Margot Robbie and her girl gang talk BIRDS OF PREY (AND THE FANTABULOUS EMANCIPATION OF ONE HARLEY QUINN)
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Coming of Age
Hugh Grant loves that he’s no longer a fresh-faced rom-com star, and tells us that getting to play weirdos, like the sleazy private investigator in director Guy Ritchie’s The Gentlemen, makes acting more fun

BY MARA REINSTEIN

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Margot Robbie returns as fun-loving psycho Harley Quinn in the Suicide Squad follow-up, Birds of Prey (And the Fantabulous Emancipation of One Harley Quinn), an irreverent action pic that sees Quinn creating a girl gang of her own. Here the Aussie star and her castmates – Mary Elizabeth Winstead, Jurnee Smollett-Bell, Rosie Perez and Ella Jay Basco – talk about joining forces in the name of grrrl power

BY MARA REINSTEIN
Ganging Up

Bad girls, bad girls, whatcha gonna do? Whatcha gonna do when they come for you?

While there’s still a ways to go, the changes in Hollywood since #MeToo blew up in October 2017 have been surprisingly swift, with a noticeable increase in films starring and about women. That’s great.

Perhaps the biggest trend, though, is one I didn’t expect — the number of films about groups of dangerous women coming together to do criminal things. In Ocean’s 8, eight ladies with various illicit skills join forces to steal a whack of diamonds at the Met Gala. In Widows, four women who’ve just lost their heist-loving husbands in a botched robbery unite to finish the job. In The Kitchen, three wives of New York gangsters take over their husbands’ business after their men go to jail. And in Hustlers a handful of strippers hatch a plan to drug, blackmail and rob their male clients.

The women in these films are largely unapologetic and, for the most part, the filmmakers have resisted the temptation to give them the type of tragic background stories that fully justify their actions. They’re fed up, pissed off, have been treated unfairly and often have their backs against the wall but their decisions are their own and the things they do are simply bad by polite society’s standards.

It’s a bit shocking at times, but no different than all the movies we’ve seen about gangs of men committing crimes — Ocean’s Eleven, The Godfather, Reservoir Dogs. Instead of assuming that complex female characters have to be virtuous and nurturing, women are being shown from all angles, even the unflattering ones, in the name of a good story.

Though, I have to admit, at times I’ve been left craving a bit more heroism mixed in with the badassery.

Enter Birds of Prey (And the Fantabulous Emancipation of One Harley Quinn).

This spinoff of 2016’s comic book movie Suicide Squad — about a bunch of supervillains forced to be disposable assets for the U.S. government — was supposed to focus on that film’s breakout character, Margot Robbie’s vigilante antihero Harley Quinn. That is, until Robbie stepped up and said, nope, she wanted this to be a film about a group of women. So, Harley unites with the Birds of Prey — Huntress, Black Canary and a cop named Renee Montoya — to save a 12-year-old girl who has gotten herself in a pickle by stealing a massive diamond from a very bad man.

The fact that the Birds of Prey are leaning toward the hero end of the hero/villain spectrum isn’t going to keep them from breaking laws, blowing stuff up and hurting people. It’s just that they’re doing it for the right reasons. Or right-ish, anyway. They’re bad girls with a higher purpose.

For our cover story, “Prey For Them,” page 38, we spoke with all five of the film’s female stars — Margot Robbie, Rosie Perez, Mary Elizabeth Winstead, Jurnee Smollett-Bell and Ella Jay Basco — about the physical rigours of making this movie, and why Robbie “really, really wanted this to be a girl gang film.”

Elsewhere in this issue, Hugh Grant tells us why The Gentlemen is the kind of movie he was always meant to make (page 24), Michael B. Jordan inspires you to see Just Mercy (page 28), and we present our 2020 Movie Preview (page 32), a rundown of 10 of the year’s most anticipated films, including a new 007 pic, the next chapter in Wonder Woman’s story and two new Marvel flicks.
GO RAPS?
We’re going to choose to believe Idris Elba was cheering for the Toronto Raptors when he was at this basketball game between the Raps and Atlanta Hawks in Atlanta. He was there shooting The Suicide Squad.

J.FK AT JFK
Extra credit to Jennifer Lopez for stomping around in those sky-high stilettos while filming Marry Me at New York’s JFK Airport.

THAT’S A STRETCH
Lin-Manuel Miranda interacts with members of Agua Sol y Sereno during La Fiesta de Pueblo in Vega Alta, Puerto Rico.
**SHE HAS ARRIVED**

Jennifer Hudson shoots a scene for *Respect*, the Aretha Franklin story, at New York’s Rockefeller Center.

**THE GLITTERATI**

Kristen Stewart (centre) and her *Charlie’s Angels* director and co-star Elizabeth Banks (right) shine at their film’s L.A. premiere.

**IN THE PINK**

Fabulous in fuchsia, Lily Collins shoots a scene for *Emily in Paris* in, well, Paris.
WE'VE LONG WAITED FOR A FEMALE James Bond and, at the risk of overstating things, when it comes to The Rhythm Section the comparison may be more than just lip service.

Based on the first of a series of four novels by Mark Burnell and starring Blake Lively, the film was produced by Barbara Broccoli and her half-brother Michael G. Wilson under the EON Productions banner. You may recognize Broccoli and Wilson as the producers of the last nine James Bond films — from 1995’s GoldenEye, starring Pierce Brosnan, to the upcoming Daniel Craig entry No Time to Die, which hits theatres April 8th.

The duo took over from Barbara’s father and Michael’s stepfather, Albert R. “Cubby” Broccoli, who produced the previous 007 films going all the way back to 1962’s Dr. No.

The Rhythm Section has Lively playing Stephanie Patrick, a woman who loses her family in a plane crash and then finds out the crash was no accident — there was a bomb on board. Obsessed with avenging her family’s deaths, Patrick trains as an assassin and a spy and sets out to find those responsible.

Just as Bond films are notoriously tough shoots, filming was no piece of cake on The Rhythm Section for the former star of TV’s Gossip Girl. An injury to Lively’s hand while filming an action sequence required two surgeries and a six-month break in production while she recovered.

There’s no word of future Stephanie Patrick films quite yet, but if The Rhythm Section is a success, Burnell’s three subsequent stories about Patrick — Chameleon, Gemini and The Third Woman — could provide source material. —MW

THE RHYTHM SECTION OPENS JANUARY 31ST.
BETTER WITH BUTTER

EVEN BETTER WITH LAYERED BUTTER

ASK FOR LAYERED AT CONCESSION
VALENTINE’S DAY PICK

IT’S A DATE!

We’ve loved LaKeith Stanfield in so many roles — as lobotomized Andre in Get Out, as Snoop Dogg in Straight Outta Compton, as Donald Glover’s philosophy-spouting friend Darius on Atlanta, and as Cash, a telemarketer who discovers a bizarre plot to transform people into horses in Sorry to Bother You.

But, so far, we haven’t seen much of the rapper/actor as a romantic lead, which is why we’re so excited about the unapologetically romantic love story The Photograph that hits theatres this Valentine’s Day.

Stanfield plays a journalist working on a story about a famous photographer who has recently passed away. His research leads him to the photographer’s daughter (Issa Rae), who is wary of love. A steamy relationship ensues.

Skip the chocolates and the cheesy stuffed animal and just go straight to the movie.

“‘The thing that’s crazy is we still have that chemistry. I was really surprised how we didn’t miss a day.’

—WILL SMITH ON REUNITING WITH CO-STAR MARTIN LAWRENCE TO MAKE THE THREQUEL BAD BOYS FOR LIFE AFTER A 16-YEAR HIATUS

ON LOCATION

I SPY SOMETHING CANADIAN

Think you’re a good sleuth? Keep your eyes peeled during the new Dave Bautista family film My Spy and you should be able to spot a few Toronto locales subbing in for Chicago. Take the skating scene that’s in the trailer. That was shot at the rink in front of the North York Civic Centre.

THE PHOTOGRAPH OPENS FEBRUARY 14TH.
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SONIC’S READY TO PLAY

You have more power than you know. When the original trailer for Sonic the Hedgehog, the animated feature based on the speedy videogame character, came out in April of last year fans were incensed about the titular character’s appearance. Too human! Where are his gloves? Scary teeth!

So, director Jeff Fowler and his team went back to the drawing board, or whatever tools they use to create digital animation, and came up with a new and improved Sonic that looks more like the videogame version.

While doing press for his TV series Kidding, the film’s human star Jim Carrey, who plays the villainous Dr. Robotnik, acknowledged the change saying, “Sometimes you find that the collective consciousness decides it wants something and then when it gets it, it goes, ‘Okay, I don’t want it.’”

The reaction to the retooled Sonic has been much better.

GRUDGE MATCH

There’s a website called #StarringJohnCho, on which a fan photoshops Korean-American actor John Cho’s face onto blockbuster movie poster characters played by white guys. The 47-year-old Cho has nothing to do with the online endeavour, but has nonetheless been acting out its point that Asian-American faces work just fine in any kind of movie Hollywood can imagine. From the Harold and Kumar stoner comedies to Mr. Sulu in the current Star Trek movie franchise to a recent run of acclaimed indie dramas, Cho has exhibited ever-increasing versatility and depth. Currently recovering from an injury on the set of Netflix’ Cowboy Bebop series, Cho can be seen this month in another reboot of an Asian genre landmark, the seminal J-horror ghost story The Grudge. BOB STRAUSS spoke with Cho about the film.

What attracted you to this reboot of a series that’s already gone through previous Japanese and Hollywood iterations?

It’s a great character piece. That’s what’s so interesting about horror right now; it’s digging into how people behave and think.

What does the new director Nicolas Pesce do with the material that’s different from Ju-On and earlier Grudge creator Takashi Shimizu’s vision?

He’s a very interesting young director, but Nic’s just a very mature filmmaker already. One of the interesting things about the movie that struck me when I first read the script was that there are no young people. I’m the youngest character in the movie, and to have all of these mature characters…I said, I’m just for that it runs counter to everything we’re seeing, and counter to horror in general. And it’s about real adult problems. It’s a very interesting, soulful but spooky story.

You play a real estate agent who walks into the wrong listing. Can you tell us more about your character, Peter Spencer?

You know, I’m on a run of these characters who have family problems in films like Searching and Columbus. In this, I worked with a wonderful actress named Betty Gilpin — she’s in GLOW — and that was one of the pleasures of that movie. She plays Peter’s wife and business partner; we have issues.

You’ve arguably been the most solid Asian-American presence on screen for decades now. How do you feel about that, and that you’ve gotten to work with more Asian-American filmmakers in recent years?

I’m hopeful we’re on the cusp of seeing a lot more storytellers, and that’s what it’s about to me. Telling stories the way we want to tell them, much less about me being in these movies. Whatever that #StarringJohnCho is, it’s not me, it’s separate from me, it’s my face….

And I’m happy to be working! I don’t want to give you the wrong impression.

What’s really been the most satisfying part of the last few years, though, has been collaborating with, particularly, great Asian-American filmmakers.

Do you know anything about future Star Trek movies?

I don’t know anything. I’m glad I don’t know anything so I don’t have to lie to you. I’ve gotten no calls from Quentin Tarantino.

THE GRUDGE OPENS JANUARY 3RD.
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Hannah Gross stars in the Niagara Falls mystery Disappearance at Clifton Hill

The Daughter of Canadian Actors
Paul Gross (Due South) and Martha Burns (Slings and Arrows), Hannah Gross is carving out an eclectic career of her own.

Over the past few years the Toronto born and raised actor has played Debbie, the intellectual girlfriend to Jonathan Groff’s FBI agent on Netflix’ Mindhunter, Joaquin Phoenix’s young mother in Joker flashbacks, and now Laure, the level-headed sister to Tuppence Middleton’s Abby in the Canadian drama Disappearance at Clifton Hill, which made its debut at the Toronto International Film Festival this past September.

Laure, who works in surveillance at a casino, provides the stability when erratic Abby returns home to Niagara Falls following their mother’s death. They’ve inherited the family’s tacky Clifton Hill motel and while Laure wants to sell, Abby is preoccupied with investigating a mysterious kidnapping she witnessed in the area as a child. Though, whether that kidnapping took place at all is a mystery all its own.

What was it like shooting this film in Niagara Falls?
It was so fun and weird. It’s definitely by far the most time I’ve spent there. I went back and forth to Toronto on weekends. I was not as intrepid as Tuppence and Albert [Shin], the director, who stayed there the whole time but yeah, it was a particularly mysterious time of year. It was December and right before the holidays so there was still tourism but definitely not as much. You had the quality of any sort of tourist vacation town that you can tell is really, for the most part, alive during the summer months.

Tell us about the relationship between the sisters, Laure and Abby.
The sisters provide an example of diverging responses to an upbringing, where Abby is on one side of the spectrum and Laure, well she’s probably grown tired. [She has] this Type A personality so growing up in a motel with wacky parents is probably very stressful. Her response to that was to choose a life of great stability and security which is why she takes great pride in her job and in her home life with her husband.

Any reactions after seeing the film?
I’m really proud to be a part of this movie, I love it a lot. It hearkens back to a quality in cinema that’s very much of the ‘70s. It’s kind of a playfulness with the genre and with the milieu.

Your next film, Falling, is Viggo Mortensen’s directorial debut. Is that right?
Yeah, though you wouldn’t be able to tell that at all. He really ran an incredibly beautiful set. I think he’s just an incredibly generous, open person and those characteristics imbued the set with the same qualities. There was a real care involved in everything, every detail and how every person was treated, and then in return everyone treated the film with the same care and respect. So yeah, it was one of the most special working environments I’ve ever been a part of.

Who do you play?
I play [Mortensen’s] mother…. In flashbacks, not present day. —MARNI WEISZ

DISAPPEARANCE AT CLIFTON HILL OPENS FEBRUARY 28TH.
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TITLE SPONSOR
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Elizabeth Banks
In London for the U.K. premiere of Charlie’s Angels.

Daniel Craig
At the Knives Out premiere in Westwood, California.

Naomi Watts
In Baden-Baden, Germany, for the Bambi Awards.

Ryan Reynolds
In New York for “A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to Cure Parkinson’s.”
↑ Chris Evans
At the Knives Out premiere in Westwood, California.

↑ Janelle Monáe
At the Hollywood premiere of Queen & Slim.

↑ Kristen Bell
At the Frozen II premiere in Hollywood.

↑ Cynthia Erivo
In Beverly Hills for the SAG-AFTRA Foundation’s Patron of the Artists Awards.
**IN THEATRES**

**JANUARY 3**

**The Grudge**
This reboot of *The Grudge* horror franchise casts Andrea Riseborough as a cop and single mom who investigates a possible murder in a vacant house. She learns the house is cursed and all who enter, including a real estate agent (John Cho), are doomed to suffer a violent death.

SEE JOHN CHO INTERVIEW, PAGE 12.

**JANUARY 10**

**Underwater**
See spotlight box.

**Like a Boss**
Good friends Mel (Tiffany Haddish) and Mia’s (Rose Byrne) struggling cosmetics company gets an influx of cash from investor Claire Luna (Salma Hayek), who then steals the gals’ products for her own company. Mel and Mia decide to take drastic action to get back what belongs to them.

**My Spy**
Former wrestler Dave Bautista has established a fine acting career with appearances in the *Guardians* pics, *Stuber* and now this family comedy that casts him as tough CIA operative JJ, whose mission is compromised by nine-year-old Sophie (Chloe Coleman). Sophie agrees to keep the mission a secret as long as JJ trains her to be a spy.

**Cunningham**
Lovers of modern dance will appreciate this gorgeous documentary about dancer/choreographer Merce Cunningham and his iconic dance company. Director Alla Kovgan uses archival footage and stunning recreations of Cunningham’s groundbreaking works to paint a vivid, moving picture.

**UNDERWATER**

Kristen Stewart continues to vary her film choices — indie fare (*Seberg*), studio pics (*Charlie’s Angels*) and now this horror/thriller in which she plays a scientist working in an undersea laboratory that is rocked by an earthquake. Not only does the event damage the lab, it unleashes an unseen monster. Co-starring Vincent Cassel, Jessica Henwick and T.J. Miller. → OPENS JANUARY 10TH
JANUARY 17
Bad Boys for Life
It’s been almost 17 years since we last saw Miami detectives Mike Lowrey (Will Smith) and Marcus Burnett (Martin Lawrence) cracking wise and taking down criminals. In this third film in the series, Marcus is working as a police inspector and ready to retire when an unknown assailant attempts to murder Mike. The pair reunites to discover who wants Mike dead.

JANUARY 24
The Gentlemen
Writer-director Guy Ritchie is a master of the violent, stylish British crime pic, having helmed Snatch, RocknRolla and Lock, Stock and Two Smoking Barrels. His return to the genre stars Matthew McConaughey as Mickey Pearson, a marijuana drug lord living in London who wants to cash out of his profitable business, leading to all sorts of criminal shenanigans. Co-starring Hugh Grant, Charlie Hunnam, Colin Farrell, Michelle Dockery, Henry Golding and Jeremy Strong. SEE HUGH GRANT INTERVIEW, PAGE 24. → OPENS JANUARY 24TH

JANUARY 31
The Rhythm Section
When Stephanie Patrick’s (Blake Lively) parents and siblings perish in a plane crash she spirals into a drug-fuelled life working as a prostitute. However, when she learns that the crash was not an accident, she teams with a British operative (Jude Law) and becomes an assassin to find those responsible for her family’s murders. Based on the first book in author Mark Burnell’s Stephanie Patrick series.

Dolittle
Not only is Dolittle Robert Downey Jr.’s first film after Avengers: Endgame, it’s his first family film since 2006’s The Shaggy Dog (and he played second fiddle to Tim Allen back then). Loosely based on the 1922 children’s book The Voyages of Doctor Dolittle, the film has Downey playing the 19th-century veterinarian who can speak with animals and goes on a mission to find a cure for the ailing Queen Victoria (Jessie Buckley). The voice cast for the film’s talking critters is top-notch and includes Emma Thompson as macaw Polynesia, Rami Malek as gorilla Chee-Chee, John Cena as polar bear Yoshi and Tom Holland as dog Jip.

The Last Full Measure
A campaign to award the Medal of Honor to a heroic airman (Jeremy Irvine) who died in Vietnam 34 years earlier unearths a long-buried story.
SONIC THE HEDGEHOG

Sonic the Hedgehog was Sega’s most popular videogame character throughout the 1990s and now, almost three decades later, he comes rushing onto the big screen as a CGI character in this live-action movie. The superspeedy alien Sonic (voiced by Ben Schwartz) and human pal Tom (James Marsden) hit the road to evade capture from Dr. Robotnik (Jim Carrey) who wants to harness Sonic’s power. → OPENS FEBRUARY 14TH

FEBRUARY 7

Birds of Prey (And the Fantabulous Emancipation of One Harley Quinn)
The year’s most extravagantly titled film is the follow-up to 2016’s Suicide Squad and stars Margot Robbie as the delightfully deranged Harley Quinn, who has split from the Joker and joins forces with Black Canary (Jurnee Smollett-Bell), Renee Montoya (Rosie Perez), and Huntress (Mary Elizabeth Winstead) to save a girl (Ella, forces with Black Canary from the Joker and joins Harley Quinn, who has split delightfully deranged 20 Portia Doubleday and Maggie Q Starring a place of nightmares. come true and turns it into setting of an island resort that takes the show’s of Blumhouse Productions got a full-on horror courtesy fun, surprise! Instead, we’ve show was going to be fluffy take on the cheesy ‘70s TV Fantasy Island See spotlight box.

FEBRUARY 21

The Call of the Wild
Harrison Ford puts his grizzled appearance to good use in this adaptation of Jack London’s 1903 novel about a dog named Buck, who is stolen from his California home and sold as a sled dog in Alaska. After being mistreated by various owners, he’s rescued by kind outdoorsman John Thornton (Ford), who takes Buck with him as he searches for gold.

Bloodshot
Vin Diesel plays comic-book character Bloodshot, a soldier whose bloodstream contains a billion nanobots that give him superstrength and enable him to heal and interface with technology. With his memory wiped, he believes the people he’s killing are responsible for his wife’s death, but he slowly learns he’s being manipulated by a shady doctor (Guy Pearce).

Brahms: The Boy II
This sequel to the 2016 horror The Boy finds a mom (Katie Holmes) and her two kids moving into the Heelshire Mansion where her young son (Christopher Convery) finds a porcelain doll named Brahms. It isn’t long before strange things start happening in the house, with signs pointing to the doll.

Come to Daddy
Elijah Wood plays Norval, an insecure man struggling with alcohol dependence who hopes a reunion with his estranged father (Stephen McHattie) in a secluded cabin might help him figure things out. Unfortunately, when he meets dear old dad, he realizes that’s not going to happen.

FEBRUARY 28

Wendy
Writer-director Benh Zeitlin (Beasts of the Southern Wild) dives into the Peter Pan mythos with his dreamlike tale about a little girl named Wendy (Devin France) who escapes with a gaggle of children to a mysterious island where they can play at will and aging and time move in strange ways.

The Invisible Man
H.G. Wells’ iconic novel serves as the base material for this psychological thriller starring Elisabeth Moss as a woman whose abusive ex (Oliver Jackson-Cohen) commits suicide. However, she begins to suspect he is actually alive — but invisible — and dedicated to driving her mad.

Disappearance at Clifton Hill
After her mother dies, Abby (Tuppence Middleton) returns home to Niagara Falls where she grew up with her sister Laure (Hannah Gross) in the tacky motel owned by their family. She’s there to settle her mom’s will but becomes preoccupied by a childhood memory of seeing a boy kidnapped and thrown in the trunk of a car. See Hannah Gross interview, page 14.
THE ULTIMATE SACRIFICE DESERVES THE HIGHEST HONOR.

THE LAST FULL MEASURE

INSPIRED BY THE INCREDIBLE TRUE STORY

ONLY IN THEATRES

JANUARY 24
IT’S 1947 AND PLAYWRIGHT ARTHUR MILLER is just about ready to call it quits. His first play, The Man Who Had All the Luck, closed on Broadway after just four performances. He vowed if his second effort, All My Sons, failed he would stop writing. However, the play was a success and continues to be remounted, including this acclaimed 2019 production starring Bill Pullman and Sally Field. The story revolves around Joe Keller (Pullman), whose company knowingly shipped defective airplane parts to the military during World War II causing the death of 21 pilots. His wife, Kate (Field), knows Joe is guilty but is in denial and their secrets are exposed one summer’s day when family and friends come to visit. The play is strikingly relevant 72 years after it debuted as corporations and individuals continue to value profit over human life. —IR

NATIONAL THEATRE LIVE

Miller’s Masterpiece

Sally Field and Bill Pullman give powerful performances in Arthur Miller’s classic play All My Sons

ALL MY SONS SCREENS ON JANUARY 18TH, 23RD, FEBRUARY 2ND AND 5TH.

INSPIRING MUSIC
Grammy-winning rap-rock duo 21 Pilots took its name from All My Sons

MORE NATIONAL THEATRE
Look for three more National Theatre productions in the next two months — Present Laughter, Hansard and Cyrano de Bergerac
FRIDA. Viva la Vida

Immerse yourself in the life and works of renowned Mexican artist Frida Kahlo in director Giovanni Troilo’s vivid documentary that recounts her life, which is marred by an accident that leaves her in constant pain, but also serves as the inspiration for her work as an artist and social revolutionary. → JANUARY 19, 22, 26, 28

NFL AT CINEPLEX

Divisional Round
SUN JAN 19

AFC & NFC Conference Finals
SUN JAN 26

Super Bowl LIV
SUN FEB 2

GALLERIES & EXHIBITIONS

FRIDA. Viva la Vida
SUN JAN 19
WED JAN 22
SUN JAN 26
TUES JAN 28

Lucian Freud: A Self Portrait
SUN FEB 16
TUES FEB 25
WED FEB 26

FLASHBACK FILM SERIES

The Dark Knight
FRI JAN 10 TO THURS JAN 23

The Karate Kid
FRI JAN 24
Airplane! (40th Anniversary)
FRI FEB 7 TO THURS FEB 13

12 Monkeys (25th Anniversary)
FRI FEB 21 TO THURS FEB 27

THE MET OPERA

Wozzeck (Berg)
Live: SAT JAN 11

Manon (Massenet)
Encores: MON JAN 13
WED JAN 15
SUN JAN 19

Madama Butterfly (Puccini)
Encores: SAT JAN 25
MON JAN 27
WED JAN 29
SUN FEB 9

The Gershwins’ Porgy and Bess
Live: SAT FEB 1

Akhnaten (Glass)
Encores: SAT FEB 15
MON FEB 17
WED FEB 19
SUN FEB 23

Agrippina (Handel)
Live: SAT FEB 29

CLASSIC FILMS

On the Waterfront
FRI JAN 17 TO THURS JAN 30

The Color Purple
FRI FEB 14 TO THURS FEB 27

BOLSHOI BALLET

Giselle
Live: SUN JAN 26

Swan Lake
Live: SUN FEB 23

ONE NIGHTERS IN VIP

Pride and Prejudice (2005)
MON FEB 24

SCREEN JAMS

Popstar: Never Stop Never Stopping Singalong
FRI FEB 28
SAT FEB 29

ANIME SERIES

Weathering with You
WED JAN 15
THURS JAN 16

CLASSIC FILMS

The Color Purple
Steven Spielberg was a surprising choice to direct an adaptation of Alice Walker’s Pulitzer Prize-winning novel that’s set in 1930s Georgia and focuses on the life of Celie (Whoopi Goldberg), an African-American woman who learns to love herself after a life of hardship. Spielberg can thank Goldberg and the film’s entire cast, including Oprah Winfrey in her movie debut, for their stunning performances that bring the book’s unforgettable characters to life. → FEBRUARY 14-27

CLASSIC FILMS

The Color Purple
We know you loved the adorable, stammering Hugh Grant of such rom-coms as Notting Hill and Love, Actually. So did we. Hugh Grant, on the other hand? Well, he's much happier in his new role as a mature, well-worn character actor playing "weirdos, narcissists and freaks" in films like The Gentlemen.

BY MARA REINSTEIN
T’S EASY TO UNDERSTAND why Hugh Grant is in such an upbeat mood on this chilly New York City evening. He’s just arrived from London to shoot the high-profile HBO thriller The Undoing with Nicole Kidman, and he’s about to head out to have dinner with his older brother.

Oh, one more thing: At 59, he’s thrilled to have finally become the character actor he always aspired to be.

“It’s delightful to get older for me, personally,” says Grant while sitting by the roaring fireplace of his hotel-apartment. “I don’t get offered romantic leading men roles anymore. It’s a relief.”

This is not a knock against classics such as Four Weddings and a Funeral, Notting Hill and Love, Actually. Grant knows that playing a sweet and stammering love interest enabled him to go from struggling actor to matinee idol. He knows these films hold a special place in your heart, not to mention your Netflix queue. And he is appreciative. “It was lovely in the sense that I was lucky to be given great big, expensive films and be paid very well,” he explains. “But it doesn’t particularly suit me as an actor. What suits me better are weirdos and narcissists and freaks.”

He gets to be all of the above in The Gentlemen.

The latest rollicking crime caper from director Guy Ritchie (Snatch, Sherlock Holmes), the film follows an American marijuana dealer, played by Matthew McConaughey, who’s living large in London. But when he decides to cash out on his empire it triggers all sorts of dirty machinations from competing gangsters. In a stuffed ensemble that also includes Henry Golding, Charlie Hunnam, Michelle Dockery, Colin Farrell and Mark Strong, it’s Grant who gets the poster’s coveted “and…” billing status, and Grant who narrates the film’s first trailer, tying the whole sordid story together.

“I play a sleazy private detective working for a sleazy newspaper,” Grant says of his character, Fletcher, who’s digging deep into the gangster world. “It’s quite an extreme characterization for me.”

Indeed, even though Grant has been in the public eye for more than 25 years, he’s almost unrecognizable in that trailer thanks to a goatee and high-pitched Cockney accent (sort of Michael Caine meets David Beckham). “It was a lot of fun,” he says, then adds for emphasis, “Lot of fun.”

Grant proudly notes he’s been a team player dating back to his days at the prestigious Oxford University, where he spent his free time on the rugby field and performing in comedy theatre troupes. After graduation he tried his hand at writing commercial jingles and acted in a few British period dramas and American TV movies before breaking out as a sweet bachelor in 1994’s Four Weddings and a Funeral. A long run as a Movie Star ensued during which, he says, “I probably did too many romantic comedies.”

In recent years, Grant has earned accolades galore for disappearing into his characters in films such as Florence Foster Jenkins and Paddington 2. In 2019 he was nominated for an Emmy and a Golden Globe for playing the impish, murder-plotting politician Charles Thorpe in the fact-based BBC miniseries A Very English Scandal.

“I slightly regret that I didn’t do more of [these parts] throughout my career because that’s what I did as a kid in school,” he says. “What I knew before was just doing silly voices, silly characters. I never really felt entirely comfortable just being a romantic leading man,” he says.

Grant won’t go so far as to say he’s experiencing a renaissance but acknowledges that the best work of his career is probably yet to come.

“It’s a relief,” he says, “being able to look myself in the mirror as an actor.”

Mara Reinstein is a freelance entertainment writer based in New York.
SCARY GOOD

Steven Spielberg teams with a Canadian director and largely Canadian cast for *The Turning*

Henry James’ novella *The Turn of the Screw* has been called the most analyzed ghost story ever written, so it’s no surprise that it has inspired an opera, a ballet, a Broadway play and numerous films and TV series.

Now a new big-screen horror, *The Turning*, introduces this thought-provoking story to a new generation with help from a fascinating grouping of filmmakers, starting with executive producer Steven Spielberg, who’s been passionate about getting this film made for years. The spooky pic also has Canadian director Floria Sigismondi (*The Runaways*) behind the camera, instructing fellow Canucks Mackenzie Davis (*Tully*, *Terminator: Dark Fate*) and Finn Wolfhard (Netflix’ *Stranger Things*).

As for the story, it has been moved from an English country estate to one in Maine where Kate (Davis) has been hired as the governess for two orphaned children (Wolfhard and *The Florida Project*’s Brooklynn Prince). But she soon starts to feel the estate, and maybe the children, are under the influence of supernatural forces.

Expect this to be a stylish retelling. The bulk of Sigismondi’s directing career has been spent crafting videos for the likes of David Bowie, Leonard Cohen, Björk, Rihanna, The White Stripes, Dua Lipa and Katy Perry. She also helmed Justin Timberlake’s “Mirrors,” which won Video of the Year at the 2013 MTV Video Music Awards. —MW

*THE TURNING OPENS JANUARY 24TH.*
Michael B. Jordan is making a habit of choosing powerful movies with social-justice themes and *Just Mercy* is no different. Here he plays real-life lawyer Bryan Stevenson, who has made it his life’s work to give wrongly incarcerated prisoners a second chance, including the subject of this film, Walter McMillian.

**Michael B. Jordan**

We saw it in 2013’s *Fruitvale Station*, the true story of Oscar Grant III, a young Black man who died after being shot in the back by Oakland transit police. We saw it again in his performance as the socially conscious villain Erik Killmonger in 2018’s *Black Panther*. Killmonger’s radical sense of justice and effort to empower the disenfranchised made us question whether he was a villain at all.

In his latest film, *Just Mercy*, the 32-year-old actor tackles the issue of criminal injustice by playing real-life, Harvard-educated defense lawyer Bryan Stevenson, who moved to Alabama in the late 1980s and founded the Equal Justice Initiative, which provides legal counsel to death-row prisoners who may have been wrongly convicted.
With the help of prisoners’ rights activist Eva Ansley (Brie Larson), Stevenson takes up the egregious case of Walter McMillian (Jamie Foxx), who was charged with the murder of a young white woman. Although McMillian was attending a church fish fry with his family at the time of the killing, the combination of a shoddy defense lawyer, a corrupt sheriff and a racist legal system led to his conviction and death sentence.

Jordan and Foxx give stellar performances in director Destin Daniel Cretton’s (The Glass Castle) legal drama that is both infuriating and uplifting.

“I got a chance to watch Bryan Stevenson and listen to him talk, watch him speak and I was very, very moved,” says Jordan on the line from Berlin where he’s filming Without Remorse, a thriller based on the Tom Clancy novel.

“I didn’t know that much about him and I was very curious about why he wasn’t as popular as he should be due to the work he was doing. After meeting with him I realized he was a very humble, very self-sacrificing man who didn’t like the limelight. So I realized the more people who knew his story, knew what was going on, it would bring more attention to the cause for which he is fighting and could actually help.”

In addition to starring in the movie Jordan served as one of its executive producers and was part of the filmmaking team that decided to hire formerly incarcerated people to work on the movie.

“A few were assistants, some of them were extras and some of them had speaking roles in the film,” explains Jordan. “It was a very crazy thing for them to go from being on death row, to being incarcerated for life, to being exonerated, then to be on a movie about it. I can’t put words in their mouths, I can’t tell you exactly how it made them feel, but to hear them speak about it, it brought me to tears.

HARD WIRE
One of Michael B. Jordan’s earliest roles was as Wallace, a young drug dealer, in season one of TV’s The Wire. Wallace tried to quit selling drugs but was drawn back into street life only to be killed by his friends.
“A lot of these exonerated inmates need these opportunities; they need these chances to be able to acclimate themselves back into society and be productive. We felt very proud of that.”

In talking about the film to the press, the real Bryan Stevenson has brought up an alarming statistic from the U.S. Bureau of Justice that shows one in three Black, male babies born in the United States is expected to go to jail or prison in his lifetime.

“Bryan is full of stats and numbers,” says Jordan, “he switches them out effortlessly and some of them would blow your mind, how f--ked up things are, and it’s shocking. In the movie, we try not to overload it with all these numbers and stats to tell someone how to feel. But in the process of talking about the film, these things do come up and it adds to the reason this movie is important; the world is like this, the system is like this and this is the reality.”

Jordan was born in Santa Ana, California, but grew up in Newark, New Jersey. He was a child and teen model before getting into acting and landing jobs on the TV soap opera All My Children and shows like The Wire and Friday Night Lights. As his film career takes off Jordan finds himself travelling around the world, and spending time in other countries gives him a deeper insight into his own nation’s struggles with social and racial inequity.

“Take Germany for example, I am here in Berlin right now and I can feel the difference,” he says. “It owns its history, the good, the bad, the ugly. And they go the extra mile to take that perspective that the world used to have on them, and they want to change that perspective.

“And I think that is a fundamental difference between them and the United States because for some people in the U.S., they act like there’s a part of African-American history that doesn’t exist and they don’t own it, and they don’t claim it and don’t want to try to heal. And I think without that ownership it’s really hard to begin a true healing process.”

Jordan is just entering his career sweet spot and if Just Mercy is any indication, he’s committed to making bold, interesting movies.

“As I get older and become more of a man and see the world differently I want different things. There’s always going to be that inner child that loves super-hero films and sci-fi and animation and all that good stuff, but then there’s also the responsibilities I feel I have as a person of colour, as a man, as a filmmaker, to tell stories about people who don’t have a voice, issues that won’t see the light of day, or won’t get as much attention as they need.

“It’s that balance between smaller films and bigger blockbusters, and finding some that have that crossover and everything in between. I kinda want it all.”

Ingrid Randoja is the deputy editor of Cineplex Magazine.
Snacks for anytime, not just showtime!

Your Cineplex favourites are now on SkipTheDishes. Get popcorn, candy, and more delivered to your door!
Disney’s focus on making live-action versions of their animated films has not only proved profitable and entertaining for audiences, it’s allowed the 96-year-old studio to redress cultural stereotypes found in their earlier films.

Here, an all-Asian lead cast assembles for a remake of the 1998 film that is being touted as a big-budget, martial arts epic that showcases female empowerment. Director Niki Caro (The Zookeeper’s Wife) oversees the film that casts Liu Yifei
as Hua Mulan, who disguises herself as a young man to serve in the Imperial Army in place of her ailing father (Tzi Ma).

The filmmakers saw almost 1,000 actors before choosing Chinese film/TV star Liu Yifei — who was born in China but spent five years in New York as a teen — to play feisty Mulan, whose skills as a warrior help the army battle invading forces.

Mulan is based on the 6th-century Chinese folk song "The Ballad of Mulan," about a girl who disguises herself as a young man to go to war in place of her father. The song ends with the line: "But when the two rabbits run side by side, how can you tell the female from the male?"
What will we do without those abs and piercing blue eyes? This 25th Bond film marks Daniel Craig’s fifth and final outing as superspy 007 and we expect he’ll go out with a bang rather than a whimper.

Cary Joji Fukunaga directs this film that finds the retired Bond living a quiet life in Jamaica when his old pal and CIA operative Felix Leiter (Jeffrey Wright) calls on him to help locate a missing scientist, hurling the former secret agent into the orbit of nasty villain Safin (Rami Malek).

Five different writers had a hand in penning the script, including Fleabag and Killing Eve creator Phoebe Waller-Bridge, who was enlisted by Craig to inject more humour into the story and make the characters more believable. Returning cast members include Ralph Fiennes as M, Naomie Harris as Moneypenny and Ben Whishaw as Q.

BLACK WIDOW

Before the big bang that created the Marvel Cinematic Universe took place in 2004, there were plans to make a standalone Black Widow film. That deal with Lions Gate Entertainment never came to fruition and the character reverted back to Marvel Studios. Scarlett Johansson debuted the role of Natasha Romanoff, the former KGB assassin turned S.H.I.E.L.D. operative, in 2010’s Iron Man 2 and established herself as the sole female member of the original Avengers.

She finally gets her own pic, a midsequel set just after the events of 2016’s Captain America: Civil War that finds Romanoff devastated after the Avengers rift and grappling with her dark past. David Harbour portrays Russian supersoldier Red Guardian, Rachel Weisz stars as seasoned spy Malina and Florence Pugh is Yelena, who is like a sister to the emotionally fragile Natasha.
WONDER WOMAN 1984

Count on Gal Gadot to look gorgeous in whatever sorry ’80s fashion choices — parachute pants, down vests, fanny packs — writer/director Patty Jenkins includes in her sequel to 2017’s blockbuster Wonder Woman.

The new film is set during the Cold War and Diana Prince, a.k.a. Wonder Woman, is reportedly working as an American spy against the Soviet Union. And, surprise, Steve Trevor (Chris Pine), a World War I pilot and her love interest from the first film, seems to be alive and well despite the fact he was killed at the end of the first film.

Could it be that Max Lord (Pedro Pascal), a metahuman with the ability to control minds, is fooling Diana into seeing him?

Kristen Wiig plays the villain Cheetah. There have been different versions of the Cheetah character in the Wonder Woman canon, and this one is heiress and archaeologist Barbara Ann Minerva, who transforms into Cheetah after undergoing a tribal ritual.

TENET

One of Tenet’s stars, Robert Pattinson, had to be locked alone in a room before he was allowed to see the script, so do you really think you’re going to get a rich and pithy plot synopsis here, six months before the film hits theatres? Nope.

What we can tell you is that director Christopher Nolan shot his espionage thriller all over the world — India, Estonia, Denmark, Italy, Norway, the U.S. and U.K. — using a combination of 70mm and IMAX film, and with a formidable cast that includes Michael Caine, John David Washington, Kenneth Branagh, Aaron Taylor-Johnson and Elizabeth Debicki.

A trailer that was shown only in theatres (Nolan is big on his movies being seen in cinemas) focused on Washington’s character as he examined a series of bullet holes in a wall of glass and the lines of text, “Time has come for a new protagonist” and “Time has come for a new mission.”

That time can’t come soon enough for us.

TOP GUN: MAVERICK

Bro culture is alive and well in this long-in-the-works sequel to 1986’s iconic Top Gun, which starred a then 24-year-old Tom Cruise as cocky naval pilot Peter “Maverick” Mitchell, who feels the need… the need for speed.

Now in his fifties and still cocky, Maverick works as a flight instructor and is tasked with training the son (Miles Teller) of his late pal Goose, who died while flying with Maverick all those years ago. Val Kilmer returns as Maverick’s rival-turned-friend Iceman — he is now a vice-admiral — and Jennifer Connelly appears as Maverick’s love interest, a single mom and bar owner. At last year’s Comic-Con Cruise said the film is “a love letter to aviation…. I really wanted to give you all an experience of what it’s like to be in that aircraft.”

The original Top Gun (1986) is preserved in the United States Library of Congress for being “culturally, historically, or aesthetically significant.”
It’s been more than three decades since we met Bill S. Preston, Esq. (Alex Winter) and “Ted” Theodore Logan (Keanu Reeves), two clueless high school students failing history class who get the opportunity to travel through time, meeting historical figures like Lincoln, Napoleon and Joan of Arc, with the help of a time-travelling phone booth and a guide named Rufus (the late George Carlin). They ace their history presentation and are told that their terrible band, Wyld Stallyns, is fated to write a song so great it saves the world.

Well, Bill and Ted are now middle-aged and that world-saving song has yet to be written.

This threequel — following 1989’s Bill & Ted’s Excellent Adventure (pictured above) and 1991’s Bill & Ted’s Bogus Journey — has long been in the works and a couple of years ago co-writer Ed Solomon said the script had the older Bill and Ted going back in time to meet their younger versions via footage from the old movies. We don’t know if that idea stuck, but we sure hope so!

Other cast members returning include William Sadler as Death and Amy Stoch as first Bill’s, and then Ted’s, hot stepmother Missy.

We’re loving the eclectic cast of Marvel’s universe-expanding, late-2020 entry Eternals, which is based on a series of Jack Kirby comic books about an immortal alien race created to protect humanity from the evil Deviants.

Aside from Kit Harrington, who plays a non-Eternal named Dane Whitman, and headliner Angelina Jolie as the warrior Thena, we’ve got Atlanta’s Brian Tyree Henry as Phastos, who can project cosmic energy, The Big Sick’s Kumail Nanjiani as the swordsman Kingo, Richard Madden of Rocketman fame as Ikaris, Salma Hayek as their leader Ajak and, perhaps most exciting, Lauren Ridloff as Makkari, the first deaf Marvel superhero (Ridloff is also deaf). Chinese-American director Chloé Zhao has the honour of wrangling this diverse lot.
The tagline for director Denis Villeneuve’s *Dune* could be, “Let’s try this again.” Frank Herbert’s beloved 1965 sci-fi novel about a family that moves to the inhospitable planet of Arrakis (also known as Dune) to manage harvesting of “the spice,” the most valuable substance in the universe, was first made into a movie by director David Lynch in 1984. It bombed so bad it’s now a punchline.

But the book has topped many lists of all-time great sci-fi novels, and it has long been Canadian director Villeneuve’s dream to give it another shot. Here he casts Timothée Chalamet as that intrepid family’s son Paul Atreides (played by Kyle MacLachlan in the first film), Oscar Isaac as Paul’s father Duke Leto Atreides and Rebecca Ferguson as Lady Jessica. We’re rooting for them!

STARRING
Timothée Chalamet, Oscar Isaac, Rebecca Ferguson
DIRECTED BY Denis Villeneuve (Blade Runner 2049)
RELEASE DATE DECEMBER 18TH

Director Steven Spielberg decided to call on Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright Tony Kushner (*Angels in America*) to pen the script for his new iteration of *West Side Story*. Kushner has said their version will pull from the 1957 Broadway musical more than the phenomenal 1961 film that won 10 Oscars. Thankfully, this production will also stay true to composer Leonard Bernstein’s score, and those timeless lyrics from Stephen Sondheim.

Of course, all versions are just a (relatively) modern-day riff on Shakespeare’s *Romeo and Juliet* with Polish Tony (played here by Ansel Elgort) and Puerto Rican Maria (newcomer Rachel Zegler) falling in love despite hailing from rival communities in 1950s New York.

STARRING
Ansel Elgort, Rachel Zegler, Rita Moreno
DIRECTED BY
Steven Spielberg (Lincoln)
RELEASE DATE DECEMBER 18TH

Rita Moreno, who won Best Supporting Actress for her portrayal of Puerto Rican den mother Anita in the 1961 film, serves as executive producer and plays Valentina, a retooling of Doc, Tony’s boss at the corner store.

WEST SIDE STORY

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STARRING
Timothée Chalamet, Oscar Isaac, Rebecca Ferguson
DIRECTED BY Denis Villeneuve (Blade Runner 2049)
RELEASE DATE DECEMBER 18TH
Harley Quinn, as portrayed by Margot Robbie, was the most interesting character to come out of 2016’s Suicide Squad, so it’s no surprise she’s getting her own movie. What is surprising is that the film, Birds of Prey (And the Fantabulous Emancipation of One Harley Quinn), doesn’t rely on Robbie’s star power, instead focusing on a gaggle of female superheroes. Here Robbie and her co-stars tell us about building their girl gang

BY MARA REINSTEIN
Birds of Prey’s tough girls, from left: Rosie Perez, Mary Elizabeth Winstead, Margot Robbie, Ella Jay Basco, and Jurnee Smollett-Bell
ARGOT ROBBIE HAS AN IMPORTANT
update on Harley Quinn, her perky, psycho, clown-faced villain from Suicide Squad. Remember how she was last seen being sprung from jail by her boyfriend, the Joker? Remember her gleeful reaction? Well, nearly four years have passed. She’s back in a new movie. And that woman no longer needs to be rescued.

“Harley and Joker have broken up. Obviously, it’s not amicable,” Robbie explains during a recent New York interview. “And she is, for the rest of the movie, convincing herself that she’s okay with it, and happy to be out on her own. And I think for the most part that’s a lie, and probably if he called her she’d go running back to him.”

But, says Robbie, things change over the course of the film as Harley finds her feet with help from some newfound friends.

In Birds of Prey (And the Fantabulous Emancipation of One Harley Quinn), the onetime psychiatrist (née Harleen Quinzel) teams up with three DC Comics heroines — Gotham City police officer Renee Montoya (Rosie Perez), a streetfighter named Black Canary (Jurnee Smollett-Bell) and the assassin Huntress (Mary Elizabeth Winstead) — to save young Cassandra Cain (Ella Jay Basco) from evil crime lord Roman Sionis, a.k.a. Black Mask (Ewan McGregor).

It seems Cassandra has stolen a very valuable diamond from the man.

“There’s a bounty on her head and everyone in Gotham, really Gotham’s underbelly, is turned upside down trying to get their hands on the kid and the diamond. Every one of us, the key members of the soon-to-be Birds of Prey, have their own reasons for fighting for the kid or against Roman. And that’s how we all kind of collide.”

On an overcast Sunday afternoon it’s fitting that Robbie is sandwiched on a couch between Perez and Smollett-Bell in a downtown New York City hotel room. (Winstead and Basco will get in touch in later.) Robbie doesn’t want to be the focal point of the movie, much less the interview. As she puts it, “I really, really wanted to make a girl gang film.”

BACK IN 2016, SUICIDE SQUAD ALSO FEATURED
an impressive ensemble, including Jared Leto, Will Smith and Viola Davis. Robbie, who notes that she read Cineplex magazine “all the time” while filming Suicide Squad in Toronto, stood out from the pack thanks to her crazed-yet-loveable interpretation of Harley. In the aftermath of its international box-office success — mixed reviews be damned! — the Aussie native’s star went from bright to supernova.

Indeed, it’s a special actor who can make both Tonya Harding and Queen Elizabeth I sympathetic (in 2017’s I, Tonya and 2018’s Mary Queen of Scots, respectively, earning an Oscar nomination for the former, and SAG and BAFTA nominations for both). She radiated glamour and kindness as Sharon Tate in Quentin Tarantino’s Once Upon a Time...in Hollywood and brings the heat along with Nicole Kidman and Charlize Theron in Bombshell, about the women who accused Fox News CEO Roger Ailes of sexual harassment.

And yet she always had her eye on a return trip to Gotham City.

Taking on a producer role, Robbie personally developed the idea of an all-grrrl spinoff and pitched it to executives. They didn’t love it at first, they wanted to focus on Harley. Robbie disagreed. “It’d be like putting a kid in an empty playground,” she says. “Where’s the fun in that?”

Instead, she wanted to pull inspiration from the Birds of Prey series of DC comic books.

“The Birds of Prey comics are a great opportunity because they involve so many different kinds of characters. It wasn’t completely outside the realm of possibility for Harley to weave in and out. She’s not an official member of the Birds of Prey but there are comics where she kind of like dips in and out and messes things up a little bit for them.”
Robbie finally got the greenlight and found her writer in Christina Hodson (Bumblebee) and director in DC newbie Cathy Yan (Dead Pigs). Then she went Birds-watching. Smollett-Bell (True Blood) was mid-production on the new HBO series Lovecraft Country but submitted an audition tape just in case she could fit it into her schedule. Winstead (10 Cloverfield Lane) met with Yan. “She sent me home with a stack of comics. I tried to familiarize myself with that as much as I could,” says Winstead. “But I also felt really free to bring my own spin to it.”

Perez, meanwhile, was lured in after reading the script. “The film world is catching up to who women are,” she notes, adding that her character is “just a beautiful mess of strength and vulnerability and self-righteousness and yet she makes mistakes and is very empathetic.”

Basco jumped at the chance to play Cain, a 12-year-old street kid who “knows her way around Gotham City too well,” according to the young actor. “She is mischievous and misguided because she’s never had an actual family...until she encounters Harley Quinn, who takes her under her wing.”

The actors, along with about 15 other hopefuls, also had to endure a full day of mix-and-match screen tests at Warner Bros. headquarters. “A bunch of us all kind of came together and when we found that group that just kind of clicked it was amazing,” says Robbie.

Smollett-Bell says that day was “crazy-nutso,” hitting Robbie’s arm for good measure. “Like running a marathon!”

**Cheadle Breaks In**

It’s a super reunion as Don Cheadle teams with his Marvel co-stars Josh Brolin and Sebastian Stan for director Steven Soderbergh’s upcoming crime flick *Kill Switch*. Set in 1950s Detroit, the film finds three men hired to break into a home only to realize they have been doublecrossed. Ed Solomon (*Men in Black*) pens the script for the film that starts shooting later this summer.

**Weisz Plays Liz**

*A Special Relationship* casts Rachel Weisz as Hollywood icon Elizabeth Taylor, whose personal assistant Roger Wall — a gay man who faced rampant homophobia growing up in the American South — inspires Taylor to become an HIV/AIDS activist in the 1980s. Taylor hosted her first AIDS fundraiser in 1984 at a time when AIDS was still a taboo subject and her involvement helped raise millions. Female directing duo Bert & Bertie (*Troop Zero*) helm the pic.
BROADBENT DUKES IT OUT

Oscar winner Jim Broadbent is in London shooting director Roger Michell’s (My Cousin Rachel) art-heist drama The Duke. The pic is based on the true story of 60-year-old London cab driver Kempton Bunton, who stole a Goya painting from the National Gallery in 1961. Bunton’s grandson sent a one paragraph email to producer Nicky Bentham saying he had a great story to share, which kickstarted the project.

SALDANA JOINS THE CIA

Zoe Saldana will play a CIA officer in the fact-based thriller, Sabaya. Saldana’s character befriends a 15-year-old Yazidi girl forced to work as an ISIS sex slave or “sabaya.” Saldana teams with the girl, who cannot read or write, to discover the whereabouts of an ISIS stronghold.

ECKHART RE-ENLISTS

Aaron Eckhart starred as a flight commander in last year’s World War II drama Midway and now he returns to combat in Ambush, which takes place during the Vietnam War. Eckhart plays Captain Drummond, who leads his commando team into the Cu Chi tunnels to fight the enemy. The Cu Chi tunnels are part of an immense tunnel system that runs underneath most of Vietnam and was used during the war as a hiding place, supply and communication route, and a trap for American soldiers who ventured into it.

COMER GETS MEDIEVAL

After winning an Emmy for playing an assassin in Killing Eve, Jodie Comer is making the move into films. She’ll be seen in this summer’s Ryan Reynolds comedy Free Guy, about a man who’s living in a videogame, and starts production shortly on director Ridley Scott’s The Last Duel, in which she comes between two 14th-century knights (Ben Affleck and Matt Damon).

KIRBY & LABEOUF IN MONTREAL

Vanessa Kirby and Shia LaBeouf make an intriguing cinematic couple. The pair is currently in Montreal filming Pieces of a Woman, which stars Kirby as a woman whose home birth goes terribly wrong. The tragic event puts an emotional strain on her relationship with her partner (LaBeouf) and her mother. The film marks the English-language debut from acclaimed Hungarian director Kornél Mundruczó (White Dog).

FRESH FACE

Harry Collett landed the coveted role of Robert Downey Jr.’s apprentice Tommy in Dolittle, the biggest role in his young career. The British youngster started his career in children’s TV (he voiced a bee on the show The Hive) and made his on-screen debut in 2017’s Dunkirk as Mark Rylance’s youngest son.

ROLE CALL

- Oscar Isaac plays a gambler who sets out to redeem an angry young man in The Card Counter.
- Pom Klementieff portrays a femme fatale in both Mission: Impossible 7 and 8.
- The horror Wally’s Wonderland casts Nicolas Cage as a janitor who is trapped in a terrifying amusement park overnight.
- John Turturro will play crime boss Carmine Falcone in The Batman.
A BEAUTIFUL DAY IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD
This celebrated bio-pic of Fred Rogers (Tom Hanks) is as much about journalist Lloyd Vogel (Matthew Rhys playing a version of real-life reporter Tom Junod) as it is about Mister Rogers. When Vogel is tasked with writing a profile of the star for Esquire he finds that the compassionate children’s entertainer is more interested in delving into Vogel’s story than his own.
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Jexi
Remember the movie Her, the near-future sci-fi where Joaquin Phoenix falls in love with his smartphone’s good-natured AI system? This is not that movie. Here Adam Devine plays Phil, a hack writer whose new smartphone comes with a virtual life coach named Jexi (voiced by Rose Byrne) who embarrasses, berates and humiliates him at every opportunity.
→ RENT IT JANUARY 14

Terminator: Dark Fate
Arnold Schwarzenegger said he’d be back, and he is, along with Linda Hamilton as Sarah Connor in this sixth Terminator movie, which picks up after 1981’s Terminator 2: Judgement Day. They’re joined by Mackenzie Davis as Grace, a human-cyborg soldier from the future, and Natalia Reyes as Dani, the one they’re all protecting from a deadly Rev-9 advanced Terminator (Gabriel Luna).
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Doctor Sleep
This sequel to both Stanley Kubrick’s cinematic masterpiece The Shining and the book by Stephen King stars Ewan McGregor as the grown up Dan Torrance, who stills sees dead people, and has to protect a girl (Kyliegh Curran) with similar abilities from a cult that feeds off an essence emitted by the dying bodies of children with psychic abilities.
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Charlie’s Angels
Kristen Stewart, Naomi Scott and Ella Balinska play three new investigators working for the mysterious Charles Townsend, or Charlie, whose business is growing at such a rate that he employs dozens of women and many handlers, all nicknamed Bosley. These three Angels go into action when, wait for it, a dangerous device falls into the wrong hands.
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Old Friends

As long dormant franchises return to the screen, we ask how well you remember the originals

It’s a year to reunite with old friends at the movies as four iconic franchises pick up after long hiatuses. Best of all, the original actors are all returning to the roles they made famous — the buddy cops of Bad Boys (Will Smith and Martin Lawrence), Bill & Ted’s time-travelling doofuses (Keanu Reeves and Alex Winter), Top Gun’s hotshot pilot (Tom Cruise) and Coming to America’s African prince and his spoiled friend (Eddie Murphy and Arsenio Hall).

To get you ready for Bad Boys for Life (January 17th), Top Gun: Maverick (June 26th), Bill & Ted Face the Music (August 21st) and Coming 2 America (December 18th) we test how well you remember the original films.

Clockwise from top: Bill & Ted's Excellent Adventure (1989), Bad Boys II (1999), Top Gun (1986), Coming to America (1988)

1. Which film includes the line, “No journey is too great when one finds what he seeks”?
   a) Top Gun
   b) Coming to America
   c) Bill & Ted’s Excellent Adventure
   d) Bad Boys II

2. Which film features characters named Hollywood, Viper, Cougar and Merlin?
   a) Top Gun
   b) Coming to America
   c) Bill & Ted’s Excellent Adventure
   d) Bad Boys

3. Of which film did Robert Ebert write, “This is a movie that thrives on the dense-witted idiocy of its characters.”
   a) Top Gun
   b) Coming to America
   c) Bill & Ted’s Bogus Journey
   d) Bad Boys II

4. Which film casts Louie Anderson and Samuel L. Jackson in small roles?
   a) Top Gun
   b) Coming to America
   c) Bill & Ted’s Excellent Adventure
   d) Bad Boys II

5. Which film features several key scenes at a Circle K convenience store?
   a) Top Gun
   b) Coming to America
   c) Bill & Ted’s Excellent Adventure
   d) Bad Boys

6. Which film inspired two TV spinoffs, one animated and one live action?
   a) Top Gun
   b) Coming to America
   c) Bill & Ted’s Excellent Adventure
   d) Bad Boys

7. Which film marked Michael Bay’s feature film directing debut?
   a) Top Gun
   b) Coming to America
   c) Bill & Ted’s Bogus Journey
   d) Bad Boys

8. Which film includes the line, “I feel the need... the need for speed”?
   a) Top Gun
   b) Coming to America
   c) Bill & Ted’s Excellent Adventure
   d) Bad Boys II

9. Which film was originally developed for Dana Carvey and Jon Lovitz?
   a) Top Gun
   b) Coming to America
   c) Bill & Ted’s Excellent Adventure
   d) Bad Boys

10. Which film has the highest rating on Rottentomatoes.com, at 79%?
    a) Top Gun
    b) Coming to America
    c) Bill & Ted’s Excellent Adventure
    d) Bad Boys

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

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Character Studies

Dolly Parton, Lily Tomlin and Jane Fonda push back against their sexist boss in 9 to 5. Pam Grier is a gun-toting vigilante in Coffy, Jennifer Grey rages against a society that doesn’t take her seriously in Ferris Bueller’s Day Off. It’s an eclectic group, which is the whole point of Vancouver artist Sherri Rogers’ series of acrylic paintings, “Strong Female Character.”

“Strong Female Character” is a film and TV trope for women that are often represented in a literal or one-dimensional way, where a token woman is physically strong or powerful,” explains Rogers who, by day, works in visual effects as a texture artist for films ranging from Wonder Woman to Angry Birds. “The women in this series of paintings are strongly written and represented as complex characters who have integral roles in the plot. They are self-actualized, independent and bonded in friendship with other women.”

As for the unique style, Rogers says, “I wanted the paintings to look like they were VHS-quality renderings. I used square brushes and blocks of colour in a pixelated style of painting.”

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† From top down: Ferris Bueller’s Day Off, Coffy and 9 to 5
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