SCARLETT JOHANSSON PULLS BACK THE CURTAIN ON BLACK WIDOW

CINERLEX MAGAZINE

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FALL 2020
THE FUTURE AIN'T WHAT IT USED TO BE

COMING TO THEATRES
Kenneth Branagh in Death on the Nile

MEET A SCRIPT SUPERVISOR
Ever wondered exactly what a script supervisor does on set? We chat with Daniela Saioni, a script supervisor who calls her demanding job an exercise in “extreme multitasking” BY INGRID RANDOJA

END OF AN ERA
We take you to the Pinewood Studios set of the James Bond pic No Time to Die, where the film’s producers Barbara Broccoli and Michael G. Wilson tell us what to expect from Daniel Craig’s final go-round as 007 BY JAMES MOTTRAM

CRUISE DIRECTOR
Death on the Nile’s director and star Kenneth Branagh on what it was like to wrangle an all-star cast for his latest murder-mystery based on an Agatha Christie whodunit BY INGRID RANDOJA

COVER STORY
WIDOW MAKER
Black Widow star Scarlett Johansson says grief, trauma and love inspire Natasha Romanoff as she returns to her Russian homeland in this unconventional Avengers movie. Plus: British actor O-T Fagbenle discusses his role as mysterious fixer Rick Mason and makes a plea to be in more Marvel films BY INGRID RANDOJA AND MARNI WEISZ

GHOST WORLD
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Relax, Scarlett’s Here

FORGET YOGA. FORGET MEDITATION, mindful practice and apps that promote calm. Forget valerian root, forget ASMR. Forget that New Age music with the bird sounds they play while you’re getting a massage.

What we all need to reduce stress right now is a little bit more Scarlett Johansson.

From the moment the two-time Oscar nominee appeared, at age 10, as one of two child runaways in 1996’s Manny & Lo she has mesmerized audiences with her velvety voice and equally soothing demeanour. “Johansson’s peaceful aura, which takes in everything with equanimity, is something special,” wrote the San Francisco Chronicle’s Mick LaSalle of her performance. She was all of 70 pounds at the time, if that, soaking wet.

As she graduated to young-adult roles that sense of calm followed. In her Entertainment Weekly review of 2003’s Lost in Translation Lisa Schwarzbaum described the “embracing, restful serenity” of Johansson’s performance. One year later, in his review of In Good Company Roger Ebert opined, “Scarlett Johansson continues to employ the gravitational pull of quiet fascination.”

And when, in 2013, Johansson took on a part that stripped away everything but those famous vocal cords to play Her’s unconventional love interest, the AI voice of a computer operating system, The Atlantic’s Christopher Orr offered, “Her voice — breathy, occasionally cracking — warms the entire film.”

Take that soothing voice and reassuring demeanour and combine them with Avengers-grade fighting skills and, well, Johansson’s true superpower may be making us feel like everything’s going to be okay.

Needless to say, we’re talking about Black Widow here — the character and next spring’s film of the same name. Fans have been begging for a Black Widow solo film since Johansson was cast as the superhero with Russian roots in March 2009. Though her character was woefully underdeveloped in her big-screen debut, 2010’s Iron Man 2, in an interview with our magazine way back then Johansson said she could see the potential in the Marvel role.

“You’re able to develop your character with the studio,” she said. “For me that’s exciting because rarely does an actor get to take it to the next level…. To build something with a character who has such a history and has had so many paths, to think about where she might go, that’s something you can invest yourself in.”

Invest she did. If you’re an Avengers fan you already know the type of sacrifice Natasha Romanoff will make to keep us safe. When Black Widow finally comes out next May we’ll get to dip back in time and get a better understanding of why.

Turn to “Sitting Pretty,” page 34, for our interview with Scarlett Johansson. And, although it’s merely written on the printed page, we encourage you to imagine the quotes in Johansson’s soothing voice and see just how good it makes you feel.

Also in this issue, Kenneth Branagh tells us how he managed to wrangle Death on the Nile’s eclectic cast (page 30), and we’re on the set of No Time to Die, presumably Daniel Craig’s final Bond film, with producers Barbara Broccoli and Michael G. Wilson (page 26).
SOUR. SWEET. GONE.

SOUR PATCH Kids

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VIVID VENICE
Tilda Swinton and director Pedro Almodóvar walk to a photocall for their short film The Human Voice during the Venice Film Festival.

PLAYING TO TYPE
Sarah Jessica Parker, known for her character’s love of shoes on Sex and the City, safely shops for a new pair in her beloved New York City.
HELLO HALLE!
Toronto actor and Bruised star Shamier Anderson calls his director and co-star Halle Berry during the film’s Toronto International Film Festival premiere at the CityView Drive-In.

JAY PROMOTES VIOLENCE
Jay Baruchel attends the premiere of his horror pic Random Acts of Violence at the 5 Drive-In in Oakville, Ontario.

TELLURIDE RIDE
Frances McDormand has a laugh on the back of her golf cart at the drive-in premiere of Nomadland in Pasadena, California. The screening was hosted by the cancelled Telluride Film Festival the same day the movie debuted at the Toronto and Venice film fests.

BRADLEY BACK AT WORK
Heavily protected crew members surround Bradley Cooper on the Encino, California, set of director Paul Thomas Anderson’s latest, a still untitled film that’s set in the San Fernando Valley of the 1970s.
UP FRONT

FUTURE

Look to the stars

Seeing your fate in the stars takes on a whole new meaning with Movie Tarot: A Hero’s Journey in 78 Cards ($27, bookstores) from illustrator Natalie Foss. The deck, in which each card depicts a well-known actor in a famous role, comes with an accompanying booklet written by tarot expert Diana McMahon Collis that explains how to use the cards, but also why each actor was chosen.

QUOTE UNQUOTE

The thing that I feel the most when I watch the film, and I feel genuinely proudest of, is that this is a same-sex romantic relationship, intimate relationship, in a period setting and yet they’re not hiding, they’re not having to run around and avoid society. They are simply in love and they discover who they truly are through this connection that they form, and the relationship between them just is. It just is.

—Kate Winslet on playing 1840s fossil hunter Mary Anning

OPPOSITE SAORSE RONAN’S CHARLOTTE MURCHISON IN AMMONITE

BIRTHDAY

HAPPY 50TH, MATT DAMON!

Matt Damon turned 50 on October 8th and as a gift to everyone here’s a pic of the actor in his very first movie, Mystic Pizza. The 1988 dramedy also happened to be Julia Roberts’ big break but while Roberts starred, Damon had one line, spoken as his character Steamer was about to tuck into a lobster — “Mom, do you want my green stuff?”

Cheers Matt, hope you enjoyed your birthday dinner, whatever you ate.

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THE HORROR

Short, But Definitely Not Sweet

If you want to direct a horror film start by making a horror short. Acclaimed horror pics Saw, Mama, Lights Out and The Babadook are all based on short films that caught the attention of Hollywood studios. Now you can add writer-director Jacob Chase’s Come Play, based on his five-minute short Larry, to the list.

In 2017, while he was the creative director of a haunted house in L.A., Chase made Larry, about the eponymous monster that appears out of an iPad to terrorize a nighttime parking lot attendant. Come Play changes up the story somewhat, it’s now a lonely boy named Oliver (Azhy Robertson) who unleashes Larry while playing on a mobile device, much to the horror of his parents (Gillian Jacobs and John Gallagher Jr.).

Chase used an old costume from his haunted house to create the monster the first time around, so look for Larry to get an upgrade in the new film. —IR

WHAT WE’RE READING

Graphic Content

He may be 56 years old, but Keanu Reeves is a kid at heart.

The actor who’s loved comic books since childhood is co-writing a comic book that features a lead character who just happens to look exactly like him. The first issue of the 12-issue, limited series BRZRKR hits stands October 7th and focuses on immortal warrior Berserker, who works covert missions for the U.S. government.

Reeves approached Boom! Studios and pitched them his idea and they hooked him up with co-writer Matt Kindt and illustrator Alessandro Vitti. In an interview with USA Today Reeves explained, “I had this image in my head of a guy fighting through the ages because of his father’s compulsion to violence.”

On the other hand, if your tastes veer toward smart and sassy teens, then check out Mean Girls: Senior Year. Written by Arianna Irwin and illustrated by Alba Cardona, this recently released graphic novel picks up one year after the events of the beloved 2004 film and sees friends Cady, Regina, Gretchen, Karen, Janis and Damian deal with obnoxious new student Megan, who’s determined to become the school’s queen bee and leader of “The Plastics.” —IR
100% WOLF

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OCTOBER 9
GET READY FOR YOUR CLOSE-UP, ALBERTA

The Kevin Costner, Diane Lane thriller Let Him Go may take place across the American badlands, but it was shot in Alberta in the spring of 2019. Costner and Lane play a retired Montana sheriff and his wife whose son recently passed away. Now their daughter-in-law has fallen in with a terrifying off-the-grid family in the Dakotas and the senior couple feels compelled to rescue their young grandson.

“What we are trying to do is show a road trip from Montana to North Dakota, so we needed mountainous terrain, through the plains to the badlands,” director Thomas Bezucha told The Drumheller Mail while shooting in Drumheller, Alberta. Calgary, High River, Fort Macleod and Didsbury also saw filming. “Alberta has all of that, and that is why we are here, it has been a fantastic experience.”

—MW

← Kevin Costner and Diane Lane star in Let Him Go
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Vancouver-born director Nisha Ganatra puts the focus on creative female characters

AFTER 20 YEARS OF HARD WORK NISHA GANATRA is at the top of her game. She made her debut film, the lesbian rom-com Chutney Popcorn in 1999, and then spent years working in TV, directing episodes of Transparent, The Mindy Project and Mr. Robot.

But in the last year and a half she’s really taken flight, with the talk-show comedy Late Night, which starred Mindy Kaling as a budding comedy writer, and then with The High Note, a dramedy about the personal assistant (Dakota Johnson) to a demanding singer (Tracee Ellis Ross). Both films, you’ll notice, focus on the challenges and triumphs of talented women.

Born in Vancouver, Ganatra spent the first four years of her life in the city before moving around the world with her family. “It feels a lot like home, Vancouver, although technically there are a bunch of places around the world that were actually home,” she says over the phone from Los Angeles.

You began your career as an actor, right? Yeah. There weren’t that many opportunities and, luckily, I got into the much easier field of directing [laughs].

Changes are taking place — you helped get Mindy Kaling’s movie, Late Night, made. Do you think if you started out now you would stay with acting?
It is so funny that Mindy is looking at me thinking, I wonder if I could try directing, and I’m looking at Mindy and thinking, ha, I wonder if I started acting 10 years later if it would have been different. It is so inspiring what she did because it certainly wasn’t easy for Mindy either. But yeah, I would never say no, there is still some time, maybe.

And then you got to direct Tracee Ellis Ross in The High Note. She’s Diana Ross’s daughter, so it’s impossible not to think of her mom when watching her sing.
It’s really such a beautiful risk she took because she had been in very few feature films, she never sang in public before, and obviously the comparisons to her mom were something she probably got her whole life. I think she always loved music and probably was a little bit nervous about being in the shadow of her mom, so her way to stand out was through acting and she is such a gifted comedic actress it’s almost unfair she can sing so well.

You had a baby just before The High Note. How did that affect your directing?
I am a single mom so it gave me a whole lot of fire to get it done [laughs]. It is so interesting to me that pregnancy can sometimes be seen as a fragile state, but anywhere else in the world women are farming fields, give birth and go right back to farming. It is a privilege to take the fragile point of view, but it is not a fragile state.

So, you may still act, you had two movies out in a year and you recently had a baby. You’re just a little busy.
Yeah, the ultimate creativity is producing a baby. But I also think that as female filmmakers we were kept out of the game for so long that once the doors started opening I think we are all so anxious that they’re going to close again, so we better hurry and do everything we can while we can [laughs].—INGRID RANDOJA

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YUP, THAT’S A GHOST STORY

Halloween is the best time to watch a good ghost story. But what does that mean? Movies about ghosts aren’t just for horror fans, you’ve got comedies and romance pics and tearjerkers, too. With just one thing in common — they all feature characters from the great beyond — good ghost stories are as varied and full of surprises as a pillowcase full of fun-sized chocolate bars and little bags of chips.

BY MARNI WEISZ

ROMANCE

Ghost 1990
DIRECTOR Jerry Zucker (Airplane!)
STARS Patrick Swayze, Demi Moore, Whoopi Goldberg

For people who like their ghost stories with a box of chocolates, a glass of wine and a good snuggle, we recommend this romance that sees Molly’s (Moore) murdered lover Sam (Swayze) try to reach her through a psychic (Goldberg) so he can warn her that the people who killed him are after her. Sure, sounds like more of a thriller, but all anyone remembers are the steamy bits, the longing looks, and that super-hot scene at the potter’s wheel. Trade that box of chocolates for a bag of leftover fun-sized Snickers and your Halloween is all set.

COMEDY

Beetlejuice 1988
DIRECTOR Tim Burton (Edward Scissorhands)
STARS Michael Keaton, Alec Baldwin, Geena Davis

What’s it like to actually be a ghost? Pretty amusing, according to this comedy from the king of quirky, Tim Burton. Baldwin and Davis play Adam and Barbara, a folksy couple living life in a folksy Connecticut country home until they die in a car crash and mysteriously find themselves right back in the house, but as ghosts. When a family of brash city people (Catherine O’Hara, Jeffrey Jones and Winona Ryder) move in and start to change everything it’s time for Adam and Barbara to visit the underworld and figure out how to scare them away. That’s where they meet Beetlejuice (Keaton), a mischievous poltergeist who may do more harm than good.

AUTEUR

The Shining 1980
DIRECTOR Stanley Kubrick (2001: A Space Odyssey)
STARS Jack Nicholson, Shelley Duvall, Scatman Crothers

The fact that The Shining wasn’t even nominated for an Oscar, never mind winning, blows our minds. Just goes to show that some movies are not appreciated in their times, as Stanley Kubrick’s haunting adaptation of the Stephen King novel is clearly one of the most compelling horrors — scratch that — films ever made. Nicholson plays Jack Torrance, a writer who moves his wife Wendy (Duvall) and son Danny (Danny Lloyd) to the Overlook Hotel where he will serve as caretaker in the off-season. Unfortunately, the Overlook is seriously haunted and the terrifying ghosts who live there really want to hang out with his psychic son Danny.
**PSYCHOLOGICAL**

**The Sixth Sense** 1999

**DIRECTOR** M. Night Shyamalan *(Unbreakable)*

**STARS** Bruce Willis, Haley Joel Osment, Toni Collette

Geez. How do we talk about this one without giving anything away? Here goes. In his breakthrough role (he was, after all, only 11), Osment plays a troubled kid named Cole Sear who, as one of the most famous lines in 20th-century film will tell you, sees dead people. Tormented by his special gift he starts to see psychologist Malcolm Crowe (Willis) who has been through his own tragedy. Crowe doesn’t believe Cole at first but then starts to come around. In addition to being Osment’s big break, this was the movie that made Shyamalan a household name so, yeah, you can expect a twist ending, and even the most jaded ending-guessers should admit it’s a pretty good one.

**FAMILY FRIENDLY**

**ParaNorman** 2012

**DIRECTORS** Chris Butler, Sam Fell

**VOCES** Kodi Smit-McPhee, Anna Kendrick, Casey Affleck

This ghoulish feature is told via stop-motion animation courtesy of Laika, the production house behind *Coraline* and *Missing Link*. The story follows Norman (Smit-McPhee), a strange little kid who can see, and chat with, dead people (a.k.a. ghosts). Yeah, kind of like that other movie about a kid who sees dead people, but this one is a lot funnier and less sad — plus it looks fantastic! Norman learns he alone can save his community from a witch’s curse by reading aloud from a book that belonged to his uncle, but he’ll have to contend with a mob of zombies and that witch (who’s also a ghost, BTW) to do it.

**HEARTWARMING**

**Field of Dreams** 1989

**DIRECTOR** Phil Alden Robinson *(The Sum of All Fears)*

**STARS** Kevin Costner, Amy Madigan, James Earl Jones

Some ghost stories don’t seem like ghost stories at all, but this corn-fed baseball flick definitely is one. After all, it has Kevin Costner uttering the line, “What are you grinning at, you ghost?” to a long-dead Shoeless Joe Jackson (Ray Liotta). Costner plays Ray Kinsella, an Iowa farmer who carves a baseball field into his farm after a ghostly voice tells him, “If you build it, he will come.” We won’t tell you who that “he” turns out to be, in case you haven’t seen it, but yeah, he’s a ghost too, and it’ll give you chills...in a nice way.

**TRADITIONAL**

**The Others** 2001

**DIRECTOR** Alejandro Amenábar *(The Sea Inside)*

**STARS** Nicole Kidman, Fionnula Flanagan, Christopher Eccleston

If you think ghost stories should take place on creepy old estates where the curtains are always drawn, furniture is draped in sheets and the hired help is clearly hiding something, well, do we have a movie for you. Just after World War II, war widow Grace Stewart (Kidman) and her two young children, who happen to be allergic to the sun, are living in a remote country home. When odd things start to happen — disembodied footsteps, the piano playing on its own — the family fears “others” are present, and that they may be ghosts.
BEHIND EVERY GREAT DIRECTOR

Ever heard of a script supervisor? You’d be surprised how much of a film’s success rides on the script supervisor’s cheetah-like reflexes, superhuman vision and obsessive attention to detail. We talk with top script supervisor Daniela Saioni about what she actually does and how it touches every scene.

BY RANDOJA

YOU’VE JUST FINISHED watching a film and as the credits roll you are struck by the number of people it took to make it. You wonder, “What did they all do?”

Take for instance the script supervisor. I got the answer when Daniela Saioni, one of Toronto’s top script supervisors, having worked on Shazam!, A Simple Favor and xXx: The Return of Xander Cage, invited me to sit in on her intensive Script Supervision course — a two-day primer in which students learn the basics of the job, often so well they start work on indie films immediately.

On a Saturday morning last year, 40 students streamed into a tiny community theatre in the city’s east end. The students varied in age, from young creative types →
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to older men and women looking to restart their careers. Many already worked in film and TV in some capacity and were considering a switch to script supervising.

It was a mind-boggling two days in which we learned that script supervising is a complicated and exhilarating job. It’s the script supervisor’s job to sit beside the director and keep a record of what happens during every single take. The actors’ exact dialogue and movements are noted to keep continuity, so that an actor picking up a glass in his right hand doesn’t switch to his left hand in the next take. The script supervisor also confers with the director, times everything, and after each day’s shooting sends all their notes to the editor, who assembles a very rough cut.

When I called to discuss her job further, Saioni was at home in Toronto, busy preparing her online comedy writing workshop and working on the indie film Jiyan, which she wrote. Effervescent as always, Saioni took a deep breath and dove right in.

**So what does a script supervisor do?**
On the outside it looks like we are just taking notes and maybe whispering things to the director, but what we do is help ensure the film will cut together as smoothly as possible and save time in post-production. We are very often the de facto person who helps keep the director focused on the visual storytelling. Not every director uses us this way, but at the upper levels of this job, working with the A-list directors, they really do. They’ll ask us if they are covered, and what they mean is, have I got all the shots to tell the story visually in a way that will cut together smoothly.

**After you’re hired for a film, what’s the first thing you do?**
The very first thing they want from you is a “timing,” and there is a whole art to that. You read the script out loud, read all the details and think about all the aspects, like how the director is going to shoot it, who is in it, the genre. And you take all those factors into account to provide an educated guess about how long the film or TV show will run. That is directly tied to the budget. That is the first document they want because the producer, director and the writer are going to make decisions about if they need to cut or add scenes.

You also prepare a list of questions about the script. Right, like on *A Simple Favor,* I gave

[writer-director] Paul Feig 142 script questions about logic and continuity in prep so they were all discussed and solved weeks before we went to camera.

You’ve arrived on set, shooting begins, and now your job gets really complicated!
Yes, it is a whole dance of eyes and ears and hands — it is an exercise in extreme multitasking. We are writing down every deviation from the script, how they are moving, when they are changing their body positions,
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and this is all the actors in the scene, and how long the scene is running.

That is multitasking. But I’m also keeping an eye on the director because some directors will verbally tell me what parts they liked or didn’t like; they will shake their head or give me thumbs up or they’ll laugh. Like in Paul Feig’s case I would write down every time he would laugh so the editor would know....

After every shot I confer with the director, if they are willing to talk to me about their preferences, and I write it down and type it out so the editor will have a clear record of what the director’s choices on set were. It is a record, or a place to start, because there is so much footage.

And each director has his or her own way of working. Some directors are communicative about what they like, and some are not. For example, on Shazam!, David Sandberg told me he was not going to give me his preferences, because he is quiet and shy, and I said, don’t worry I am going to read your face. He laughed, but that is exactly what I did. So, I am telling the editor in my notes what David liked based of his facial expressions, and that happens a lot.

Let’s talk about continuity. Viewers often notice when an actor’s hair changes from shot to shot, or their clothes have somehow altered. How does that happen? The number one thing a movie must have are the performances. So, 100 percent of the time we are trying do everything we can to protect the performances, and sometimes that means not fixing continuity. That doesn’t mean we don’t try, but things like hair, and hair is a big one, especially women’s long hair or hair that you can move in front of the ear or behind the ear, is one of the most common continuity errors. The hair might have matched in takes three, four and five, but the performance take was take one, so that’s the one that ends up on the movie.

The filmmaking industry had to be shut down due to COVID-19. This is a tough time for you and your peers. It is so scary because for many years we have been used to the endless flow of work, since SARS. When SARS hit Toronto we lost work, in general, for two to three years afterwards and that impacted a lot of people. But with COVID-19, 100 percent of the people [were] unable to work. Ultimately, I think it will mean that some people will drop out of the business. But what I do remember after SARS is that the work came back with a vengeance, to the extent we needed to train more people, and I think that is what is going to happen as well this time, it is going to come back with a vengeance.

 Daniela Saioni works on xXx: Return of Xander Cage.

Ingrid Randoja is the deputy editor of Cineplex Magazine.
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CHADWICK BOSEMAN
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THE FEBRUARY 2018 COVER OF Cineplex Magazine featured a regal Chadwick Boseman standing tall in his full Black Panther costume. It remains one of the most powerful covers of our 21-year history, and after the 43-year-old’s death from colon cancer in August, it is now one of our most poignant.

It was in December 2017 that I interviewed Boseman for that story, and the man on the line was soft-spoken with a deep staccato laugh that made me laugh. Although he’d already been lauded for his powerful performances in 42, Get on Up and Marshall, Boseman understood Black Panther was special and took his leading-role responsibilities seriously, revealing that he even brought a drummer to the set so the sounds of the African continent would reverberate across the Atlanta soundstage.

Yet, what stays with me most about our interview was how he kept calling himself a “storyteller.” Boseman didn’t grow up wanting to be a movie star, rather it was the shooting death of a teammate on his youth basketball team that inspired him to write a play. He went on to write and direct many plays, and then turned his considerable talents to acting.

We mourn the loss of this most gracious man and the stories he wanted to share with the world. —INGRID RANDOJA
People love to talk about Jamaica, Italy, Mexico and Austria — all famous locations from James Bond films. But if there’s one place in the world that’s home to the cinematic version of Ian Fleming’s spy, it’s Pinewood Studios in Buckinghamshire, England. That’s where we caught up with 007 during the final days of shooting *No Time to Die*, and spoke with the film’s producers about bringing Daniel Craig’s final Bond film in for a smooth landing.

*By James Mottram*

*Daniel Craig is crouched* by a stone staircase, dressed to kill in a classic tuxedo. It can only mean one thing: James Bond is back. As the MI6 spy targets two foes in black jumpsuits — one carrying a silver briefcase — there isn’t time to fire before wires winch the baddies up to the ceiling out of reach. Somewhere out of shot, a voice calls “cut,” and Craig relaxes for a second. It may be just two days before the actor wraps the 25th Bond movie, *No Time to Die*, but his concentration is as intense as ever.

The setting is an elaborate street in Havana, with bustle and bars and even a cinema — the Paradiso — promising a Cuban Film Festival inside. “We’re in the first third of the film,” explains longtime Bond producer Michael G. Wilson. “But what we’re not in is Cuba. This latest 007 adventure has already taken the crew across the globe, to Norway, Jamaica and Italy, but Cuba was a bridge too far. Instead, the production is concluding its epic seven-month shoot at Pinewood Studios in England.

“We actually went to Cuba as a team to look at possibilities of filming there,” explains the film’s production designer Mark Tildesley. “But it is complicated to work there. *Fast & Furious* had just been there, but their subject matter was very simple — cars smashing into walls. Politically, people there need to know how you’re going to portray the country. And obviously we wouldn’t want to tell them our secret story.” Instead, Tildesley and his team built a remarkable recreation of a lively Cuban street.
A

S THE FILM’S PRODUCER
Barbara Broccoli notes, the Bond franchise has been at Pinewood since 1962, when her father Albert “Cubby” Broccoli (also Wilson’s stepfather) delivered the first 007 movie, Dr. No. “It’s a flagship for us,” she says. With its famous 007 Stage, the English studio is soaked in Bond history. Right behind us, when we meet in one of the workshop spaces, is a glass display cabinet featuring the actual bikini worn by Ursula Andress when she famously emerged from Caribbean waters in that debut Bond film 58 years ago.

Not that there’s much time for nostalgia with a complicated night shoot to get in the can. In fact, making this entire film has been a particularly testing experience. First, original director Danny Boyle left the project to be replaced by True Detective’s helmer Cary Joji Fukunaga. Craig injured his ankle during the Jamaica leg of the shoot, requiring surgery. And then there was the damage they did to Pinewood when an explosion went wrong. “I guess you heard that we blew up the stage during the course of the film,” says Wilson, with a seen-it-all-before shrug.

PLAY TIME
Along with her half-brother Michael G. Wilson, Barbara Broccoli has produced several stage productions, including a 2002 West End mounting of Chitty Chitty Bang Bang, a 2017 Broadway run of The Band’s Visit and a 2019 staging of Fleabag at New York’s Soho Playhouse.
This, of course, is all before the coronavirus pandemic delayed No Time to Die’s planned April debut, making it the first major blockbuster of 2020 to shift its release date as theatres began to shutter. “What matters is the film at the end of the day,” says Broccoli. “You always want the film to be the best in the series. And I think we really are feeling that this one is really extraordinary.” Still, with Craig looking to bow out, it’s a bittersweet feeling, she adds. “I don’t think we’ll get him to come back again.”

With Broccoli promising an “epic emotional quality,” there’s a feeling that plot seeds planted across all the Craig-era Bond films, from Casino Royale onwards, will come to fruition here. At the outset, Bond is out of active service, enjoying retirement in Jamaica, until his old CIA colleague Felix Leiter (Jeffrey Wright) enlists him to collect a package in Cuba. It’s a mission that reunites Bond with psychiatrist Dr. Madeleine Swann (Léa Seydoux), his love interest from 2016’s Spectre.

But Swann isn’t the only female lead. Lashana Lynch steps in as a new “00” agent and Ana de Armas, who’s currently on set with Craig for the Cuban shootout, is a CIA operative helping Bond. “He’s got a lot to deal with in this film,” Broccoli says with a nod. “I think the women are more relevant and more important than ever.” Much of this increased relevance can be attributed to the presence of top British writer Phoebe Waller-Bridge (Fleabag), who was drafted to give a more diverse spin to the story.

And while the trailers have revealed the return of Christoph Waltz, who played iconic Bond antagonist Ernst Stavro Blofeld in Spectre, it’s Rami Malek — Best Actor Oscar winner for 2018’s Freddie Mercury bio-pic Bohemian Rhapsody — who will be our chief villain, Safin. “He’s really bad! He’s not a good guy. He’s a really bad guy,” says Broccoli. “We’re so thrilled that he wanted to do this. We all wanted him before the whole Oscar thing, we were all desperate to get him and then, of course, that was just such a wonderful celebration to see him winning the Oscar. Such a great performance. And he’s superb in this, really chilling. We’ve got lots and lots of spoilers that we can’t reveal. You have to see the movie.”

James Mottram is a freelance entertainment writer based in London, England.
MAKE EVERY MOMENT COUNT

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Doesn’t a romantic cruise on a fancy steamship from days of yore sound good right about now? What if we told you there was also a murder on board? For fans of Agatha Christie novels that just makes things better. One of those fans, Kenneth Branagh, tells us about starring in, and directing, *Death on the Nile*, and how he keeps his big, wild casts on course.

*BY INGRID RANDOJA*
GIVE KENNETH BRANAGH AN ensemble cast, a juicy script and eye-catching locales and watch him make magic. The 59-year-old filmmaker did just that in 2017 directing and starring as detective Hercule Poirot in *Murder on the Orient Express*, a sleek and entertaining adaptation of Agatha Christie’s whodunit. The end of that film set the stage for the second Branagh/Christie mashup, with Poirot being told he’s needed in Egypt for a murder investigation, revealing to Christie fans that *Death on the Nile* would be the follow-up film in the series.

Set in 1937, the mystery opens with young Jacqueline de Bellefort (Emma Mackey) engaged to Simon Doyle (Armie Hammer). However, that relationship shatters when Simon falls for Jacqueline’s best friend, the heiress Linnet Ridgeway (Gal Gadot). Consumed by jealousy, Jacqueline boards the same steamship that is taking Simon and Linnet on their honeymoon voyage down the Nile. We won’t spoil the story, but know that murders ensue, and it is Poirot’s job to discover the culprit amid the film’s colourful cast of characters portrayed by the likes of Russell Brand, Dawn French, Jennifer Saunders, Letitia Wright, Ali Fazal and Annette Bening.

Branagh was on phone from L.A. when we chatted about making the Poirot films, getting actors to “shut up” and how he feels about turning 60.

**Why choose *Death on the Nile* as the follow-up to *Murder on the Orient Express***?

Michael Green, the screenwriter, and I spoke a lot during the making of *Murder on the Orient Express*, and we loved the purity of dealing with the theme of revenge in *Murder on the Orient Express*. And we loved the idea of choosing another book that again had a dominating theme, and jealousy is central to *Death on the Nile*. We also felt that it would be possible to make the film with a more youthful take on this central love triangle and allow sex and death to be a bit more present in the story.

**What challenges await Poirot?**

I think we see him challenged by witnessing love and lust up close and personal... It offers him time to reflect on his own relationship with love. We saw moments in *Murder* where he was referring to a woman called Katherine, some kind of lost love, perhaps? We get to see whether there was a moment when the passion of Hercule Poirot for crime solving was present for people and for affairs of the heart, and if he decided to concentrate on this more cerebral life of solving of crimes, what has it cost him?

**You do a wonderful job of assembling eclectic casts for...**
these Poirot films. Actors like Gal Gadot must love the chance to join these ensembles. I think people do like that. They like to be in a top team where they get to have their moment, they get to be a key member of the team, and they work with people they perhaps wouldn’t have worked with before. In the case of certain leading actors, they don’t have to carry the film, I think that lightens the load for them, maybe leading to a spirit of enjoyment for someone like Gal Gadot that is different.

And the actors say they have fun working on your set. You feel that sense of play and playfulness. For instance, like in a dinner scene on the steamship Karnak, when there is some sort of tense moment happening between Jacqueline de Bellefort and Simon Doyle and Linnet Ridgeway and other characters are at dinner listening and half-talking; you set this particular group of actors off to improvise, they all have such rich and diverse experiences that it’s hard to get them to shut up. They are all telling war stories, stories about holidays and families, and they are excited and there is this good energy.

How much shooting did you do on location in Egypt? We did beauty shots of the Nile, we went down on a Nile steamer, but I wanted to have greater access to the temple of Abu Simbel than we were physically able to have so we came back [to England] and rebuilt Abu Simbel to scale at Longcross Studios. We did the same thing with the Cataract Hotel, so we’re able to take our cinema audiences much more into the heart of what would have been the 1930s version of the locations.

You turn 60 in December. What comes to your mind when I say that? I don’t say this with any malice, but you’re the first person to say that to me actually [chuckles]. I’m sort of non-plussed by it. Every decade birthday and every moment that marks this kind of passage of time, I think for the individual is always kind of shocking. You can’t believe it. You wake up feeling like a spritely 18-year-old and then you walk into the bathroom and somebody is living in your mirror who looks quite different from the spritely 18-year-old. I don’t know where all those wrinkles come from, but I guess I am the same guy.

Ultimately, what do you hope audiences will feel while watching Death on the Nile? What I hope is that the audience can go on that vicarious emotional and passionate journey with our characters. And just feel it, feel all that passion at the centre of it, and then go on that boat ride down that river in that amazing country and experience love in a very hot, beautiful, ancient and mysterious place, with all the dangers love brings.

Ingrid Randoja is the deputy editor of Cineplex Magazine.
STILL BASKING IN THE GLOW OF OSCAR NOMINATIONS FOR MARRIAGE STORY AND JOJO RABBIT, SCARLETT JOHANSSON IS IN THE SWEET SPOT OF AN ALREADY STELLAR CAREER. ADD IN AN ENGAGEMENT TO FUNNYMAN COLIN JOST AND, OF COURSE, NEXT SPRING’S BLACK WIDOW, THE AVENGERS MOVIE THAT SHE CAN CALL HER OWN, AND IT’S ALL COMING TOGETHER FOR THE SULTRY STAR

Pretty

Sitting

BY INGRID RANDOJA
WAS THE FALL THAT broke our hearts.

Natasha Romanoff letting go of Clint Barton’s hand in *Avengers: Endgame*, plummeting to her death and sacrificing herself so the Avengers could take possession of the Soul Stone and use it to defeat Thanos.

It was the look in her eyes — full of love, regret and fear — that brought us to tears and solidified our respect for Scarlett Johansson, whose masterful turn as Natasha Romanoff, a.k.a. Black Widow, in a nine-year, seven-film run made us care about the former Russian spy and assassin who harboured deep, dark secrets.

Those secrets intrigued us, and Johansson too — she longed to explore Romanoff’s tortured past.

We’ll all get some answers next spring when *Black Widow* finally hits theatres. The long-awaited, standalone Avengers film takes place just after the events of 2016’s *Captain America: Civil War*, a film that ended with the Avengers splintered and Romanoff on the run after breaking the law by helping Captain America and Winter Soldier escape capture.

“For the first time in Natasha’s life she doesn’t sort of belong anywhere,” says the actor. “She’s in a transient time, she has no family or affiliation. It’s probably the first time in her life that things are so quiet.”

JOHANSSON IS TALKING ABOUT the upcoming film via Zoom in early June. As the COVID-19 pandemic continues, the 35-year-old star is quarantining with her fiancé, SNL writer and “Weekend Update” co-host Colin Jost, and her six-year-old daughter, Rose, in their Manhattan apartment. Dressed in a white T-shirt, wearing glasses, her hair in a ponytail, Johansson looks relaxed and eager to share her thoughts about *Black Widow*.

Directed by Australian filmmaker Cate Shortland (*Lore*), the pic sends Romanoff back to her homeland of Russia where she reunites with two other Black Widow agents — Yelena Belova (Florence Pugh) and Melina Vostokoff (Rachel Weisz) — and aging hero Red Guardian (David Harbour). Romanoff is determined to make amends for her past misdeeds, and seeks revenge against those who’ve harmed her, especially the people who run the brutal Red Room program responsible for creating Black Widow agents.

“She is a character who has incredible trauma and guilt and regret and a huge sense of loss within,” explains Johansson. “I think in this film you learn a lot of things about Natasha’s past, where she comes from, and you see the relationship she has with these characters is much more complicated than any of the relationships that we’ve seen before, like with any of the Avengers.

“This is deep, childhood, family stuff so you understand why she is the way she is, and why she acts the way she does, and why she wears masks.”

SHOW HER THE MONEY

When Scarlett Johansson made her debut as Natasha Romanoff in 2010’s *Iron Man 2* she had no idea that a decade later she would hold the box-office record as the highest-grossing female star of all time. Her films have earned $14.3-billion dollars worldwide, which also makes her the third-highest grossing actor behind Robert Downey Jr. And Samuel L. Jackson and, at age 35, Johansson has decades to add to that astronomical total. —IR
**O-T TALKS**

English actor **O-T Fagbenle**, best known for playing Luke on the Toronto-shot series *The Handmaid's Tale*, scored the role of Rick Mason in *Black Widow*. Mason is a “fixer” who many have theorized is really the film’s villain, Taskmaster. But, who knows, Marvel has purposely led us astray before. We’re not jumping to any conclusions, but we did manage to get Fagbenle on the line from L.A. where he told us, well, what he can.

**So, who is Rick Mason?**

How do I describe Rick Mason? I’m kind of like a private contractor who knew Natasha from her time as a spy, but like a guy who has these connections to the criminal underworld so I can provide anything she needs, you know, from a hideout to weaponry. Anything you could possibly want, Mason can get.

**Of course, the rumour is that Mason is really the villain Taskmaster. What do you say to that?**

Well, I find it really interesting. I mean, definitely part of the excitement of Marvel movies is people guessing what things mean and looking into the details of everything, but I’ve gotta say I’m really excited to be bringing Mason to the big screen [laughs].

**You mentioned in another interview that there is a “romantic frisson” between Mason and Natasha. Tell us more about that.**

I don’t want to say too much, but you definitely get a feeling that there is some kind of history between them which may or may not be completely platonic.

**What surprised you most about working with Scarlett Johansson?**

How personable she is. My experience working with really famous people is sometimes they can have quite a barrier up, and you understand it, it’s a self-defence mechanism against everyone wanting a piece of you. But she’s so personable and friendly and welcoming and playful on set. It was so lovely to see that someone who is so renowned and also someone who is so excellent at their craft could still hold a sense of play and fun and connection.

**You didn’t watch Endgame until you were already shooting this film. Do you remember how you felt during Black Widow’s ultimate scene?**

I mean, I’m always bowled over by how brave Marvel are in taking things to a level which you don’t expect and that was one of the things that really kind of blew me away, and also it’s just a very emotional scene and brilliantly acted by Jeremy [Renner] and Scarlett.

**Any chance your character will show up in future Marvel films?**

Listen, the more we can do to ensure that end the better.

—MARNI WEISZ
like Rachel, it’s like, why? What are you doing, what’s the heart of this? And she elevates the work. Her participation brings it to the next level. And Florence as well. She is so strong and unapologetic. She has raw talent and beauty and strength.”

Although she’s only 35, Johansson has been making movies for an astonishing 25 years. Beginning as a child actor in 1994’s North, she hit her stride early, giving nuanced and mature performances as a teenager in films like The Horse Whisperer, Ghost World, Lost in Translation and Girl With a Pearl Earring.

In many ways Florence Pugh is following the same path. She began acting as a teenager and has impressed with her own mature turns in films such as Lady Macbeth, Midsommar and Little Women. They even share the same raspy voice, although Pugh’s comes courtesy of a childhood illness that affected her trachea.

Does Johansson see some of herself in Pugh? “She does remind me somewhat of myself,” says Johansson. “More than anything I think it’s just the excitement knowing what a fun career she has, and what is ahead of her. I feel fortunate to witness some part of this journey and be part of the ride, just because there are so many exciting things happening for her and in a weird way, through watching her, allows me to be self-reflective about that time in my life.”

BLACK WIDOW WILL GIVE US the rare opportunity to study a beloved film character knowing exactly how her life will play out. Avengers: Infinity War and Endgame are lurking on the horizon and we have seen all the pain and suffering that’ll soon be inflicted on Natasha. What a gift then to have the character’s blank spaces filled in, allowing us to appreciate her even more.

Yet for all the new things we will learn about the character, Johansson says Black Widow is, in many ways, an open book. “What I really take away from this experience is that Natasha is actually very much the person you think she is,” says Johansson. “That ultimate sacrifice she makes in Endgame comes from a very genuine place.

“Her is truly heroic to her core and that comes from a place of love, and you see her act out of love in this film. I think people will be most surprised that what you see is what you get, which to me is always surprising with people.”

Ingrid Randoja is the deputy editor of Cineplex Magazine.
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Billy Eichner will portray queer icon Paul Lynde in the bio-pic *Man in the Box*. Lynde is best known for his role as Uncle Arthur on TV’s *Bewitched* and his regular appearances on the game show *Hollywood Squares*, where he delivered zingers from his spot in the centre square. While not officially out, Lynde’s campy persona marked him as queer and limited his career. Eichner sees some of himself in Lynde, and in a recent interview with *Deadline* said, “I want to do this...because gay actors are never, hardly ever, I should say, allowed to play our own gay icons. Harvey Milk, Freddie Mercury, Elton John. Where are the gay actors?”
When Disney’s Peter Pan & Wendy — the live-action version of its 1953 animated classic Peter Pan — resumes production next year after a coronavirus pause, Jude Law is expected to join the cast as the villainous Captain Hook. David Lowery (Pete’s Dragon) is directing young actors Alexander Molony and Ever Anderson (Milla Jovovich’s daughter) as Peter and Wendy in the flick. By the way, Anderson will next be seen as the young version of Natasha Romanoff in Black Widow.

Daniel Dae Kim, who made his mark on the TV shows Lost and Hawaii Five-0, is turning his attention to the big screen. First, his sci-fi thriller Stowaway, which co-stars Anna Kendrick and Toni Collette, is set for release next year. But he’s also planning to produce and star in the rom-com A Sweet Mess, based on the book by Jayci Lee. The story revolves around a reclusive cake maker who appears on a cooking show hosted by a jaded food critic played by Kim.

The comedy Homecoming Queen casts Tiffany Haddish as a woman who thinks she’s descended from African royalty and heads to her ancestral homeland only to discover she isn’t. The film is based on Haddish’s own life and her trip to Eritrea in 2018 to bury her father who was born in the East African nation. Writer Raamla Mohamed (TV’s Scandal) pens the script.
This timely documentary explores six decades in the life of the late John Lewis — activist, politician and rabble-rouser for positive change.

Using archival footage and interviews with Lewis done not that long before he died of pancreatic cancer this past July, filmmaker Dawn Porter tells the story of the famed social activist starting from his childhood as the son of 1940s Alabama sharecroppers.

Lewis met Martin Luther King Jr. in 1957 and eventually became an important leader in the Civil Rights movement, famously marching across the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma, Alabama, in 1965, where he had his head cracked by police who were trying to stop the peaceful demonstration.

Elected to the United States Congress in 1986, Lewis served an astounding 17 terms, fighting for issues like gun control, immigration, voting rights and health-care reform right up until the end, even appearing at a Black Lives Matter protest just weeks before his death.

The film also features input from Lewis's recent political contemporaries, including Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and Nancy Pelosi.
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   - Connect via your TV and a Roku device or Chromecast.

CINEMA

Target Number One

It took more than a decade for writer-director Daniel Roby to make this Canadian crime drama based on the true story of Daniel Leger (Antoine Olivier Pilon), a Montreal addict sentenced to life in a Thai prison in 1989 for a botched drug deal. His case draws the interest of Globe and Mail investigative reporter Victor Malarek (Josh Hartnett), who suspects a shady dealer (Jim Gaffigan) and corrupt RCMP officers worked together to set him up.

The Tax Collector

David Ayer (Suicide Squad) is most at home in L.A.’s South Central neighbourhood. He wrote the script for Training Day and directed the crime pics End of Watch, Harsh Times and Street Kings, all set in the California locale. His latest returns to those same mean streets and casts Bobby Soto and Shia LaBeouf as two toughs who are sent by a criminal kingpin called The Wizard to collect dues from various L.A. gangs. Their already perilous jobs get a lot more dangerous when a new crime boss sets up shop looking to rake in cash.

CRIME

Canadian Target Number One

It took more than a decade for writer-director Daniel Roby to make this Canadian crime drama based on the true story of Daniel Leger (Antoine Olivier Pilon), a Montreal addict sentenced to life in a Thai prison in 1989 for a botched drug deal. His case draws the interest of Globe and Mail investigative reporter Victor Malarek (Josh Hartnett), who suspects a shady dealer (Jim Gaffigan) and corrupt RCMP officers worked together to set him up.

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   - Connect via your TV and a Roku device or Chromecast.
Some films arrive just when needed, as is the case with Antebellum. The writing-directing team of Gerard Bush and Christopher Renz confronts systemic racism in America with this time-travelling horror that casts Janelle Monáe as doctor and author Veronica Henley, who’s made a splash with her best-selling book Shedding the Coping Persona. Her success makes her a target for a group of white supremacists, who are somehow able to transport her to a new and terrifying reality — a slave plantation in the American South. Co-starring Marque Richardson, Jack Huston, Kiersey Clemons, Gabourey Sidibe, Eric Lange and Jena Malone.

ETHAN HAWKE STARS IN THIS STYLISH DRAMA that’s not about the car company but the turn-of-the-century European inventor who inspired its name. Nikola Tesla spent much of his life experimenting with and advocating for the alternating current (AC) system of power transmission, brushing up against historical figures like Thomas Edison (Kyle MacLachlan) and George Westinghouse (Jim Gaffigan) who were sometimes allies and sometimes foes.

Eve Hewson, herself the daughter of a famous figure (U2’s Bono is her dad), plays Anne Morgan, the daughter of iconic financier J.P. Morgan. Anne is a potential love interest for Tesla, but also our story’s anachronistic narrator who, dressed in her period garb, uses modern methods like Google searches to explain our protagonist’s place in history.
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As the weather cools and the leaves start to turn brown, a warm and gooey Taradonna Pizza will hit the spot. And if you’re already missing those long summer days spent at the beach you might want to bring the sun and sand home with a fun, beach-themed cocktail.

Rather order in? You can get Cineplex’s famous popcorn, hot dogs, candy and a selection of alcohol delivered right to your door through Skip the Dishes or Uber Eats. And if you need inspiration picking out the perfect movie, check out CineplexStore.com for new releases and classic films.

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**Taradonna Pizza**

**INGREDIENTS**
- Pizza dough (choose your favourite store-bought frozen dough)
- 1/4 cup basil pesto
- 1 cup mozzarella cheese
- 1 grilled chicken breast, cut into thin slices
- 1/4 cup chopped roasted red pepper
- 1/4 cup shaved parmesan

**INSTRUCTIONS**
1. Roll or toss your dough into the desired shape and thickness.
2. Spread pesto onto dough and cover with cheese, then chicken and roasted red pepper.
3. Bake as instructed on dough packaging.
4. Finish with 1/4 cup shaved parmesan.

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**Candy Beach Fishbowl**

**INGREDIENTS**
- Swedish fish
- 1 oz Smirnoff vodka
- 1 oz blue curaçao
- 1 oz peach schnapps
- 2 oz lime juice
- Sprite to fill

**INSTRUCTIONS**
1. Fill large bowl (fishbowl cocktail glass, if you have) halfway with ice.
2. Place four Swedish fish inside, then top with more ice.
3. Add the ingredients, then place straws in carefully so you don’t disturb the fish!
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Where’s that from?

A great line of dialogue takes on a life of its own. You probably know a ton of famous movie quotes and can even remember who said them. But do you remember which movies they came from? Are you sure? Find out below.

1. You had me at “hello.”
   —RENÉE ZELLWEGER
   a) Bridget Jones’s Diary
   b) One True Thing
   c) Jerry Maguire
   d) Cold Mountain

2. I’m walking here!
   —DUSTIN HOFFMAN
   a) Midnight Cowboy
   b) Tootsie
   c) The Graduate
   d) Rain Man

3. They call me Mr. Tibbs.
   —SIDNEY POITIER
   a) Blackboard Jungle
   b) To Sir, With Love
   c) Guess Who’s Coming to Dinner
   d) In the Heat of the Night

4. La-dee-da, la-dee-da.
   —DIANE KEATON
   a) Annie Hall  b) Love and Death
   c) Play It Again, Sam  d) Manhattan

5. Hello, gorgeous!
   —BARBRA STREISAND
   a) Hello, Dolly!
   b) Yentl
   c) Funny Girl
   d) On a Clear Day You Can See Forever

6. Nobody’s gonna hurt anybody. We’re gonna be like three little Fonzie’s here.
   —SAMUEL L. JACKSON
   a) Jackie Brown
   b) Pulp Fiction
   c) Kill Bill
   d) Inglourious Basterds

7. Snap out of it!
   —CHER
   a) Moonstruck
   b) Silkwood
   c) Mermaids
   d) The Player

8. You talkin’ to me?
   —ROBERT DE NIRO
   a) Taxi Driver
   b) Casino
   c) The Untouchables
   d) The Godfather: Part II

9. You make me want to be a better man.
   —JACK NICHOLSON
   a) Something’s Gotta Give
   b) Terms of Endearment
   c) As Good as It Gets
   d) Heartburn

10. I’ll be back.
    —ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER
    a) Total Recall
    b) The Terminator
    c) Predator
    d) True Lies

ANSWERS: 1. c  2. a  3. d  4. b  5. a  6. a  7. a  8. a  9. c  10. b
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CINEPLEX
Feeling the Felt

After years spent working as a successful illustrator/animator, including projects for MTV and Saturday Night Live, Ed Mironiuk had a hankering to create tangible art. “Felting allowed me to change the way I thought, considering shapes in 3D rather than trying to represent them in 2D,” says the New York artist.

His series of “Felt Fiend Sculptures” runs the gamut from deliriously happy anthropomorphic ice-cream sundaes to deliriously happy anthropomorphic teeth to deliriously happy movie characters, even when those characters aren’t known for being happy on screen. “My main goal is to make something that is lighthearted and make the viewer smile,” he says. “Using subjects that sometimes aren’t associated with happiness just makes them goofier and more fun.”—MW

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