

# CINEPLEX

MAGAZINE

## Back In ACTION

Jennifer  
Garner  
TALKS  
PEPPERMINT

+ TORONTO  
INTERNATIONAL  
FILM FESTIVAL  
GUIDE!  
PAGE 26

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# CONTENTS

SEPTEMBER 2018 | VOL 19 | N°8

## COVER STORY

### 40 CALL TO ACTION

It's been more than 20 years since we last saw **Jennifer Garner** kicking butt in an action film. She returns to the genre in this month's *Peppermint*, playing a bereaved mother who gets into fearsome shape to go after the baddies who killed her family. Here, the 46-year-old tells us what drove her back to action, and the price she paid to do so

BY INGRID RANDOJA

## REGULARS

4 EDITOR'S NOTE

6 SNAPS

10 IN BRIEF

14 SPOTLIGHT CANADA

16 ALL DRESSED UP

18 IN THEATRES

44 CASTING CALL

46 CINEPLEX STORE

47 RETURN ENGAGEMENT

50 FINALLY...

## FEATURES

### 24 KNOW YOUR YETI?

An eclectic cast, including **James Corden**, **LeBron James** and **Channing Tatum** voice characters in *Smallfoot*. Can you match them with their roles?

BY MARNI WEISZ

### 26 TIFF GUIDE

A rundown of the top films screening at the **Toronto International Film Festival** before hitting a theatre near you

BY MARNI WEISZ

### 34 PREDATOR IN B.C.

We hit *The Predator's* B.C. set to chat with the film's stars, including **Boyd Holbrook** and **Olivia Munn**, about the alien's big-screen return

BY JULIDE TANRIVERDI

### 38 SCARY SWEDE

Swedish actor **Bill Skarsgård** on playing *It's* creepy clown and watching the world burn in the dark satire *Assassination Nation*

BY BOB STRAUSS



THIS PHOTO BY GREGG DEGUIRE/GETTY, COVER PHOTO BY MICHAEL MULLER





## FRESH TURN

**T**he way the trailer for *Peppermint* starts, it's almost as if Jennifer Garner is having a little fun with us. Upbeat, plinky-plunky keyboard music plays in the background while Garner's squeaky-clean mom dotes over her adorable daughter, telling her, "My girl has love in her heart, and snow in her eyes, and peppermint in her blood."

Okay, we see where this is going. Directly into the *oeuvre* of Jennifer Garner, circa 2008 to 2018, when — with the exception of playing a doctor treating AIDS patients in *Dallas Buyers Club* — she has portrayed a buffet of girlfriend, wife and mom roles, some funny, some sad, but all belonging to the genus that's the bread and butter of most actresses in their 30s and 40s.

Then, it all changes. A drive-by shooting at a bucolic country fair kills her daughter and husband and, after a corrupt system denies her justice, Garner's character goes into training, becomes Schwarzenegger, Stallone and Bronson rolled into one, and sets out to exact her own brutal revenge. Joke's on us! Love it.

It's hard not to be reminded of Garner's breakout role as identity-shifting double agent Sydney Bristow on TV's *Alias*. For the first time in more than a decade we're seeing Garner tap into the genre that made her a star. I have to admit, I didn't watch *Alias*. I first noticed Garner a bit earlier as Hannah Bibb — a small role on TV's *Felicity*, which starred Keri Russell as a contemplative New York university student in love with two men, Ben and Noel. Garner played Noel's sweet, one-time girlfriend.

Funny thing is, Garner's *Alias* role came out of J.J. Abrams' desire to turn *Felicity* into a spy. Abrams, who created both shows, was out of ideas for the character and only half-jokingly thought turning the moody visual arts student with the famous mop of curls into a secret agent would solve his problem.

A short time later he was asked if he had any ideas for a new female-driven show, and *Alias* was born. He even wrote the role with Garner in mind, despite the fact she appeared in just three episodes of *Felicity*. If you want, you can find Garner's *Alias* audition tape on YouTube and watch her roll through version after version, or alias after alias, of the show's lead character.

Funnier still is that Keri Russell finally got to play her own spy when *The Americans* hit the airwaves in 2013 starring Russell as a Soviet KGB agent posing as a regular American wife and mom in the Washington, D.C., of the 1980s. Wheels within wheels.

Turn to "One Tough Mother," page 40, to find out how, in an interesting twist, playing a vigilante was inextricably tied to playing a mother for Garner this time out.

Elsewhere in this issue, we're on the Vancouver set of *The Predator* to chat with **Boyd Holbrook**, **Olivia Munn** and other cast members about this latest alien invasion (page 34), and we have **Bill Skarsgård** talking about his role as a citizen of *Assassination Nation* (page 38). Plus, starting on page 26 we present our annual **Toronto International Film Festival Guide**, our look at the top films coming to the fest before opening in theatres across the country.

■ MARNI WEISZ, EDITOR

PUBLISHER SALAH BACHIR

EDITOR MARNI WEISZ  
DEPUTY EDITOR INGRID RANDOJA  
CREATIVE DIRECTOR LUCINDA WALLACE  
GRAPHIC DESIGNER DARRYL MABEY  
VICE PRESIDENT, PRODUCTION SHEILA GREGORY

CONTRIBUTORS BOB STRAUSS,  
JULIDE TANRIVERDI

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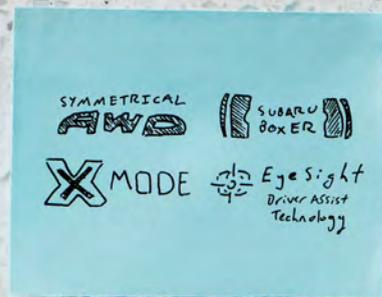


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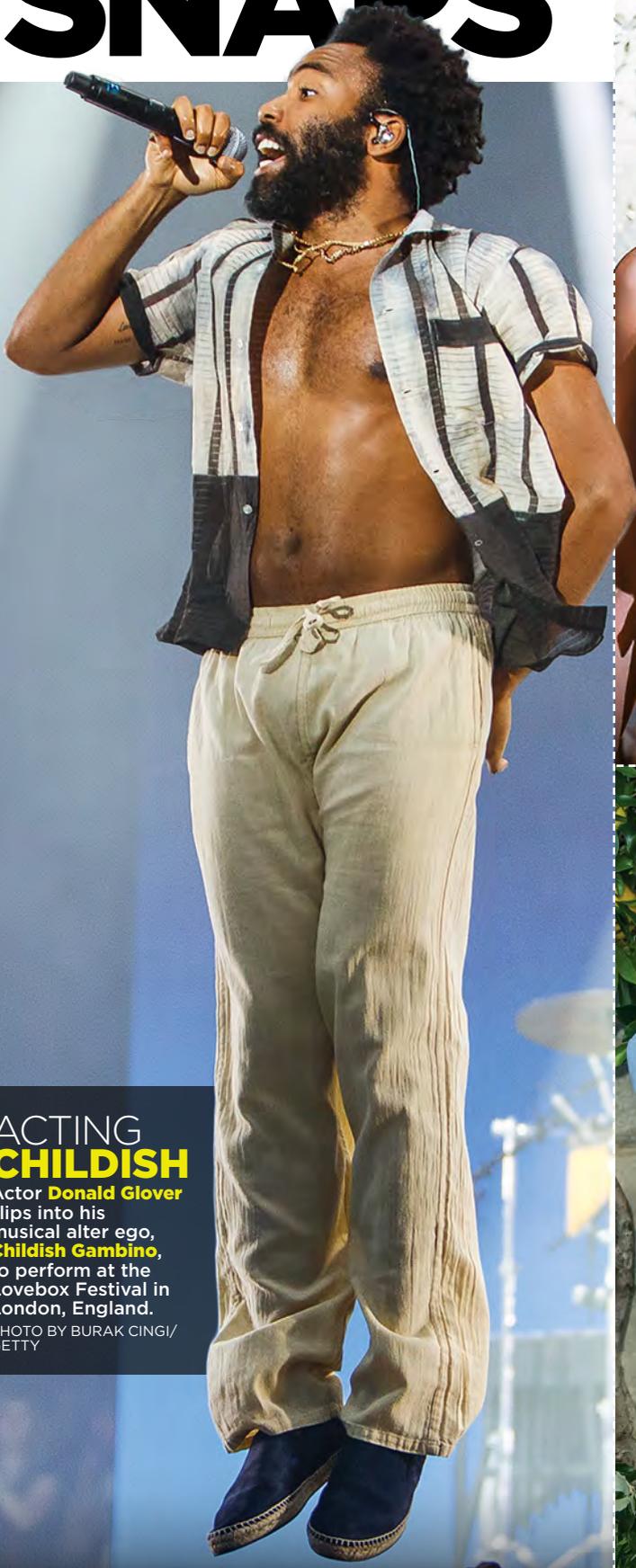
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# SNAPS



## ACTING CHILDISH

Actor **Donald Glover** slips into his musical alter ego, **Childish Gambino**, to perform at the Lovebox Festival in London, England.

PHOTO BY BURAK CINGI/GETTY



## UMA IN MIU MIU

Actor **Uma Thurman** turns model at Miu Miu's 2019 Cruise Collection Show in Paris.

PHOTO BY VICTOR BOYKO/GETTY



## FRUIT FIGHT

**Dominic Cooper** tosses lemons to the crowd at the London premiere of *Mamma Mia! Here We Go Again*.

PHOTO BY JEFF SPICER/GETTY



## THE DEVIL YOU KNOW

**Emma Thompson** pokes fun at herself by drawing devil horns on her portrait after being awarded the CineMerit Award at the Munich Film Festival.

PHOTO BY GISELA SCHOBER/GETTY



## KEANU'S NEW RIDE

Since when does **Keanu Reeves** know how to ride a horse? The actor gallops through Brooklyn while filming a scene for *John Wick 3*.

PHOTO BY JAMES DEVANEY/GETTY



## LIV FAST

**Liv Tyler** takes an electric racecar for a spin at a Formula E race in New York City.

PHOTO BY JOHN LAMPARSKI/GETTY



## DRIVING DIRECTIONS

**George Clooney** works on the set of *Catch-22* in Sutri, Viterbo, Italy. Clooney is directing the miniseries based on Joseph Heller's novel.

PHOTO BY ERNESTO RUSCIO



## HOT MAMMA

**Lily James** shows off her shoes at the London premiere of *Mamma Mia! Here We Go Again*.

PHOTO BY JEFF SPICER/GETTY



## ROAD SHOW

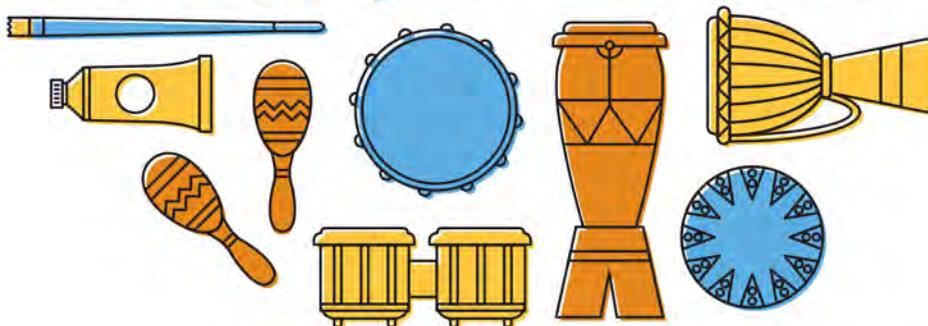
From left, *Isn't It Romantic* stars **Rebel Wilson**, **Adam Devine** and **Priyanka Chopra** film a song-and-dance number in Midtown Manhattan.

PHOTO BY JAMES DEVANEY/GETTY



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# IN BRIEF



## ROOM AND Borden

Chloë Sevigny (right) with Kristen Stewart in *Lizzie*

HOUSE PHOTO: FACEBOOK/LIZZIE BORDEN BED & BREAKFAST/MUSEUM

**If you enjoy this month's big-screen take** on the old Lizzie Borden story, *Lizzie*, you might want to spend a night or two in the house that inspired star Chloë Sevigny to make the movie. Yes, the actual house where Borden is alleged to have hacked her father and stepmother to death in 1892.

That house at 92 Old Second Street, Fall River, Massachusetts, is now a B&B that capitalizes on its macabre history, and it wasn't just what happened there that inspired Sevigny to develop this pet project — it was an overnight stay.

After a friend came to Sevigny's house dressed as Borden one Halloween, Sevigny became fascinated with the legendary figure, who was eventually acquitted in the case, but remains the number one suspect. "I did some internet research and found out that you can stay at her house in Fall River," Sevigny told the

audience at the Sundance Film Festival after her film's world premiere in January.

"I've always been attracted to that sort of thing," she continued, cracking a sheepish grin. "And staying at the house, and hearing this tale, this yarn, that the proprietors tell you while you're there, I just was immediately fired up."

Everyone who stays at the Lizzie Borden Bed and Breakfast gets an hour-and-a-half tour included in their room rate, which ranges from \$225 to \$275 (U.S.) per night. —*MW*



PHOTO BY TAYLOR HILL/GETTY



## On Home Turf: Seth Rogen

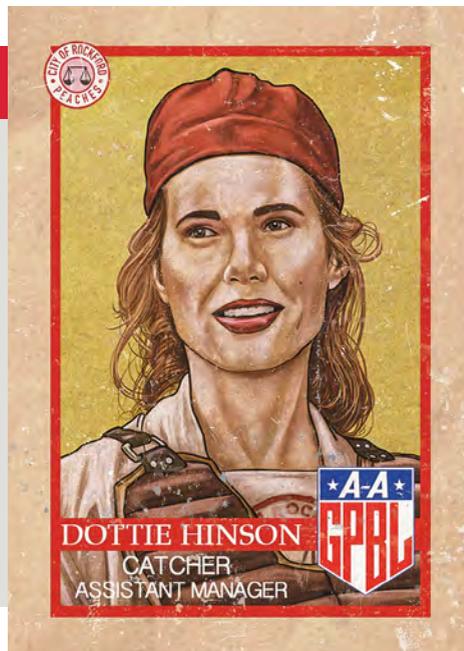
Seth Rogen, the producer, has two projects wrapping up on Canadian soil right now and, strangely, both have "Boys" in the title.

In Rogen's native B.C., the feature film *Good Boys* is finishing filming this month with the Canadian funnyman acting as one of its producers. The R-rated comedy stars Rogen's fellow Canadian Jacob Tremblay (*Room*) as one of four boys who skip school and have an unexpected adventure.

And now shooting in Toronto, the Rogen-developed superhero series *The Boys* is based on the comic book of the same name in which vigilantes join forces to take down corrupt superheroes. It stars Karl Urban and Elisabeth Shue. —*MW*

## THE ART OF FILM

Cuyler Smith's first faux trading card was of Tom Hanks' character from the baseball movie *A League of Their Own*. That was three years ago. Since then the Texas born artist who now calls Irvine, California, home has created 128 sports cards based on characters from TV shows and movies. "I am a huge fan of sports films and I am always on the lookout for the next idea," he says. "Lately it has been fun to surprise fans with characters that they would never expect to have a trading card. The more obscure characters are some of the most fun to do." Here, clockwise from left, you see Geena Davis from *A League of Their Own*, Chevy Chase from *Caddyshack* and Seann William Scott from the Canadian hockey pic, *Goon*. To see more go to [Gallery1988.com](http://Gallery1988.com) and search for Cuyler Smith. —*MW*



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# SERIOUSLY Funny

Emma Thompson plays a High Court judge with marital problems who forces a teen Jehovah's Witness with leukemia (Fionn Whitehead) to undergo a blood transfusion in this month's *The Children Act*. Serious stuff. But after the film's premiere at last year's Toronto International Film Festival, where Thompson had just seen the movie

for the first time, she told the crowd that one thing really surprised her. "I didn't know how funny it was," she said. "I have to lay that all at the feet of Richard [director Richard Eyre] who gives all of us, every character their full human weight.... All of those people seem so real, and I think that's one of the reasons why it's funny, too." —*MW*

## WHO'S THAT NUN?



We think the demonic nun, Valak, at the centre of this month's *The Conjuring 2* spinoff, *The Nun*, might be a little less terrifying if we tell you a bit about the woman who plays her (inset).

It's American character actor Bonnie Aarons, whose earlier film roles include "The Bum" in David Lynch's *Mulholland Drive* (2001) and Baroness Joy von Troken in *The Princess Diaries* (2001).

Starting in the late-2000s Aaron did start veering toward horrors, adding films like *Drag Me to Hell* and *Dahmer vs. Gacy* to her filmography while still scoring wee roles in two great David O. Russell films — "Crackhead Bonnie" in *The Fighter* (2010) and "Ricky D'Angelo's Mother" in *Silver Linings Playbook* (2012).

BONNIE AARONS PHOTO BY STEVE GRANITZ/GETTY



## Quote Unquote

It says a lot about America, it says a lot about poverty, it says a lot about single-parent homes, it says a lot about the justice system. This role for me is my country song, **this is my sad country song.**

WHITE BOY RICK STAR **MATTHEW MCCONAUGHEY** ON PLAYING THE FATHER OF RICK WERSHE JR. WHO, AT 14, BECAME THE YOUNGEST FBI INFORMANT IN HISTORY



## Much Improv-ed

Amy Poehler slips back into improv mode during the 20th Annual Del Close Improv Marathon in New York City. The three-day marathon (comprised of hundreds of shows) has been hosted by Poehler's old troupe, the Upright Citizens Brigade, in New York City for the past 20 years in honour of Close, the legendary improv performer and teacher who died from emphysema in 1999. Next year, the event moves to Los Angeles. Others who took part in this year's event included Tina Fey, Horatio Sanz and Rachel Dratch.

PHOTO BY NICHOLAS HUNT/GETTY



## Happy CAMPER

Casting directors looking for the next Tiffany Haddish, the Hollywood It Girl who stars opposite Kevin Hart in this month's *Night School*, might want to check out the kids in the Laugh Factory's Comedy Camp, which just completed its 34th annual session.

When Haddish was a 17-year-old living in South Central L.A. she was given the choice to attend the camp, which is hosted by the famous chain of comedy clubs and supports underprivileged children, or see

a therapist. Haddish, who was placed in foster care after her mom suffered brain damage in a car accident, chose the camp, where she was mentored by the likes of Richard Pryor, Damon Wayans and her personal favourite, Charles Fleischer (*Who Framed Roger Rabbit* was the movie that made her want to be funny).

She has said the camp saved her life, and made her feel safe. Earlier this year Haddish was named a member of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences. —MW

## FESTIVAL SEASON!

The Toronto International Film Festival isn't the only celebration of cinema in Canada this season. Here are some of the other big film fests unspooling coast to coast.

### FIN: ATLANTIC INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

Halifax, Nova Scotia  
September 13-20  
[www.finfestival.ca](http://www.finfestival.ca)

### CINÉFEST SUDBURY

Sudbury, Ontario  
September 15-23  
[www.cinefest.com](http://www.cinefest.com)

### OTTAWA INTERNATIONAL ANIMATION FESTIVAL

Ottawa, Ontario  
September 26-30  
[www.animationfestival.ca](http://www.animationfestival.ca)

### CALGARY INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

Calgary, Alberta  
September 19-30  
[www.calgaryfilm.com](http://www.calgaryfilm.com)

### EDMONTON INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

Edmonton, Alberta  
September 27-October 6  
[www.edmontonfilmfest.com](http://www.edmontonfilmfest.com)

### VANCOUVER INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

Vancouver, British Columbia  
September 27-October 12  
[www.viff.org](http://www.viff.org)

### FESTIVAL DU NOUVEAU CINEMA

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## TAKING A CHANCE

**K**elly McCormack wants her fellow actors to know the casting process doesn't always have to be completely awful. Every once in a while, you have that dream experience.

Take, for example, her audition for director Paul Feig (*Bridesmaids*, *Ghostbusters*) to work on *A Simple Favor*.

Despite being an accomplished actor (she has roles on TV's *Killjoys* and *Letterkenny*), who has written two feature films (*Barn Wedding* and *Play the Film*) and has a third in production (*Sugar Daddy*), McCormack was thrilled to audition for a one-line, unnamed part in Feig's thriller, which stars Anna Kendrick as a mommy vlogger searching for a missing friend (Blake Lively), and was shot in Toronto in 2017.

"In a Paul Feig film all the one-liner roles are really well written and they're usually played by established comedians or up-and-coming actors, and if you watch his earlier stuff you're like, 'Oh my god that's so and so,'" explains McCormack, who was born in Vancouver and studied and worked in L.A. and New York before settling in Toronto four years ago.

But when McCormack got to her callback with Feig, who often works with improv artists like Melissa McCarthy and Kristen Wiig, she did something she wouldn't normally.

"I took a chance," she says with a nervous laugh, "and turned my one-liner scene into this whole improvised scene and had a lot of fun playing around with it. And I guess Paul Feig thought that was kind of fun so he asked me, in the room, to read for every single one-liner part in the whole film.

"He was like, 'Okay, now read this character, and read that character. And they were all different walks of life, different accents, a wide range of personalities. I felt like a medieval troubadour performing for Paul Feig and trying to show off a little bit of my abilities as a character actor.'"

When McCormack walked out of the room she didn't even care if she booked the part, she felt like she'd already won. But a week later her agent called and told her she'd been cast as a character named Stacy, another mom at the school Kendrick and Lively's kids attend.

"I read the script and she was one of the supporting leads of the film, and all my scenes were with Anna Kendrick, Blake Lively, Aparna Nancherla, Andrew Rannells and, yeah, I was elated. I got to spend the summer watching Paul Feig work and getting to know him and it was just one of those positive experiences that are a nice counterpoint to all the horrific audition experiences that actors are used to." —MARNI WEISZ



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# ALL DRESSED UP

**ANGELA  
BASSETT**

In Washington, D.C., for the premiere of *Mission: Impossible – Fallout*.

PHOTO BY JAMES DEVANEY/GETTY

**BENEDICT  
CUMBERBATCH**

At the Southbank Sky Arts Awards in London, England.

PHOTO BY JOHN PHILLIPS/GETTY

**NEVE  
CAMPBELL**

At the New York premiere of *Skyscraper*.

PHOTO BY JIM SPELLMAN/GETTY



**SELENA GOMEZ**

At the *Hotel Transylvania 3: Summer Vacation* premiere in Westwood, California.

PHOTO BY GETTY



**HENRY CAVILL**

At the *Mission: Impossible - Fallout* premiere in Washington, D.C.

PHOTO BY JAMES DEVANEY/GETTY



**AMANDA SEYFRIED**

In London for the U.K. premiere of *Mamma Mia! Here We Go Again*.

PHOTO BY DAVE J. HOGAN/GETTY

# IN THEATRES

SEPTEMBER 7



Taissa Farmiga in *The Nun*

## THE NUN

This prequel delves into the backstory of the demon nun who scared the heck out of audiences in *The Conjuring 2*. A Vatican priest (**Demián Bicher**) and a young novice (**Taissa Farmiga**) travel to a Romanian abbey to cast out the evil spirit of a dead nun (**Bonnie Aarons**). The film was shot on location in Romania last year so look for authentic locations, including the Gothic-Renaissance Corvin Castle, to give the pic an added layer of spookiness.

## PEPPERMINT

**Jennifer Garner**, who has spent the past decade making mostly feel-good movies, returns to her roots as an action star (TV's *Alias* and the big-screen *Elektra*) with this revenge thriller that casts her as Riley North, whose daughter and husband are killed by members of a drug cartel. A corrupt legal system lets the killers walk, so Riley spends the next five years training so she can enact revenge. **See Jennifer Garner interview, page 40.**

SEPTEMBER 14



Emma Thompson and Stanley Tucci in *The Children Act*



## THE CHILDREN ACT

Ian McEwan wrote the screenplay for his own novel that centres on British High Court judge Fiona Maye (Emma Thompson), whose marriage to husband Jack (Stanley Tucci) is falling apart. Adding to her woes is a case in which she must decide whether to force a dying teenage boy (Fionn Whitehead) to have a blood transfusion even though his religious beliefs forbid such a procedure.

## THE PREDATOR

The sixth film in the *Predator* franchise that started way back in 1987 sees a child (Jacob Tremblay) triggering a signal that calls the violent alien predators to Earth. It'll take a science teacher (Olivia Munn) and a team of military personnel — Boyd Holbrook, Trevante Rhodes, Keegan-Michael Key, Sterling K. Brown and Thomas Jane — to stop them. See *The Predator* set visit and cast interviews, page 34.



Wonders of the Sea

## WONDERS OF THE SEA

Arnold Schwarzenegger narrates this 3D documentary co-directed by famed ocean diver Jean-Michel Cousteau that gives audiences a breathtaking look at the creatures who live in our oceans.

## A SIMPLE FAVOR

Paul Feig is known for directing funny movies starring funny women — *Bridesmaids*, *The Heat*, *Spy*, *Ghostbusters*. He switches gears with this psychological thriller starring Anna Kendrick as a mommy vlogger investigating the disappearance of her friend Emily (Blake Lively), who seemingly led the perfect life.

CONTINUED ▶



## WHITE BOY RICK

The fascinating true story of Richard “White Boy Rick” Wershe comes to the big screen with newcomer Richie Merritt (a 15-year-old Baltimore teenager who'd never acted before) portraying the Detroit drug dealer who, at age 14, became the FBI's youngest informant. Matthew McConaughey plays Wershe's dad.



Anna Kendrick in *A Simple Favor*



▶ **THE HOUSE WITH A CLOCK IN ITS WALLS**

It's 1953 and orphan Lewis (**Owen Vaccaro**) goes to live with his uncle Jonathan (**Jack Black**), a warlock who lives in a magical house that has a clock hidden in its walls. Lewis, Jonathan and the witch next door (**Cate Blanchett**) must find a way to dismantle the clock before it brings about the end of the world.



Tiffany Haddish and Kevin Hart in *Night School*

**LIFE ITSELF**

It's not a question of *if* you'll cry, but rather how *soon* the tears will flow while watching writer-director **Dan Fogelman's** (TV's *This is Us*) drama about two families, one American and one Spanish, that are connected through a shared experience. **Oscar Isaac, Olivia Wilde, Olivia Cooke** and **Mandy Patinkin** headline the American cast, while **Antonio Banderas, Laia Costa** and **Alex Monner** anchor the Spanish cast.

**THE SISTERS BROTHERS**

Canada-born author **Patrick deWitt's** darkly comic Western novel gets a big-screen adaptation starring **Joaquin Phoenix** as Charlie Sisters and **John C. Reilly** as Eli Sisters, brothers who are hired by the Commodore (**Rutger Hauer**) to kill gold prospector Hermann Kermit Warm (**Riz Ahmed**), who has teamed with a partner named Morris (**Jake Gyllenhaal**).

**NIGHT SCHOOL**

The comedic dream team of **Tiffany Haddish** and **Kevin Hart** star in this laughter that finds Teddy (Hart) attending a night school class to earn his high school diploma. It'll take an unconventional teacher (Haddish) to whip him into shape.

**ASSASSINATION NATION**

In the town of Salem, 18-year-old Lily (**Odessa Young**) is cheating on her boyfriend Mark (**Bill Skarsgård**). Actually, Lily and her pals — **Hari Nef, Suki Waterhouse** and **ABRA** — have a whole lot of secrets, all of which are revealed when an unknown hacker uploads the entire town of Salem's private online information. Prepare for a shocking amount of violence, sex and nasty behaviour in this dark satire of modern life.

See **Bill Skarsgård** interview, **page 38**.



Clockwise from top: Hari Nef, Suki Waterhouse, ABRA and Odessa Young in *Assassination Nation*

CONTINUED ▶



THE  
**PREDATOR**  
THE HUNT HAS EVOLVED 9.14

LAND ROVER IMAX



### ▶ SMALLFOOT

This animated tale finds a yeti named Migo (**Channing Tatum**) out to prove that “Smallfoot” creatures (humans) actually exist. He gets his wish when he meets backpacking Percy (**James Corden**). Listen for **Zendaya**, **Common**, **Danny DeVito**, **Gina Rodriguez** and **LeBron James** in supporting roles. See *Smallfoot* feature, [page 24](#).



From left: Bex Taylor-Klaus, Christian James, Reign Edwards and Amy Forsyth in *Hell Fest*

### HELL FEST

Visitors at a Halloween theme park love to be scared, but their fun turns to horror when a real-life killer joins the crowds and starts murdering people. The film stars **Amy Forsyth**, **Reign Edwards**, **Bex Taylor-Klaus** and **Christian James**.

### LIZZIE

After years in development hell, producer and star **Chloë Sevigny** finally gets her Lizzie Borden passion project into theatres. At 32, Borden was charged with murdering her father and stepmother with an axe in 1892. Sevigny plays Borden as a lonely woman who bonds with housemaid Bridget Sullivan (**Kristen Stewart**) in the months leading up to the murders.

# CINEPLEX EVENTS

## SENSORY FRIENDLY SCREENING

*The LEGO Movie*  
SAT., SEPT. 1

## CONCERT FILM

*Jonas Kaufmann:  
Under the Stars*

SAT., SEPT. 1-WED., SEPT. 5

## FAMILY FAVOURITES

*The LEGO Movie*  
SAT., SEPT. 1

*The Secret Life of Pets*  
SAT., SEPT. 8

*E.T. the Extra-Terrestrial*  
SAT., SEPT. 15

*Show Dogs*

SAT., SEPT. 22

*Wonder*

SAT., SEPT. 29

## NFL SUNDAY NIGHT FOOTBALL @VIP

*Bears vs. Packers*  
(Ontario and East)

*Seahawks vs. Broncos*  
(Manitoba and West)

SUN., SEPT. 9

*Patriots vs. Jaguars*  
SUN., SEPT. 16

*Bills vs. Packers*  
(Ontario and East)

*Seahawks vs. Cardinals*  
(Manitoba and West)  
SUN., SEPT. 30

## PASSPORT TO THE WORLD

*Thailand: Asia's Paradise*  
MON., SEPT. 10

## CLASSIC FILMS

*The Apartment*  
WED., SEPT. 12; FRI., SEPT. 14;  
SUN., SEPT. 16; MON.,  
SEPT. 17; TUES., SEPT. 18

## ANIME

*Dragonball Z 2*  
SAT., SEPT. 15;  
MON., SEPT. 17

## AUSTRALIAN BALLET

*The Merry Widow*  
WED., SEPT. 19;  
SUN., SEPT. 30

## BROADWAY STAGE

*An American in  
Paris - The Musical*  
THURS., SEPT. 20; SAT.,  
SEPT. 22; SUN., SEPT. 23;  
WED., SEPT. 26

## EVENTS IN VIP

*Say Anything*  
MON., SEPT. 24

## LONDON THEATRE

*Live: King Lear*  
THURS., SEPT. 27

## LONDON STAGE

*An Ideal Husband*  
SAT., SEPT. 29

FOR MORE INFO, GO TO  
[CINEPLEX.COM/EVENTS](http://CINEPLEX.COM/EVENTS)



Sissy Spacek and Robert Redford in *The Old Man & the Gun*

## THE OLD MAN & THE GUN

Now 82, **Robert Redford** stars as the real-life Forrest Tucker, a career criminal who escaped from prison 12 times and went on a bank-robbing spree at age 79. Co-starring **Sissy Spacek**, **Danny Glover** and **Casey Affleck**.

## LITTLE WOMEN

This year marks the 150th anniversary of **Louisa May Alcott's** classic novel *Little Women*. Hollywood celebrates with two film versions in the next two years, the first is this modern retelling starring **Lea Thompson** as mother Marmee, who watches her four precocious daughters — Meg (**Melanie Stone**), Jo (**Sarah Davenport**), Amy (**Taylor Murphy**) and Beth (**Allie Jennings**) — grow into adulthood. Writer-director Greta Gerwig's version, starring Meryl Streep, Emma Stone and Saoirse Ronan, will be released on Christmas Day 2019.

## COLETTE

The fascinating life of 19th-century French novelist Colette comes to the screen with **Keira Knightley** portraying the writer who marries the older author Henry Gauthier-Villars (**Dominic West**). She writes a popular string of novels about a character named Claudine that are published under his pen name, Willy, and are wildly popular, especially with young women. And then Colette creates a scandal when it is revealed that she is the true author of the works.



Denise Gough (left) and Keira Knightley in *Colette*

SHOWTIMES ONLINE AT [CINEPLEX.COM](http://CINEPLEX.COM)

ALL RELEASE DATES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE



You know how animated characters often end up looking like the actors who voice them? Think of *Inside Out*'s Sadness (Phyllis Smith), *Up*'s Carl Frederickson (Ed Asner) or *Wreck-It Ralph*'s Ralph (John C. Reilly). That's not necessarily the case with **Smallfoot**, the story of a Yeti who encounters a small, hairless creature (yup, a human) and realizes he has proof of the existence of the mythical Smallfoot. Can you guess which actor voices which character in the new animated flick?



**A** **Danny DeVito**, the diminutive American actor who shot to fame as volatile dispatcher Louie on TV's *Taxi*. He now plays Frank on the long-running TV comedy *It's Always Sunny in Philadelphia*.

**B** **LeBron James**, the six-foot-eight NBA star whose previous acting roles include versions of himself on TV's *Entourage* and in Amy Schumer's *Trainwreck*.

**C** **Zendaya**, a child model turned Disney star; she played Rocky Blue on the Disney Channel sitcom *Shake it Up*. Last year she portrayed Michelle Jones in *Spider-Man: Homecoming*.

**D** **Channing Tatum**, a dancer turned actor whose breakout role came in 2006's *Step Up* and is known for his impressive physique.

**E** **Common**, a rapper, actor and film producer whose song "Glory" from the movie *Selma* won the Oscar for Best Original Song in 2015. He also played Civil Rights leader James Bevel in the film.

**F** **Gina Rodriguez**, the Chicago-born actor of Puerto Rican heritage who has earned three Golden Globe nominations for playing Jane on TV's *Jane the Virgin*, winning once.

**G** **James Corden**, the British host of TV's *The Late Late Show With James Corden*, famous for the show's often-viral Carpool Karaoke spots.

ALL PHOTOS BY GETTY; DANNY DEVITO BY PAUL ARCHULETA; LEBRON JAMES BY GARY GERSHOFF; ZENDAYA BY FRAZER HARRISON; CHANNING TATUM BY MICHAEL TRAIN; COMMON BY SLAVEN VASIC; GINA RODRIGUEZ BY GABE GINSBERG; JAMES CORDEN BY JAMIE MCCARTHY

# Toronto International Film Festival



The Actor-Turned-Director

## A Star is Born

Four-time Oscar nominee Bradley Cooper chose to remake *A Star is Born* for the third time (that makes four versions in total) for his directorial debut. But any fears that the subject matter would be old and worn by now were allayed when Cooper cast Stefani Germanotta, a.k.a. Lady Gaga, in her first starring film role (she's had small parts in several movies).

Gaga plays Ally, an aspiring singer who's ready to give up on her dream when she meets country music star Jackson Maine (Cooper), an alcoholic whose career is in decline. He pushes her into the spotlight, but what will her success do to their relationship?

Plus, Dave Chappelle plays a character named Noodles.

Directed by  
Bradley Cooper  
(debut)

Starring  
Bradley Cooper,  
Lady Gaga,  
Dave Chappelle

In Theatres  
October 5th



TIFF  
STATS

11

Days the  
festival  
takes over  
Toronto

# tional Guide

The **Toronto International Film Festival**, known to most simply as TIFF, takes over Toronto streets, theatres, restaurants, event spaces and hotels from **September 6th to 16th**. Here we take a look at some of the big movies that will screen at TIFF before coming to a theatre near you ■ BY MARNI WEISZ



The Kid

## White Boy Rick



**Directed By**  
Yann Demange  
(77)

**Starring**  
Matthew  
McConaughey,  
Jennifer  
Jason Leigh,  
Richie Merritt

**In Theatres**  
September 14th

With no acting experience whatsoever, 15-year-old Richie Merritt took on the title role of Rick Wershe Jr. in this true story. At 14 years old, Wershe was manipulated into becoming an undercover informant, reporting on illegal goings on in his tough Detroit neighbourhood. A few years later the authorities abandoned him, and Wershe turned to illegal activities himself to get by.

At age 17 he was arrested for drug trafficking and sentenced to life in prison where he was still sitting, after nearly three decades, when work on this film began.

Matthew McConaughey plays the kid's dad, Rick Sr., who's full of love and bad decisions, and Bruce Dern and Piper Laurie step in as his grandparents.



The History Lesson

## Colette

*Colette* tells the story of the real-life French writer (played by Keira Knightley) who fought to get credit for the novels she co-wrote with her well-known author husband Henry Gauthier-Villars (Dominic West), and that were published under his name alone in the 1890s.

You may assume this film was pulled together in the past year to take advantage of today's woke-woman climate in Hollywood. But the truth is, the script was written in 2001 by Westmoreland and his late husband Richard Glatzer, who passed away from ALS in 2015, the year after the couple co-wrote and co-directed *Still Alice*.

**Directed By**  
Wash  
Westmoreland  
(*Still Alice*)

**Starring**  
Keira Knightley,  
Dominic West,  
Eleanor Tomlinson

**In Theatres**  
September 28th



## The Political Scandal

# The Front Runner



**Directed By**  
Jason Reitman  
(*Tully*)

**Starring**  
Hugh Jackman,  
Vera Farmiga,  
Sara Paxton

**In Theatres**  
November 7th

Canadian director Jason Reitman is TIFF Royalty, having screened all but two of his films here — *Thank You For Smoking*, *Juno*, *Up in the Air*, *Labor Day* and *Men, Women & Children*. *Young Adult* and *Tully* are the only exceptions.

In this very American true story, which seems quaint by today's standards, Reitman recalls the scandal that ensued when Democratic Senator and Presidential hopeful Gary Hart (Hugh Jackman) saw his campaign derailed after stories of an extramarital affair with campaign aide Donna Rice (Sara Paxton) surfaced. Both denied the affair.

Ah, the good old days.

## The Timely Tale

# The Hate U Give

**Directed By** George Tillman Jr. (*The Longest Ride*)

**Starring** Amandla Stenberg, Regina Hall, Common

**In Theatres** October 19th

Recognize Amandla Stenberg? Imagine her a bit younger. Younger. Got it? She was Rue, the littlest tribute in *The Hunger Games*. Just thinking about Rue's death scene still makes us cry. Ugh.

Here she is all grown up and starring in another film about an unfair death, but this time her character, Starr, is a witness. She's there when her friend Khalil (Algee Smith) is shot by a cop during a traffic stop and now she has to decide just how much she's willing to say, and how, and when.

TIFF  
STATS  
22

Number  
of TIFF  
programmers  
(the people  
who choose  
the films)



## The Tearjerker

# What They Had

**Directed By** Elizabeth Chomko (debut)

**Starring** Hilary Swank, Michael Shannon, Blythe Danner

**In Theatres** October 12th

*What They Had* is certainly not the first movie to chart the effects of Alzheimer's on the individual and his or her family, and considering the prevalence of the disease, it won't likely be the last.

Joining a formidable list that includes *Away From Her*, *The Notebook*, *Still Alice* and *The Leisure Seeker*, *What They Had* tells the story of Bridget (Hilary Swank) who returns home to help her exhausted brother Nicky (Michael Shannon) and father Burt (Robert Forster) take care of their mother Ruth (Blythe Danner), who is in the late stages of the disease.

First-time writer-director Elizabeth Chomko drew on her own family history for this film that earned very positive reviews when it had its world premiere at Sundance.





### The Crime Pic

## Widows

**Directed By** Steve McQueen  
(*12 Years a Slave*)

**Starring** Viola Davis, Liam Neeson,  
Daniel Kaluuya

**In Theatres** November 16th

Director Steve McQueen turns his lens to a group of Chicago criminals (including Liam Neeson and Jon Bernthal) and their wives (Viola Davis and Michelle Rodriguez among them). When the husbands perish in a heist gone wrong, the wives make the surprising decision to follow through on the crime and claim what they feel is theirs.



### The Dry Comedy

## Can You Ever Forgive Me?

Melissa McCarthy plays real-life writer Lee Israel who, when her celebrity biographies stopped selling, started forging letters she claimed were written by famous authors and demanding large amounts of money for them. It's been reported she wrote more than 400 fake letters. Her pal Jack (Richard E. Grant) encouraged her, until of course things started to go south. Based on the memoir by Israel herself.

Although the film is a comedy it's a different, perhaps more mature, type of comedy than we're used to seeing from McCarthy, and we're excited to see another side of her.

**Directed By**  
Marielle Heller  
(*The Diary of a Teenage Girl*)

**Starring**  
Melissa McCarthy,  
Richard E. Grant,  
Jane Curtin

**In Theatres**  
October 19th

The Western

# The Sisters Brothers

**Directed By** Jacques Audiard (*Rust and Bone*)  
**Starring** Joaquin Phoenix, John C. Reilly, Jake Gyllenhaal  
**In Theatres** September 21st

This black-comedy Western may seem all-American — it stars American actors Joaquin Phoenix and John C. Reilly and takes place in Oregon and California, but it has a deep Canadian connection too. It's based on the book of the same name by Patrick deWitt, who was born on Vancouver Island, and won several big Canadian prizes, including the 2011 Governor General's Literary Award for Fiction and the 2012 Stephen Leacock Memorial Medal for Humour.

The story follows two gun-slinging brothers (Phoenix, Reilly) with the last name Sisters as they track down a gold prospector who stole from their boss, the Commodore (Rutger Hauer).



The Father and Son

# Ben is Back

Peter Hedges directs his son, Lucas, in this domestic drama about Ben (Lucas Hedges) who, in trouble, returns home one Christmas Eve. Julia Roberts plays his mom, Holly.

While his father is no slouch, and also wrote this film, the younger Hedges has had a talent for picking winning films over the past few years, including 2016's *Manchester by the Sea* and two 2017 pics, *Lady Bird* and *Three Billboards Outside Ebbing, Missouri* — all three of which earned Best Picture nominations.

**Directed By** Peter Hedges  
(*Dan in Real Life*)

**Starring** Julia Roberts, Lucas Hedges, Kathryn Newton

**In Theatres** To be announced



TIFF  
STATS

7

Number of Academy Award nominations last year's People's Choice Award winner, *Three Billboards Outside Ebbing, Missouri*, earned. It won two

The Master of Tears

# Life Itself

**Directed By** Dan Fogelman  
(*Danny Collins*)

**Starring** Oscar Isaac, Olivia Wilde, Antonio Banderas

**In Theatres** September 21st

If you've been watching TV's *This is Us* you know its creator Dan Fogelman is a master manipulator of human emotions, and you don't even care that you're being played, because it's so darn good!

Here Fogelman brings his sad-making skills to the big screen with a story that starts off well enough — Will (Oscar Isaac) and Abby (Olivia Wilde) meet, fall in love and get married. And then something happens. Of course it does. Bring the tissues.



## The Follow-Up

# If Beale Street Could Talk

Writer-director Barry Jenkins' first film since his 2016 indie phenomenon *Moonlight* won Best Picture at the Oscars is this drama based on the James Baldwin novel about a pregnant Harlem woman (Kiki Layne) trying to prove her husband (Canadian actor Stephan James) is innocent of a crime.

*Moonlight* was the buzz movie of the 2016 Toronto film fest, though it lost the People's Choice Award to the more commercial *La La Land* that year. How will this one fare?

**Directed By**  
Barry Jenkins  
(*Moonlight*)

**Starring**  
Kiki Layne,  
Diego Luna,  
Stephan James

**In Theatres**  
November 30th



TIFF  
STATS

74

Countries  
represented  
at last year's  
TIFF



## The Reunion

# First Man

The last time Damien Chazelle directed Ryan Gosling, their movie, *La La Land*, came within milliseconds of winning Best Picture at the Oscars, eventually losing out to *Moonlight* in one of the awards show's most exciting, and confusing, endings.

This time the pair teams up to tell the story of Neil Armstrong (Gosling), the first man to walk on the moon. *The Crown*'s Claire Foy plays the astronaut's wife, Janet, and Corey Stoll is Armstrong's space-travelling partner, Buzz Aldrin.

**Directed By**  
Damien Chazelle  
(*La La Land*)

**Starring**  
Ryan Gosling,  
Claire Foy,  
Corey Stoll

**In Theatres**  
October 12th



## The Tribute

# Sharkwater: Extinction

**Directed By**  
Rob Stewart  
(*Sharkwater*)

**Starring**  
Rob Stewart,  
Brock Cahill,  
Will Allen

**In Theatres**  
October 5th

Canadian documentary filmmaker Rob Stewart was in the middle of filming this follow-up to his award-winning doc *Sharkwater* when he died in a scuba diving accident off the Florida Keys on January 31st, 2017.

Just as *Sharkwater* premiered at the Toronto International Film Festival in 2006, *Sharkwater: Extinction* will open at the fest this year, completed by his fellow filmmakers, and continuing Stewart's efforts to educate the public about the brutal practice of shark-finning and the damage it does not only to sharks but the ocean's ecosystem as a whole.

This one's going to get you on all sorts of levels.



## The Indigenous Story

# Through Black Spruce

**Directed By** Don McKellar (*Childstar*)

**Starring** Tanaya Beatty, Brandon Oakes, Graham Greene

**In Theatres** To be announced

Will this adaptation of Joseph Boyden's Giller Prize-winning novel rise above the controversy surrounding the author's genealogy, more specifically whether Boyden's claims of indigenous heritage are legitimate?

The story is a powerful one.

Tanaya Beatty plays Annie, a young Indigenous woman from Moosonee who goes south to the big city to look for her missing sister, Suzanne, while Brandon Oakes plays Beatty's uncle Will Bird, a hunter forced to leave town after defending himself against a relentless thug.

Barbara Samuels (creator of TV's *North of 60*) adapts Boyden's story for the screen.

## The Teen Tale

# Giant Little Ones



**Directed By**  
Keith Behrman  
(*Flower & Garnet*)

**Starring**  
Kyle MacLachlan,  
Josh Wiggans,  
Maria Bello

**In Theatres**  
October 19th

Filmed in Sault Ste. Marie last summer, this Canadian Young Adult drama tells the story of two teen boys who have been friends since childhood. Then something happens at a 17th birthday party that changes their lives.

Writer-director Keith Behrman described his project as "a beautiful film about the fluidity of self, sexuality and the nature of love" on its Facebook page.



TIFF  
STATS

# 24

Number of years TIFF's director and CEO Piers Handling has been with the festival. In September 2017 he announced 2018 would be his final year

# RETURN OF THE PREDATOR

We're on the Vancouver set of *The Predator* to talk with cast members **Boyd Holbrook, Olivia Munn, Sterling K. Brown, Keegan-Michael Key** and **Trevante Rhodes** about taking on the vicious, alien beast who, despite having the ability to disappear, just won't go away ■ BY JULIDE TANRIVERDI

**I**t's a sight you don't see every day. A Predator, in his shiny, muscular armour, is standing calmly in line at the fajita bar.

Catering is serving Mexican on this, the 44th day (of 65) on set at Mammoth Studios in Vancouver where *The Predator*, the reboot of the Predator action franchise, is being filmed. And, thanks to his impressive height (six-foot-nine) and iconic helmet with dreadlock-like tentacles, the alien sticks out like a sore thumb.

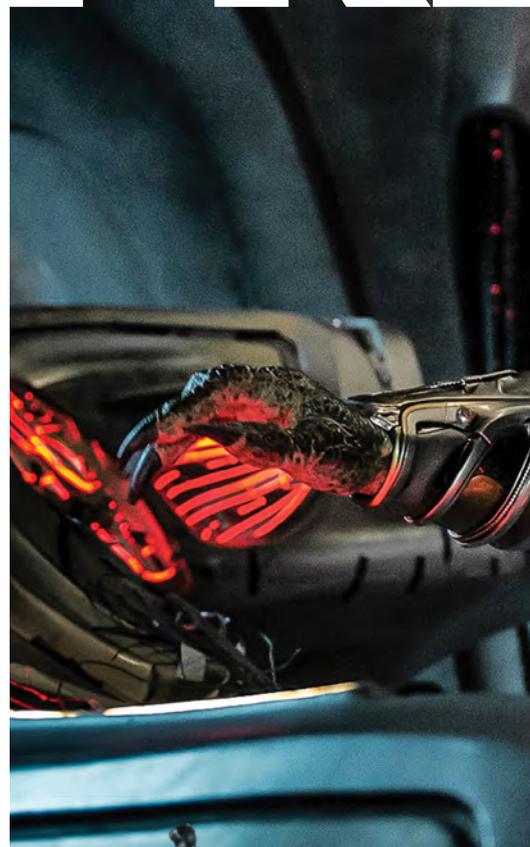
At some point the stuntman/actor inside the suit, Brian A. Prince, takes off his headpiece so he can talk with his co-workers and eat his meal. Thankfully, he's not wearing a hideous alien mask underneath. Instead, there's just his friendly face, which we're guessing the original film's star Arnold Schwarzenegger would have preferred to the alien's reveal in the 1987 movie when he uttered that now infamous line, "You're one ugly mother..."

One of the most interesting things about the reboot is that Shane Black is behind the camera. More recently known for directing films like *The Nice Guys* and *Iron Man 3*, Black played a soldier named Hawkins in the original film. As the story goes, he was hired because director John McTiernan wanted to have a screenwriter on set so they could change things on the fly, and the then 26-year-old Black had already written the massive hit *Lethal Weapon*.

So it's no surprise that Black was the first choice to helm the new entry and bring the franchise back to life. He also co-wrote the script. Unlike the original, in which a group of mercenaries are killed off one by one in the jungle, the alien with the ability to self-camouflage is now unleashed in present-day suburbia.

Boyd Holbrook, who plays Special Forces commando Quinn McKenna, says Black brought that old idea of writing on the fly back for this instalment. "We would improvise on set, rehearse, then Shane would go into the trailer, write up two pages, and then we would shoot it after lunch. Where does this ever happen?"

CONTINUED ►



Boyd Holbrook in *The Predator*

# PREDATOR



*The Predator's titular alien invader*



From left, Sterling K. Brown, Olivia Munn and Keegan-Michael Key

▶ After surviving an alien encounter Holbrook's McKenna sends some pieces of alien armour to his home where his son Rory (played by Canadian Jacob Tremblay) accidentally activates them thereby calling a Predator to Earth. Meanwhile, the U.S. government is trying to hide the creatures' existence and reluctantly agrees to work with a group of disgraced and unconventional military vets dubbed the Loonies.

As an unapologetic fan of the franchise — "I saw all of them and am not ashamed to admit I enjoyed all of them" — comedian Keegan-Michael Key, who plays one of the Loonies, describes the movie as, "in the universe of the Predator but with a Luc Besson feel and its own capsulated story with lots of humour."

Holbrook, perhaps best known for playing the bad guy in last year's excellent X-Men spinoff *Logan*, wanted to be part of the film because he loved the new setting.

"The first movie is a fantastic film and for all its glory was set only in one location, a jungle. We are taking all of that and shifting it and now it's coming to your backyard, threatening

your family. The story itself is much more layered and complex."

Holbrook describes his character as a troubled guy. "I play an absent father,

estranged from my wife and child. All the guys have lots of problems, suffer from PTSD. The movie is more relatable because it is more grounded in real issues."

On this day in Vancouver they're filming a scene in which the Loonies are protecting Rory from the alien. Leaving the boy behind in the care of a military general played by Edward James Olmos, the mercenaries go to kick some ugly alien ass.

As usual, the scene has to be shot several times to capture the action from all angles. That action is familiar, yet new. Black wanted the Predator to be faster and fiercer for his R-rated take (apparently it's also full of profanity), which is why he cast Prince, who is not only the perfect height to play the Predator, but has a particu-

lar talent for parkour, the acrobatic art/sport of traversing obstacle-laden environments by running, jumping and climbing.

"Shane wanted to see certain movements," Prince says, "which was not the easiest thing

in a 60-pound suit. But I got inspired by Kratos, the character from the *God of War* videogames. I thought he is a big, muscled man who doesn't look back."

All that fighting and shooting is part of the fun and the reason why many of the actors signed on.

*This is Us* star Sterling K. Brown says he wanted to be part of the film because his role, agent Will Traeger, was such a departure. "I usually play decent human beings, I am naturally that way," he jokes. "Traeger is not the most sympathetic character, he pursues his own interests."

As one of the film's few women, Olivia Munn had a different wish. "It was very important to me that the character is not a romantic interest of anyone and isn't just there to service the men," she says. She plays teacher and scientist Casey Bracket who studies the alien and also gets to pull some punches and do some stunts. "It's important to change the perspective of girls today, that they see an independent woman. I wanted her to be able to survive," she says.

Trevante Rhodes, who played the oldest version of the protagonist, Chiron, in 2016's Oscar-winning drama *Moonlight*, had a completely different agenda. With a big smile on his face he says simply, "I can tell you — Arnold has nothing on me. Look at my muscles! And I have the biggest guns and I am a total badass in the movie!"

Move over, Arnold. ☑



## HOW MANY PREDATORS?

Although *The Predator* is the fourth film in the franchise that started with 1987's *Predator*, it's the sixth film if you include the two *Alien/Predator* hybrids, *Alien vs. Predator* (2004) and *Alien vs. Predator: Requiem* (2007). Above, you see the late Kevin Peter Hall as the title character in the first film.

Julide Tanriverdi is a New York-based freelance writer and producer.

THIS HOUSE KNOWS WHAT MAKES YOU TICK



THE HOUSE WITH A  
CLOCK IN ITS WALLS

SEPTEMBER 21

# SCARY GOOD

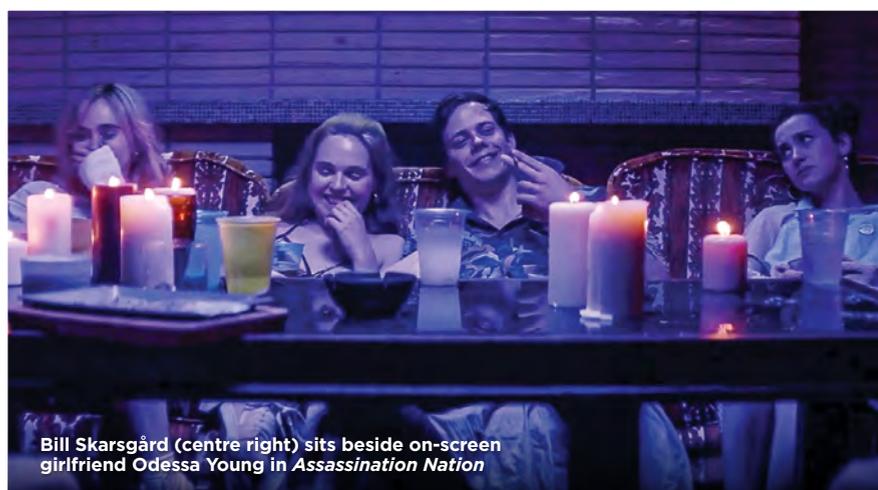
Would you believe this is the guy who played *It's* creepy clown, Pennywise? Now adorable Swedish actor **Bill Skarsgård** is starring in a movie that's just plain creepy from start to finish, even if his character seems like a nice enough guy. Here Skarsgård talks about that cautionary tale, ***Assassination Nation***, in which an entire town's social media posts are leaked, bringing about bloody anarchy ■ BY BOB STRAUSS

**T**hings have been getting pretty ugly for Bill Skarsgård lately.

Consider the 28-year-old Swedish actor's recent spate of appearances: as the inter-dimensional demon clown Pennywise in last year's hit horror movie *It* (and its sequel, currently filming in Ontario); his brief but memorable turn as Zeitgeist, the most disgusting, acid-vomiting new mutant recruited for *Deadpool 2's* X-Force; the immensely creepy, mysterious Shawshank prisoner in another adaptation of *It* author Stephen King's work, the Hulu TV series *Castle Rock*.

So it must have been a relief to portray a seemingly nice-guy boyfriend for this month's hot-button pushing social satire *Assassination Nation*, right? Even if everything else in the movie is as ugly as the United States can get these days.

"It's about high school and teens in this small town in Middle America — it could be anywhere in America, really," Skarsgård explains, wearing black slacks with a matching long-sleeve pullover shirt on a blistering hot day in Beverly Hills. "Then you have a cyberattack, a hacker starts releasing all their



personal information to residents, and how that small town reacts to it. The whole kind of internet — and the whole kind of world — becomes an audience to the downfall of it. It's one of the best scripts I've read in a long time and I had so much fun working on it."

Skarsgård won't say if Mark, the likable lunkhead he plays in the movie, turns out to be more nefarious than he initially seems. But the film, set in a town cheekily named Salem

to evoke the infamous witch trial hysteria of Colonial times, takes great glee in assaulting the hypocrisies, phobias, sexual double standards and mob mentalities that have fuelled witch hunts through the centuries.

When suspicion falls on Mark's girlfriend Lily (Australia's Odessa Young) and her free-wheeling buds Em (singer ABRA), Sarah (English model-actor Suki Waterhouse) and Bex (Hari Nef, the transgender actor from

**ASSASSINATION  
NATION**  
HITS THEATRES  
SEPTEMBER 21ST



**Bill Skarsgård, the handsome young actor**  
INSET: Skarsgård as *It*'s terrifying clown, Pennywise

*Transparent*) as the online culprits, they fight back in the most outrageous and apocalyptic ways possible.

Skarsgård loved it.

"It's super-interesting," he says. "It's written and directed by Sam Levinson, Barry Levinson's [director of *Rain Man* and *Good Morning Vietnam*] son. Sam just recently co-wrote Barry's HBO film *The Wizard of Lies* about Bernie Madoff, the big investment scammer. He's an incredible writer who really understands how things can go wrong, and this is his second feature."

As for his second outing as *It*'s Pennywise, Skarsgård describes how he brings what is arguably Stephen King's most indelible supernatural creation to life on film.

"There's no gender, age, anything that describes the character," the actor notes.

"Anybody could be this character — we're not talking a mid-20s college guy here — you can interpret it however you want. So that's a great opportunity to come up with something creative. There is also a stage of understanding the character on an intellectual and psychological level — who is he,

what's his function, what's his motivation? I have this 1,200-page novel as source material to find out what Stephen King thought about this character, and that's a great resource.

"There are so many interesting things that really resonate with me that I want to incorporate in Pennywise. Also, just little hints like his voice is described in a handful of different ways in the novel. Those kind of things help me paint a picture of what I want to go toward."

The fourth of actor Stellan Skarsgård's eight children, it seemed inevitable that Bill would follow his older brothers Alexander and Gustaf into the family business. But that wasn't necessarily the case.

"Dad always encouraged us to do whatever we wanted to do, so I never, ever felt him being partial in any way for us to do anything, really," Bill Skarsgård explains. "Growing up, he was always like, 'Whatever you want to do, I'll support.' So the acting was an option that was neither frowned upon nor heavily encouraged. It was just, you can be an actor if you want, but work hard. It was always you need to take it seriously, like anything in life."

Although, the idea of not taking life too seriously is what ultimately pointed Skarsgård in the direction he took.

"As a kid growing up, seeing it, I think acting is just being a kid for the rest of your life," he says. "You just play and pretend and get to do what kids do normally and you get paid for it. So it was a very appealing choice of career for me. I don't ever really have to grow up!"

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



# ONE TOUGH MOTHER

Remember the **Jennifer Garner** that kicked butt week after week on TV's *Alias*? Well, she's back, and she's tougher than ever. Here the star of *Peppermint* talks about going dark to play the film's grieving mom turned vigilante ■ BY INGRID RANDOJA

**J**ennifer Garner would not be denied.

The 46-year-old actor believed the role of vigilante Riley North in the thriller *Peppermint* was meant for her, and she made it happen.

"I really went in and fought for it, and just kind of said, 'You have to give me this role,'" says Garner on the line from Los Angeles. "I know what to do to get ready for it. I know how to train for it. I know what it will need and I know, dramatically, that I can handle it. I guess I should fight like that more often because I don't very often."

Garner tells her story in her gentle, sing-song voice so it's hard to imagine her laying down the law to studio executives. Yet that's exactly what makes her such a fascinating star; her ability to transform from the soft-spoken mother of three to hardened, big-screen action star.

That transformation from soft to hard is also what makes this film so compelling.

Directed by French filmmaker Pierre Morel (*Taken*), *Peppermint* starts out looking like another feel-good domestic drama, almost too sweet, with Garner as a happily married mother who dotes over her adorable 10-year-old daughter Carly (Cailey Fleming). Then, one night at a carnival, Carly and her dad are murdered, the innocent victims of a drug cartel shooting. Riley is injured too, but recovers.

She identifies the killers, but corrupt cops, lawyers and even a judge make sure the murderers go free. That's when Riley disappears and starts training, spending years living on L.A.'s skid row honing her skills so she can take revenge against those who wronged her.

Garner's fans still fondly remember her breakout role as CIA agent Sydney Bristow in J.J. Abram's TV show *Alias* (2001-2006). It was as Sydney that the actor's talents as an acrobatic action star were revealed.

She took her game to another level in 2005 starring as assassin Elektra in the much-maligned, early Marvel pic of the same name. The fact that *Elektra* died a painful death in theatres may have hastened Garner's move away from action to the rom-coms, dramas and family fare that have dominated her career for the past decade. Movies such as *Ghosts of Girlfriends Past*, *Arthur*, *Dallas Buyers Club*, *Miracles From Heaven* and *Love, Simon* made us forget Garner was once a hard-ass hero.

It was the need to let loose one more time on screen that drew her to *Peppermint*.

"I felt like I had another action role in me," she says. "I had been telling people that for a while, but it's so hard to find one where the action is really motivated. In a movie like that the stakes have to be off the charts, like the President has to be in peril, something has to be insane for you to go to the lengths you go to in an action movie."

CONTINUED ►



**PEPPERMINT**  
HITS THEATRES  
SEPTEMBER 7<sup>TH</sup>



Peppermint's Jennifer Garner gets her revenge



PHOTO BY RACHEL MURRAY/GETTY

► For Garner, the mother of three kids with ex-husband Ben Affleck — 12-year-old Violet, nine-year-old Seraphina and seven-year-old Samuel — it was a woman dealing with the death of a child that ensured the action made sense to her.

"I always felt like no one had ever really written the role that appealed to me as a mom because obviously there are no higher stakes than something happening to your child. The idea of vengeance for the death of a child and a husband who were wrongfully killed by really bad guys, this script got that right."

Garner was in great shape before shooting, but took her training to another level to prepare for the role — running, kick-boxing, stunt work and, surprisingly, dancing.

"I would do a workout in the morning with fitness trainer Simone De La Rue who I'd been working out with," notes Garner, "and I said, 'They want me to go with some big, beef-you-up kind of trainer and I just think we've been dancing every day and I think we can do it.' And she said, 'Yeah we've got this.' She really got me into shape."

Garner studied ballet as a child and believes today's crop of stellar female action stars bring a dancer's mind and body to their roles. "Zoe Saldana, Charlize Theron, I love the girls who play the scenes through the action and who use the physical to enhance what they're already playing, and I feel all those women

grew up dancing, so it's like you're using your whole body to do the job."

What proved even more difficult than the physical preparation was the mental and emotional part of the role, harnessing the grief, pain and anger of a woman whose family is murdered.

"Yeah, it was dark," she says seriously. "It was really dark. I worked with Nancy Banks, who is an acting coach here in L.A. who I've worked with for years, to make sure that I'm just on top of it and asking myself the questions I need to ask. It was so busy that I would get a hotel room for three or four hours at a time so that Nancy and I could go somewhere to focus and go through the script and write detailed notes about whatever.

"But other than that, it's just the thought of these things happening that are so powerful that there's no preparation other than just going in there and trying to play the scene."

The film was shot in Los Angeles, which meant Garner could go home after a day's shooting. Although her children are too young to see *Peppermint* when it hits screens, one day they will have the chance, and you wonder what Garner thinks her kids will make of their mother playing a remorseless vigilante.

"Oh gosh, I think they'll really remember me shooting it because that's what movies are when you live them, they are a time in your life. So they'll say, 'Oh yeah, I was in third grade,'

## DOUBLE TIME

Shauna Duggins has definitely got Jennifer Garner's back. Not only is Duggins Garner's stunt double on *Peppermint* she has served as the star's stunt double for nearly 20 years going back to Garner's time on *Alias*. "She is one of my closest friends," says Garner. "She's like a sister to me she's and now she's a big coordinator. She's just amazing and I'm so proud of her." Duggins is a stunt coordinator for TV shows such as *Ray Donovan*, Netflix's *GLOW* and Jim Carrey's new series, *Kidding*. —IR

so they'll definitely have that memory. And I think they'll be surprised that I would come home from those events and tuck them in or take them to school after I'd worked all night.

"But I think that they would also look at the movie and say, 'Yeah, she would do that for us.'" ☑

Ingrid Randoja is the deputy editor of Cineplex Magazine.

WINNERS® PRESENTS

# FINDERS KEEPERS



WHERE THE FAB FINDS ARE REAL  
AND MISSING OUT IS NOT AN OPTION

## STONE RETURNS TO **Zombieland**

It's been almost 10 years since we saw **Emma Stone**, **Woody Harrelson**, **Jesse Eisenberg** and **Abigail Breslin** battle the undead in *Zombieland*, and word is the quartet will reassemble for the sequel, *Zombieland Too*, set to hit screens in October 2019. Getting Stone back is a coup, as is the signing of original *Zombieland* director **Ruben Fleischer**, who's just finished shooting the highly anticipated superhero pic *Venom*.



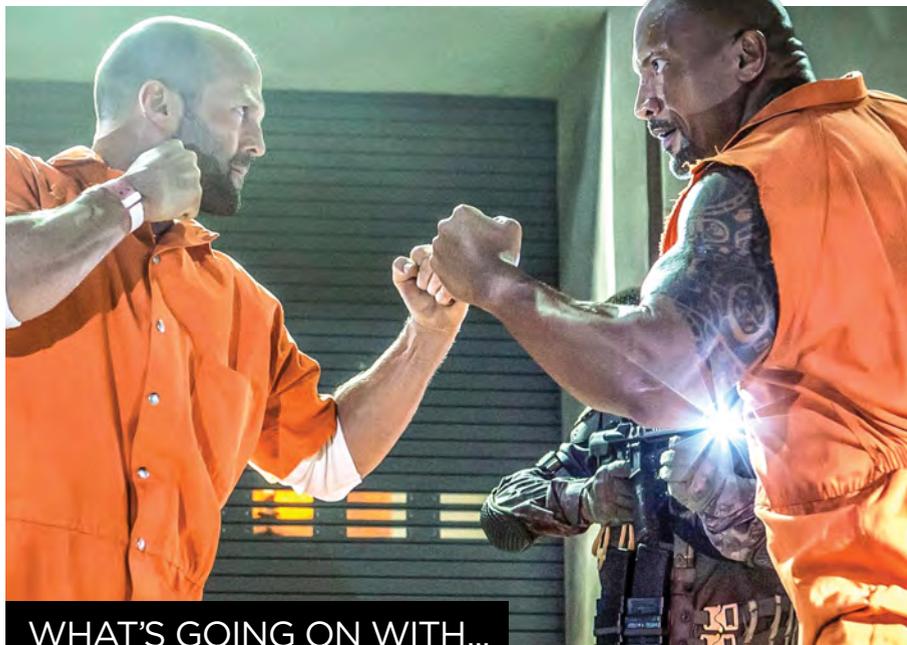
## CHALAMET Considers **Dune**

**Timothée Chalamet** is circling the lead role of Paul Atreides in director **Denis Villeneuve**'s remake of *Dune*. The sci-fi flick, based on **Frank Herbert**'s 1965 novel, finds nobleman Atreides taking control of the desert planet Arrakis, the home to Melange, the galaxy's most valuable spice. We're betting Villeneuve's adaptation will wipe away memories of **David Lynch**'s kooky 1984 version.



## WINSLET Catches **BLACKBIRD**

**Kate Winslet** joins **Diane Keaton** and **Mia Wasikowska** in *Blackbird*, the English-language remake of the 2014 Danish drama *Silent Heart*. The story centers on a dying mother (Keaton), who welcomes her daughters (Winslet, Wasikowska) home one last time before she commits suicide. **Roger Michell** (*Notting Hill*) directs.



WHAT'S GOING ON WITH...

## Hobbs and Shaw

The first spinoff from the *Fast & Furious* franchise, *Hobbs and Shaw* sees special agent Luke Hobbs (**Dwayne Johnson**) teaming up with criminal Deckard Shaw (**Jason Statham**). While the plot is under wraps we do know that **Idris Elba** will play the baddie and **Vanessa Kirby** (*The Crown*'s Princess Margaret) portrays Shaw's sister. **David Leitch** (*Deadpool 2*) directs the action pic that hits theatres July 26th, 2019.



## Boseman PLAYS DETECTIVE

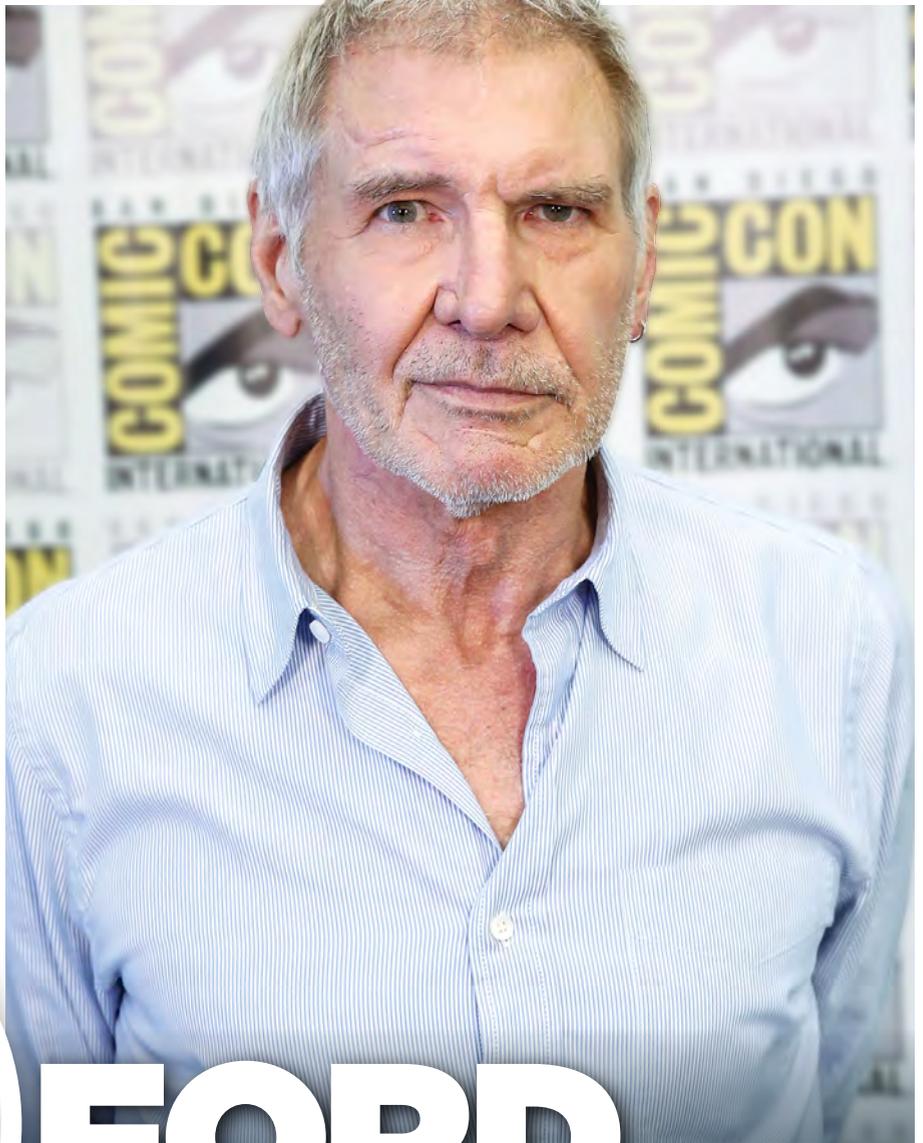
*Black Panther*'s breakout star **Chadwick Boseman** leaves Wakanda behind to play an NYPD detective in the action-thriller *17 Bridges*. Boseman is also producing the movie directed by **Brian Kirk** (TV's *Luther* and *Game of Thrones*) that sees Boseman's disgraced detective seeking redemption while searching for a cop killer.



## FRESH FACE Laia Costa

Writer-director **Dan Fogelman**'s tearjerker *Life Itself* assembles an excellent cast, including 33-year-old Spanish actor **Laia Costa**, whose Hollywood career is on the rise. Eight years ago she was an advertising executive who took an acting class in Barcelona that changed her life. Her career took off with the acclaimed one-take, German thriller *Victoria* (2015), and since 2017 she's focused exclusively on English-language movies, including *Newness*, *Piercing* and *Duck Butter*.

LAIA COSTA PHOTO BY DIA DIPASUPLI/GETTY



# FORD GOES WILD

**Harrison Ford** was all set to star in *Indiana Jones 5* but a script overhaul has pushed shooting back until next year. In the meantime, Ford has begun work on the CGI/live-action version of *Call of the Wild*. **Jack London**'s classic novel is set in the Yukon during the 1890s Klondike gold rush and is told from the point of view of Buck, a sled dog. Buck has many owners, but he bonds with prospector John Thornton (Ford). **Chris Sanders** (*The Croods*) directs.

**ALSO IN THE WORKS** ▶ **Sterling K. Brown** and **Evan Rachel Wood** join the voice cast of *Frozen 2*. ▶ **Jim Carrey** portrays the mad-scientist villain in *Sonic the Hedgehog*. ▶ *Limited Partners* casts **Tiffany Haddish** and **Rose Byrne** as pals who start a beauty products company. ▶ **Djimon Hounsou** will play a 3,000-year-old sorcerer in the superhero pic *Shazam!*

## SOLO: A STAR WARS STORY

**BUY IT** SEPTEMBER 14

**RENT IT** SEPTEMBER 25

**Alden Ehrenreich** portrays a young, desperate Han Solo, who gets involved in a scheme to steal a valuable power source alongside Wookiee Chewbacca (**Joonas Suotamo**), crook Tobias Beckett (**Woody Harrelson**), smuggler Lando Calrissian (**Donald Glover**) and former girlfriend Qi'ra (**Emilia Clarke**).



## SICARIO: DAY OF THE SOLDADO

**BUY IT** SEPTEMBER 11

**RENT IT** SEPTEMBER 25

This sequel to *Sicario* once again stars **Benicio Del Toro** as mysterious black ops agent Alejandro Gillick, whose humanity is tested when his boss (**Josh Brolin**) orders him to kill the young daughter (**Isabela Moner**) of a Mexican drug kingpin.



## THE FIRST PURGE

**BUY IT** SEPTEMBER 18

This prequel to the *Purge* series takes us back to the first purge — a social experiment designed by psychologist Dr. May Updale (**Marisa Tomei**) — held on Staten Island where government mercenaries, drug dealers and innocent civilians battle in the streets for survival.



## HOTEL TRANSYLVANIA 3: SUMMER VACATION

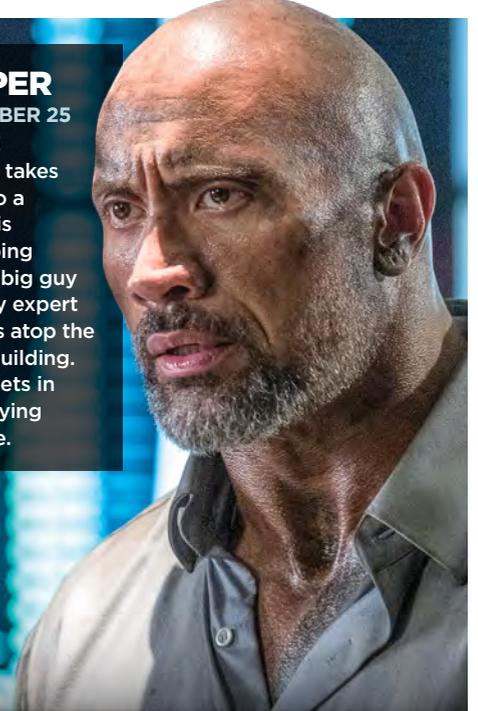
**BUY IT** SEPTEMBER 25

Count Dracula (**Adam Sandler**) and his monster pals embark on a summer cruise not knowing that the ship's human captain (**Kathryn Hahn**) is actually a monster hunter who wants to dispatch Dracula.

## SKYSCRAPER

**BUY IT** SEPTEMBER 25

Don't look down! **Dwayne Johnson** takes his action skills to a higher level in this adrenaline-pumping pic that sees the big guy playing a security expert fighting bad guys atop the world's highest building. **Neve Campbell** gets in on the action playing Johnson's spouse.



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## Apartment VIEWING

**V**iewed through the lens of the #MeToo movement director Billy Wilder's classic 1960 dramedy *The Apartment* doesn't seem very appealing. It's the tale of C.C. Baxter (Jack Lemmon), who allows the married executives at the insurance company where he works to use his apartment as a love nest for their trysts. Personnel director Jeff Sheldrake (Fred MacMurray) is an especially slimy guy, who strings along sweet-natured elevator operator Fran Kubelik (Shirley MacLaine).

However, what not only redeems the movie — and makes it one of Hollywood's most beloved films — is that Lemmon's C.C. Baxter ultimately realizes his complicit actions are beneath him, and that his love for Fran, a woman struggling with her self-esteem, makes him a better man. Lemmon and MacLaine have wonderfully tender comedic chemistry, and Billy Wilder's genius at melding comedy and drama together earned him a Best Director Oscar and the film a Best Picture Oscar. —INGRID RANDOJA

*The Apartment* screens as part of Cineplex's Classic Films series on September 12th, 14th, 16th, 17th and 18th. Go to [Cineplex.com/Events](https://www.cineplex.com/Events) for times and locations.



PHOTO: TWITTER.COM/CSSLTY

# TAKE ON THE WORLD!

The World Electronic Sports Games will pit nation against nation

**Want to represent** Canada at our planet's only Olympic-style esports tournament?

The journey begins on September 8th as the World Electronic Sports Games (WESG) qualifiers get underway online, kicking off months of gaming that will end at the WESG finals in China in February of 2019.

WorldGaming, the esports and competitive gaming platform owned by Cineplex Entertainment, is the official tournament operator for both Canada and the United States, with each country having its own independent qualifying events.

If you feel you're among the world's best in one of the six featured games — *DOTA2*, *VainGlory*, *Starcraft II*, *CounterStrike: Global Offensive (CS:GO)*, *Hearthstone* or *Pro Evolution Soccer (PES)* — go to [WorldGaming.com/WESG](http://WorldGaming.com/WESG) to sign up.

The competition will be split into



eight categories — individual for *Hearthstone* and *PES*, team for the other four, plus an additional two female-only categories, one for *CS:GO* and another for *Hearthstone*.

The majority of the Canadian WESG Qualifying Finals will be held live from October 26th to 28th at the Enthusiast Gaming Live Expo (EGLX) at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre, while others will be held at Toronto's Scotiabank Theatre on November 11th.

So what are you playing for? A share of the \$5.5-million (U.S.) prize pool that will be distributed across the finals and qualifiers, with \$150,000 (CAD) for

Above, Canada's Stephanie Harvey (right) of team TDC competes at the most recent WESG competition. Left, *CounterStrike: Global Offensive*. Below, *DOTA2*



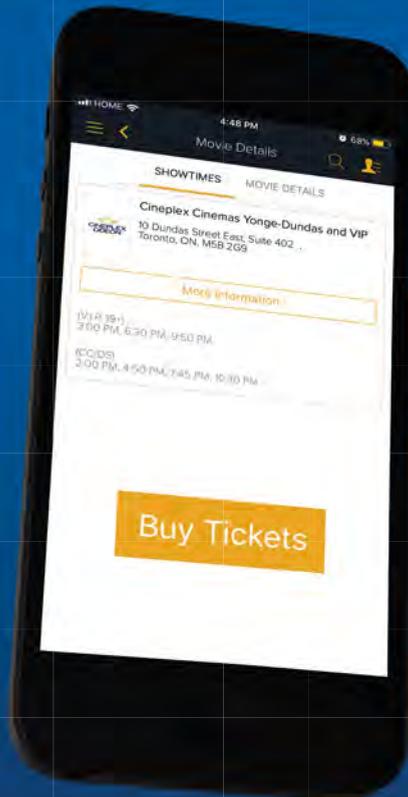
the Canadian qualifiers alone. And if you do make it to those finals, your trip to China will be covered.

At the last WESG finals Canada's female team TDC (which stands for Those Damn Canadians) finished third in the *CS:GO* female-only finals and Quebec's Michael Luker finished second in *Hearthstone*. Not too shabby. Can we repeat, or do even better, this year?



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# FINALLY...



PHOTO BY AMANDA SCHMIDT/BLACKDOLL PHOTOGRAPHY

## THIS Old House

Here is the 1872-built, Italian-style villa that inspired the popular kids' story *The House With a Clock in Its Walls*. And if you'd been shopping for a new home in Marshall, Michigan, a few years ago you could have picked up the registered historic landmark for \$134,500 (U.S.).

Based on the 1973 book by John Bellairs, who was raised in Marshall and was thinking of this particular house on Madison Street when he wrote *The House With a Clock in Its Walls*, the tale is now a big-screen fantasy starring Jack Black as the warlock Uncle Jonathan. With the help of his witch friend, Mrs. Zimmerman (Cate Blanchett), Jonathan takes in his orphaned nephew Lewis (Owen Vaccaro) and tells him about the ominous clock that was built into their abode by the previous owners, a very bad witch and warlock.

The real mansion, which is dubbed The Cronin House in honour of original owners Susan and Jeremiah Cronin, was in pretty bad shape when it was sold in 2015, but it has since been restored and would probably go for a lot more than \$134,500 today. —MW

**THE HOUSE WITH A  
CLOCK IN ITS WALLS**  
HITS THEATRES  
SEPTEMBER 21<sup>ST</sup>



Jack Black in *The House With a Clock in Its Walls*

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