

DECEMBER 2015 | VOLUME 16 | NUMBER 11

CINEPLEX

MAGAZINE



STAR WARS VII

J.J. ABRAMS
TALKS HEROES,
HISTORY AND
THE FORCE AWAKENS

PUBLICATIONS MAIL AGREEMENT NO. 41619533

INSIDE: TINA FEY, AMY POEHLER, CHRIS HEMSWORTH, EDDIE REDMAYNE

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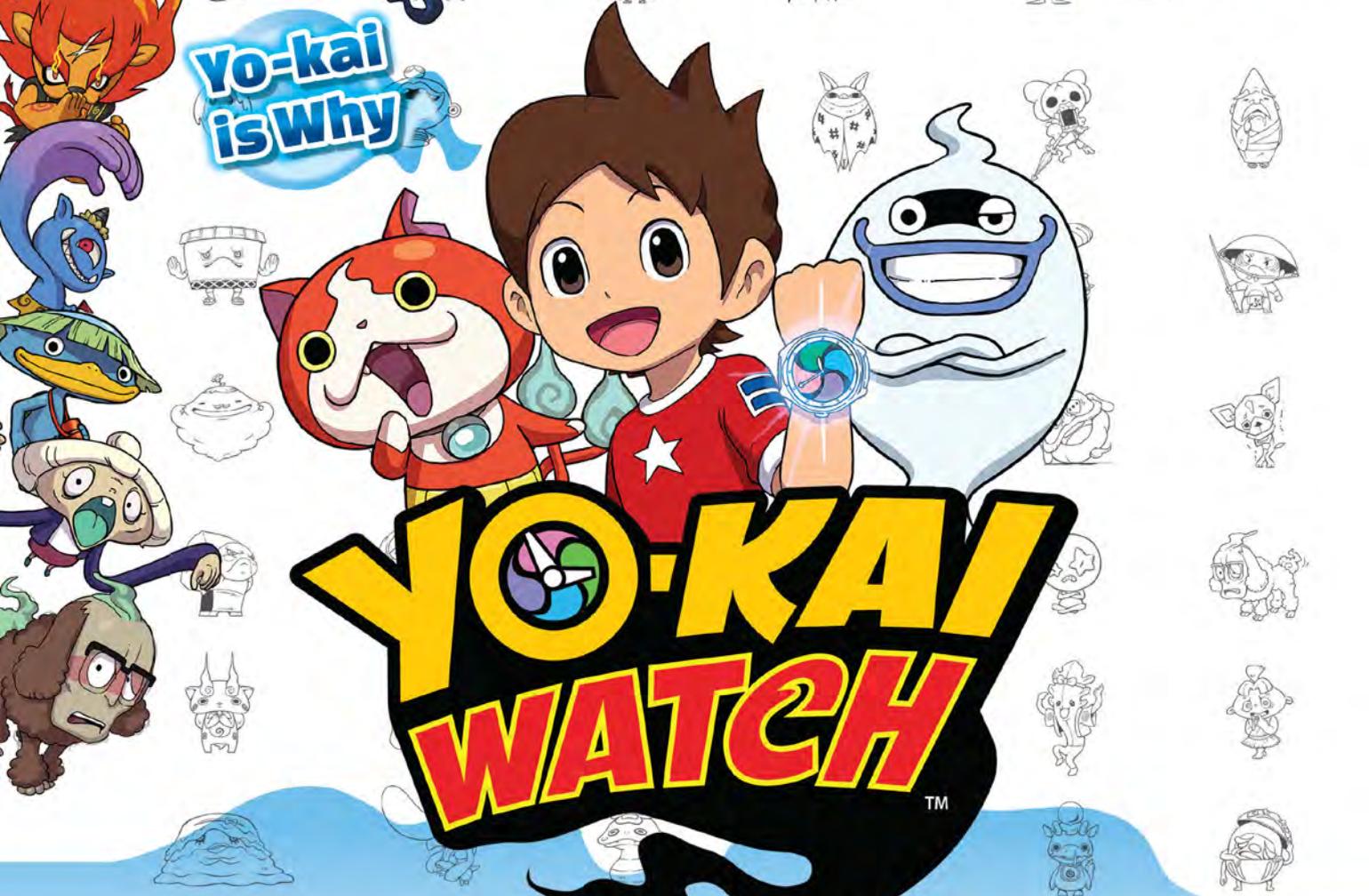
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The story begins

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Instead of bugs, though, Nate finds a loud-mouthed Yo-kai named **Whisper** locked inside a Crank-a-kai machine!



He gives Nate a Yo-kai Watch, a device that lets humans see the normally invisible Yo-kai.



Jibanyan
Yeah. Great. Perfect. I can't tell if I'm in pain or not... I think I'm numb.

Nate uses the watch to investigate mysteries around town, convincing Yo-kai to give up their hi-jinks and instead use their powers for good.



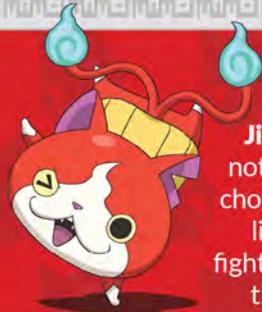
Meet Yo-kai

Yo-kai are the physical embodiment of everyday problems, and they live everywhere in our world—under cars, near vending machines, in the river—you just can't see them.



Whisper

A self-proclaimed "Yo-kai butler", **Whisper** is determined to help Nate learn more about Yo-kai—whether Nate wants to or not!



Jibanyan

Jibanyan, when he's not lying around eating chocolate bars, Jibanyan likes to practice his fighting moves on passing trucks—usually with painful results!

Colour the Yo-kai

Looks like you've discovered three Yo-kai, can you find them above and colour them in to match?



Tattletell



Komasan



Shogunyan

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BY RACHEL WEST

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Chameleon British actor **Eddie Redmayne** on the privilege, and challenge, of playing transgender pioneer Lilli Elbe in *The Danish Girl*
BY CHRISTIAN AUST





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READY, YOU ARE?

Are you ready for *Star Wars: Episode VII - The Force Awakens*?

I'm not asking if you're excited. I'm asking, are you ready to pick up where we left off?

Chronologically speaking that's the end of 1983's *Star Wars: Episode VII - Return of the Jedi*, the last film in the *Star Wars* canon to feature Luke, Leia, Han and Chewie. Until now.

But what do you honestly remember about the end of *Return of the Jedi*? I mean, this was the final entry in the most influential film trilogy of all time — it should be pretty clear in your mind, right?

Is Darth Vader dead or alive? Did Luke turn to the dark side? Are Han and Leia together? What about Yoda?

If you'll allow me to take the results from an informal and utterly unscientific survey I conducted with friends and co-workers over the past few days, and then extrapolate those results to all of mankind — the world is separated fairly evenly into two types of people.

There are those who recall the ending of *Return of the Jedi* in great detail, and those who respond to the question by dropping their heads forward in what appears to be a shame reflex, then nervously saying something like, "Ummm, Luke killed Darth Vader and Han Solo is encased in carbonite?"

I also encountered a surprising number of people who said, "I've never seen it." Which I guess means the world is actually separated into three types of people.

For the latter two groups here we go.

Darth Vader is dead. (Or as dead as anyone with the Force can be.) But his death doesn't come at Luke's hand. They do fight aboard the Death Star, but Luke refuses to finish his dad off, despite Emperor Palpatine's urging (the Emperor wants Luke to take Vader's place as the dark side's poster boy). Palpatine tries to kill Luke but Vader stops him, instead killing Palpatine. Vader is mortally injured by the effort and dies in Luke's arms.

Meanwhile, Han Solo is down on the Ewoks' home planet of Endor trying to disable a shield generator that's protecting the Death Star. He's successful, and Lando Calrissian (piloting Han's Millennium Falcon) destroys the Death Star just as Luke escapes on a shuttle, carrying Vader's body.

Back on Endor, Han tells the gentleman, asking Leia if she loves Luke. She says she does, so Han offers to back off. That's when Leia tells Han that she loves Luke, but like a brother, because, yeah, he's actually her brother. Han and Leia smooch.

A solemn Luke burns Vader's body on a funeral pyre before joining his pals at a rocking Endor-style party where C-3PO dances awkwardly by the bonfire, and the smiling apparitions of Obi-Wan Kenobi, a redeemed Darth Vader and Yoda (also dead) appear to Luke.

There. *Nou* you're ready.

In "Force to Be Reckoned With," page 48, *The Force Awakens*' director **J.J. Abrams** talks about keeping his emotions in check in order to do the franchise justice.

Elsewhere in this issue, we have interviews with **Tina Fey** and **Amy Poehler** for *Sisters* (page 34), **Eddie Redmayne** for *The Danish Girl* (page 42) and **Chris Hemsworth** for *In the Heart of the Sea* (page 40). Plus, on page 26 you'll find our very useful **Holiday Gift Guide**.

Happy holidays everyone, we'll see you in 2016.

■ **MARNI WEISZ**, EDITOR

PUBLISHER SALAH BACHIR

EDITOR MARNI WEISZ
DEPUTY EDITOR INGRID RANDOJA
ART DIRECTOR TREVOR THOMAS STEWART
GRAPHIC DESIGNER KATIE CRANE
VICE PRESIDENT, PRODUCTION SHEILA GREGORY

CONTRIBUTORS CHRISTIAN AUST, MICHAEL KENNEDY, BOB STRAUSS, RACHEL WEST

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SNAPS



HANKS ON THE HUDSON

That's **Tom Hanks** on the New York set of director Clint Eastwood's *Sully*. Hanks plays Chesley "Sully" Sullenberger, the pilot who landed his US Airways plane in the Hudson River.

PHOTO BY SPLASH NEWS



HAPPY B-DAY KATE!

Kate Winslet is all smiles on her 40th birthday, spent in Tribeca, New York.

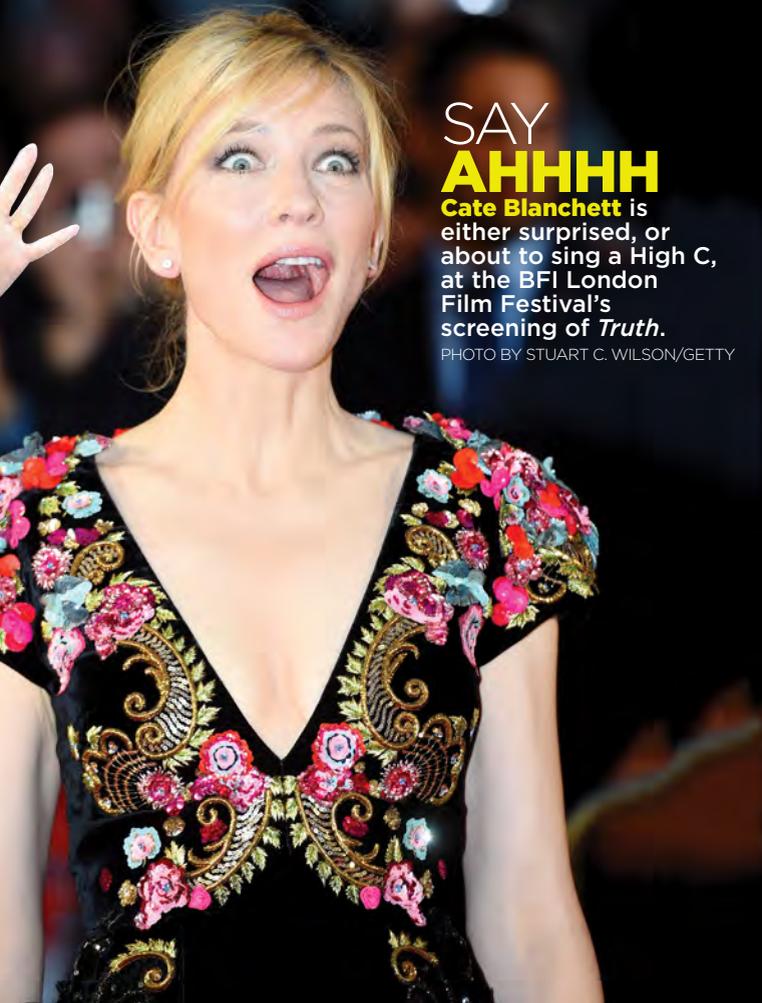
PHOTO BY JOSIAH KAMAU/KEYSTONE PRESS



HAIRY MOMENT

Gwyneth Paltrow's hair defies gravity on a gusty day at New York's JFK Airport.

PHOTO BY SPLASH NEWS



SAY AHHHH

Cate Blanchett is either surprised, or about to sing a High C, at the BFI London Film Festival's screening of *Truth*.

PHOTO BY STUART C. WILSON/GETTY



EFRON RIDES AGAIN

Zac Efron is seen atop a handsome steed on the L.A. set of *Neighbors 2*.

PHOTO BY SPLASH NEWS



BOND AFTER PARTY

Daniel Craig greets the press at *SPECTRE*'s after party held at The British Museum in London.

PHOTO BY DAVE J. HOGAN/GETTY

IN BRIEF



Christian Bale

Cate Blanchett

Jennifer Lawrence

Eddie Redmayne

Will Smith

IS THAT OSCAR CALLING?

The 88th Academy Awards will be handed out on February 28th, and while several Oscar-worthy movies have already been released (*Spotlight*, *Steve Jobs*, *Room*), this month's films, in particular, boast a ton of performances earning Oscar buzz.

It's shaping up to be a year in which former Oscar winners are bidding to add to their collections.

A Best Actress winner at 22 for *Silver Linings Playbook*, **Jennifer Lawrence's** turn as Joy's (December 25th) ballsy inventor Joy Mangano could earn her a second statue at

the ripe old age of 25. Reigning Best Actor **Eddie Redmayne** shows just what a chameleon he is with his portrayal of transgender pioneer Lili Elbe in *The Danish Girl* (December 11th), while two-time winner **Cate Blanchett** digs deep to play an unhappily married woman who falls in love with a younger lass (**Rooney Mara**, who may earn a nod herself) in *Carol* (December 11th).

There's an awful lot of talent on screen in the heralded financial drama *The Big Short* (December 23rd) — **Brad Pitt**, **Christian Bale**, **Steve Carell**

and **Ryan Gosling** — but look for former Oscar winner Bale to generate the most heat for his turn as Asperger's-affected financial genius Dr. Michael Burry.

Or perhaps twice-nominated **Will Smith** will finally earn some Oscar love for his portrayal of Dr. Bennet Omalu, who uncovers football-related brain trauma in *Concussion* (December 25th). —IR



Greg Kinnear

On Home Turf: PHIL: A TALE OF FLOSSING AND PLUMBING

Actor and former TV show host **Greg Kinnear** is in B.C. directing his first film this month.

Phil: A Tale of Flossing and Plumbing stars Kinnear as Phil, a dentist who ingratiates himself into the family of a recently deceased patient by pretending to be a relative from Greece. English actor **Emily Mortimer** (*TV's The Newsroom*) is expected to co-star as the deceased patient's widow. —MW

PHOTO BY MAARTEN DE BOER/GETTY

THE ART OF FILM

When Toronto-based oil painter John Abrams captures a scene from a classic film, it somehow looks more alive than it did on screen. (Here you see works based, from left, on *Easy Rider* and *Dial M for Murder*.) How does he do it? "I incorporate different painting techniques — dripping, smearing, splattering and spraying — through parts of my paintings giving them an unfinished or slightly raw feel, while other areas possess a finely wrought quality," explains Abrams. "The combination of rough and loose against fine and finished allows the viewer to imagine the painting as an act as much as an art object." See more at www.johnabramsart.com. —MW





DID YOU KNOW?

This month's horror-comedy *Krampus*, in which a monster invades a family's Christmas, is based on an ancient Alpine folk story about a fur-covered, cloven-hoofed beast that arrives during the Christmas season and steals children who've misbehaved. —IR

MATTHEW MCCONAUGHEY PHOTO BY FELIPE RAMALES/SPLASH NEWS



Wore it best!

Tom Cruise

Christian Bale

WHO WORE IT BEST?

The husky, balding look — who wore it best? Tom Cruise in *Tropic Thunder*, Christian Bale in *American Hustle* or Matthew McConaughey seen here on the New York set of the upcoming drama *Gold*? We choose McConaughey by a hair.

Quote Unquote

It's not they used these type of lenses on *Ben-Hur*; they used *these lenses on Ben-Hur...* These are the lenses that they shot *It's a Mad, Mad, Mad, Mad World* in, they shot *Battle of the Bulge* in, the Marlon Brando *Mutiny on the Bounty*. **These are the same lenses they used.**

—DIRECTOR **QUENTIN TARANTINO** ON THE ANTIQUE LENSES HE USED TO SHOOT *THE HATEFUL EIGHT*



SILENT PARTNER

James Franco taught Robert Naylor how to stay very still. Naylor is the 19-year-old Montreal actor who stars opposite Franco in *Every Thing Will Be Fine*. The drama, directed by Wim Wenders, is set in Quebec and casts Franco as brooding writer Tomas, who, one snowy night, accidentally runs over Nicholas, a little boy who was tobogganing with his brother, Christopher.

The film follows Tomas for the next 12 years as he deals with his guilt. Naylor enters the film as the teenage Christopher, who finds Tomas in the hopes of coming to terms with the tragedy. "James was very subdued on set," says Naylor on the line from his Montreal apartment, "and that's what the movie called for. He takes his work seriously, and I learned a lot about subtleties making this movie. The movie itself is all about subtlety, a lot about looks and breathing even, which take up a lot of space in a shot even though you don't always realize it."

Naylor began working steadily in both English and French when he was just 10. He learned his flawless French in school and also by growing up with a French-speaking mother (his father is British). He credits his mom for guiding him through the perils of being a child actor.

"We kinda learned on the fly, my mom and I. And I've always trusted my mom and had the utmost faith in her. She's been my closest partner throughout all of this," he says. "It was good to have her there looking out for me while I learned the ropes, and at the same time she was also learning how everything worked."

Naylor will head to his second home in January, an apartment in Los Angeles where he spends a few months a year drumming up work. However, he's hoping he won't have to leave Montreal permanently anytime soon. "For now I am just hanging out in Montreal and doing what I can from here, I just don't want to get up and move if I don't have to because this is home." —INGRID RANDOJA



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IN THEATRES

DECEMBER 4



LIFE

Dane DeHaan plays relatively unknown actor James Dean, who becomes the reluctant subject of a 1955 photo essay by *Life* magazine photographer Dennis Stock (**Robert Pattinson**).



Adam Scott
in *Krampus*

KRAMPUS

A family Christmas turns into a horror show when a young boy inadvertently summons the cloven-hoofed Christmas monster Krampus, who punishes those who've been naughty. Starring **Toni Collette**, **Adam Scott** and **David Koechner**.

DECEMBER 11



CAROL

Carol is based on **Patricia Highsmith's** novel *The Price of Salt*, which caused a stir when it was published in 1952 due to its lesbian content. Lonely department store clerk Therese (**Rooney Mara**) falls for the elegant, unhappily married Carol (**Cate Blanchett**), who reciprocates the younger woman's feelings.



Youth's Michael Caine

YOUTH

Michael Caine and **Harvey Keitel** bring a combined 158 years of life experience to director **Paolo Sorrentino's** study of creativity, aging and love. Caine plays retired conductor Fred, who, along with his daughter (**Rachel Weisz**) and filmmaker pal Mick (Keitel), heads to a spa in the Alps where they all contemplate their greatest achievements, failures and realize their creative juices are still flowing.

THE DANISH GIRL

Reigning Best Actor Oscar winner **Eddie Redmayne** may be in the running again for his turn as transgender pioneer Lili Elbe who began life as Danish artist Einar Wegener, and married fellow artist Gerda Gottlieb (**Alicia Vikander**) in 1904. It is while posing as Lili, Gerda's female model, that Einar embraces the truth that she's a female living in a man's body. **See Eddie Redmayne interview, page 42.** CONTINUED ▶

MAKING **LIFE**
SPARKLE SINCE 1856

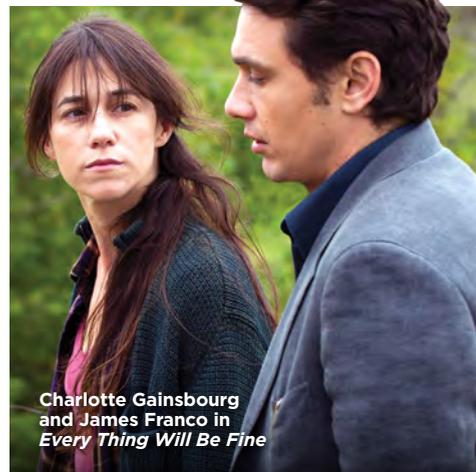


DECEMBER 11



▶ IN THE HEART OF THE SEA

Director **Ron Howard** skips this action-packed account of the disaster that befell the 19th-century whaling ship *Essex*, and which inspired Herman Melville to pen *Moby-Dick*. Captain Pollard (**Benjamin Walker**), First Mate Owen Chase (**Chris Hemsworth**) and the rest of the crew are shipwrecked after a giant whale destroys their vessel. Their survival may require them to make some morally questionable decisions. See **Chris Hemsworth interview, page 40.**



Charlotte Gainsbourg and James Franco in *Every Thing Will Be Fine*

EVERY THING WILL BE FINE

Wim Wenders directs this thoughtful drama about writer Tomas (**James Franco**), who accidentally runs over and kills a small boy in rural Quebec. In the years that follow Tomas is beset by guilt, but also a strange sense of creative freedom. However, he has to confront his past when the dead boy's brother (**Robert Naylor**) comes looking for him. See **Robert Naylor interview, page 14.**

DECEMBER 18



STAR WARS: EPISODE VII - THE FORCE AWAKENS

The relentless hype and rampant speculation finally come to an end with the release of the seventh instalment in the beloved *Star Wars* series. Director **J.J. Abrams** puts his reputation as franchise saviour on the line with this tale of young resistance fighters (**Daisy Ridley, Oscar Isaac, John Boyega**) who join forces with older rebels Han and Leia (**Harrison Ford, Carrie Fisher**) to take down evil First Order warriors, led by Kylo Ren (**Adam Driver**). Luke (**Mark Hamill**) is back too, but his part in the proceedings is one of the film's great mysteries. See **J.J. Abrams interview, page 48.**

CONTINUED ▶

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DECEMBER 18



Alvin and the Chipmunks: The Road Chip

▶ **ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS: THE ROAD CHIP**

The fourth film in the *Alvin and Chipmunks* franchise finds frisky critters Alvin, Simon and Theodore getting behind the wheel and heading out for a three-day road trip to stop Dave (**Jason Lee**) from getting married.

SISTERS

When responsible Maura (**Amy Poehler**) and her impulsive sister Kate (**Tina Fey**) find out their parents are selling their childhood home, they decide to have one final house party. What could go wrong? **See Tina Fey and Amy Poehler interview, page 34.**

DECEMBER 23



THE BIG SHORT

Michael Lewis's acclaimed book about the collapse of America's housing bubble and the subprime mortgage crisis of the mid-2000s comes to the big screen boasting a stellar cast. **Christian Bale, Brad Pitt, Ryan Gosling** and **Steve Carell** star as four brainy guys who discover the banking system that governs the mortgage system is doomed to fail, so they bet against the banks and earn millions.

CONTINUED ▶

ACADEMY AWARD® WINNER

EDDIE REDMAYNE

ALICIA VIKANDER

FROM THE ACADEMY AWARD® WINNING DIRECTOR OF
THE KING'S SPEECH AND LES MISÉRABLES



THE
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The Hateful Eight's Samuel L. Jackson

▶ **THE HATEFUL EIGHT**

Famous for being a film aficionado, **Quentin Tarantino** spurned digital technology to shoot his wintry Western in widescreen 70mm. The story revolves around bounty hunter John Ruth (**Kurt Russell**) and his captured female fugitive Daisy Domergue (**Jennifer Jason Leigh**), who hole up alongside six mysterious men (including Tarantino regulars **Samuel L. Jackson**, **Michael Madsen** and **Tim Roth**) in a snowbound inn.

DADDY'S HOME

Will Ferrell reunites with *The Other Guys* co-star **Mark Wahlberg** for this comedy about a perfect stepdad (Ferrell) who has to compete for his stepkids' affection when the kids' fun-loving, biological dad (Wahlberg) reappears.



Will Ferrell (left) and Mark Wahlberg in *Daddy's Home*



Jennifer Lawrence and Bradley Cooper in *Joy*

JOY

Director **David O. Russell** and his muse **Jennifer Lawrence** team up for their third film together, this one recounting the life story of Joy Mangano, an ambitious single mom from Long Island who invents the Miracle Mop and becomes a successful entrepreneur.

SON OF SAUL

Winner of the Grand Prix at this year's Cannes Film Festival, this harrowing Hungarian film takes place inside the Auschwitz concentration camp and stars **Géza Röhrig** as Saul, a Jewish prisoner forced to work in the camp's crematorium.

CONCUSSION

This torn-from-the-headlines drama stars **Will Smith** as real-life forensic pathologist Dr. Bennet Omalu, who discovers the degenerative brain disease CTE in former professional football players and fights to make his results known.

POINT BREAK

This remake of the 1991 bromance casts **Luke Bracey** as undercover FBI agent Johnny Utah (Keanu Reeves' old role), who infiltrates a crime ring of extreme sports enthusiasts led by the macho Bodhi (**Édgar Ramírez** in Patrick Swayze's part).

FRONT ROW
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EVENTS

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LONDON STAGE
THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING EARNEST
THURS., DEC. 3

FAMILY FAVOURITES
POLAR EXPRESS 3D
SAT., DEC. 5
DR. SEUSS' HOW THE GRINCH STOLE CHRISTMAS
SAT., DEC. 12

THE METROPOLITAN OPERA
OTELLO (VERDI)
ENCORES: SAT., DEC. 5;
MON., DEC. 7; WED., DEC. 9
THE MAGIC FLUTE (MOZART)
ENCORE: SUN., DEC. 13

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BOLSHOI BALLET
THE LADY OF THE CAMELLIAS
LIVE: SUN., DEC. 6
THE ROYAL BALLET
THE NUTCRACKER
LIVE: SUN., DEC. 20

NATIONAL THEATRE LIVE
JANE EYRE
LIVE: THURS, DEC. 10

SENSORY FRIENDLY SCREENINGS
THE GOOD DINOSAUR
SAT., DEC. 12

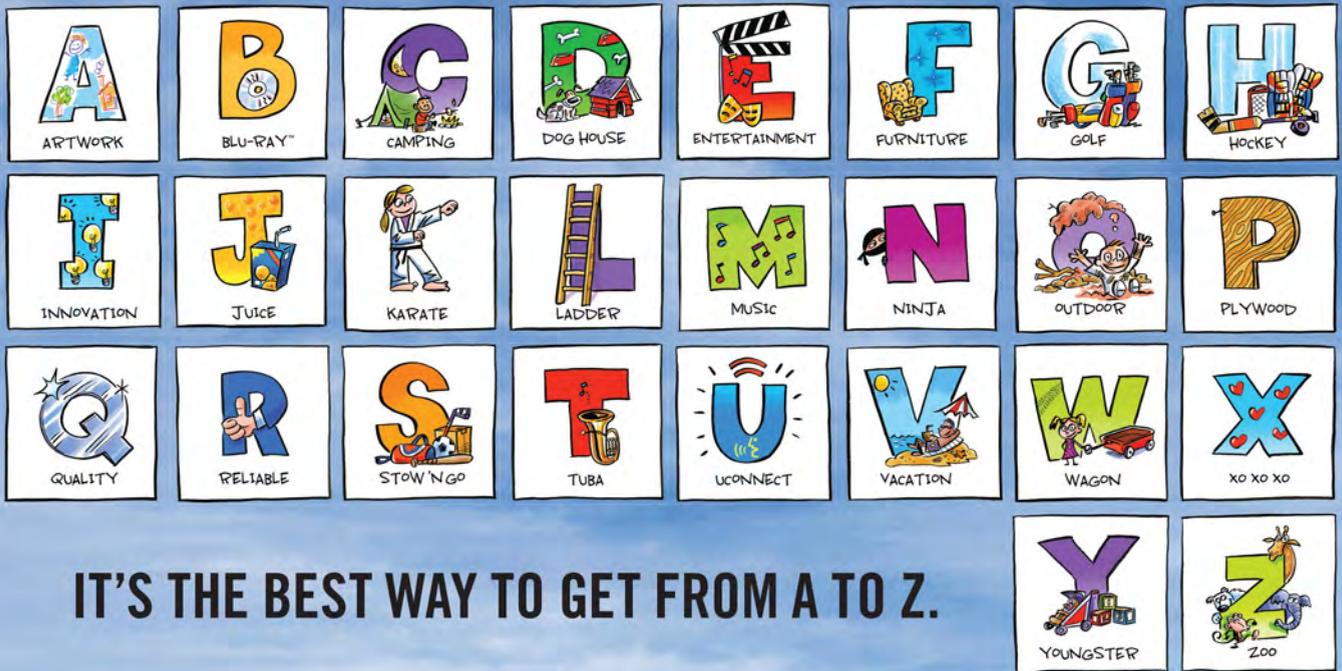
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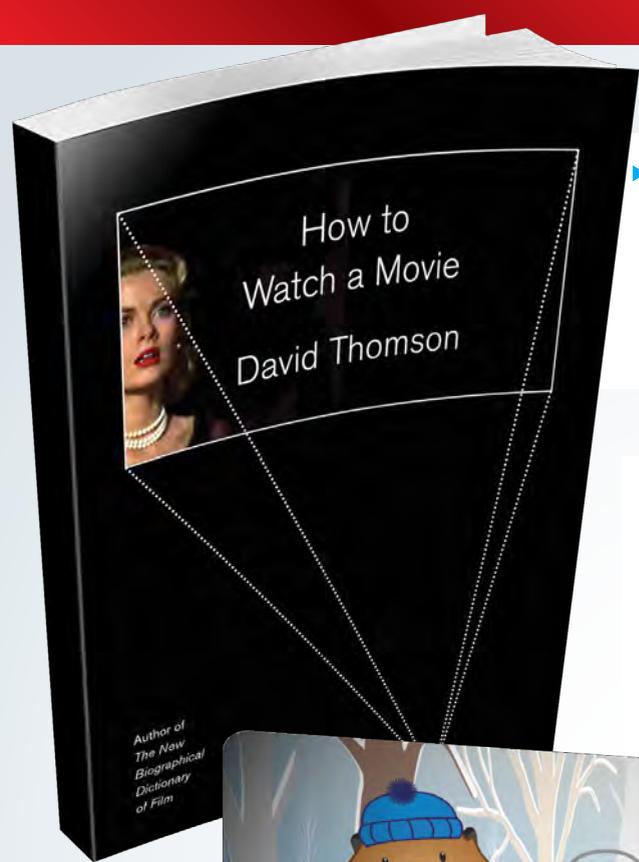
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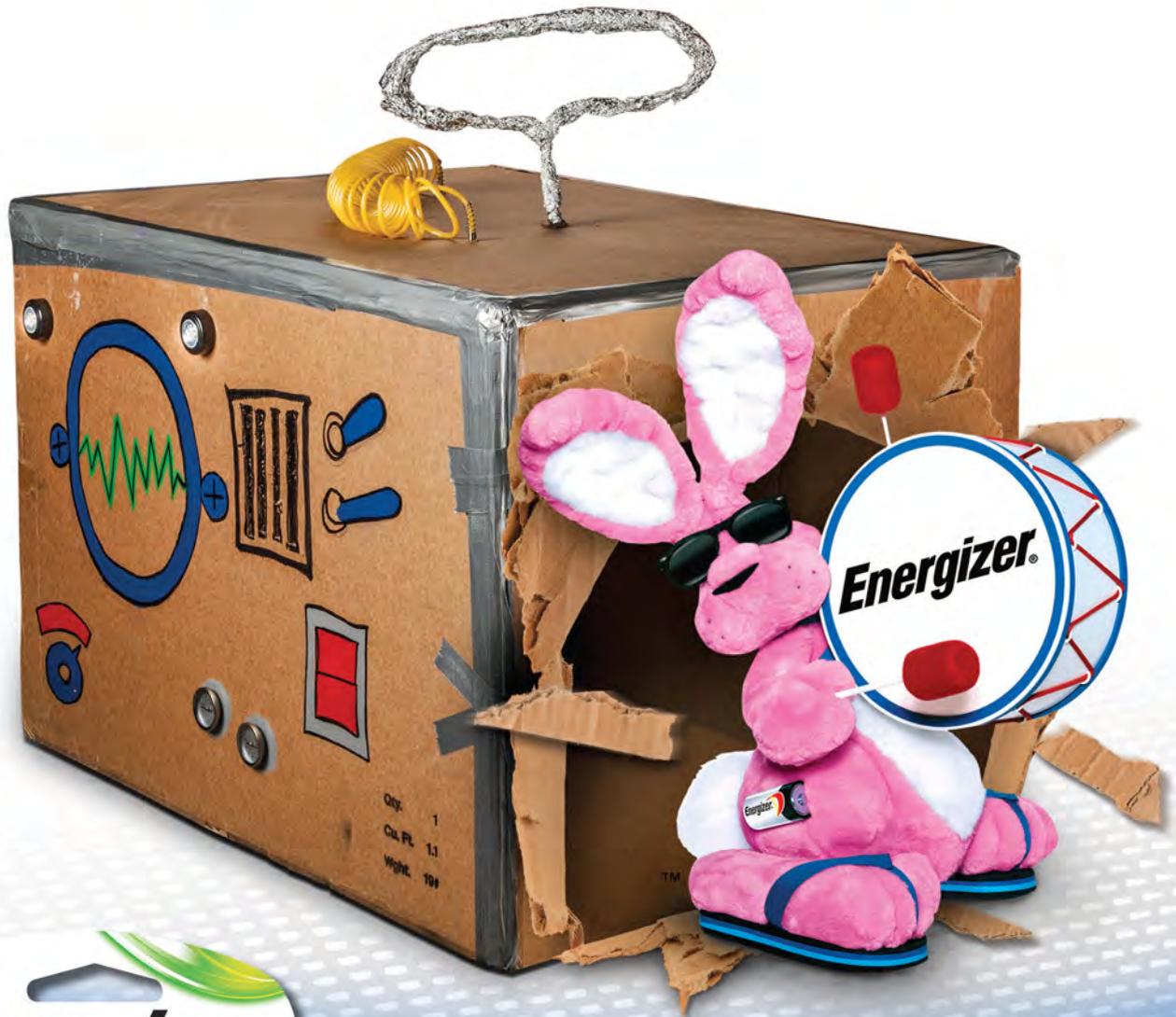
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PARTY LIKE IT'S 1999

Red Solo cups. Check. Sparkly outfits. Check. Tequila. Check. **Tina Fey** and **Amy Poehler** turn up the funny while talking about *Sisters*, a comedy about middle-aged sibs who throw one last teen-style bash at their childhood home and — surprise, surprise — run into a few problems ■ BY MICHAEL KENNEDY

Sisters stars Amy Poehler (left) and Tina Fey

Who in Hollywood has the cojones

to go up against *Star Wars: Episode VII - The Force Awakens*?

Why it's Tina Fey and Amy Poehler. Their raunchy little comedy *Sisters* hits theatres on December 18th, 2015, the same day Han Solo reclaims the Millennium Falcon and pilots it into nearly every cinema complex across planet Earth.

"Yeah, they've been begging us to hook up with them for promotion and stuff," jokes Poehler. "We kind of wanna do our own thing but they're trying to piggyback on our business."

Sisters is a broad comedy (that means crude, physical or over-the-top comedy kids, not that it stars two broads) that was penned by Paula Pell (*Saturday Night Live*, *30 Rock*) and focuses on dysfunctional siblings (Fey, Poehler) who, upon learning their parents have sold their childhood home, decide to throw one last bash at the old house.

We sat down with Fey and Poehler in Hollywood to talk about partying.

Q:

Tell us about your characters in this movie.

POEHLER: "I play Maura, who is the sister who is stuck and a little repressed and hasn't done anything since her divorce, and Kate is her sister who lives out loud."

FEY: "Right, I kind of take up a lot of air in the family. I am selfish and impulsive and have lived my life like a wrecking ball through the family, and over the course of the movie need to grow up a little bit."

POEHLER: "And Maura decides, okay, I'm going to use this party to kind of let my freak flag fly, and Kate says I'm going to use this party to show that I'm a responsible person and a responsible mom too."

You are very close in real life. Did that help you play sisters?

POEHLER: "Yeah, I think so. We realized we didn't have to do any of that thing where you first start a film where you have to get to know how somebody works. We kept saying, 'Why is the beginning of this so easy?' And it was because the chemistry is already there." CONTINUED ▶

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SISTERS
HITS THEATRES
DECEMBER 18TH

Want to talk *Sisters* with fellow Cineplex film fans? Use **#FANSCREEN** on Twitter or Instagram

FEY: "If you see any movie... See *Sisters* first, but if you see any other movie where the people didn't already know each other...you could probably try to guess, 'Oh, that's the scene they shot on the first day.' See if you can spot the scene in any movie where the people are still being weird with each other [mimes moving robotically toward Poehler]."

POEHLER: "And you know, Tina and I both have a rule where we immediately sleep with the actor we're working with on Day One, and it was really nice this time to know the person."

FEY: "Right, so nice."

What goes into putting on an epic party?

FEY: "For an epic party you need your parents to not be home, in that we succeeded. You need a lot of Solo cups, just like a lot of red plastic cups. And then you need to mix alcohol with any kind of sugary liquid."

POEHLER: "Mmm hmmm. You need a few weird, random people that you're afraid of, that you're constantly keeping your eye on."

FEY: "Yeah, a little danger element."

POEHLER: "You need suds or soap or bubbles of some kind. Or perhaps a washing machine that goes askew."

FEY: "You need someone that you're hoping to hook up with, just to keep the party interesting."

POEHLER: "Right. Cops coming. And then you need to fake 'em out, or sweet-talk them. That's always a part of an epic party. There has to be a lot of stages. And in *Sisters* the party starts and you think it's going to be one way and then it goes a completely different way. You have to be in for the long haul, it's a marathon."

FEY: "And you need music. You need really good dance music. And somebody has to cry. It's not a party until somebody cries."

What is it about your personalities that makes you get along so well?

POEHLER: "Well, we met many years ago in Chicago."

FEY: "We could pretend it was Toronto if that would help. We could say it was like Second City Toronto."

POEHLER: "I do know that you should say Trono."

FEY: "Trono. Second City Trono."

POEHLER: "But we met so many years ago when we were just starting out and we kind of had very similar experiences in the ways that we studied and learned and kind of came up, and we were lucky that we got to find our feet first outside of the public eye. I can't imagine being that age then and going to the things we have to go to now. We're lucky that we had some time to figure out who we were outside of the glare of all of it."

FEY: "To cook."

What do you think audiences will be surprised by in this movie?

FEY: "Amy's full body nudity."

POEHLER: [Laughing.] Unexplained. Never commented on."

FEY: "It's only like four frames, but it's when you don't expect it at all. So stay through the end credits."

POEHLER: "[Getting serious.] Well, I think that we get a little rowdy, and there's a lot of physical stunts."

FEY: "It is an R-rated movie; people have maybe never seen us in an R-rated movie before."

POEHLER: "Yeah, we've done TV for a long time, and we like the constraints of that and playing against that, but we got to let loose a little bit, which is really nice, and act like babies, you know, jerks. And maybe people haven't seen that enough. Or maybe they have, on the street, not in a film."

What do you hope people get out of this film?

FEY: "Fun times. I think it's very fun, I think the movie also has a nice heart. Hopefully it just has a lot of laughs. It's just a really great way to warm your body up for *Star Wars*."

POEHLER: "Right."

FEY: "If you see *Star Wars* cold, you could literally have a stroke. So warm up, go to like a noon showing of *Sisters*, then walk around the block a few times, then go to a three o'clock showing of *Sisters*, and then maybe by eight go see *Star Wars*." 📺

Michael Kennedy is Cineplex Entertainment's Executive Vice President of Filmed Entertainment.

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**IN THE HEART
OF THE SEA**
HITS THEATRES
DECEMBER 11TH

“They survived for 93 days drifting in the ocean.

It’s a fascinating tale of humanity at its extreme”

It was Hemsworth’s idea to do this to himself.

“There was a book, *In the Heart of the Sea* [by National Book Award winner Nathaniel Philbrick], which sort of documented the event,” the actor explains. “It was taken from journals kept by Owen Chase, Captain Pollard [Benjamin Walker in the film], the cabin boy Thomas Nickerson [Tom Holland] and other crew of the *Essex*. After it was struck by a whale, then sank, they survived for 93 days drifting in the ocean. It’s a fascinating tale of humanity at its extreme.

“My manager and I had this script...and I took it to Ron Howard. He loved it and said ‘Let’s do it.’ That was such an amazing experience.”

Of course it was. There’s nothing like filming on open water off the Canary Islands with no protection from sun and the elements on near-starvation rations. Yet Hemsworth says working with Howard, the child star turned Oscar-winning filmmaker, makes even the toughest physical tests worth taking.

“It’s just an absolute blessing to be able to work with Ron again,” says the actor who played race-car driver James Hunt in Howard’s 2013 film *Rush*. “He’s probably one of my favourite human

beings as well as directors. After doing *Rush* I was immediately like, ‘What else can I do with him?’”

Starve, apparently. Supermuscle fans needn’t fret, though. After working on next year’s *Snow White and the Huntsman* sequel, *The Huntsman*, and playing Kevin the receptionist in the all-female *Ghostbusters* reboot, Hemsworth is once again bulking up for the third Thor movie, *Ragnarok*.

“You’ve just got to eat right,” he says of his current regimen. “It’s a very strict diet, protein — and you train your ass off. That’s the truth, you just get in and put in the work. There’s no cheating it, you can’t kind of wing it at the last second. Acting, you can kind of wing it if you didn’t quite put in the work. But what you see is what you get with a physical sort of performance.”

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

Wrecked

Chris Hemsworth talks *In the Heart of the Sea*

BY BOB STRAUSS

Chris Hemsworth isn’t quite as imposing in real life as he is on screen as the Marvel cinematic universe’s mighty Thor.

“I’m a good 20, 30 pounds lighter than when I play Thor,” says the still strapping, 32-year-old Australian during an interview in Burbank, California.

But that’s nothing. For his latest movie, *In the Heart of the Sea*, Hemsworth endured a 500 calorie per day diet to portray

Owen Chase, first mate from the Nantucket-based whaling ship *Essex* who, in 1820, spent three months wasting away in a tiny boat after a monster whale smashed his ship. The expedition’s few survivors eventually turned to cannibalism. The true-life tale was one of the inspirations for Herman Melville’s great American novel *Moby-Dick*.



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Alicia Vikander (left) and Eddie Redmayne in *The Danish Girl*

TRANSFORMING ROLE

We can't imagine **Eddie Redmayne** will ever be typecast. How could he, when every time out he morphs into someone completely different, and completely unlike himself? This month the British actor becomes real-life transsexual pioneer Lili Elbe for *The Danish Girl* ■ BY CHRISTIAN AUST

Eddie Redmayne took home this year's Best Actor Oscar for his transformation into ALS-afflicted physicist Stephen Hawking for *The Theory of Everything*. He might just make it two in a row.

In his second transformative role in so many years, the 33-year-old British actor plays transgender pioneer Lili Elbe in *The Danish Girl*, a history-based drama from Oscar-winning director Tom Hooper (*The King's Speech*).

Born male, and named Einar Wegener, in a small Danish village in the 1880s, it wasn't until later in life that Lili found her true gender identity when she started dressing as woman to pose for her artist wife, Gerda (Alicia Vikander). In the 1930s, Lili was one of the first trans women to risk dangerous sex reassignment surgery.

We met up with Eddie Redmayne after the world premiere of *The Danish Girl* at the Venice International Film Festival.

Q: Jared Leto told me that after doing *Dallas Buyers Club* he kept some of the female gestures and mannerisms. Did you have a similar experience and, if so, what did you keep?

"You know, that's a good question. But I think you would have to ask my wife that question. I like to think I'm not a method actor. So I think that I come home and I'm just me. But occasionally she sees other things. For me, the preparation of this film was the most extraordinary experience. I met many trans men and trans women, people from the community. And they educated me in the most extraordinary way."

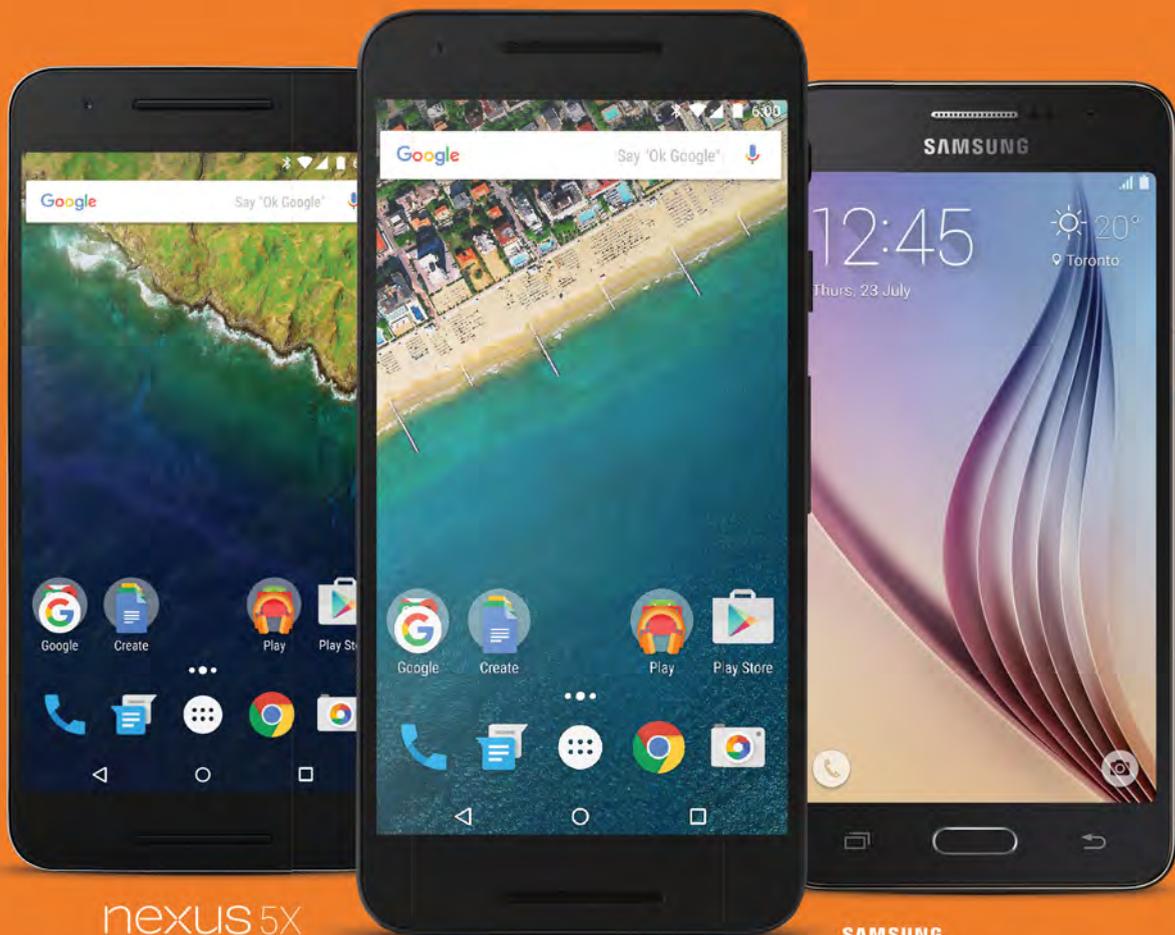
What did you learn?

"The openness of their spirit, like their kindness in going into any question. They said, 'Ask any question you want,' being

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▶ as transparent as possible in order to make me understand this battle they have to go through to be themselves. That was amazing... For me it was less about the physical, it was more about the emotional journey and what was going on in Lili's mind. That was perhaps most challenging."

Were you scared of this role?

"For me it really felt like a great privilege. Because when you start out being an actor, the stats are that it's very difficult to get a job or an agent, [that] the notion of employment frankly is pretty good. So you start playing every part you can get. The dream of getting to play interesting people like Lili, that alone is the stuff we dream of. So my initial reaction was one of great privilege. Whenever I play a part there is an element of fear, that's what drives me. The overwhelming thing for me was wanting to do her story justice."

How deep did you have to dig to get in touch with your feminine side?

"What was interesting, and again it came from the council of the people that I met, for me gender is on a spectrum, I don't see it as a super-binary thing. And I think the notion of what is feminine and what is masculine is in some ways sort of antiquated, like sport is for men and that kind of thing."

But we are all more or less raised like that.

"I know. But I hope in some ways it's shifting now. It's interesting. I went to an all-boys school. And there is a great tradition in British theatre of men playing women on stage. So I played women in theatre. My first professional job was playing Viola in *Twelfth Night* with Mark Rylance playing Olivia. And there was a production last year in London of *Julius Caesar* by an all-female cast. I hope there will be more freedom in the future."

Lili is confused by the way men look at her with desire when she starts dressing like a woman. Did you experience that?

"The very first day I walked onto set as Lili, I've never felt such scrutiny. That was by a mostly male crew and you don't know what you are being judged for. Are you passing, are you blending, whether you look ridiculous or not? Many trans women I talked to spoke up to me about scrutiny and that kind of judgment and the fear that comes as a consequence. What I witnessed was within an incredibly safe environment. So that was nothing compared to what they must feel. Danger and threat and assault and violence, particularly against trans women of colour is so prevalent. And I did feel the idea of it."

You got your Academy Award while filming *The Danish Girl*?

"I was two weeks into filming when the Oscars happened and it was an amazing frenzy of a time there.... When I was in Los Angeles I was introduced to many trans women and their partners. So I was trying, while promoting *The Theory of Everything*, to work on *The Danish Girl*."

What is it like when they call your name?

"Oh god...what is it like? It's like this frenzy euphoria. But what's so weird is, it happens so quickly. Because you have been sitting in this seat and you can't move. All the girls around you are in dresses that are so tight that they can barely breath. Everyone is really nervous and there are cameras on you. So you don't know quite how to look. And suddenly someone is saying your name and it's Cate Blanchett. The second it's over you are in a press room. Everyone is asking, 'How does it feel? How does it feel?' And you haven't had a moment to hold your wife. And then it's straight from there to a party with thousands of journalists. The first moment I had for myself was at four in the morning." ☑

Christian Aust is a freelance entertainment journalist based in Hamburg, Germany.

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Director J.J. Abrams
and producer
Kathleen Kennedy in the
Millennium Falcon's cockpit

FORCE TO BE RECKONED WITH

It's been 10 years since the last *Star Wars* movie was in theatres and, more importantly, 32 years since we left Luke, Leia, Han, Chewie and the droids fighting the good fight in a galaxy far, far away. If there's one man we trust to take us back to the *Star Wars* universe it's **J.J. Abrams**. Here the director of the most anticipated movie of the millennium tells us about keeping his inner fanboy in check ■ BY RACHEL WEST

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Abrams (left)
on set with
John Boyega

"I think we all had our kid,
our inner child, with us at all
times and then had to,
**in most cases, not let that
overwhelm"**

▶ J.J. Abrams seems remarkably calm for

a man who is about to unveil his entry into what is perhaps the biggest franchise in cinematic history.

Boyish and bespectacled, the 49-year-old director is fresh from the stage at Disney's D23 Expo in Anaheim, California, where ravenous fans hung on his every word, hoping to glean any minute detail about *Star Wars: Episode VII - The Force Awakens*.

An admitted *Star Wars* fanboy, Abrams has been playing his cards pretty close to his chest when it comes to *Episode VII*. While plot details may be scarce, we do know a few familiar faces will return, including Harrison Ford, Mark Hamill and Carrie Fisher back in their original-trilogy roles, and that the story picks up 30 years after George Lucas's saga. (Disney bought the rights to the franchise from Lucas in 2012.)

We also know the new wave of cast members and soon-to-be fan favourites includes John Boyega, Oscar Isaac, Adam Driver, Gwendoline Christie, Lupita Nyong'o, Andy Serkis, Domhnall Gleeson and Daisy Ridley as the film's heroes and antiheroes.

We're at the "Happiest Place on Earth" — Disneyland — to talk with Abrams about giving new life to Han, Luke and Leia, and giving birth to a whole new slate of *Star Wars* characters, for the year's most-anticipated film.

Q:

If you could have a chat with your 11-year-old self as he was coming out of the theatre after seeing *Star Wars* in 1977, what would you tell him about the experience you've just had?

"Well, I'd probably say, 'Don't freak out, I'm from the future,' and then probably my mom would chase me down thinking I was some kind of weirdo.... [But] I feel like the kid in all of us, and I speak for a massive and incredibly gifted cast and crew, I think we all had our kid, our inner child, with us at all times and then had to, in most cases, not let that overwhelm. Because it could become a blinding thing, being just a fan or overly excited just to be there. We had to do a lot of work, so it was a balancing act."

Was there a moment when you first saw Mark Hamill or Harrison Ford or Carrie Fisher in character that really stands out?

"There's not one moment that does more than others, really. It was an ongoing sort of cavalcade of craziness, with the, 'Oh my god, I can't believe this is happening.' And it was with different locations, different cast members, it was with props or ships or even storylines. There were scenes we would do, and it would happen in some cases multiple times a day, that I think we were in shock that we were

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Newcomer
Daisy Ridley as Rey
BELOW: BB-8



Chewbacca
(Peter Mayhew)
and Han Solo
(Harrison Ford) return

for sure Harrison Ford was gonna be in this movie. But I also knew I had a certain sense of what it would feel like to see Han Solo at this time, at this age, come back to the screen, meaning it wasn't enough to have Harrison Ford in the movie, it needed to be Han Solo. And I was delighted as we all were to see that he brought that character back. It wasn't just that he was on set and doing lines. Han Solo's back. So that was really fun to see.

"I think Mark and Anthony [Daniels, who plays C-3PO] and Carrie and Peter [Mayhew, who's Chewbacca] — there wasn't anyone who we worked with in a main or more peripheral role that seemed to have a hard time. Everyone was just wanting to make sure that it lived up to what they all felt it needed to be, so you know, it was an incredible thing. Especially with 3PO, because Anthony's in the suit, so you're literally talking to 3PO, like, you can't see his face, so you're giving these notes and you're just talking to 3PO. Same with Chewbacca — it's just crazy."

Among the new additions, who do you think fans are going to be most taken with?

"Well, I think that [if you asked] that same question about the original *Star Wars*, I think you would be hard-pressed to have an answer that wasn't argued by someone else. If one person says, 'Well Luke, obviously,' and someone says, 'Are you kidding, it's Han Solo,' and someone could say, 'What about Leia?' and, 'Well, R2 or 3PO,' and you get into this thing. They're all characters that have a real power. I think it's a testament to the work that Daisy and Oscar and Adam and Lupita and Andy and Domhnall, that they all brought to these parts, [and] Gwendoline.... If we did our job right, I think people will hopefully be finding their favourites and there won't be an obvious choice."

You shot at a lot of exotic locales, which one do you think is most likely to become the mecca for fans, somewhere they'll want to visit?

"I think shooting in the deserts of Abu Dhabi, shooting in the forests of Wales, or the snow in Iceland, or the mountains of Ireland. I mean, each location felt magical in its own way, and I think one of the CONTINUED ▶

▶ doing this. But again, you've got to be careful of that, because that's a fun thing to feel, but it has to be the anomaly, meaning you have to look at it from the inside out."

Explain what that means.

"You're there to do a job, so if I was giving a direction to Harrison, it was because that's my job and his desire as well; he wants notes. We're all there to work. So you can't get caught up in the, 'Oh my god, I can't believe Harrison Ford is here,' of it all for much more than, you know, a few moments before you have to actually dive in and do what you're there to do."

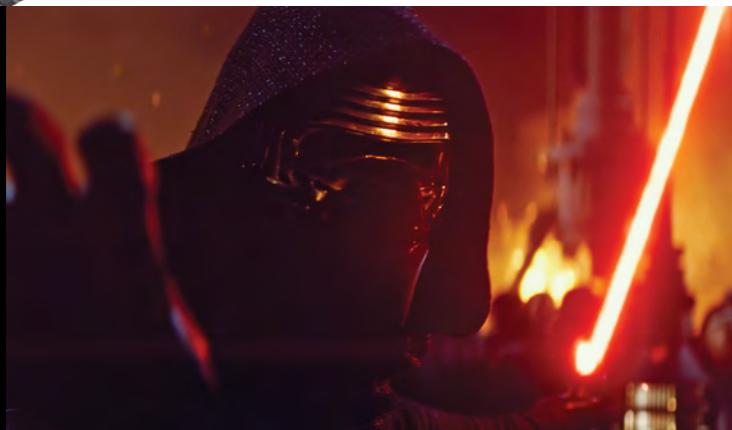
Which one of the returning cast members do you think had the easiest time slipping back into character?

"It is an interesting thing because Harrison, for example, has done so many movies, and I knew



BEHIND THE MASK: KYLO REN

In a franchise that's all about the fanboys (and the fangirls) *The Force Awakens'* number-one villain, Kylo Ren, seems to be a bit of a fanboy himself. Unfortunately, he's a fan of Darth Vader — hence the black helmet, cape, etc. The question is: Why? Our guess is he's Vader's grandson, but we won't know for sure until December 18th. And the actor behind the mask? Why it's *Girls* star Adam Driver.





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Oscar Isaac as
Poe Dameron

► things I'm most grateful for is the fact that we were given the resources to shoot in real locations, so that when you're in a forest, very little effort needed to be made to believe that place because you were in that place."

And if you were forced to choose?

"I would say that Skellig Islands in Ireland is worth going to for many reasons, and might end up being a place that becomes a destination for any hardcore fans."

It's been nearly 40 years since we were introduced to this world and these characters. Why do we still care?

"Well, I think it's probably multi-tiered, I think part of it is the unbelievable aesthetic. I think part of it is the message of unity, the idea that the Force — it's a sort of all-encompassing, unifying feel that I think is a very powerful and optimistic idea. But I think maybe the most enduring thing is the incredible heart and sense of humor and humanity with which George [Lucas] told the story."

BEHIND THE MASK: CAPTAIN PHASMA

The Force Awakens is righting some of the franchise's cultural wrongs by bringing more women and minorities into the mix. And they're not all good guys and gals. That's *Game of Thrones* star Gwendoline Christie behind the blingiest stormtrooper suit we've ever seen. Her Captain Phasma commands the troops of the First Order, which is the new name for the reconfigured Empire.

John and Daisy seem to have a great relationship off set. How does that translate on screen to Finn and Rey?

"It was hugely informative when we were first shooting scenes, we had a couple scenes that we had written and filmed, and they felt off to me because I saw what they were, and what they had in life. Every time I would call 'action,' things would adjust and it would dim a little bit. I thought, 'What the hell's going on?' And we ended up changing a little bit of what the story, what the scenes were, because I knew the power of their friendship, and it wasn't translating."

How did you fix that?

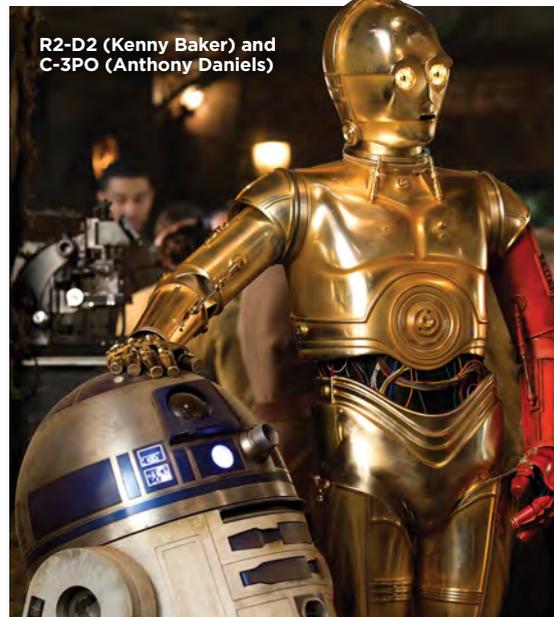
"We literally did a rewrite on a couple scenes, and went back and re-shot them during production, and it was night and day. It was just this crazy feeling of, like, not understanding why something that was so present and palpable and wonderful wasn't translating to screen. It just took a couple shots before we were able to get it, but I think when you see the movie you'll see...the dynamic that they have."

On a scale of 1 to 10, how nervous are you about how fans are going to react to this movie?

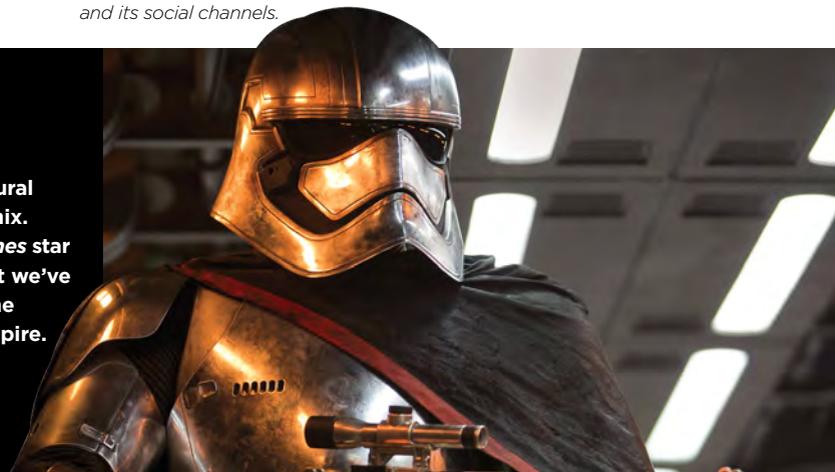
"It's a funny thing. I mean, I'm always concerned that people won't like what they see, and I don't know how to do the job otherwise, and I can't imagine anyone does. But this one is particularly important to me personally, and when I'm talking about the fans I don't feel like I'm talking about another group, I feel like I'm talking about a group I'm a part of. So I'm terrified in

some ways, but the fact is, I know what we have, and I feel very confident that what this cast and what this crew has done delivers. Nothing will please everybody, but I feel like if you like *Star Wars*, if you like these characters, if you enjoyed the heart and the comedy and the romance and the stakes of those films, this feels like something that I think will be a continuum. I'm more excited than I am nervous for people to see the movie." ❏

Rachel West is a film journalist and content producer for Cineplex.com and its social channels.



R2-D2 (Kenny Baker) and
C-3PO (Anthony Daniels)



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DREAMING OF A **GREEN** CHRISTMAS

Director Ron Howard knew the secret to turning the beloved 26-minute TV special *Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas* into a feature-length film lay with Jim Carrey.

In 2000 Howard cast the then 38-year-old actor in the lead role, and although unrecognizable under layers of green makeup, Carrey was the living, breathing embodiment of the sour-souled Grinch who sets out to destroy Christmas for the residents of Whoville. Howard guided Carrey's performance perfectly, reigning in the actor's mania, but allowing him to have fun with the role.

Howard also created one of the most Christmas-y of all Christmas movies, building the incredible fantasy world of Whoville, which includes more than 8,200 ornaments, 1,938 candy canes and 152,000 pounds of crushed marble doubling as snow.

—INGRID RANDOJA

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LOOK FAMILIAR?

You've seen this image a thousand times before, but we're willing to bet every other time it was rendered in some striking combination of DayGlo colours.

This photo was the source material for Andy Warhol's iconic Marilyn Monroe silkscreen series of the early 1960s. Those are Warhol's crop marks, but Warhol didn't take the pic. That task fell to a photographer named Gene Korman who took it as a publicity still on the set of Monroe's 1953 film noir *Niagara*.

The image is just one of many on display at Toronto's TIFF Bell Lightbox until January 24th as part of "Andy Warhol: Stars of the Silver Screen". —MW



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