSLET

In London for the world
premiere of *Titanic 3D*.

PHOTO BY JAMES WHATLING/SPLASH NEWS

JENNIFER LAWRENCE

At the L.A. premiere of
The Hunger Games.

PHOTO BY KEYSTONE PRESS



**KEANU
REEVES**

At the "Power of Film Gala"
in Hong Kong.

PHOTO BY CHRIS MCGRATH/GETTY



**MILEY
CYRUS**

At "Muhammad Ali's Celebrity
Fight Night" in Phoenix.

PHOTO BY SPLASH NEWS



**NEIL
PATRICK
HARRIS**

At the opening of The Smith Center
for the Performing Arts in Las Vegas.

PHOTO BY BRYAN STEFFY/GETTY

IN THEATRES

MAY 4



THE AVENGERS

It's finally here, Marvel's assembled "dream team" of superheroes (whose films have earned a combined worldwide total of more than \$1.9-billion). Iron Man (**Robert Downey Jr.**), Captain America (**Chris Evans**), Thor (**Chris Hemsworth**), Hulk (**Mark Ruffalo**), Black Widow (**Scarlett Johansson**) and Hawkeye (**Jeremy Renner**) unite under the watchful eye of S.H.I.E.L.D. director Nick Fury (**Samuel L. Jackson**) to stop Loki (**Tom Hiddleston**) from taking over the Earth. **See Chris Evans interview, page 22.**

THE BEST EXOTIC MARIGOLD HOTEL

An ensemble comedy starring a who's who of seasoned British actors — **Judi Dench, Tom Wilkinson, Maggie Smith, Bill Nighy** and **Celia Imrie** — as retirees who decamp to India to live out their days in a glorious retirement hotel. However, upon their arrival they find the hotel is actually a dilapidated mansion run by an inexperienced young man (**Dev Patel**).

NOUS AVONS UN PAPE

The title of director **Nanni Moretti**'s comedy translates to "We have a Pope," which refers to the main character, a newly elected Pope (**Michel Piccoli**), who's so overwhelmed by his unexpected election that he seeks psychiatric care.



Tena Desae and Dev Patel in *The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel*

MAY 4

HEADHUNTERS

This acclaimed Norwegian thriller stars **Aksel Hennie** as Roger Brown, a successful corporate headhunter who moonlights as an art thief. Roger gets in a heap of trouble when he attempts to steal a Rubens painting owned by a former mercenary, who knows a thing or two about protecting his belongings. A Hollywood remake starring **Mark Wahlberg** is in the works.



SOUND OF MY VOICE

A hit at last year's Sundance Film Festival, this provocative drama follows two investigative journalists (**Christopher Denham, Nicole Vicius**) who go undercover to investigate a cult's mesmerizing leader, Maggie (**Brit Marling**), who claims to come from the future.

MAY 11



DARK SHADOWS

As a child, director **Tim Burton** loved the campy TV soap opera *Dark Shadows* about a family of vampires. He loved it so much he decided to turn it into a movie. **Johnny Depp** stars as Barnabas Collins, an 18th-century aristocrat who's turned into a vampire by a jealous witch (**Eva Green**). Kept captive for two centuries, he's finally freed in 1972 and returns to his family estate where he helps his descendants — including **Michelle Pfeiffer, Jonny Lee Miller** and their live-in therapist, **Helena Bonham Carter** — get their lives back on track. **See Tim Burton interview, page 32.**

THE DICTATOR

Sacha Baron Cohen dives headfirst into political satire with his latest comedic caricature, Admiral General Aladeen, the dictator of the fictional Republic of Wadiya who travels to New York to meet with the U.N. But in an effort to put an end to his reign, U.S. officials capture him, alter his appearance and leave him to fend for himself in the Big Apple. Fortunately (for Aladeen, anyway), he meets a kindly New Yorker (**Anna Faris**) who gives him a job in her health food store.

EDWIN BOYD: CITIZEN GANGSTER

Scott Speedman stars as real-life Canadian criminal Edwin Boyd, a World War II vet and failed actor who begins robbing banks in 1945 Toronto to support his family — and his theatrical flair makes him a folk hero. Director **Nathan Morlando** managed to track down the real Boyd in Victoria, B.C., and spent hundreds of hours talking with him over the phone before Boyd passed away in 2002. **CONTINUED ►**



► WHAT TO EXPECT WHEN YOU'RE EXPECTING

The best-selling pregnancy bible inspires this comedy about five couples preparing to become parents. The group includes a woman (**Jennifer Lopez**) planning to adopt a child from another country, a mothering expert (**Elizabeth Banks**) who realizes she's full of hot air after she gets pregnant, and a group of fathers called the "Dudes Group" who impart wisdom to fathers-to-be. **See Elizabeth Banks interview, page 38.**



BATTLESHIP

Call it *Transformers* on the high seas. The U.S. naval fleet goes to war against sneaky aliens who attack the Earth. **Taylor Kitsch** and **Alexander Skarsgård** play officer brothers, **Liam Neeson** is the Admiral in charge of the fleet, and pop star **Rihanna** makes her film debut as a sailor. **See Alexander Skarsgård interview, page 36.**

TOUCHER LE CIEL

This French documentary by Montreal filmmaker **Adrian Wills** opens in Quebec this month and focuses on Cirque du Soleil founder **Guy Laliberté**, who invests millions of his personal fortune to train with Russian cosmonauts in order to fly on a Soyuz spacecraft, roundtrip, to the International Space Station. **See Adrian Wills interview, page 14.**



Battleship's Taylor Kitsch

MAY 25



Tommy Lee Jones (left) and Will Smith in *Men in Black 3*

MEN IN BLACK 3

It's been 10 years since we last saw agents J (**Will Smith**) and K (**Tommy Lee Jones**) apprehend alien visitors. In this third *MIB* pic, the timeline's been altered and K has been dead for more than 40 years. So J has to go back in time to 1969, meet up with the younger K (**Josh Brolin**) and prevent his death. **See Josh Brolin interview, page 30.**

INTOUCHABLES

Based on a true story, this French comedy (already a huge hit in France) stars **François Cluzet** as Philippe, a wealthy quadriplegic who hires Driss (**Omar Sy**), an ex-con of Senegalese descent, to work as his live-in caregiver. Driss's zest for life inspires Philippe, and together the pair embarks on a series of adventures.

CHERNOBYL DIARIES

The locations for this found-footage horror pic are pretty creepy — Ukraine's abandoned Chernobyl nuclear power plant, which experienced a toxic meltdown in 1986, and the nearby city of Prypiat, which housed the plant's workers. The story follows a group of young American tourists who plan a one-day excursion to see the deserted sites, but when their ride breaks down their visit stretches into an all-night affair, and they realize they're not alone.

HYSTERIA

In this British comedy — inspired by real events — a young Victorian doctor (**Hugh Dancy**) suddenly becomes the most popular physician in London when he invents the vibrator to help women suffering from hysteria, the era's convenient catch-all diagnosis for female patients. **Maggie Gyllenhaal** plays an upper-class woman who recognizes the sexual, social and political power the little device wields.



Hysteria's Hugh Dancy and Maggie Gyllenhaal

FRONT ROW CENTRE EVENTS

by CINEPLEX

HOT DOCS SCREENINGS

CHINA HEAVYWEIGHT

WED., MAY 2

INDIE GAME: THE MOVIE

THURS., MAY 3

NATIONAL THEATRE LIVE

ONE MAN, TWO GUVNORS

ENCORE: SAT., MAY 5

FAMILY FAVOURITES

SHORT CIRCUIT

SAT., MAY 5

CHICKEN RUN

SAT., MAY 12

JONAH: A VEGGIE TALES MOVIE

SAT., MAY 19

THE MUPPETS TAKE MANHATTAN

SAT., MAY 26

CLASSIC FILM SERIES

A STREETCAR NAMED DESIRE

WED., MAY 16

& SUN., MAY 27

THE METROPOLITAN OPERA:

RING CYCLE DOCUMENTARY

WAGNER'S DREAM

MON., MAY 7

RING CYCLE ENCORES

DAS RHEINGOLD

(WAGNER) WED., MAY 9

DIE WALKÜRE (WAGNER)

SAT., MAY 12

SIEGFRIED (WAGNER)

THURS., MAY 17

GÖTTERDÄMMERUNG

(WAGNER) SAT., MAY 19

THE METROPOLITAN OPERA

LA TRAVIATA (VERDI)

ENCORE: SAT., MAY 26

WWE LIVE VIA SATELLITE

OVER THE LIMIT

SUN., MAY 20

CHRISTOPHER PLUMMER

in **BARRYMORE**

PREMIERE: WED., MAY 23

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**HERE
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THE AVENGERS
HITS THEATRES MAY 4TH



From left: Jeremy Renner, Chris Evans and Scarlett Johansson in *The Avengers*

The build-up has stretched for five years, and over five films. Well, it's finally time to see where it was all leading.

Chris Evans, a.k.a. Captain America, talks about assembling Marvel's team of superheroes for *The Avengers*

■ BY BOB STRAUSS

It's the question that's almost too cliché to ask. "So, how did everyone get along on set?" You already know that 99 times out of 100 the answer's going to be, "Everyone got along just great! It was like one big, happy family."

But when the movie is *The Avengers*, and most of the 10 principal actors have already had either first or second billing in their own Marvel superheroes movies — and at least one Marvel star, 2008's Hulk Edward Norton, was not asked back because, as Marvel put it, they needed "an actor who embodies the creativity and collaborative spirit of our other talented cast members" — you just have to ask.

The answer from Chris Evans — who's already had his own Marvel movie, 2011's *Captain America: The First Avenger* — is, "We got along fantastically well. Shockingly well! When you have all of these actors coming together to work, you can't expect everyone to hit it off, but somehow we have."

Of course you have.

But dig a little deeper and it seems his story checks out, especially in regard to the franchise's biggest star, Robert Downey Jr. (Iron Man), who Evans says has a unique way of motivating his co-stars.

"He's so supportive and positive; every little take he gives you a little fist bump and a thumbs up, and it just changes your whole day."

For an actor like Evans, who admits he is "saturated in insecurity," that little fist bump makes a huge difference. "It probably means nothing in his mind," he says. "But I go back to my trailer, like, giddy."

Handsome, talented and successful, you wouldn't think Evans would need such constant reassurance. But sitting here in L.A. in a lumberjack-over-T-shirt ensemble that provides hints of his sculpted physique without being obnoxious about it, the friendly 30-year-old insists it's true. "When you're talking about career-wise, I'm on shaky ground. I have one bad audition and I'm like, 'Man, I knew I shouldn't have been an actor! I'm going back to college.' But that's most actors. Most actors are riddled with insecurity."

Which means he's doing a pretty good acting job as Captain America, the 97-pound weakling who succeeds on nothing but heart and determination — until, that is, he gets some additional help from a top-secret research experiment that transforms him into a burly muscleman with the strength to defeat the world's toughest foes.

But that all happened in last year's movie.

This month's movie is the culmination of Marvel's five superhero films from the past five years, and the coming together of their stars, including Downey's Iron Man, Chris Hemsworth's Thor and Evans' Captain America. The assorted heroes are assembled by S.H.I.E.L.D. director Nick Fury (Samuel L. Jackson) to battle a major threat set in motion by Thor's evil stepbrother, Loki (Tom Hiddleston). Other big names include Scarlett Johansson as Black Widow, Mark Ruffalo as Hulk, Jeremy Renner as Hawkeye and Gwyneth Paltrow as Iron Man's long-suffering

CONTINUED ►



Chris Evans (left) and Robert Downey Jr. in *The Avengers*

“He’s so supportive and positive,” Evans says of Downey. “Every little take he **gives you a little fist bump and a thumbs up, and it just changes your whole day**”

► assistant and business partner, Pepper Potts.

Evans doesn’t give away much about his role, but from what he says about his new and improved costume, we assume he’ll be ready to rumble. “The first Cap costume was very cumbersome. It’s thick and bulky and it’s tough to do fight sequences in,” explains Evans. “The current wardrobe is a bit different. The suit’s range of motion is fantastic, you can really get some good fight sequences in, it’s a little more form-fitting.”

Form-fitting probably wouldn’t have been Evans’ choice back in high school, when he had more in common with Steve Rogers, the pre-transformation Captain America, than you’d think. “I weighed, like, 135 pounds until I was at least 17, so I know what it’s like to be small,” he says. “I wasn’t a victim of bullies, but you definitely feel the sting if you like a girl and she’s dating the guy who’s a quarterback while I’m doing plays in my tights and my tap shoes. ‘This might have to do with the fact that I’m 100 pounds,’ you think.”

Back then, when he was growing up in suburban Sudbury, Massachusetts, comic books were not on Evans’ radar. His interests were music (he plays piano and guitar), drawing and, after seeing how much fun his older sister was having in drama class, theatre.

But since being cast as the Human Torch in two *Fantastic Four* films and then as Cap, Evans has been happily catching up on his reading. “I’ve read dozens and dozens of comics now,” he says. “I certainly respect them. They have complex plots and sophisticated dialogue and amazingly mature artwork. It’s certainly worth the time for a kid to get into them. If I had a kid and he had to be into something, comic books would be a great thing for that.”

How many more times Evans will squeeze into that form-fitting Captain America suit depends, largely, on how audiences receive *The Avengers*. But, having signed a six-picture deal, if Cap keeps going, so will Evans.

In the meantime, though, he’s doing his best to choose films that are as far from the Marvel Universe as possible. He’ll soon be seen in *The Iceman* — which is not about the Marvel superhero of the same

name, but is the true-life tale of a contract killer — and he’s attached to *Snowpiercer*, a dystopian thriller by the acclaimed South Korean director of *Mother* and *The Host*, Bong Joon-ho.

“I guess it’s about the director, really. The genre or the role doesn’t really dictate the choice,” Evans says. “You want to make good movies. It’s not just about being creatively satisfied, it’s not just about acting in a vacuum. It’s not worth it to me to say, ‘It’s a crap movie but I’m great in it!’ You want a good movie, and good direction makes good movies.”

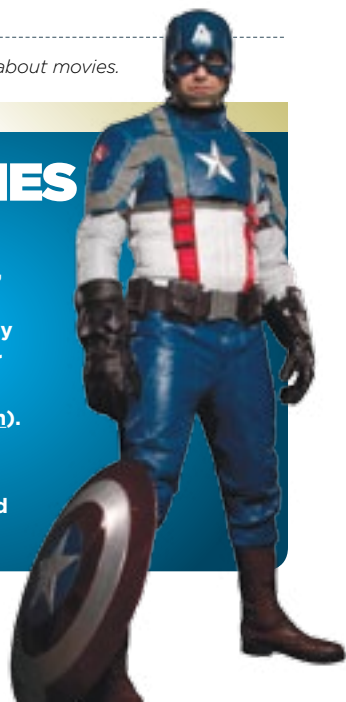
As for Joss Whedon, *The Avengers*’ director, Evans says he did a super job managing this super cast of superheroes.

“I give Joss a lot of credit,” says Evans. “That’s not an easy job, bringing all of these characters together and all of these actors together. But everything I’ve seen is fantastic. It’s incredibly exciting to watch all of these characters together and what Joss does with the camera. It all just kind of astounds me.” ☑

Bob Strauss lives in L.A. where he writes about movies.

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Scout's Honour



What's all this about **Edward Norton** not working well with others? As the earnest scout master in Wes Anderson's ***Moonrise Kingdom*** Norton is just one of a large and talented ensemble, and he says "one of the most fun things about making movies is when you get into a great troupe of folks" ■ BY MARNI WEISZ



MOONRISE KINGDOM HITS THEATRES JUNE 1ST

The prestigious opening night slot at this month's Cannes Film Festival (May 16 to 27) goes to *Moonrise Kingdom*, perhaps the most nostalgic of director Wes Anderson's always wistful films. Set on an island off the coast of New England in the mid-1960s, a young boy attending scout camp (Jared Gilman) falls in love with a local girl (Kara Hayward) and convinces her to run off with him, throwing the surrounding adults into a panic.

The ensemble cast includes Bruce Willis as the sheriff, Bill Murray and Frances McDormand as the girl's parents, Edward Norton as the boy's earnest scout master, and Tilda Swinton, Jason Schwartzman, Bob Balaban and Harvey Keitel in suitably quirky supporting roles.

Norton, who lives in New York, was hanging out at a friend's place in L.A. when we spoke by phone about going to Cannes, camping in Algonquin, and stepping into Wes Anderson's peculiar world.



Are you going to Cannes?

"I will definitely try to go. We just found out about all of that and we're pushing things around, but I don't want to miss that because Wes is such a francophile himself. He's lived in Paris for many years, he loves France and I don't think he's ever had a film at Cannes, which seems amazing. I'm such a fan of his, I think he's one of the really uniquely original and dis-

tininctive filmmakers from my crowd and generation, and even though it's a real ensemble I want to be there to celebrate him."

Speaking of ensembles, this movie comes out just a few weeks after *The Avengers*. After playing Hulk in the 2008 film you were passed over for the new film with Marvel implying you're not a team player. Does it feel good to be part of such a creative ensemble movie coming out the same month?

"It's never even occurred to me once that there was a link between the two. I think people on the outside tend to telescope on these things, I don't think I've thought about that twice since. You look at things like that and in the scope of things they're just not that important. I don't think it's worth making a negative out of them. I know half the people in that film really well, they're all my friends, so it's like I have not a shred of negative feeling and I'm hoping they'll all do great.... One of the most fun things about making movies is when you get into a great troupe of folks."

Anderson's (*Rushmore*, *The Royal Tenenbaums*) films have such a surreal look and feel. How much of that is evident on set?

"It's about 50/50. He's incredibly meticulous about his *mise en scène*, the art direction, the colour of the fabrics, all the elemental details do feel very much an expression of his eye on set, but then of course there's that magic patina of the photography and his

CONTINUED ►



Edward Norton (centre) with two of his scouts in *Moonrise Kingdom*

► choice of lenses, how he and [cinematographer] Bobby Yeoman light things, the way they choose to shoot things, literally almost the perspective they choose. Those bloom when you see it the first time.”

Describe your character.

“Well, the movie takes place in 1965, and my character is the leader of a summer scout troop. When Wes described him to me he sent me a picture of some of those scout leaders from the ’60s with their stiff brown hats and pulled up socks and wingtip shoes and he said, ‘I’m pretty sure that there’s nobody who’s more devoted to the Scouts than this guy, and I’m also pretty sure he ended up in Vietnam two years later [laughs].’ You know, he’s very earnest and a real believer that scouting is going to build boys of better character.”

Does the film say something about the way children should be raised?

“I don’t want to speak for Wes, but as a fan of his films, I’d say that this film definitely has something that I think is a very consistent theme in his films, which is that theme of family — people either longing to be part of family and creating their own family or the way the family can be.... It raises questions of the way adults take their own failings and project fears onto the way they manage their kids, when in fact maybe the kids still have a kind of purity.”

This is your first film with Wes, were you up for others?

“No, I’ve talked to Wes before, we both live in New York and he’s come to see plays I was in and we’ve already had a nice, kind of, conversation over the years but this was the first time we talked officially about it and it was wonderful. I couldn’t have been more thrilled to dive into his troupe.”

You and Wes both have reputations as perfectionists. Is that fair and, if so, how did it affect working together?

“I think those kinds of things become reductive kind of ways of describing things that are actually very complicated work processes. Some things you approach one way, some things you approach another way. Obviously you don’t work on a film like *Death to Smoochy*

“My character is the leader of a summer scout troop. When Wes described him to me he sent me a picture of some of those scout leaders from the ’60s with their stiff brown hats and pulled up socks and wingtip shoes”

the same way you work on a film like *American History X*, so perfectionism is very relative to the type of challenge you’re facing. I hope I’m always hardworking and Wes is certainly always hardworking.

“To me it’s a given going in working with Wes that you’re in his world, and I think it’s actually wonderful as an actor to just surrender to a director who’s that specific, so clear about what they want. It’s not only easy, it’s a delight to look to them for guidance and service what’s in their head.... I’ve probably never had an easier time just notching back and letting him guide it because he’s such an auteur.”

Your fiancée, producer Shauna Robertson, is from Toronto. Do you spend much time here?

“I still go up there a good bit. Our families are spread around, but definitely still rooted in Toronto, a lot of friends there.... I’ve made quite a few films in Canada, *Smoochy*, we did *Hulk* there, and I did *The Score* in Montreal which was great fun. And I used to spend a lot of my summers of my youth up toward North Bay, Algonquin and stuff, so I do know that area.”

What brought you to Algonquin?

“My grandfather used to like to fish in Algonquin and I went to a canoeing camp way up north, even further up north, kind of like Wes’s camp, but yeah, I love that area, I think it’s wonderful.”

Marni Weisz is the editor of Cineplex Magazine.

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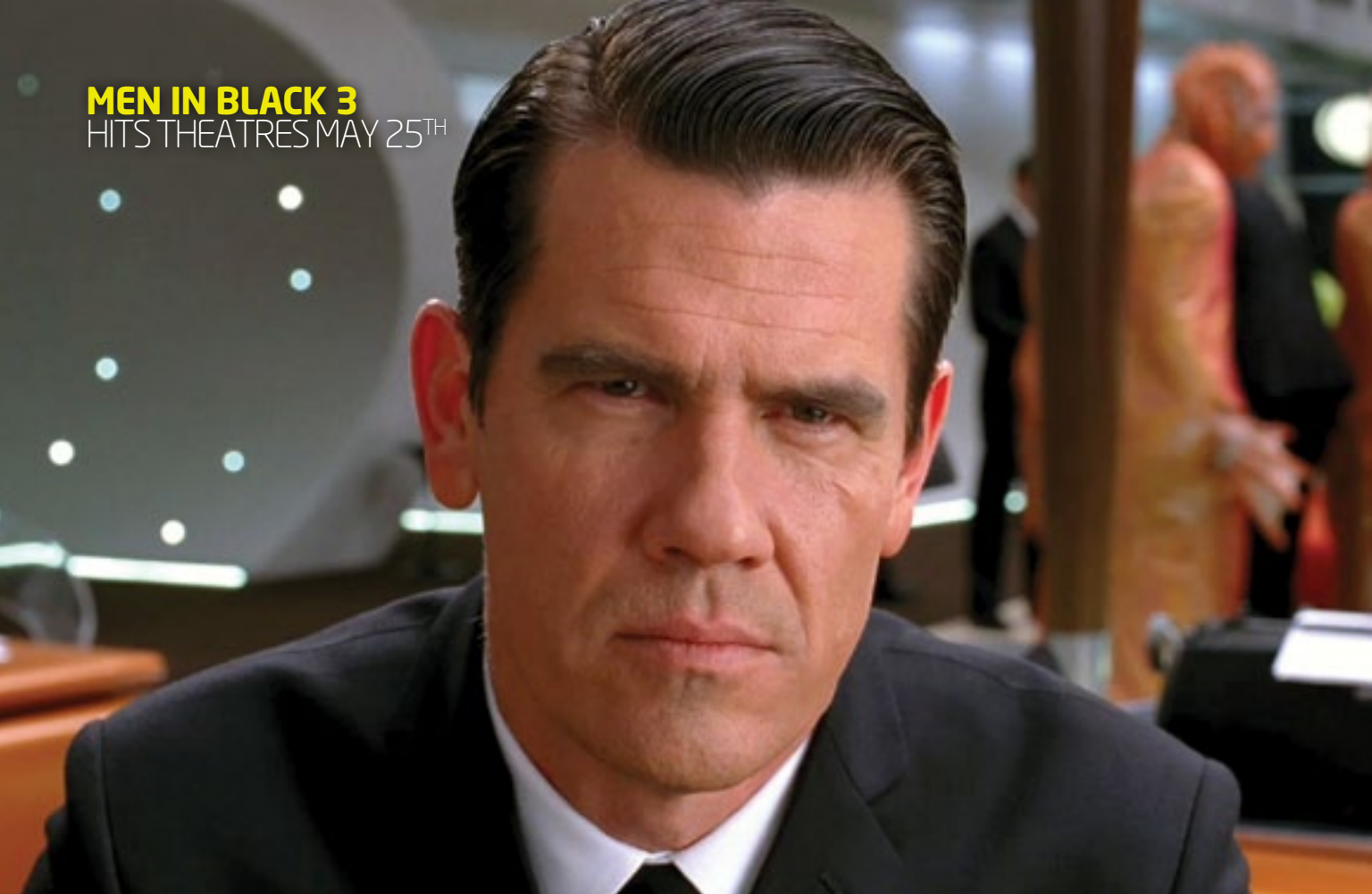
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MEN IN BLACK 3
HITS THEATRES MAY 25TH



A GOOD IMPRESSION

If we had to choose just one reason to see ***Men in Black 3*** it would be Josh Brolin's uncanny impression of a young Tommy Lee Jones. Here, Brolin explains why the opportunity to ape Jones was the only reason he signed on

■ BY ASHLEY JUDE COLLIE

It's been 15 years since *Men in Black* introduced us to alien chasers Agent J (Will Smith) and Agent K (Tommy Lee Jones), a host of quirky extraterrestrials, and the idea that people's memories can be wiped clean, or "neuralized," after they've come into contact with visitors from other planets. And it's been 10 years since the 2002 sequel, *Men in Black II*, hit theatres.

Over that decade, some pretty impressive aliens have invaded movie theatres, from *Avatar*'s big-budget Na'vi to *District 9*'s low-budget, but highly effective, "prawns."

So *MiB*'s creators, once innovators in the cinematic alien realm, needed to bring it for *Men in Black 3* — or *MIB³*. They chose to go with a plot involving time travel, and some truly inspired casting in the form of Josh Brolin as a bang-on younger version of Jones's Agent K.

"When they pitched me the movie, I'm thinking it's not really my thing — it's not that I don't want to be involved in a mega-movie kind of thing, it's more I really don't know what to do," says Brolin as he sits on the roof of his Santa Monica office overlooking the Pacific Ocean. "But then they pitched me the idea more specifically of being a young Tommy, and I thought, 'Okay that's great. That's a character that I can rely on,' and that made it extremely interesting to me."

It helped that Brolin had worked with Jones in two 2007 movies, director Paul Haggis's *In the Valley of Elah* and the Coen Brothers' multiple Oscar winner *No Country for Old Men*, which brought Brolin back from the brink of obscurity. Plus, both Brolin and Jones have Texan roots (Brolin's late mother was from Texas, his father is California-born actor James Brolin) and they've both lived on



Josh Brolin as the young Agent K and Will Smith as Agent J in *Men in Black 3*
ABOVE: Smith with the older Agent K (Tommy Lee Jones)



“When they pitched me the movie, I’m thinking it’s not really my thing.... **Then they pitched me the idea more specifically of being a young Tommy, and I thought, ‘Okay that’s great’**”

ranches where that laconic Agent K attitude often prevails.

In this third film, the timeline has somehow been altered, and in the new timeline Jones’s Agent K has been dead for 40 years. So Agent J has to travel back to a groovy 1969 to set things right, which is where he partners with Brolin’s young Agent K, whose Texan drawl, taciturn nature, and stony expressions are a pitch-perfect reflection of the character Jones developed in the first two films.

It’s not the first time Brolin has proved his talent as an impressionist. After making *No Country* his upswing continued when he nailed George W. Bush in director Oliver Stone’s 2008 bio-pic, *W*. And that was a relief, since previous to *No Country* Brolin’s acting career had leveled out to the point where he was supplementing his income by working as a day trader. “I made more money than I probably should have,” he admits.

But Brolin’s focus is back on acting these days, and his strategy is to choose compelling characters like Agent K. “In the first place, I’m not particularly an interesting guy,” he says. “So if we’re just resorting back to my own personality, I don’t think there’s anything that really stands out about me. But then when you get into a character you want to find something that’s really kind of different, and extreme in some way.”

The other reason he accepted the *MIB*³ role was to co-star with Will Smith. “I like his work a lot and took into consideration being around his incredible energy,” says Brolin. “And even though he can

go and do these massive mega-movies, he seems very mathematical in what he chooses and how he germinates that. I wanted to be around that. He’s amazing to work with because he cares about every detail.”

In the end, Brolin insists acting isn’t about fame or accolades. It’s about working hard.

“I grew up on a horse ranch in central California. It was bone-hard work,” he says. “It’s the same with acting. It’s about the work. Whether it’s emotionally or physically, it really is blood, sweat and tears. Sometimes it pays off and sometimes it doesn’t. Personally, I’m not interested in where am I on my IMDB STARMeter chart. It doesn’t really pertain to what I’m trying to do. I respect people like the Coens or Woody Allen or Oliver Stone who keep making movies and no matter how much strife they get, they just keep putting them out there.”

Ashley Jude Collie is a Canadian writer living in Los Angeles.



TIM BURTON SHEDS LIGHT ON DARK SHADOWS

Why did the iconic director turn an obscure (and, admittedly, not very good) vampire soap from his childhood into a movie? It wasn't because vampires are trendy

■ BY MARK PILKINGTON

We don't blame you if

you've never heard of the TV series *Dark Shadows*, which aired between 1966 and 1971, and on which Tim Burton's latest creation is based. It gathered quite a cult following, but that was a long time ago. Fast-forward five decades and Burton is introducing a whole new generation to the creepy, kooky family that clearly played a part in forming his Gothic aesthetic.

The film stars Johnny Depp as Barnabas Collins, who was turned into a vampire and buried underground for more than two centuries after unwittingly breaking the heart of a vengeful witch (Eva Green). Finally freed from his tomb he returns to his family home only to find life in 1972 is vastly different than what he recalls from the 1700s. Michelle Pfeiffer plays the household's current matriarch, and one of Barnabas's descendants, who's hired a live-in psychiatrist (Helena Bonham Carter) to help make sense of this dysfunctional family.

Dark Shadows is Burton's eighth collaboration with Johnny Depp and his seventh with his off-screen partner Bonham Carter. We sat down with the director in London to find out more.

Q

Why turn this TV series into a movie?

"Well it's a bit of a strange thing. There was a generation of us who ran home from school, didn't do our homework, and watched *Dark Shadows*. So it's very special to that small weird group of people. But beyond

that if you show it to people who haven't seen it before, they just think it was full of horrible acting and was really cheesy. The actors used to forget their lines.... It was a strange show. That's why, for me, I never felt like we were remaking it, it was more about being inspired by it and trying to capture that weird feeling of why I liked it."

Describe the tone of the movie.

"It's tricky to say, I guess it's like a Gothic soap opera. It'll be interesting to see how it performs, because it goes against everything a studio wants in a movie. It's a funny film."

It's a comedy?

"Yes, there are comedic elements in it. The thing about the original *Dark Shadows* is I found it quite funny, even though it was supposed to be so serious. I like it when a film is a mixture of things, you know; melodrama, emotion, humour, light and dark mixed together. It's a tricky tone to achieve, because you never know how people are going to respond to that."

So you think this movie will be a challenge for viewers?

"Probably. Although I never know. Any movie I've ever CONTINUED ►



Dark Shadows' Barnabas Collins (Johnny Depp, centre) surrounded by his dysfunctional descendants

DARK SHADOWS
HITS THEATRES MAY 11TH

► made could have gone either way as far as I'm concerned. Success or failure. One of my favourite movies, *Ed Wood*, was the biggest bomb I've ever made. I never really try to predict what will happen. I try to make a film I like and hope for the best."

Do studios afford you a lot of freedom, creatively speaking?

"I learned early on, after I'd done a couple of movies, *Beetlejuice* and *Batman*, I thought I could do pretty much whatever I wanted to do. Then my next movie, *Edward Scissorhands*, was the hardest movie to get made. Up to a few years ago, if I said I wanted to use Johnny on a movie, they wouldn't have been very keen. Now they beg me to use him! I always get told my material is dark, but nowadays my version of *Batman* looks like a lighthearted romp in comparison to Christopher Nolan's *Dark Knight*."

Why have you worked with Johnny and Helena so many times?

"Sometimes you work with certain people and it's fun to see them do different things. It's also nice to mix it up, if I was to only work with those two and nobody else then it might get a little stale. There are a lot of people who I haven't worked with on this film which made a big difference. You introduce new people to the dynamic and there is always a new chemistry to witness, so it's fun to see that in action."

How was it to work with Michelle Pfeiffer again?

"For me, her version of Catwoman was one of my favourite performances on any movie I had worked on. I remember how she impressed me by letting a live bird fly out of her mouth, learning how to use a whip and dancing around on rooftops with high-heeled shoes on. She did all that stuff for real. I hadn't really talked to her for about 20 years, and she called before I had started working on *Dark Shadows*, and she told me how much she loved the old TV series and she wanted to be involved."

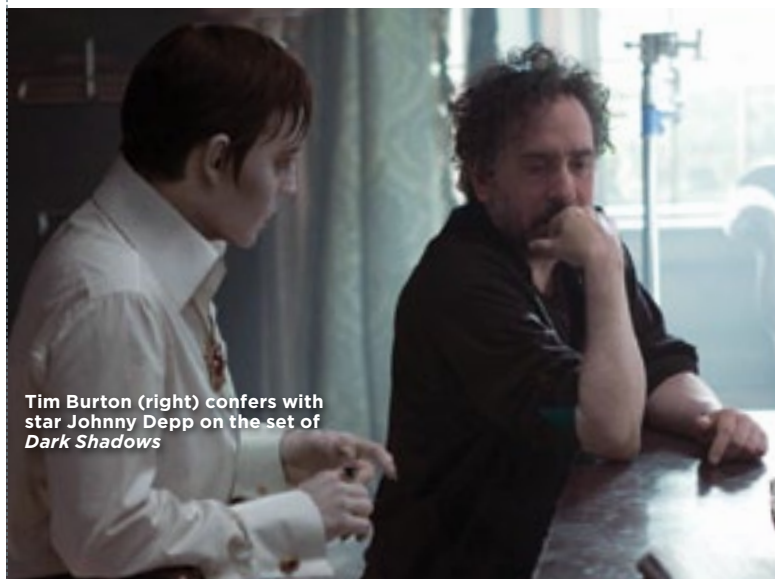
Apart from the original series, what other films have influenced *Dark Shadows*?

"I would have to say largely Hammer horror films. The trend started with me when I was about three or four years old, and I've always loved those films. I think those kind of movies just stay with you and they will always influence me. The movies I showed the cast were *Legend of Hell House* and *Dracula A.D. 1972*, and they were the two reference points we used."

It seems that the vampire theme is more popular than ever.

"Oh it's always been popular to me. I'm friends with Christopher Lee, you know, so it's nothing new to me. You can look at trends as a good or bad thing, and if you are at the trail end of a trend it may not be such a good thing, but for me vampires have always been trendy." □

Mark Pilkington is freelance writer based in London, England.



Tim Burton (right) confers with star Johnny Depp on the set of *Dark Shadows*



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A close-up portrait of actor Alexander Skarsgård. He is wearing a dark blue U.S. Navy digital camouflage uniform. His hair is short and light brown, slicked back. He has a serious, intense expression, looking slightly off-camera to the left. The background is dark and out of focus, suggesting an indoor setting like a ship's interior.

BATTLESHIP
HITS THEATRES
MAY 18TH

SKARSGÅRD'S SHIP COMES IN

He plays a vampire on TV's *True Blood*, but **Alexander Skarsgård** is so much more than a sexy bloodsucker. He proves it as the commander of a U.S. Navy destroyer in *Battleship* ■ BY MATHIEUCHANTELOIS

Battleship, the unlikely action pic

based on a Hasbro board game, hits theatres this month with an eclectic cast playing naval officers racing to save the world after aliens attack and, well, try to sink their battleships. There's pop star Rihanna as a petty officer, Canadian Taylor Kitsch as a naval weapons specialist, and Swedish actor Alexander Skarsgård as Kitsch's brother, the commanding officer of a U.S. Navy destroyer.

If you recognize Skarsgård, you're probably a fan of TV's *True Blood*, the vampire drama on which he's played Eric Northman for the past five seasons. The sexy soap-opera hit has turned the 35-year-old, 6-foot-4 actor into an object of desire for men and women around the world. Before that, he was a stage actor in his native Sweden, where his father, Stellan Skarsgård (*The Girl With the Dragon Tattoo*, *Thor*) is one of that country's most famous actors.

We recently sat down with Skarsgård in Toronto to talk about explosions, biting fans, and working with pop stars.



An alien enemy tries to sink a battleship

You had to do mandatory military service in Sweden. Was that experience useful in making *Battleship*?

"Yeah, it definitely was. I was in the Royal Swedish Navy. What we did was kind of what the Marines were doing, we were land-based. We were on board as well, but it was more for antiterrorism in the archipelago of Stockholm. So it was still a big challenge playing the commanding officer of a big U.S. Navy ship, a destroyer. Even though I was in the military in Sweden, I didn't know how you talk with the CIC [Combat Information Center] or how you talk to other officers. The lingo is very different. I'm a sergeant in Sweden, so in terms of leadership and the structure, the hierarchy, there were definitely similarities there."

What was Rihanna like to work with?

"She was amazing. I feel that my schedule is busy, like I'm working on a movie in New York, and I flew out here for the weekend and then go back because I work on Monday morning again. But compared to Rihanna, I'm on vacation. We would work Friday night and then she would get on a plane, fly to L.A. for some MTV Music Awards, perform in front of millions and millions of viewers, take the red-eye back to Hawaii, go straight from the airport to set and just show up with a big smile and prepared and ready to shoot. It's pretty impressive."

You also made the music video for *Paparazzi* with Lady Gaga. You seem to be a magnet for pop stars.

"I think it is a coincidence. Well, hopefully it's more than that! The Lady Gaga thing is that Jonas Åkerlund, the director of her video, is a good friend of mine.... It was six hours of my life but it's what people are curious about. I also did things like *Generation Kill*, a great series on HBO about the 2003 invasion of Iraq. But I probably talk more about my few hours with Lady Gaga than *Generation Kill*."

Do people react the same way to you in Sweden and America?

"Americans are more direct. They come up to you and say what they think about your character.... Swedish are more reserved that way."

Do people ask you to bite them?

"Yes! I always sign autographs. I always take pictures. I'm so invested in all my characters and the fact that people care about them means a lot. But I wouldn't bite someone. If I do that once or twice then, now with the internet, it would be all over and I'll end up doing that for 40 years, biting people. Everyone would be like, 'I saw online that you did that with another fan and so now you have to bite me,' and you end up biting people constantly. So I'm trying to stay away from biting [laughs]...in public." ☑

Mathieu Chantelois is the editor of Le magazine Cineplex.

Vous parlez français?

"Seulement un peu, seulement un peu."

On IMDb.com, it says that your French is as good as your English...

"Does it? That's a complete lie."

I guess you don't Google yourself a lot.

"No, that scares me."

What attracted you to a movie inspired by a board game?

"I wanted to do something that was different. I don't want to go play Eric Northman under a different name, without the vampire makeup and the fangs. Obviously, because of the show, I get a lot of offers that are similar, but that's not fun for me creatively as an actor."

Tell us about your character.

"Stone Hopper is a commanding officer of a U.S. Navy destroyer, a big warship. It's a big Hollywood movie, with Pete Berg, a great and interesting director. That's what attracted me to that project. He is an actor himself. Even though it is a big movie, I knew he would let me have fun with my character and explore it. That was very important. This is my first big Hollywood movie, and I was afraid of what it would be like."

Were you worried about acting in front of a green screen?

"Yeah, like, of course there is going to be a lot of that because it is a big action movie. But at the same time I've heard horror stories where on big movies you can't change anything, especially in action movies. It's all about the explosion and not about the characters, and that is not fun for an actor to play. But I trusted Pete, he was like, 'We are going to work so hard on the relationship between you and your brother... and if you have ideas, bring them to me and we will change things.'"



WHAT TO EXPECT WHEN
YOU'RE EXPECTING
HITS THEATRES MAY 18TH

Pregnant With Possibility

How has **Elizabeth Banks** avoided being pigeonholed? She moves from movies to TV, from thrillers to comedies, from acting to directing to producing with the greatest of ease. The star of this month's ensemble comedy ***What to Expect When You're Expecting*** gives us her theory ■ BY BOB STRAUSS

Fresh off her turn as freakish media creature Effie Trinket in *The Hunger Games*, Elizabeth Banks is freaking out again in *What to Expect When You're Expecting* — albeit in a more natural, or certainly more common, way.

"I play the owner of a baby store who has been dealing with infertility," Banks says of the ensemble comedy spun off of the venerable, non-fiction pregnancy guide by Heidi Murkoff and Sharon Mazel. "I finally get pregnant and I think it's going to be a miraculous miracle, an amazing situation — and, of course, I get the exact opposite of that. Then it's all about how I deal with it."

Ravaged by mood swings and other hormonal side effects, Banks' Wendy Cooper sees all of her idealized theories about impending parenthood shattered and her marriage to Gary (Ben Falcone) imperiled by the blessed event. It's one of five interconnected storylines in the film directed by Kirk Jones (*Nanny McPhee*, *Waking Ned Devine*) and written by Shauna Cross and Heather Hach based on Murkoff and Mazel's book.

"It's actually a great premise for a comedy," says Banks, no slouch at humour herself (*Role Models*, *The 40-Year-Old Virgin*, TV's *30 Rock*) and looking quite whimsical in a yellow dress covered in a chickadee print during this L.A. interview. "It's called *What to Expect*, and all of the five women that the movie follows — Cameron Diaz, Jennifer Lopez, myself, Anna Kendrick and Brooklyn Decker — each has an expectation for how our pregnancy is going to affect our lives and our relationships. And, of course, nobody gets exactly what they're expecting in the movie. So that's comedy, right? Like, setup and twist.

"I thought they did a great job translating the book into something that's truly fun. And at the end, everybody gets a baby. It's sorta kinda great."

Banks could relate to some parts of the part. The 38-year-old actor's son, Felix, just had his first birthday. The weight of a fake baby bump and breast enhancements were something new, however. Although Banks and husband Max Handelman have been together for 20 years — since they met on their first day at the University of Pennsylvania, in fact — and married since 2003, she was unable to conceive, CONTINUED ▶

Elizabeth Banks (left)
and Brooklyn Decker in
*What to Expect When
You're Expecting*



Elizabeth Banks as baby-crazy Wendy in *What to Expect When You're Expecting*



Banks as costume-crazy Effie Trinket in *The Hunger Games*

► and Felix was born via a gestational surrogate.

"Being a mom is awesome, my baby's awesome," Banks gushes, but then invokes the pragmatism that's as much a part of her as any kookiness. "Of course, it's a challenge to be a working mom, but I think it takes a village and I have great help. And I'm really grateful that I have a great baby."

She's not kidding about that working mom thing. After already appearing in *Man on a Ledge*, *The Hunger Games* and *What to Expect* this year, the Massachusetts-raised Banks has the dramedy *People Like Us* and the comedy compilation *Movie 43*, for which she directed a segment, awaiting release. She's currently shooting *Frank or Francis*, the latest from head-game specialist Charlie Kaufman, the writer of *Being John Malkovich* and *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind*.

And, through Brownstone Productions, the company she runs with Handelman, she recently finished producing the musical comedy *Pitch Perfect*.

"We had a great time producing this thing, but it's the hardest I've ever worked," Banks says of *Pitch Perfect*, which is set in the geeky but cutthroat world of competitive a cappella singing. "For us it's awesome, we love it. But I don't recommend it for every couple. We're very yin and yang and we bring out the best in each other. Like any great partnership, we respect each other's strengths and correct each other's weaknesses. We're very lucky in that we have similar tastes in things."

"I really love producing, I've gotta say. I hope I direct soon, a little more. I've been directing a lot of shorts, sort of building my resumé. I hope there's development in that direction for me. I love acting, I'm very gratified by it for sure. But I don't have any control over it. As a producer, I get to have a lot of say, which I like! Also, it's very gratifying to help create jobs for other people."

Her increasingly behind-the-scenes approach to life in Hollywood isn't surprising, considering her take-it-or-leave-it attitude toward the spotlight.

"I don't purposely do much," she says when asked about the premiere-and-party scene. "I'm sort of just living my life. I choose roles that interest me and go to things that interest me, but I have a

very full and busy life. I've been making movies in a row for almost a year. I've been at my job. And I'm a new mom, so that's the other thing I'd rather be doing. I prefer to hang out with Felix."

As for her screen profile, which along with the aforementioned comedies encompasses heavy drama (*The Next Three Days*), horror (*The Uninvited*), historical re-enactment (*W.*, *Seabiscuit*) and even a little superheroics (the past three Spider-Man movies)...well, Banks is kind of happy she doesn't really have an established star persona.


"Nobody's pigeonholed me," she says triumphantly. "I'm not anybody's sweetheart. I've played three completely different roles so far this year. Part of that is because I still feel fresh and new because no one really knows what I am. And that's great for me."

Banks wouldn't mind being identified with one batty publicist in future *Hunger Games* sequels, though.

"I love the books, and there is no other role that I can play in the movies, so this is it, I just wanted to be a part of it," she admits. "I loved Effie from the beginning. She's obviously comic relief in the books, and I like anything where I can be funny."

"But there's so much more going on, there are so many levels. I just felt like I knew what to do with her, and that's rare for an actor. I think there are little gifts when you find a role that you know you can really take on." ☐

Bob Strauss lives in L.A. where he writes about movies and filmmakers.



THE PREGNANCY BIBLE

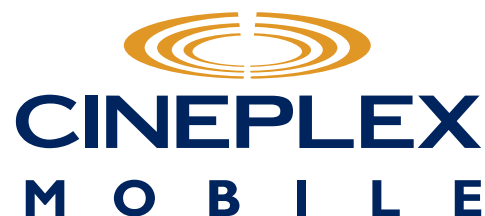
Heidi Murkoff and Sharon Mazel's book *What to Expect When You're Expecting* was first published in 1984. Since then it has become a bible for pregnant women, with more than 17 million copies in print. A *USA Today* article even claimed that 93 percent of women who read a pregnancy book read this one. Written as a series of questions and answers that follows the chronology of a pregnancy, the book has no narrative structure whatsoever. The movie's storyline was conceived, and gestated, entirely in Hollywood.

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Summer's 10 MUST-SEE MOVIES

■ BY INGRID RANDOJA

1 The Dark Knight Rises

The plot focuses on a disgraced Batman (**Christian Bale**) returning to Gotham City after eight years, and taking on the brutish Bane (**Tom Hardy**) and duplicitous Catwoman (**Anne Hathaway**). But what's director **Christopher Nolan's** third and final Batman movie really about? Pain. Bruce Wayne finally coming to terms with the pain of his past. Alfred's (**Michael Caine**) pain at feeling he's failed Bruce. And the terrifying Bane inhaling a never-ending supply of anesthesia to block out the pain racking his body while he delivers bone-crushing blows to his enemies. Is it wrong to take so much pleasure from so much pain?

OPENS JULY 20





2 **Prometheus** (3D)

Although it's not an *Alien* prequel, director **Ridley Scott** says his film "shares strands of *Alien's* DNA." We're intrigued, very, very intrigued. Scott brings his gloomy but beautiful artistic vision to this tale of the spaceship *Prometheus* and its crew — archeologist **Noomi Rapace**, captain **Idris Elba**, android **Michael Fassbender** and corporate suit **Charlize Theron** — who head to a faraway planet to study the relics of an advanced extraterrestrial civilization. Oh, if only it were that simple.

OPENS JUNE 8



3 **Snow White and the Huntsman**

Director **Rupert Sanders** describes his *Snow White* star **Kristen Stewart** as "someone who has some piss and vinegar in her." We agree. Here Stewart proves she's much more than a vampire magnet playing a tough-as-nails fairy tale heroine alongside man-of-the-moment **Chris Hemsworth** in this kick-ass retelling of the *Snow White* saga.

OPENS JUNE 1 CONTINUED ►



4 **Brave** (3D)

Thank you Pixar. We've been waiting a long time for you to make a movie featuring a female hero, and here it is. This gorgeous film follows Scottish Princess Merida (voiced by **Kelly Macdonald**), a fiery little lass determined to find adventure in a big man's world.

OPENS JUNE 22



5 **Rock of Ages**

Tom Cruise sings! That alone gets us through the door, but toss in **Alec Baldwin**, **Russell Brand**, **Julianne Hough**, and **Catherine Zeta-Jones** belting out a catalogue of '80s rock tunes and suddenly you've got a summer sing-a-long sensation.

OPENS JUNE 15



6 **Abraham Lincoln: Vampire Hunter** (3D)

Russian/Kazakh director **Timur Bekmambetov** (*Wanted*, *Night Watch*) makes frenetic, absurdist movies that push the action envelope. Letting him loose — in 3D no less — to adapt the bestseller in which Abraham Lincoln (**Benjamin Walker**) hunts down vampires involved in the slave trade is nothing less than inspired.

OPENS JUNE 22



7 The Bourne Legacy

Sometimes you just want to see a guy who's not wearing tights hit something. This summer's manliest man is **Jeremy Renner**, the new face of the fast-paced, nasty *Bourne* spy series that gave Matt Damon street cred. Now it's the franchise that could turn Renner into this generation's Steve McQueen.

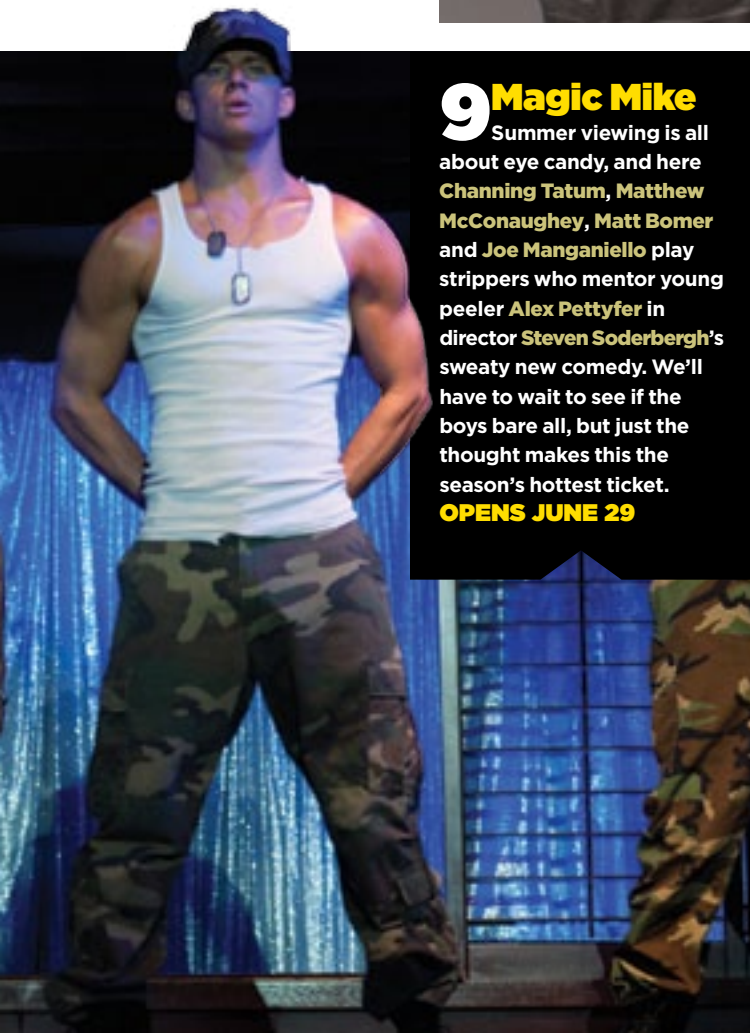
OPENS AUGUST 3



8 The Amazing Spider-Man (3D)

Why reboot the Spider-Man franchise a mere five years after it shut down? 3D baby. Spider-Man's (**Andrew Garfield**) web-swinging heroics were made for 3D — none of the three previous Spidey movies utilized the technology — and this new film uses state-of-the-art cameras and CGI that'll make viewers feel like they're swinging alongside the webbed one.

OPENS JULY 3



9 Magic Mike

Summer viewing is all about eye candy, and here **Channing Tatum**, **Matthew McConaughey**, **Matt Bomer** and **Joe Manganiello** play strippers who mentor young peeler **Alex Pettyfer** in director **Steven Soderbergh's** sweaty new comedy. We'll have to wait to see if the boys bare all, but just the thought makes this the season's hottest ticket.

OPENS JUNE 29



10 ParaNorman (3D)

It's hard to believe this slick, 3D animated pic about a boy who can speak with the dead was made using stop-motion, but it was, and the results are stunning. Look out Pixar, Laika Entertainment's follow-up to their underrated *Coraline* makes them a player in the animation game.

OPENS AUGUST 17

CASTING CALL

■ BY INGRID RANDOJA



MARTY & LEO: TAKE FIVE

Martin Scorsese and **Leonardo DiCaprio** will team up for their fifth film together, *The Wolf of Wall Street*, based on **Jordan Belfort**'s best-selling memoir. DiCaprio will play Belfort, who, in the 1990s, made hundreds of millions selling untradeable stocks by day while partying hard at night. He served 22 months in jail for stock fraud. Filming gets underway in New York this August for a 2013 release.



WHITAKER'S BUTLER SEES ALL

Forest Whitaker's brief TV career is over — *Criminal Minds: Suspect Behavior* was cancelled after one season — which means he can get back to making movies, including *The Butler*, in which he'll portray real-life White House butler **Eugene Allen**, who served eight American presidents between 1952 and 1986. Allen began his White House career as a "pantry man" when segregation was still in effect in the South, but lived to see **Barack Obama**'s election. *Precious* helmer **Lee Daniels** directs.



CROWE FLIES ONTO THE ARK

The biblical tale of Noah's Ark has been called the original disaster story, which makes it the perfect subject for a big-budget Hollywood movie. It's also been **Darren Aronofsky**'s (*Black Swan*) dream project, and the director finally starts shooting *Noah* this summer with **Russell Crowe** on board as Noah. Surprisingly, the last time Hollywood made a live-action movie about Noah and his Ark was way back in 1928.



COLLINS FIGHTS DEMONS

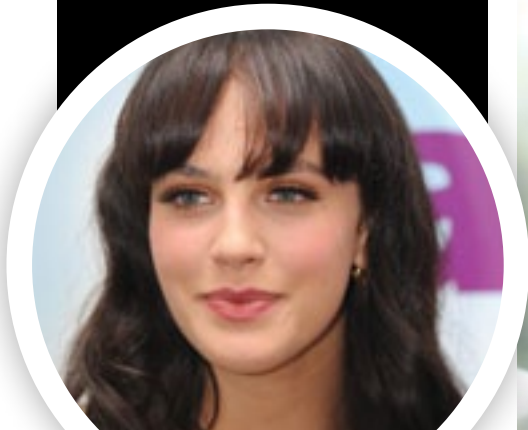
Move over **Jennifer Lawrence**, here comes **Lily Collins**. After a delay that saw the project switch studios, it's confirmed that *City of Bones*, the first book in **Cassandra Clare**'s bestselling, young adult series *The Mortal Instruments*, will be adapted for the big screen. Collins plays New York teenager Clary Fray, who discovers she has magical powers and joins in the fight against demons. **Harald Zwart** (*The Karate Kid*) directs what should be the first in a trilogy of films.



WHAT'S GOING ON WITH...

OUIJA

Battleship, the Hasbro board game-turned-movie hits screen this month, which makes us wonder what happened to *Ouija*, the other Hasbro game set to become a film. The plan was to make the occult game into a special-effects extravaganza with a rumoured \$100-million budget and **McG** as director. Universal dropped out at that price, but now the film's been reconfigured as a low-budget pic similar to *Paranormal Activity* and *Insidious*, so it's back on the sked.



FRESH FACE JESSICA BROWN FINDLAY

Fans of the British costume soap *Downton Abbey* know 22-year-old **Jessica Brown Findlay** as the outspoken Lady Sybil Crawley. Soon movie audiences will meet her, as she's just been cast as the female lead in *Winter's Tale*, the adaptation of author **Mark Helprin's** fantasy drama about a death-defying thief who becomes a messiah. Findlay beat out a bevy of starlets, including **Elizabeth Olsen** and Canadian **Sarah Gadon**, for the part.



JOHNSON'S HERCULEAN TASK

Dwayne Johnson hasn't starred in a swords-and-sandals movie since his breakout film, 2002's *The Scorpion King*. But the former wrestler takes on the ultimate he-man role in *Hercules*, playing the titular strongman in director **Brett Ratner's** adaptation of **Steve Moore's** graphic novel *Hercules: The Thracian War*. The film shoots in New Zealand this October.

ALSO IN THE WORKS

► **Keira Knightley** plays a woman with a secret in the romantic drama *Safe Haven*. ► The 1970s-set *Blood Ties* has cast **Billy Crudup** and **Clive Owen** as brothers who get involved in the criminal underworld to save their family. ► Illumination Entertainment, which gave us *Dr. Seuss's The Lorax*, will make an animated 3D version of *The Cat in The Hat*. ► **Megan Fox** and **Zoe Saldana** team up for the heist pic *Swindle*.

AT HOME

May's BEST DVD AND BLU-RAY

CHRONICLE MAY 15

In this well-received addition to the found-footage genre, three teens — likeable Matt (**Alex Russell**), popular Steve (**Michael B. Jordan**), and socially awkward Andrew (**Dane DeHaan**) — develop telekinetic powers after coming into contact with a mysterious substance inside a cave. At first, they use their new skills for fun and games. But then their true natures take over and the darkest of the three, Andrew, becomes a problem.



HAYWIRE MAY 1

This **Steven Soderbergh** thriller was built entirely to get mixed martial arts star **Gina Carano** onto the big screen. She plays a freelance mercenary who often works for the U.S. government rescuing hostages and the like. But when she's set up by the people she trusts, and survives, they're the ones in trouble.



THE WOMAN IN BLACK MAY 22

Daniel Radcliffe's first post-*Harry Potter* role has him playing a young lawyer who travels to a remote, and creepy, estate in Victorian England to settle the affairs of a recently deceased woman. But what fun would it be if that creepy estate wasn't haunted? Enter the woman in black.



GOON MAY 29

Montrealer **Jay Baruchel** co-wrote the script for this ode to hockey enforcers that stars **Seann William Scott** as Doug Glatt, a minor league hockey player who can barely skate but sure knows how to fight. Baruchel plays Glatt's buddy and **Liev Schreiber** steps in as a rival tough guy from another team.

Something Special

UP ALL NIGHT WITH ROBERT DOWNEY SR.

MAY 22



You know and love his son, now get acquainted with **Robert Downey Sr.**, the underground American filmmaker from the 1960s and '70s whose films probed matters of race, politics and consumerism. This set from the Criterion Collection features five of his experimental films.

Games Why We Love...



MAY PAYNE 3

MAY 15

PS3, XBOX 360, PC

We're eager to see what new lead writer, **Dan Houser**, of the *Grand Theft Auto* series, does with an older, balder, more cynical Max Payne, now living in São Paulo, Brazil, where he has to track down the kidnapped trophy wife of a wealthy businessman.

MORE MOVIES ▶ JOYFUL NOISE (MAY 1) ▶ NEW YEAR'S EVE (MAY 1)
▶ THE DEVIL INSIDE (MAY 15) ▶ ALBERT NOBBS (MAY 15) ▶ ONE FOR THE MONEY (MAY 15)
▶ THE GREY (MAY 22) ▶ THIS MEANS WAR (MAY 22) ▶ RED TAILS (MAY 22)

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RETURN ENGAGEMENT

A *Streetcar Named Desire* screens as part of Cineplex's Classic Film Series on May 16th and 27th. Go to Cineplex.com/events for times and locations.

The MAN

You're looking at the man who changed acting forever.

Marlon Brando's acclaimed turn as brutish Stanley Kowalski in 1951's *A Streetcar Named Desire* was the wake-up call acting needed. Before Brando stormed onto the scene actors played it safe, there was an accepted theatricality to their performances. Brando changed all that — he unleashed his emotions onto the characters he played, and suddenly it was okay for an actor to sweat, grunt, cry and rage on screen.

As the vulgar Stanley, he terrorizes his psychologically frail sister-in-law Blanche DuBois (Vivien Leigh), and acts violently towards his wife, Stella (Kim Hunter). It's because of Brando's brilliance that he turns an ugly role into — dare we say — a thing of beauty. —IR

FINALLY...

HAPPY VICTORIA DAY!

Amid the two-fours, the barbecues and the brave first camping trips of the season, we encourage you to spend a bit of time this Victoria Day long weekend (May 19-21) with the lady herself, Queen Victoria. Dead for more than a century, Vic has recently experienced a resurgence at the cinema. Last month we were introduced to her claymation version (voiced by Imelda Staunton) in *The Pirates! Band of Misfits* (3) and she appears briefly in this month's *Hysteria* (2) in which she's presented with an early vibrator. Vicky's other cinematic representations are indeed eclectic, ranging from Emily Blunt's vibrant, dare we say hot, monarch in 2009's *The Young Victoria* (1) to Judi Dench's depiction of a mourning royal in 1997's *Mrs. Brown* (5) and Kathy Bates' cameo in the 2004 remake of *Around the World in 80 Days* (4). —MW



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