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Famous

december 2002 | vol. 3 | no. 12

**DENZEL
WASHINGTON**
ON DIRECTING
ANTWONE FISHER

STEVEN SPIELBERG
IS ELUSIVE ABOUT
CATCH ME IF YOU CAN

TAKE OUR
YEAR-END QUIZ

FIGHTING BACK

LEONARDO DICAPRIO RETURNS TO THEATRES WITH
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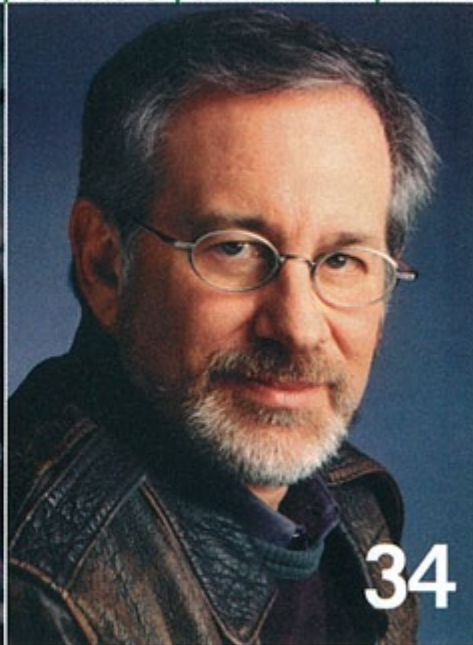
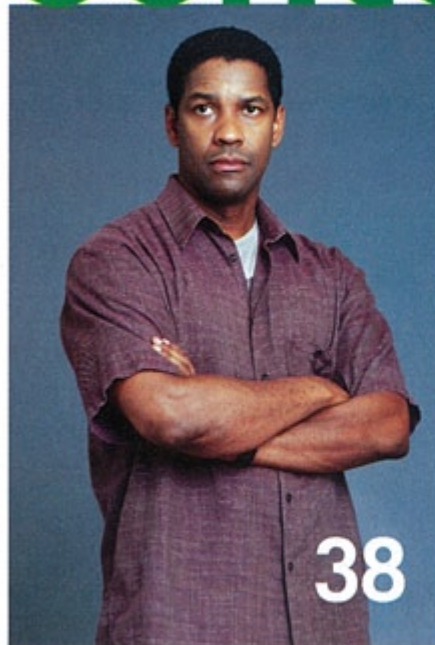
PlayStation 2



Mild Violence

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First-time director Denzel Washington talks about *Antwone Fisher* and his first foray behind the camera | By John Kennedy

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Been missing Leonardo DiCaprio? After an almost three-year absence from theatres the 28-year-old returns with *Gangs of New York* and *Catch Me if You Can*. Here he talks about shooting the former in Rome | By Ron Dicker

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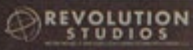
jennifer lopez

ralph fiennes

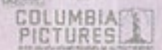


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this christmas love checks in

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WHERE HAVE YOU GONE, LEO DICAPRIO?

Everybody's talking about **Leonardo DiCaprio's** nearly three-year hiatus from movies. But that's a bit of a fallacy. Although the Hollywood heartthrob hasn't had a flick out since *The Beach* hit theatres in February 2000, he started working on Martin Scorsese's period piece *Gangs of New York* just six months later.

But the shoot was long, at eight months, post-production was complicated, and then came September 11th, after which anything remotely related to New York became too sensitive to touch. The studio delayed the movie until July 2002, and it was bumped yet again when they realized that would mean going head-to-head with another period pic, Tom Hanks's *Road to Perdition*.

So Leo's fans were denied until this month, when he appears not only in *Gangs*, but also with Hanks in Steven Spielberg's *Catch Me if You Can*, filmed earlier this year. For "Return of the King," page 40, DiCaprio recalls the *Gangs* shoot, and defends himself against accusations that his partying got in the way of the production.

We've also got **Steven Spielberg** talking about *Catch Me if You Can*. Well, sort of. If you've ever read an interview with an actor appearing in a Spielberg film you'll know the secretive director makes his cast sign contracts swearing not to reveal plot details. So imagine how tough it is to get the man himself to crack. But that's okay. As you'll see in "Spielberg Speaks," page 32, there are other interesting things you can discuss with him.

From one of Hollywood's most-esteemed directors to a newbie stepping behind the camera for the first time. Yet, this first-time director has a name that's just about as recognizable as Spielberg's. In "Denzel's Debut," page 38, **Denzel Washington** takes you through the history of his first directing experience, *Antwone Fisher*, from the day he signed his name to a napkin/contract to how it feels to be just an actor again on his first post-*Antwone Fisher* project.

And if you just want some mindless fun, turn to "Screen Test," page 26, and take our year-end quiz about all the wacky things that went on in movieland this year.

Enjoy your holiday season, and have a happy new year.

—Marni Weisz



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"An indescribably funny, altogether remarkable movie
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Peter Travers, ROLLING STONE

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Meryl Streep
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PHOTO BY JOHN WHITE

Rishma comes home

Rishma Malik has lived and worked in Hong Kong, Mumbai, Los Angeles and New York City, but there is no place the practicing Buddhist would rather be this Christmas than at home with her family in Richmond Hill, Ontario.

"I think we started celebrating Christmas when I stated to the family that we should," laughs Malik, one of the stars of last month's *Bollywood Hollywood*. "Since then it's been a very important holiday to the family. In years that I've been out of town I've made sure that I've been home for it."

Celebrating a Christian tradition is something Malik's South Asian character in her next film, *Expecting Shanti*, might do. In the feature, which begins production in California next month, Malik plays a modern woman working as a magazine fashion editor whose life is turned upside down when her traditional Indian aunt comes to visit. Malik says she can relate. In fact, she swears she's had to do research to play Indian women in films like *Bollywood Hollywood*.

"I haven't lived the true Indian experi-

ence because I grew up with very liberal parents and my cultural references were so outside of what was Indian," explains Malik, adding that she's never even had an Indian boyfriend.

"I rebelled against it but it also wasn't pushed on me. My sense of culture seems to come more from the Canadian side of me. In some ways when I went to India I felt so strange. It took me a while to understand that this is where I was from."

Malik, a former Miss India-Canada who worked as a VJ on an Asian music network, credits some of her openness to Western culture to her father, who encouraged her to pursue her dreams. "Here's a man who is so talented and gifted. He is such a closet artist," she gushes. "He's a man who has been so supportive of my career. Most Indian fathers? Oh my God, they're strict. I was like, 'Dad, I want to take dance classes,' and he was like, 'Okay!' My dad used to sit down with me and we used to press "play" and "record" on the tape deck and talk into the tape deck and sing songs."

After wrapping *Bollywood Hollywood*

last year, Malik took acting courses at the William Esper Studio in New York City, where she managed to land a leading role in the forthcoming *Flavors*, a movie about love, romance and arranged marriages in the South Asian community. Although she's anxious for a part that's not based on her ethnicity, Malik realizes she's got an edge in the highly competitive acting business.

"Had I been blond I wouldn't be getting the opportunities to play leading roles in things. I'd be up against many, many good actresses," she says. "For now it's what is coming in front of me and it's what I've got to do in order to learn all the tricks of the trade. When I really bust out it's going to be a role that's not about my ethnicity."

That role could be just around the corner. Malik recently auditioned to play a character named June McAllister — a rather non-Indian surname — on the small screen. "I don't really want to do TV but the fact that this casting director said 'you've got the chops to play this part and your ethnicity doesn't matter...' to me that's respect."

—JK



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CAUGHT ON FILM

THE STARS WORK, PLAY AND PROMOTE THEIR MOVIES



PHOTO BY MARIO ANZUINI/SPLASH NEWS

She likes what she sees. **Mena Suvari**, who shows up in next month's *Sonny*, covets a snappy bustier at an L.A. party for Agent Provocateur's new line of lingerie.



PHOTO BY JOHN KENNEDY/FAMOUS

That Bay blanket will come in handy when **Catherine Zeta-Jones**'s second baby arrives in a few months. The *Chicago* star was in town promoting Elizabeth Arden products when John Evanson, director of the downtown Toronto Bay store, presented her with the bit of Canadiana.

Maybe they're looking for a new Bosley. *Charlie's Angels* chicks (from left) **Cameron Diaz**, **Lucy Liu** and **Drew Barrymore** give **Danny DeVito** a little thrill backstage at the Hollywood Film Festival's Hollywood Movie Awards in Beverly Hills. The trio's second movie, *Charlie's Angels: Full Throttle*, comes out next summer.



PHOTO BY GREGG DEGUIRE/WIREIMAGE



PHOTO BY THE GROSSBY GROUP

Harrison Ford was on a break from shooting *Hollywood Homicide* when he took this spin on a girl's bike. The film, in which Ford plays an LAPD homicide detective who moonlights as a real estate agent, should open next August.

Shannyn Sossamon does her best doe-eyed starlet at the Hollywood premiere of her latest flick, *The Rules of Attraction*.



PHOTO BY CHRIS WEEKS/FILM MAGIC

now in theatres

HEAD FOR THE TWO TOWERS, CHECK OUT THE HOT CHICK
OR BOLDLY GO TO STAR TREK: NEMESIS



Elijah Wood (left) and Sean Astin
in *Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers*

DECEMBER 6

ADAPTATION

Who's In It? Nicolas Cage, Meryl Streep

Who Directed? Spike Jonze (*Being John Malkovich*)

What's It About? Now pay attention: This is the story of attempts by writer Charlie Kaufman (Cage) to adapt *The Orchid Thief* by novelist Susan Orlean (Streep), about the true-life experiences of John Laroche (Chris Cooper), who conspired to clone rare orchids and sell them to collectors. Watch for cameos by John Cusack and Catherine Keener.

ANALYZE THAT

Who's In It? Billy Crystal, Robert De Niro

Who Directed? Harold Ramis (*Analyze This*)

What's It About? In the sequel to the surprise hit of 1999, *Analyze This*, Paul Vitti (De Niro) gets released from prison and seeks therapy from Dr. Ben Sobel (Crystal), who is in need of his own therapy as he deals with the death of his father. Hoping to make an honest living, Vitti becomes a consultant on a *Sopranos*-esque TV series about the mafia.

RABBIT-PROOF FENCE

Who's In It? Everlyn Sampi, Kenneth Branagh

Who Directed? Phillip Noyce (*The Bone Collector*)

What's It About? Doris Pilkington and Nugi Garimara's book *Follow the Rabbit-Proof Fence* is the inspiration for this feature set in

1931 Australia. Three Aboriginal girls are abducted by a government bureaucrat (Branagh) and forced to work as domestics for a white family until they escape and set out across the Outback to return to their family.

EMPIRE

Who's In It? John Leguizamo, Denise Richards

Who Directed? Franc Reyes (debut)

What's It About? Based on the true story of a Latino drug dealer (Leguizamo) who, while trying to turn his life around, is conned into giving his money to a business investor (Peter Sarsgaard) and his girlfriend (Richards).

DECEMBER 13

DRUMLINE

Who's In It? Nick Cannon, Orlando Jones

Who Directed? Charles Stone III (*Paid in Full*)

What's It About? A kid from Harlem (Cannon) is recruited to a southern university to bang some life into the school's fledgling marching band.

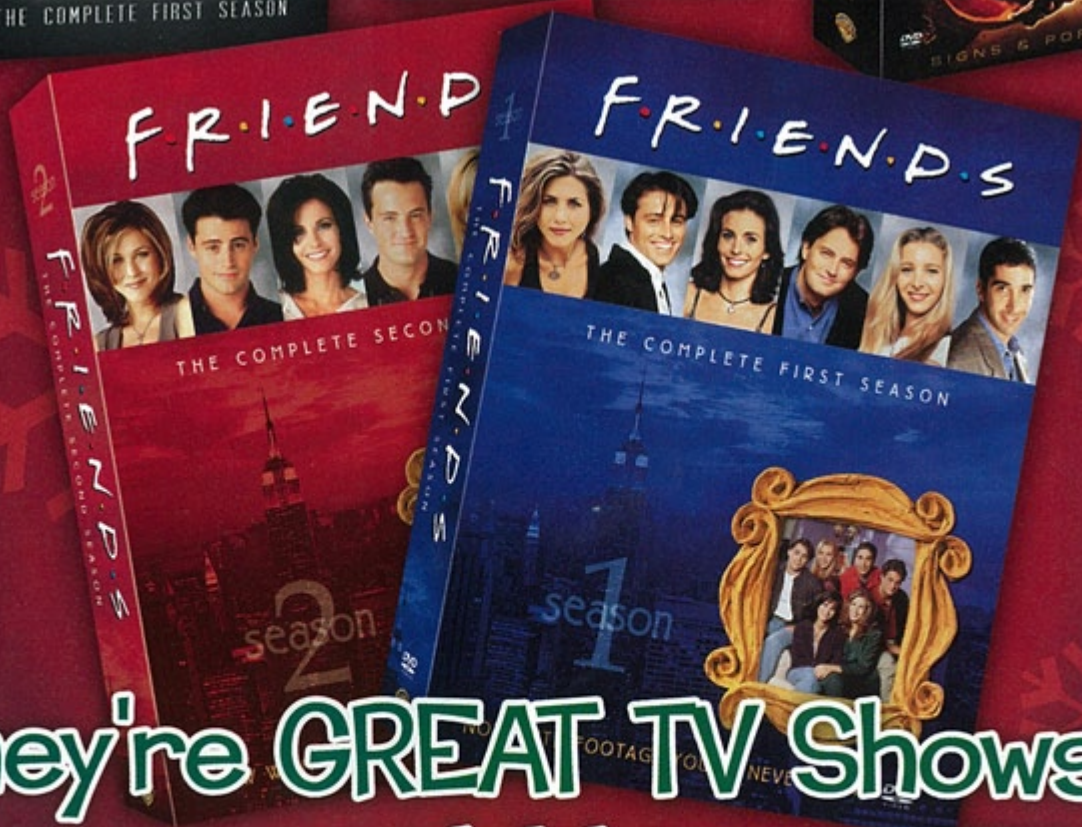
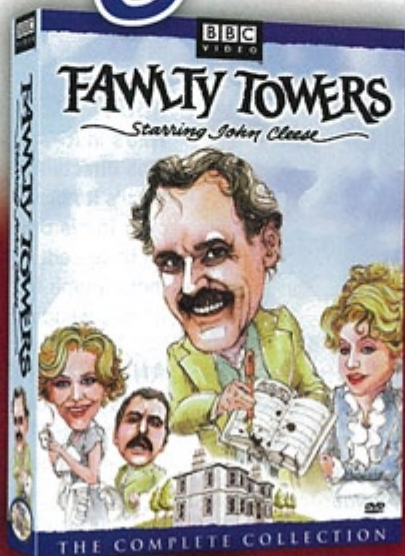
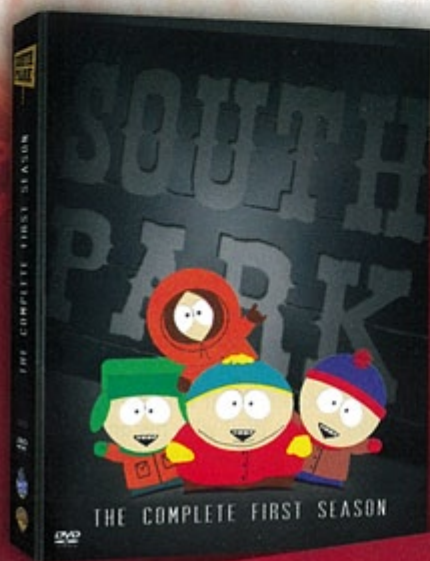
STAR TREK: NEMESIS

Who's In It? Patrick Stewart, Brent Spiner

Who Directed? Stuart Baird (*Executive Decision*)

What's It About? This is the 10th feature film inspired by the cheesy '60s TV series and the many Trek series that followed. ▶▶

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Rob Schneider (centre) in *The Hot Chick*



This time, Captain Picard and his crew discover Earth is in trouble when they travel to Romulus under the impression the long-time Federation foes want to talk peace. All your favourite *Star Trek* characters show up.

THE HOT CHICK

Who's In It? Rob Schneider, Rachel McAdams

Who Directed? Tom Brady (debut)

What's It About? Just in time for Oscar consideration comes this comedy about a popular but rather cruel teenage girl (McAdams) who wakes up one day in the body of an adult male (Schneider). As she struggles to reclaim her female form, she discovers just how nasty she was.

MAID IN MANHATTAN

Who's In It? Jennifer Lopez, Ralph Fiennes

Who Directed? Wayne Wang (*Anywhere But Here*)

What's It About? A hotel chambermaid (Lopez) falls in love with the handsome heir to a political dynasty (Fiennes) in this modern-day Cinderella story. Bet he got extra towels.

DECEMBER 20

THE WILD THORNBERRYS

Who's In It? Lacey Chabert, Tim Curry

Who Directed? Jeff McGrath (debut)

What's It About? An animated feature based on the popular kids series about a family that travels around the world making nature films. In Africa, little Eliza Thornberry (voiced by Chabert) is granted the ability to talk to animals and uncovers a plot by poachers to kill a herd of elephants.

TWO WEEKS NOTICE

Who's In It? Sandra Bullock, Hugh Grant

Who Directed? Marc Lawrence (debut)

What's It About? Wealthy and charismatic George Wade (Grant) doesn't do anything — in business or in life — until he checks with his company's chief counsel, Lucy Kelson (Bullock). But

when she quits to spend more time with her boyfriend (Mark Feuerstein), George discovers he can't live without her.

LORD OF THE RINGS: THE TWO TOWERS

Who's In It? Elijah Wood, Ian McKellen

Who Directed? Peter Jackson (*Fellowship of the Ring*)

What's It About? Hobbits, elves, wizards and scary guys in dark cloaks on horses. No, it's not a weekend at Nick Nolte's house. It's the second of three *Lord of the Rings* flicks, picking up where Frodo (Wood) and Sam (Sean Astin) head off to Mordor to destroy the One Ring.

ABOUT SCHMIDT

Who's In It? Jack Nicholson, Hope Davis

Who Directed? Alexander Payne (*Election*)

What's It About? Based on Louis Begley's 1996 novel about a widower in his 60s (Nicholson) whose life isn't turning out to be what he imagined. He's got lots of time to think about it as he drives a motor home from Nebraska to Colorado to attend his daughter's (Davis) wedding to a man he doesn't like (Dermot Mulroney).

ANTWONE FISHER

Who's In It? Denzel Washington, Derek Luke

Who Directed? Denzel Washington (debut)

What's It About? Washington directs himself as a Navy shrink who helps a troubled young sailor (Luke) deal with his anger and focus on finding the family that abandoned him when he was a child. Based on the true story of Fisher, who wrote the screenplay. See Denzel Washington interview, page 38.

GANGS OF NEW YORK

Who's In It? Leonardo DiCaprio, Daniel Day-Lewis

Who Directed? Martin Scorsese (*Goodfellas*)

What's It About? DiCaprio plays Amsterdam Vallon, who vows to avenge the death of his father (Liam Neeson) at the hands of Bill "The Butcher" Poole (Day-Lewis). The larger picture tells of the conflict between Irish and Italian gangs in mid-1800s New York City. See Leonardo DiCaprio interview, page 40.

DECEMBER 25

CATCH ME IF YOU CAN

Who's In It? Leonardo DiCaprio, Tom Hanks

Who Directed? Steven Spielberg (*Minority Report*)

What's It About? Based on the memoirs of Frank "Skywayman" ▶▶



Roberto Benigni as Pinocchio

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▶ Abagnale (DiCaprio), a master fraud artist who was the youngest man ever on the FBI's Most Wanted List. Following Abagnale — and admiring his skills — was FBI agent Joe Shaye (Hanks), who helped him get out of prison early and got him a job as a consultant for the FBI. Martin Sheen, Christopher Walken and Jennifer Garner also star. Try to figure out which scenes were shot in Quebec. **See Steven Spielberg interview, page 32.**

PINOCCHIO

Who's In It? Roberto Benigni, Carlo Giuffrè

Who Directed? Roberto Benigni (*Life is Beautiful*)

What's It About? The timeless story of a puppet that yearns to be a real boy, played in this live-action version by 50-year-old Roberto Benigni (no, we're not lying...check our noses) and filmed in Italian. Giuffrè plays the toy maker Geppetto who makes Pinocchio's dream come true.

CHICAGO

Who's In It? Renée Zellweger, Catherine Zeta-Jones

Who Directed? Rob Marshall (debut)

What's It About? Toronto stands in for Chicago in the roaring '20s for this big-screen version of the popular Broadway musical. Zellweger plays chorus girl Roxie Hart, who goes to jail for killing her cheating lover (Dominic West) and meets another dancer, Velma Kelly (Zeta-Jones), whose lawyer is the "King of Razzle Dazzle" Billy Flynn (Richard Gere). Original *Chicago* star Chita Rivera makes a cameo.

CONFESSIONS OF A DANGEROUS MIND

Who's In It? Sam Rockwell, Julia Roberts

Who Directed? George Clooney (debut)

What's It About? This Montreal-made flick is based on a partly fictional autobiography by Chuck Barris (Rockwell), who is best known as host of the late-'70s *Gong Show* and creator of *The Newlywed Game* and *The Dating Game*. It focuses on Barris's secret life, in which he supposedly worked as an assassin for the CIA (director George Clooney plays the agent who recruits him).

THE HOURS

Who's In It? Meryl Streep, Nicole Kidman

Who Directed? Stephen Daldry (*Billy Elliot*)

What's It About? Inspired by Michael Cunningham's Pulitzer Prize-winning homage to Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway*, this drama tells three stories: In 1923, Woolf (Kidman) suffers from depression while writing her book. In 1949, a housewife (Julianne Moore) is so taken by the book she neglects the planning of her husband's birthday party. In present day, a woman (Streep) throws a party for her dying friend (Ed Harris) who nicknamed her Mrs. Dalloway.

All release dates are subject to change.
Some films play only in major markets.

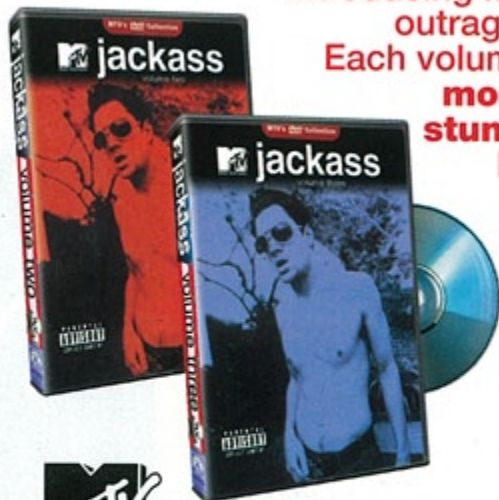
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and tennis teams, and was known for carrying his camera everywhere, snapping shots of anything he found interesting. He went on to study government and Spanish at St. Lawrence University in Canton, N.Y., and then moved to Denmark for a while, where he lived with his cousins and worked odd jobs like selling flowers on the street, driving a fork lift and waiting tables. In 1982, he followed a then-girlfriend back to New York, which is when he decided to become an actor.

After two years at the Warren Robertson Acting Workshop, Mortensen started doing plays and getting roles in small films like 1985's *Witness* and the 1987 underground pic *Salvation!* opposite punk rock icon Exene Cervenka, lead singer for the band X. The pair fell in love, got married, and in 1988 had a son, Henry Blake. They divorced in 1997 but remain great friends, often taking vacations together.

Aside from the third *Lord of the Rings* movie, *Return of the King*, Mortensen's 2003 schedule includes the drama *Hidalgo* in which he once again mounts a trusty steed as real-life long-distance rider Frank T. Hopkins.

Sample roles: Eddie in *28 Days* (2000), Walker in *A Walk on the Moon* (1999), Sam in *Psycho* (1998), David in *A Perfect Murder* (1998), Master Chief Urgayle in *G.I. Jane* (1997), Caspar in *The Portrait of a Lady* (1996), Guy in *Albino Alligator* (1996), Lucifer in *The Prophecy* (1995), Lt. Ince in *Crimson Tide* (1995), Lalin in *Carlito's Way* (1993), Frank in *The Indian Runner* (1991), Green in *Fresh Horses* (1988), Jerome in *Salvation!* (1987), Moses in *Witness* (1985)

Trivia: Is fluent in Spanish and Danish. • He did the murals his character paints in *A Perfect Murder*. • Got lost in the woods one night while in New Zealand for *Lord of the Rings* and used the flash on his camera to find his way back to camp. The ensuing photos will be part of one of his future art shows. • After filming the *Rings* trilogy, he and the other members of the Fellowship got tattoos of the number "9" to commemorate the experience.

On his Fellowship tattoo: "It was a way of saying thank you to each other, I suppose, and reaffirming the bond that we had developed, and probably always will have to one degree or another." [*Virgin.net*, December 2001] —MW

Now appearing in...the second *Lord of the Rings* movie, *The Two Towers*, as Aragorn, the reluctant human hero who, as the movie begins, has been separated from Frodo, the hobbit he's sworn to protect.

Bio bits: If you wrote a script about a guy who was not only inhumanly beautiful but also a world-class actor, published poet, noted painter and photographer, your audience would balk. It's not believable, they'd snicker. But all of that (plus a childhood lived all over the world and a marriage to a punk rock star) is true of Viggo Mortensen.

Born in Manhattan on October 20, 1958, to a Danish father and American mother, Mortensen didn't stay in New York State for long. When he was only two, his father moved the family (Viggo has two brothers) to South America to run a business. They traveled back and forth between Argentina and Venezuela until Viggo was 11 and his parents divorced. That's when mom moved the kids back to New York.

At high school he was captain of the swim

in *A Perfect Murder* (1998), Master Chief Urgayle in *G.I. Jane* (1997), Caspar in *The Portrait of a Lady* (1996), Guy in *Albino Alligator* (1996), Lucifer in *The Prophecy* (1995), Lt. Ince in *Crimson Tide* (1995), Lalin in *Carlito's Way* (1993), Frank in *The Indian Runner* (1991), Green in *Fresh Horses* (1988), Jerome in *Salvation!* (1987), Moses in *Witness* (1985)



Mortensen in *The Two Towers*

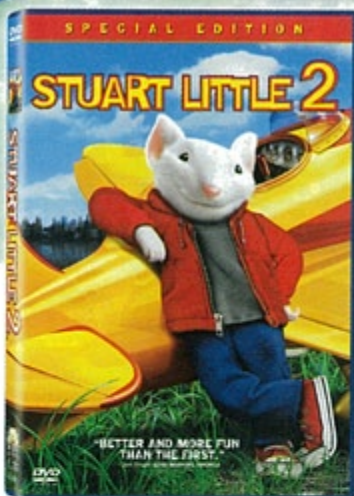
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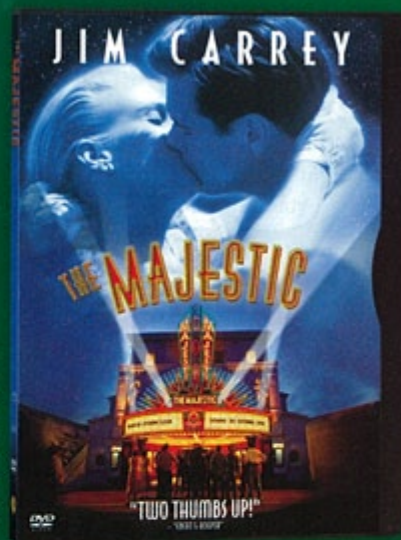
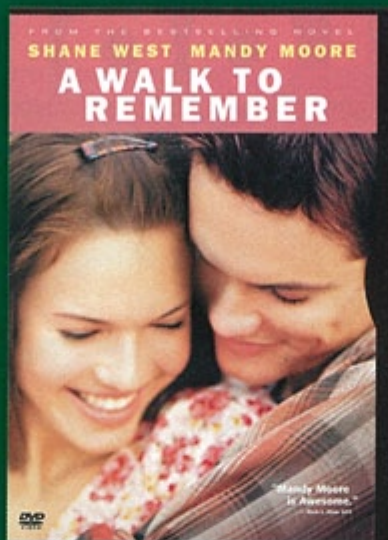
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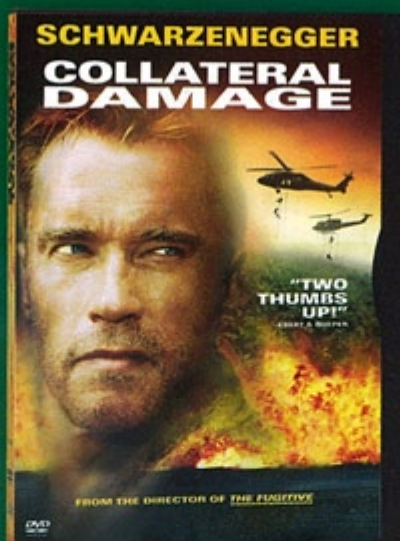
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screen test

It's not surprising that in a year of global turmoil and bizarre criminal behaviour a lot of people sought comfort and escape inside movie theatres. We shunned flicks that hit too close to home (the child abduction drama *Trapped* and the terrorism-themed *Collateral Damage*) and flocked to what was either fun and familiar (*Spider-Man*) or alien to us (*Signs*).

Then there was the simple pleasure of watching the stars' off-screen follies. To find out if you were paying attention, grab yourself a bag of popcorn and take our year-end quiz.

1. What did a security guard claim Winona Ryder said when she was apprehended on the suspicion of shoplifting?

- a) The producers of *Simone* had put a stop on her cheque
- b) After a few beers she mistook Saks Fifth Avenue for her vast bedroom closet
- c) She was researching a role
- d) Angelina Jolie double-dog dared her to do it over lunch at a nearby Denny's

2. Name the curling movie that opened in theatres last March.

- a) *Swept Away*
- b) *Get Your Rocks Off*
- c) *Men With Brooms*
- d) *Big Fat Brier*

3. What is Hogwarts?

- a) A skin condition that pigs develop
- b) Something you get from eating too much bacon
- c) Gandalf's summer home
- d) Harry Potter's school

4. The reason you never see Russell Crowe naked in films was finally revealed this year. What's his excuse?

- a) He doesn't want to propagate an unrealistic body image that will contribute to the insecurities of lesser men
- b) He has cellulite
- c) He wants to keep the mystery alive
- d) He has a tattoo that reads "Tom and Roseanne forever" on his left thigh

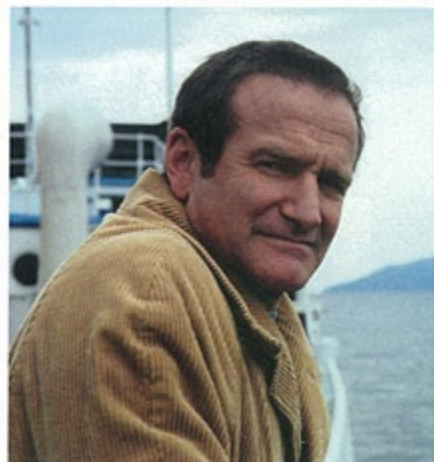


5. Which of the following films did not star an actor related to *Home Alone's* Macaulay Culkin?

- a) *Igby Goes Down*
- b) *Signs*
- c) *The Dangerous Lives of Altar Boys*
- d) *I Spy*

6. For the 20th anniversary re-release of *E.T.: The Extra-Terrestrial*, director Steven Spielberg made one significant change. Can you identify it?

- a) E.T. was given a wacky sidekick named Mini E
- b) A Pepsi logo was digitally added to E.T.'s spacecraft
- c) The agents' guns were digitally replaced by walkie-talkies
- d) E.T. tries to explain the plot of *A.I.: Artificial Intelligence* to the kids



7. Which of the following did Halle Berry not say in her Oscar acceptance speech?

- a) "Oh, my God. Oh, my God"
- b) "I got to thank my lawyer, Neil Meyer, for making this deal"
- c) "I thank the Academy for choosing me to be the vessel for which His blessing might flow"
- d) "You like my dress. You really like my dress!"

8. Who didn't wear a bikini in a 2002 movie?

- a) Kate Bosworth
- b) Madonna
- c) Halle Berry
- d) Steve Irwin

9. Name the only 2002 movie in which Robin Williams did not play a psycho.

- a) *Death to Smoochy*
- b) *One Hour Photo*
- c) *Insomnia*
- d) *Red Dragon*

10. Name the father of Elizabeth Hurley's baby.

- a) Millionaire Hollywood producer Steve Bing
- b) Fictitious *Friends* character Chandler Bing
- c) Late crooner Bing Crosby

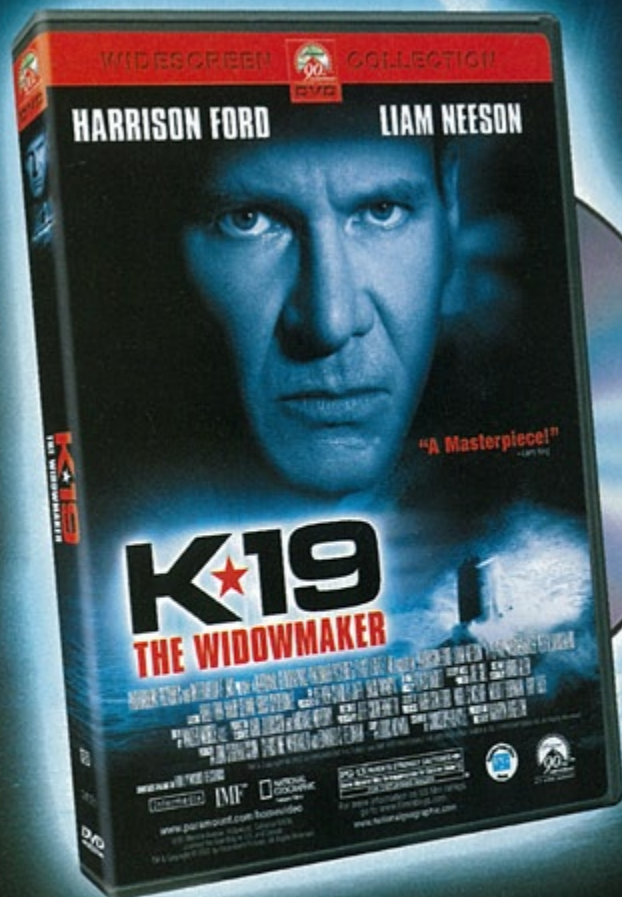
11. Which of the following films did not feature a member of the *Friends* cast?

- a) *Analyze That*
- b) *The Good Girl*
- c) *Serving Sara*
- d) *The Sweetest Thing* ▶▶





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- 12. Which famous couple moved to Vancouver this year so their son could play hockey?
 a) Madonna and Guy Ritchie
 b) Antonio Banderas and Melanie Griffith
 c) Goldie Hawn and Kurt Russell
 d) Matthew Broderick and Sarah Jessica Parker

13. Nicolas Cage and Lisa-Marie Presley made a strange addition to the guest list for their August nuptials. Who was it?
 a) Presley's ex-husband Michael Jackson
 b) A voodoo priestess asked to cast a spell
 c) The Flying Elvises from Cage's *Honeymoon in Vegas*
 d) The real Elvis

14. Harrison Ford started a relationship with which TV star this year?
 a) Debra Messing
 b) Calista Flockhart
 c) Doris Roberts
 d) Kelly Ripa
 e) Julia Louis-Dreyfus

15. Three of the following pop stars each appeared in two movies this year. Which diva had only one big-screen release in 2002?
 a) Beyonce Knowles
 b) Britney Spears
 c) Madonna
 d) Jennifer Lopez



ANSWER: *The Tuxedo*

PAGE TO SCREEN

A lot of the stories we saw on the big screen this year started out on the small screen (*I Spy*, *Scooby-Doo*, *Crocodile Hunter*, *Jackass: The Movie*), but even more originated in print. Which one of the following was *not* based on a book?

- *Blood Work*
- *Antwone Fisher*
- *Divine Secrets of the Ya-Ya Sisterhood*
- *The Sum of all Fears*
- *White Oleander*
- *The Tuxedo*
- *Solaris*
- *Gangs of New York*
- *The Rules of Attraction*
- *Catch Me if You Can*
- *Abandon*

16. Which 2002 release did the *New York Post* describe as "so unremittingly awful that labeling it a dog probably constitutes cruelty to canines"?

- a) *Bad Company*
- b) *FearDotCom*
- c) *The Adventures of Pluto Nash*
- d) *Sweet Away*

17. Which of the following movies did not feature an actor with the surname Hanks?

- a) *The Road to Perdition*
- b) *Orange County*
- c) *Minority Report*
- d) *Catch Me if You Can*

18. Christopher Walken appeared in which of the following movies?

- a) *Reign of Fire*
- b) *The Country Bears*
- c) *FearDotCom*
- d) *XXX*

19. Who directed the Nicolas Cage flick *Windtalkers*?

- a) John Woo
- b) *Scooby Doo*
- c) Elizabeth Shue
- d) Lucy Liu

TRUE NORTH

Canada provided the backdrops — and tax credits — for many of this year's Hollywood features, including *John Q.*, *The Tuxedo*, *Death to Smoochy*, *I Spy*, *The Santa Clause 2*, *Ballistic: Ecks vs. Sever*, *Chicago*, *The Shipping News* and *K-19: The Widowmaker*. And Canadian actors had big roles in a number of movies. Can you match the leading man below with his place of birth? (Two are from Vancouver.)

- | | |
|---|----------------------|
| 1. Mike Myers (<i>Austin Powers in Goldmember</i>) | a. Pembroke, Ont. |
| 2. Hayden Christensen (<i>Star Wars Episode II: Attack of the Clones</i>) | b. Vancouver, B.C. |
| 3. Tom Green (<i>Stealing Harvard</i>) | c. Toronto, Ont. |
| 4. Ryan Reynolds (<i>Van Wilder</i>) | d. London, Ont. |
| 5. Harland Williams (<i>Sorority Boys</i>) | e. Ashern, Man. |
| 6. Ryan Gosling (<i>Murder by Numbers</i>) | f. Scarborough, Ont. |
| 7. Adam Beach (<i>Windtalkers</i>) | |

ANSWERS: 1f 2b 3a 4b 5c 6d 7e

ANSWERS: 1c 2c 3d 4b 5d 6c 7d 8d 9d 10a 11d 12c 13b 14b 15a 16c 17c 18b 19a



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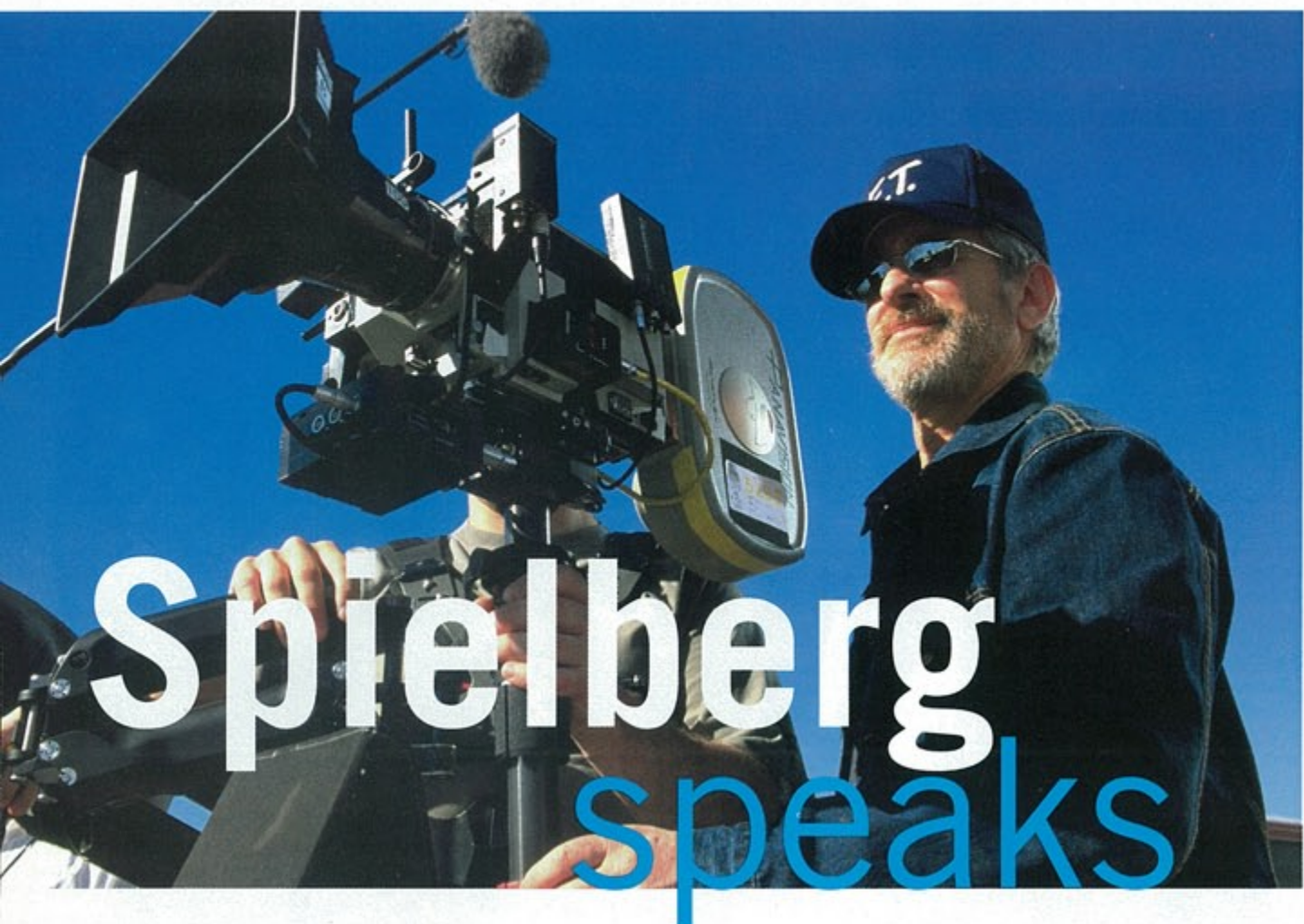
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Spielberg speaks

...BUT DON'T EXPECT HIM TO SAY MUCH ABOUT HIS LATEST FLICK *CATCH ME IF YOU CAN*. THE ÜBER-POWERFUL DIRECTOR HAS A THING ABOUT REVEALING TOO MANY DETAILS BEFORE OPENING WEEKEND | BY EARL DITTMAN

“**W**hen a movie fan knows too much about a film before they even walk into the theatre, it ruins their whole sense of wonderment and adventure and makes it a less enjoyable experience,” says Steven Spielberg. “There’s no feeling more pure than that of being surprised by what they see on the screen.... If I had one wish, it would be that audiences just knew the title of the film. That way, they would have no preconceived notions of what they were going to see and they would enjoy it so much more.”

For that reason, you will find out precious little about the new Leonardo DiCaprio, Tom Hanks drama *Catch Me if You Can* in this interview with its director. From him, anyway.

Fortunately, the film is based on the true story of 1960s con artist Frank Abagnale Jr., so we know a bit about the plot. Featuring DiCaprio in the lead role, *Catch Me if You Can* follows the criminal exploits of the grifter in his teen years. An expert impersonator, Abagnale routinely passed himself off as a pilot, professor and physician, funding his extravagant lifestyle by forging and cashing millions worth of bad cheques. But the FBI caught on and formed a special task force to capture him. A composite of several real-life

operatives, Tom Hanks plays the young con’s law enforcement nemesis who always seems to be one step away from making the big arrest.

“It’s an incredibly interesting and entertaining story,” Spielberg reluctantly responds when asked why he was drawn to the script. “It’s not your typical cop chasing the bad guy movie. There’s a lot of humour in Frank’s adventures and how he was able to elude officials for so long. There’s no real good or bad guys in the story. The lines are kind of blurred. That’s what makes it fun to watch. But I don’t want to tell you too much more and spoil the fun for you. You need to see it for yourself.”

After adding that he always envisioned Leo and Tom in their roles (“They are absolutely perfect for their parts because, in a lot of ways, they are playing against type”), Spielberg politely asks if he can move on to another subject.

Dressed in a pair of wrinkled khaki pants, a matching shirt and a pair of boots (“It’s my Indiana Jones look,” he jokes), the director was more than happy to talk about other things — like finally graduating from university last spring, and life with his wife, actor Kate Capshaw, and their five children.

[Q] How do you keep yourself sane when you have your fingers in so many projects?

[A] "Who said I was sane? [laughs]."

[Q] But how do you stay on top of it all?

[A] "Well, for one thing, I don't run DreamWorks [the studio he co-founded], which is a popular misconception about me. DreamWorks is run by Jeffrey Katzenberg and David Geffen, my partners. When I first formed the company with them I said, 'Guys, I'm here to direct. I'm not here to run a company.' When I had Amblin, Kathy Kennedy ran it. I didn't run Amblin Entertainment. I'm the guy who goes out and makes the movies. Right away the huge component of what it takes to run a corporation was taken from me, and I love that I don't have to do that. So I have time to direct and to be a father."

[Q] And to get your bachelor's degree in film and electronic arts from California State Long Beach.

[A] "Yeah, I finally got my degree. It was great."

[Q] Congratulations. What are you going to do after your academic life?

[A] "I'm going into post-graduate counseling immediately."

[Q] Why was it important to get the degree after everything you've accomplished?

[A] "I had two years left. I had 42, 43 units to go when I dropped out of college to get the directing contract offered to me by Sid Sheinberg and the late Lew Wasserman. It was important for me to do it because my kids were already talking about not wanting to go to college because I didn't. I did well without having a degree and my older kids were beginning to talk like that, and that scared me."

[Q] What graduation gifts did you get?

[A] "I got a lot of books about panic attacks, post-graduation: how not to panic, how to get work, how to parlay your degree into a master's if you can't get work on your BA."

[Q] Did you have to write a paper?

[A] "I did."

[Q] What was it about?

[A] "I wrote a paper on marine biology off the California coast. I think it was seven, eight or 10 pages. I had to research it. Of course, I didn't know a lot about it. I had to take a course, read the professor's book."

[Q] Did you get to use *Schindler's List* or *Saving Private Ryan* for any of your classes?

[A] "Not *Private Ryan*. But *Schindler's List* fulfilled a humanities course, and *Amistad* fulfilled a black history course."

[Q] Did you get As?

[A] "I got As, except from the *New York Times*. They still give me a C+ on that [laughs]."

[Q] How do you keep your kids grounded?

[A] "I think a lot of how normal they are is based on the fact that they have strong friendships with kids who are, you know, deemed 'normal.' And that grounds them. I think their friends ground them even more than our lifestyle, and

we have a very funky lifestyle. We don't have servants. We don't have people that come and make us dinner. I make breakfast every morning. My wife makes dinner every single night. We have a former nanny that helps my wife make dinner, named Francis, but this is how I was raised. My mother never had anybody. I have three younger sisters. My mom never had a staff helping us grow up. My mom did it all by herself. I think my wife, Kate — she's from the Midwest, she's from Missouri — has that sort of grass roots ethic about doing it herself."

[Q] At home, what are you really good at and what are you absolutely hopeless at?

[A] "I'm a great morning person in organizing all the kids and getting their lunches packed and getting them off to school. I'm Mr. Mom from about 6:30 a.m. — I do three car pools in the morning — to, like, 9:00. My wife is the real mom for the rest of the day, and the rest of the evening. What am I really bad at? Probably figuring out consequences for my kids when they do something wrong. I'm really bad at that. Not that I'm not tough enough, I'm just always short of ideas. My wife is a lot better in the creative consequence department than I am."

[Q] It's great to hear that a new Indiana Jones is finally going to be made. I think everyone's pretty excited about it.

[A] "Believe it or not, so am I. But I don't think we'll start shooting it until 2004. It's not coming out until 2005."

[Q] You've been trying to do it for a long time. How did it finally come together?

[A] "For the longest time I didn't like some of the ideas. Finally, a concept happened that I liked and Harrison Ford happened to like at the same time. It was only about the idea. George Lucas tells the stories, and I help write it. But George is the one who crystallizes what this adventure is particularly about. George was spinning off a lot of different ideas. It's kind of like he's the pitcher, and I'm the catcher. I can shake off a pitch. I can shake my head and say, 'Let's try something else.' And George came up with a pitch that Harrison and I thought was brilliant. So we looked at that one and hired ▶▶



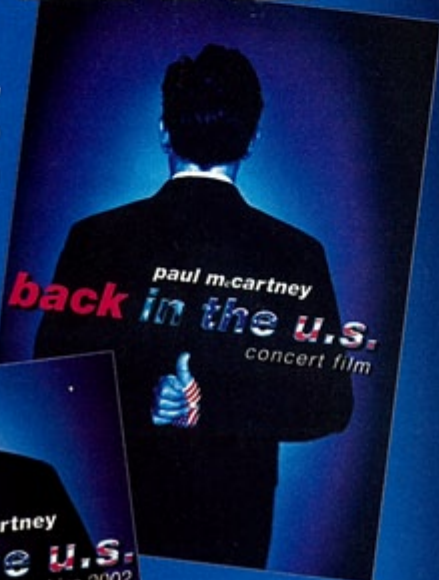
Tom Hanks (left) and Leonardo DiCaprio in *Catch Me if You Can*

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Spielberg with wife
Kate Capshaw at the Emmys

▶▶ Frank Darabont to come up with the rest of it."

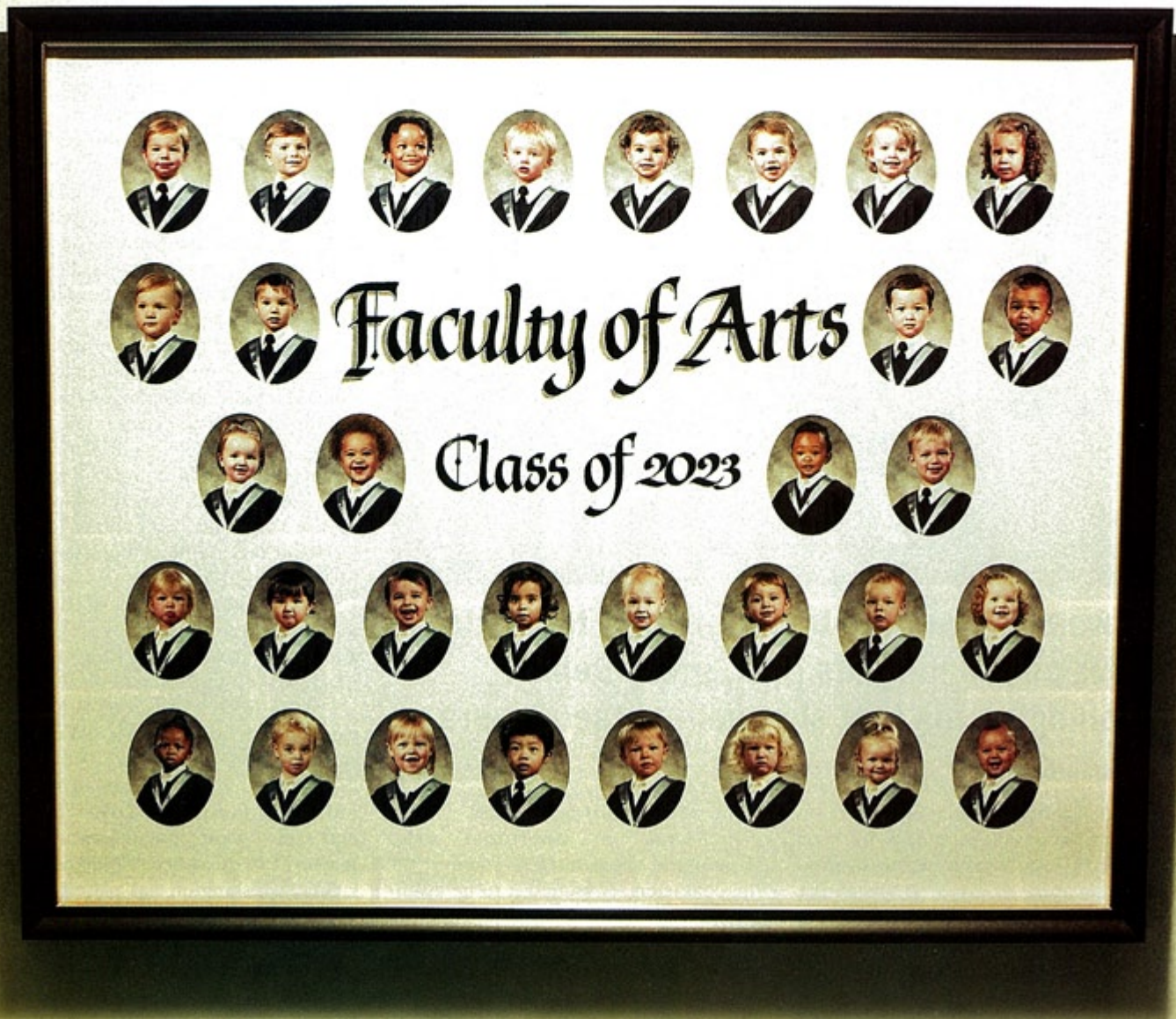
[Q] What do you want to do next?

[A] "I'm actively looking for a musical right now. The good thing about a musical is you know how long the movie is going to be because there is a finite amount of minutes for each number. I've wanted to do one for years. I came close to turning a couple of films into musicals, but it never quite worked out. I had nine songs written by John Williams [for *Hook*]. I photographed two of them, and at John's request cut them out of the movie. John was the one who saw them cut together and said, 'This is not the right template for a musical.' So we abandoned nine months of work, and I just told the straight story of *Captain Hook*. I almost made *1941* into a musical. Johnny [Belushi] and I were going to make that into a musical, and that would have probably helped that movie."

[Q] You could make the next *Indiana Jones* a musical.


[A] "I guess he could sing a little bit. Let me give Harrison a call and see if he's ready to start dancing and singing lessons. I can just imagine his response [laughs]. But now that I think about it, maybe we can do this gigantic stage number with snakes, with Indy right in the middle of a big Busby Berkley dance number. Harrison's been telling me we really need to go out on a limb with the next one. Here's our chance." **F**

Earl Dittman is an entertainment writer based in Houston, Texas.



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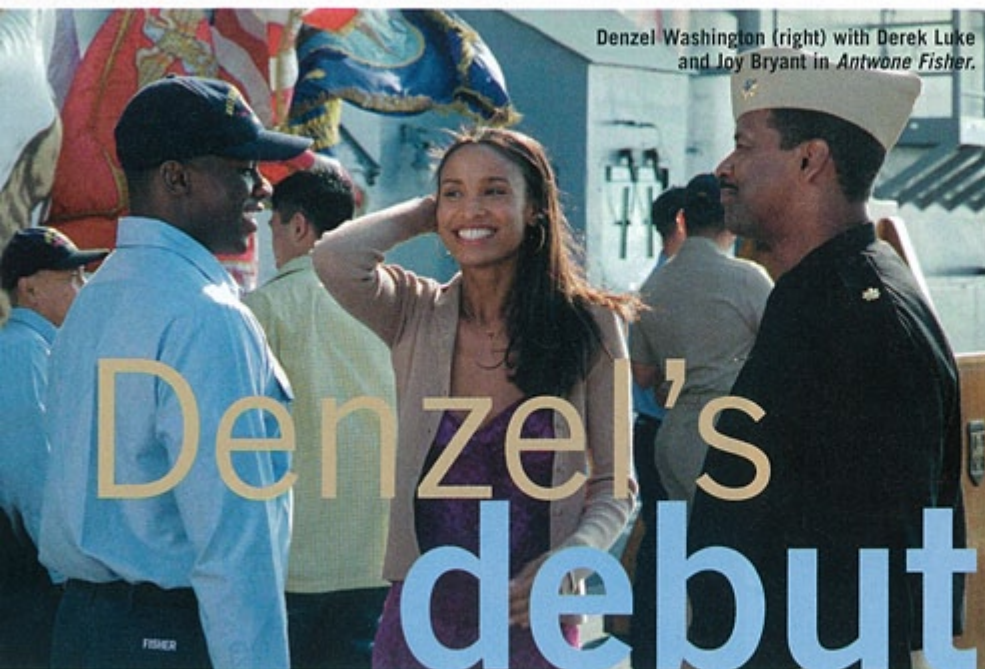
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Denzel Washington (right) with Derek Luke and Joy Bryant in *Antwone Fisher*.

Antwone Fisher, the true story of a tormented sailor confronting his past, gives Denzel Washington his first shot behind the camera

By John Kennedy

It's only fitting that Denzel Washington is at Toronto's Four Seasons hotel talking to journalists about his new movie *Antwone Fisher*. It was in the hotel's bar two years ago that Fox Searchlight head Peter Rice convinced Washington — in town shooting *John Q* — to direct the poignant true story.

"He backed me into a corner and made me sign a contract, which I actually signed on a napkin," recalls Washington just hours before the world premiere of his directorial debut at the Toronto International Film Festival. "I said: 'I promise I will do this after *Training Day*.'"

The film was written by Antwone Fisher, a former Sony Pictures security guard, based on his best-selling autobiography *Finding Fish*. It's the story of his life as a troubled young sailor (played by newcomer Derek Luke) who is encouraged to confront his past and search for the family that abandoned him. After years of abuse as a child, Fisher turns to a life of crime before joining the Navy, where his violent outbursts and lack of respect for authority put him face to face with a Navy psychiatrist (Washington). It is this shrink and Fisher's girlfriend (Joy Bryant), who convince him to find his

family and conquer his demons.

In terms of directorial style, Washington chose to focus squarely on the characters. "I wanted it to be a simple, honest story because that's what it is," he explains.

Washington first saw a script for the film in 1997 but felt it needed a lot of work and consulted with Fisher on as many as 70 rewrites. "I've learned from some of the films that I've been in that just because it's important to you doesn't mean that people are going to care about it. Just because it's true doesn't mean it's interesting," he explains. "We had to apply that to the material and make sure that we fashioned a decent screenplay. Trust me, we only cover about 40 percent of what he's gone through. I mean, it was so much, and so



Washington and Luke at the Toronto Film Festival

rough, that we were like, 'We'll never get anybody in the theatre.' Some of the earlier scripts...it was relentless."

Although Washington directed, produced and starred in the film, he insists it's Fisher's story. "The last thing I wanted to do was draw attention to myself. I said it throughout the filming and even before that — it's about the boy," says Washington. "The story is about him. It's not about my debut."

Still, much of the attention the film is getting centres on Washington as a first-time director. But, for the veteran actor, standing behind the camera was no big deal. "I've been studying directors for 20 some odd years. I've worked with the best," he says. "I didn't realize how much I knew. I've made a lot of films, I know a lot about making films, I just never had to apply it until now."

The hardest part, he adds, was acting in his own movie. "Having to jump in and jump out — I didn't care for it so much. It was tough."

Luke, a former Sony studios gift shop clerk and friend of Fisher's, delivered an emotional and convincing performance. "The only thing I came in to the film with was a heart," says Luke. "I prayed and said if I can just deliver my heart maybe I can do justice to everybody."

Since Washington has played a number of real people in his career (Rubin Carter in 1999's *The Hurricane*, Herman Boone in 2000's *Remember the Titans* and the titular *Malcolm X* in 1992) he helped Luke get into his role by, initially, keeping Fisher away from the set. "I know what that pressure is to play a real person," he explains. "I wanted to give Derek the opportunity to have a day or two under his belt before *Antwone* came on the set."

Washington's next movie, *Out of Time*, is scheduled to hit theatres next summer. He'll play the police chief of a small Florida town who borrows money from the evidence room so he can run away with the woman (Sanaa Lathan) with whom he's in love. Shot last summer, it was his first job after finishing *Antwone Fisher*.

"It was interesting going back to acting because I was like, 'I've got a few ideas.' It was hard keeping my mouth shut," he jokes. "But it was like a paid vacation because I didn't have to worry about it. 'I'll be in my trailer, let me know when you need me.'" **F**

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Leonardo DiCaprio (right)
with Daniel Day-Lewis
in *Gangs of New York*

Return of the king?

After a long break, box-office royalty **Leonardo DiCaprio** is back with two big movies this holiday season. **Ron Dicker** followed Hollywood's golden boy to Cannes to see if the first one to hit theatres, *Gangs of New York*, is likely to spur a second wave of Leo-mania

When the higher-ups at Miramax decided to shoot *Gangs of New York* not in the Big Apple, but at Rome's Cinecittà studios, in order to re-create 19th-century Manhattan for a lot less, they had no idea star Leonardo DiCaprio might make them pay in another way. The aging teen idol reportedly couldn't say no to the historic city's tempting club scene, and interrupted the production with his late-night carousing.

There were rumours of a 10-minute rant director Martin Scorsese let loose on DiCaprio after the actor allegedly showed up late one morning. Story was, he'd been out late the night before partying with girlfriend Gisele Bündchen.

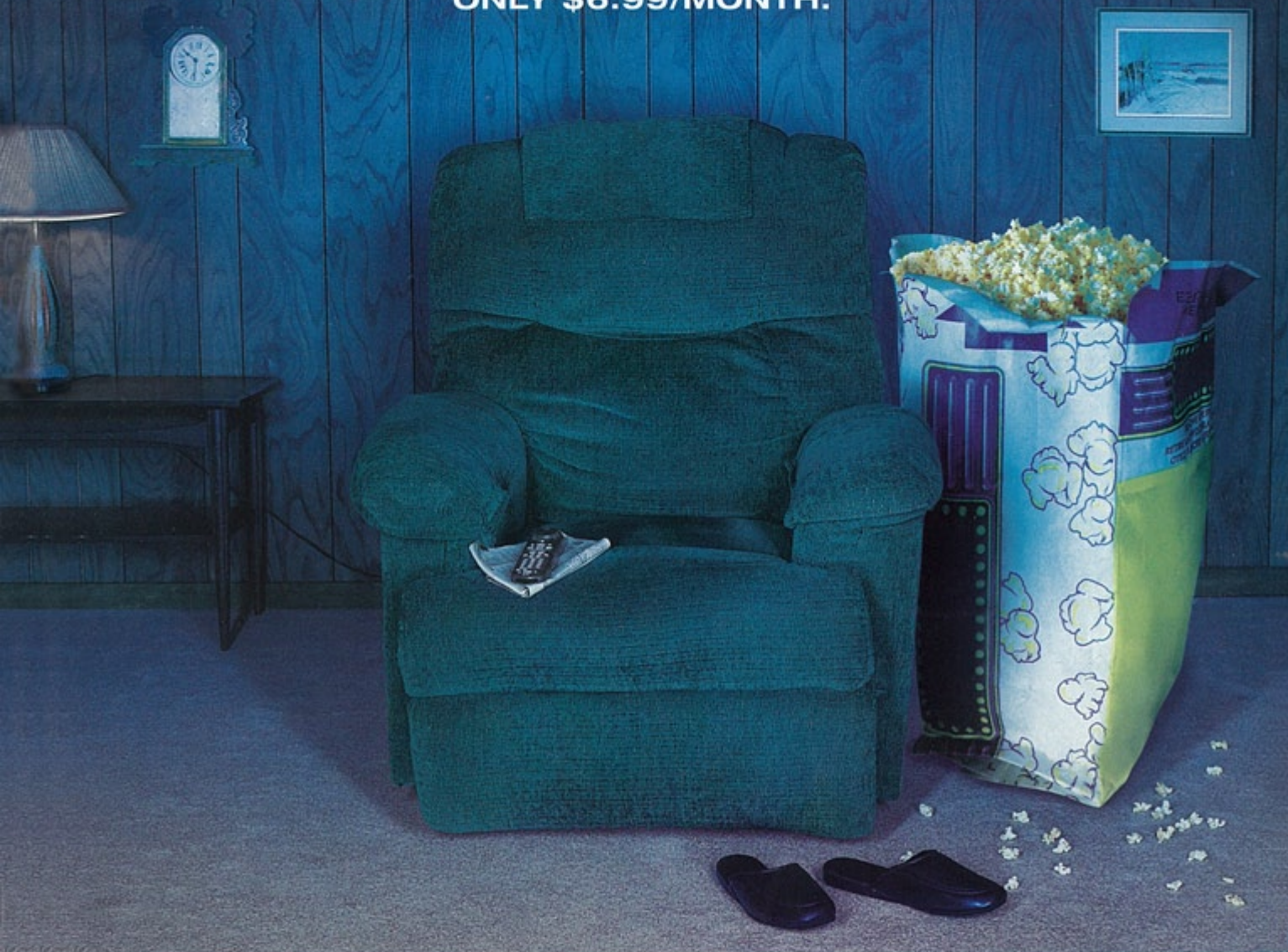
But if DiCaprio was living *la dolce vita* in Rome, the man who signed his paycheck isn't saying. "I'll tell you what he was doing at night," growls Miramax honcho Harvey Weinstein. "He was working on the g--damned script with Kenny Lonergan and working on his character. This whole story is totally

exaggerated." Weinstein, DiCaprio, co-star Cameron Diaz and Scorsese were speaking with journalists at the Cannes Film Festival, where they came to release a 20-minute snippet of the much-anticipated movie.

DiCaprio, looking grown-up in a dark suit and tie, insists he was strictly professional. "For some reason I have the image of a man about town," he says. "But I can assure you that I never was at parties instead of appearing on the set."

The actor has a bigger obstacle than a playboy persona to overcome. The ▶▶

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▶▶ 28-year-old whose character in *Titanic* proclaimed he is king of the world, will soon find out whether he's still a king among leading men, thanks in part to *Gangs of New York*, a saga of immigrant warfare which opens this month.

His reception at Cannes made it clear that, despite being absent from the big screen for more than two years, DiCaprio's celebrity is still unquestioned. Fans went berserk for him on the Croisette (the Riviera community's beachside thoroughfare); the social elite and industry types watched his every move at a cliff-side soiree that lasted until daybreak; the paparazzi were aggressive even by paparazzi standards as DiCaprio walked the red carpet into the Palais des Festivals; and the thousands lucky enough to snag tickets applauded wildly when he entered the Palais's Lumiere theatre.

But DiCaprio's potency at the box office has not matched his popularity of late. After starring in 1997's *Titanic* — the highest-grossing movie of all-time at more than \$600-million (U.S.) — DiCaprio appeared in two duds: *Man in the Iron Mask* (1998) made just \$56.9-million and *The Beach* (2000) fared even worse at \$39.8-million.

"I try not to be influenced by this," says DiCaprio. "It may sound a bit naive but I just try to find the roles which challenge me."

Much of the news DiCaprio has made since his last film has revolved around his on/off relationship with Brazilian model Bundchen and his single-guy forays into Hollywood's nightlife with the likes of *Spider-Man's* Tobey Maguire.

Now DiCaprio will try to romance the public with a film shepherded by one of Hollywood's most revered directors. "It's like a dream come true for me, as it would be for any actor, to work in a Martin Scorsese epic," DiCaprio says. "I've learned more during this shoot than I've ever learned in all the roles that I've done before."

Filmgoers will decide whether the dream has a fairy tale ending. But if the reaction at Cannes was any indication, DiCaprio might finally be able to leave that sinking ship behind. The audience cheered with abandon after the 20-minute clip, as DiCaprio stood up and played maestro, guiding the adulation toward Scorsese.

The first thing one noticed in that



Day-Lewis (left) with DiCaprio

"For some reason I have the image of a man about town. But I can assure you that I never was at parties instead of appearing on the set," DiCaprio says

taste of *Gangs* was DiCaprio's additional heft. "I worked out like crazy in a fitness centre," he explains. "I've gained about 25 pounds in muscle." The bulk gave his character more presence — a necessity given that he shares the screen with acting heavyweight Daniel Day-Lewis. "It's like a war for him," DiCaprio recalls. "It's like fighting a battle. You feel that intensity in the air, and you feed off of it, and it makes you better as an actor."

In the sepia-toned, blood-stained film, the streets of New York are muddy and lawless, giving DiCaprio a charged environment in which to strut his stuff. It's the mid-1800s and lower Manhattan is a ground zero of a different kind. Riots stemming from the military draft are erupting throughout the Five Points section and DiCaprio's Irish orphan, Amsterdam Vallon, returns after 15 years to join the fray. Characters wear circus-like outfits to show their gang affiliation, much like gang colours of today, but the alliances are tenuous.

Nativists hate the Irish and all immigrants. And Day-Lewis's Bill the Butcher, a Nativist who holds sway over most of the crime mobs, hates pretty much everyone and rules all with an iron fist.

Unbeknownst to the Butcher, Vallon has a personal beef with him. He saw the Butcher stab his father to death during a Nativist-Irish donnybrook years before. So he infiltrates the Butcher's bunch to help the Irish and exact revenge. Diaz plays the Butcher's girlfriend who develops feelings for Vallon.

"I have to admit, I was unfamiliar with the Draft Riots, their historical significance and what it meant to our country," says DiCaprio. "It's a really unique time in our history. It was the birth of our country basically. The more I learned about it, the more fascinating it was and the more applicable it was to our time even now."

And the widely reported tension between Weinstein and Scorsese, who

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Cameron Diaz and DiCaprio
in *Gangs of New York*



► argued over the film's length and content, now seems to be history as well. They presented a united front at Cannes, even if the final cut is around 2 hours, 40 minutes, some 20 minutes short of what Scorsese wanted. (The budget soared to \$100-million (U.S.), a first for a Miramax release.)

The movie was originally set to open last December but was delayed after the attacks of September 11 because of the New York connection. It was then set to open Christmas Day of this year, until two months ago when Miramax shuffled the film to December 20 to avoid a box-office war with DiCaprio's other movie coming out that day, *Catch Me if You Can*.

Perhaps this time DiCaprio will hold on to the A-list status that seemed ordained early on. Meanwhile, his mystique seems to grow. "People come up to me all the time," he says. "It's non-stop and it's out of control. Wherever I go people seem to want a part of me."

At least he has a sense of humour about it all. At a party after the *Gangs* screening in Cannes, DiCaprio watched as a birthday cake was presented to someone, then asked a reporter, "How much would you give me to jump up on that table and say, 'I'm king of the world?'" **F**

Ron Dicker is a New York-based movie writer. This is his first story for *Famous*.

famous trivia

1 *Two Weeks Notice* star Sandra Bullock played the same role in a 1990 TV series that Melanie Griffith played in a 1989 movie. Name the movie and series.

2 Which star of *The Two Towers* appeared in Paula Abdul's "Straight Up" video when he was just eight years old?

3 In what 1993 Mel Brooks comedy did *Star Trek: Nemesis* star Patrick Stewart play King Richard?

4 *Maid in Manhattan* star Jennifer Lopez and boyfriend Ben Affleck have each starred in a movie with Owen Wilson. Both start with the letter "A". Can you name them?

5 Tim Curry, who lends his voice to *The Wild Thornberrys*, made his feature-film debut in which 1975 cult classic starring Susan Sarandon?

6 *Analyze That* marks the second time Billy Crystal has done a sequel. Can you name the other?

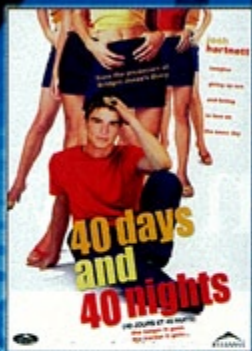
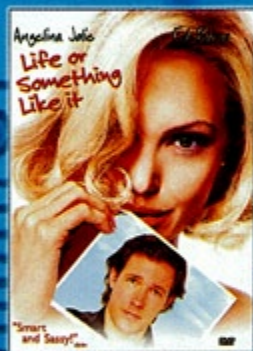
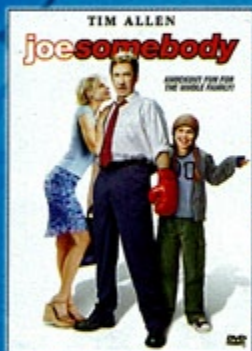
7 Adam Sandler makes a cameo in pal Rob Schneider's *The Hot Chick*. In which Sandler flick did Schneider make a cameo as a delivery guy?

ANSWERS

1 Working Girl 2 Elijah Wood
3 Robin Hood: Men in Tights 4 Anaconda
and Armageddon 5 Rocky Horror Picture Show 6 City Slickers II 7 Mr. Deeds

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COUNTING CROWS GO BACK TO THE MOVIES AND DANA GLOVER SHARES HER TESTIMONY | BY JOHN KENNEDY

Adam Duritz



MOVIE MUSIC

Sandra Bullock, star and co-producer of this month's romantic comedy *Two Weeks Notice*, is so fond of the Counting Crows' version of the Joni Mitchell classic "Big Yellow Taxi" — originally released as a hidden track on the band's latest CD *Hard Candy* — she used it in the movie's title sequence.

"I usually have a rule of not putting anything in a movie unless I've seen it," Crows singer Adam Duritz told *Famous*. "But I met with Sandra and the director and they showed me a whole bunch of scenes. It's really funny and the chemistry between [Bullock and co-star Hugh Grant] is really great."

The song isn't the first from the Crows to make it to the silver screen. "Colorblind" from the album *This Desert Life* was used in 1999's *Cruel Intentions* and Duritz wrote "Baby I'm a Big Star Now" specifically for the closing moments of the 1998 Matt Damon/Edward Norton flick *Rounders*. The band also contributed an acoustic

version of the Psychedelic Furs song "The Ghost in You" to the 1995 hit *Clueless*.

Duritz wrote several songs for last year's *Josie and the Pussycats* and wrote "Going Down to New York Town" as the opening song for his friend Adam Sandler's comedy *Mr. Deeds*, but the track was buried at the end instead.

"Pretty much every movie I've ever been involved with has involved some grind, some real frustration," Duritz admits. "It can be a difficult experience working with movie people."

Is it enough to keep Duritz from actually being in a movie some day? "I don't have the slightest desire to act. I can't imagine why I would want to," he says. "I don't really see the appeal. I think some people want to be

more famous. For some people this is about being a star and acting is a part of that. For me, I'm happy with what I do and I don't really need to branch out...and I sure don't need to be more famous than I am."



SONGS OF THE SOUTH

North Carolina native and ex-model Dana Glover's dreams of success as a recording artist have finally come true. The southern belle's debut CD *Testimony*, featuring the

single "Thinking Over," is earning praise for its piano-drenched, gospel-influenced sound. And if you think you've never heard Glover before, think again. She contributed "It is You (I Have Loved)" to last year's *Shrek* soundtrack and "Plan on Forever" to *The Wedding Planner*.

Glover's recent showcase performance in Toronto attracted the likes of Ronnie Hawkins, Dahmnaï Doyle (whose new album comes out in February), jacksoul singer Haydain Neale and The Band veteran Robbie Robertson, who signed Glover to a record deal and served as executive producer of her CD. (He just finished the music for this month's *Gangs of New York*.)

RHYME TIME

From an early age Bryan Van Dusen has



Van Dusen

been fascinated by reading, writing, crafting poetry and freestyle rhyming, so it's no wonder rap and hip hop music are his favourite forms of expression. Van Dusen, who bills himself

as the Baron Mann-E-Face, has blended his talents and come up with a self-titled independent CD. Hear it for yourself by clicking on www.bryandusen.com.

OUT THIS MONTH

Queen Latifah | *She's a Queen*

>> DECEMBER 10

One of the grand dames of hip hop releases her greatest hits collection just weeks before she shows up in the film version of *Chicago*.

Lil' Romeo | *Game Time*

>> DECEMBER 17

The 12-year-old son of rap impresario Master P has broken out into acting (including the upcoming features *Shorty* and *Honey*) and is back with a follow-up to his chart-topping debut.

PLUS... 'Tis the season for soundtracks! Watch for *Deliver us From Eva* and *Hot Chick* (December 3), then *Catch Me if You Can* and *Gangs of New York* (December 10).

BEST OF 2002

Videogame columnist Mark Magee makes his list and checks it twice



This past year was a mixed one for videogames. There were dozens of truly great games made in 2002 but, sadly, almost every one was either a sequel or a thinly disguised rip-off of another game. All on this "best of" list are fun, well-designed titles, but none of them truly break any new ground. Where last year saw innovative games like *Pikmin* and *Grand Theft Auto III* that significantly raised the bar for gaming, this year's crop just didn't rise to the challenge. Nonetheless, here are our (highly subjective) picks for the best games of '02.

Animal Crossing

>> GAMECUBE

Let those boring reality-obsessed types noodle around with *The Sims* — we'll stick to the blissful goofiness of *Animal Crossing's* virtual world. After all, it's a land where all you do is wander around making friends, winning furniture and going fishing. Sounds boring? You won't think so once it takes over your real life.

Mafia >> PC

Much like *Grand Theft Auto III*, this crime-soaked offering drops you into a living, breathing city that's ripe for the plucking. Only, this time, it's a 1930s city, complete with Tommy guns and pinstriped gangsters. Lots of wish-fulfillment fun for anyone who's ever fantasized about being in *The Untouchables*.

WarCraft III >> PC

The vaunted orcs-versus-humans series got a serious overhaul with this third outing, which heavily amped up both the look and feel of the game, making it (along with its older cousin *StarCraft*) a serious contender for Best Real-Time Strategy Game Ever.

Eternal Darkness: Sanity's Requiem

>> GAMECUBE

Nintendo broke out of the kiddie mold with this genuinely frightening survival-horror game that combines gorgeous graphics, excellent sound design and a wickedly clever storyline.

Super Monkey Ball 2

>> GAMECUBE

If you don't think the idea of monkeys rolling around inside see-through bubbles



is fun, then you probably haven't got a soul. Well, maybe that's a little harsh. But the fact remains, only the most sour-pussed gamer won't be charmed by this highly addictive puzzle/party game.

Hitman 2 >> PC, PS2, XBOX

The original *Hitman* was a great idea in search of good execution (pun intended). Luckily, this sequel rights all the original's wrongs, leaving you free to live the life of a high-priced assassin without hassle. Sure, it's super-violent and lacking in morals, but that's half — if not all — the fun.

Buffy the Vampire Slayer

>> XBOX

Fans of one of television's best shows ever (seriously!) can finally step into Buffy's ass-kicking, but still stylish, shoes. The fun here is all in the combat, as you take down an army of vamps and demons with the Slayer's arsenal of martial arts moves.

Super Mario Sunshine

>> GAMECUBE

The man in red decides to take a break from stomping Koopas, only to find that someone has mucked up his vacation spot. So he straps on a water-powered jetpack/hose and gets cleaning! Old-school gaming at its best.

Medal of Honor: Frontline

>> PS2

The WWII first-person shooter franchise continues with this new chapter. The whole game is great, but it makes this list for the opening mission: storming the beach at Normandy. It's like *Saving Private Ryan*, only now you're the one being shot at.

Jet Set Radio Future

>> XBOX

Even if it had a dozen competitors, this would still be the best jet-powered Rollerblading/graffiti game on the market. As it is, JSRF is a unique title that gets instant points for originality.

Sega Bass Fishing Duel

>> PS2

You may laugh, but the simple fact is, this game rules. Feel like fast-paced bass action? Take on a pal in a head-to-head fish-off that'll have you screaming at your screen in seconds. Prefer something more laid-back? Load up your boat and spend a lazy afternoon on the lake. But don't start telling stories about the virtual one that got away. 'Cause that's just pathetic.

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new RELEASES

TAKE **LILO & STITCH** HOME OR SPEND AN EVENING WITH **AUSTIN POWERS**

DECEMBER 3

LILO & STITCH

Voices: Daveigh Chase, Tia Carrere
Directors: Dean DeBlois, Chris Sanders
Story: Disney ditched its usual sugary sweetness and piled on the anarchy for this delightfully skewed tale of a lonely little Hawaiian girl who adopts a puppy, only to discover that it's really a fugitive, super-powered genetic experiment from another galaxy. Almost good enough to make you forget about *Mulan*. Almost.

AUSTIN POWERS IN GOLDMEMBER

Stars: Mike Myers, Michael Caine
Director: Jay Roach (*Meet the Parents*)
Story: For his third outing, the eternally aroused superspy (Myers) travels back to the 1970s, where he meets his father (Caine), a Dutch roller-skating villain (Myers again) and a heavily afroed Beyoncé Knowles. Sure, the jokes are all rehashed from the first two films, but this one's got funky disco threads!

DECEMBER 10

K-19: THE WIDOWMAKER

Stars: Harrison Ford, Liam Neeson
Director: Kathryn Bigelow (*Strange Days*)
Story: Based on true events, this undersea flick follows a leaky 1960s Soviet nuclear sub that headed out on its maiden voyage before it was ready, only to experience a serious problem with the reactor while at sea. Kinda makes you long for the good old days of depth charges and low oxygen.

LIKE MIKE

Stars: Lil' Bow Wow, Morris Chestnut
Director: John Schultz (*Drive Me Crazy*)
Story: A cute widdle orphan (rapper Bow Wow) gets to join the NBA after he and his new shoes get hit by lightning. You see, instead of burning him to a crisp, the jolt of electricity gave his sneaks magic b-ball powers, and now he's the team's biggest star.

DECEMBER 17

MINORITY REPORT

Stars: Tom Cruise, Colin Farrell
Director: Steven Spielberg (*A.I.*)
Story: Set in the near future, this sci-fi tale (based on a story by the legendary Philip K. Dick) posits a world where pre-cognitives are used to predict — and therefore prevent — future murders. But when the pre-cogs predict that a top cop will kill a man he's never met, the system begins to break down.

UNFAITHFUL

Stars: Richard Gere, Diane Lane
Director: Adrian Lyne (*Lolita*)
Story: The talented Diane Lane finally gets a shot at stardom with her stunning turn as a woman who decides to cheat on her loving husband (Gere) with a suave bookseller. Luckily, the film steers



Mike Myers in *Austin Powers in Goldmember*

(mostly) away from "obsessive psycho ex-lover" territory, choosing instead to be a mature drama about marital infidelity.

XXX

Stars: Vin Diesel, Asia Argento
Director: Rob Cohen (*Fast and the Furious*)
Story: Who needs highly trained secret agents when you can have a bad-attitude extreme sports junkie? Apparently not the National Security Agency, who takes on a bungee-jumping grouch (Diesel) in the hopes that his totally in your face style will succeed where other — less teen-audience-friendly — spies have failed. Focus groups, look upon what you hath wrought...

new to DVD

BACK TO THE FUTURE: THE COMPLETE TRILOGY

(December 17)

Marty McFly (Michael J. Fox) zips back and forth between the 1950s and the 1980s (let's just forget about that whole Wild West bit, okay?) in this very funny and inventive tale of Oedipal love, time paradoxes and the never-ending search for 1.21 gigawatts. Extras include commentary tracks by Michael J. Fox, director Robert Zemeckis and writer Bob Gale, outtakes, deleted scenes, screen tests and a making-of featurette.



MY NEIGHBOR TOTORO (December 3)

This charming, whimsical 1988 film by anime godfather Hayao Miyazaki (*Spirited Away*, *Princess Mononoke*) follows the adventures of two girls who make the acquaintance of a forest spirit when they move to a new house in the country. Perfect for children of all ages.

THE KING OF COMEDY (December 17)

Martin Scorsese's 1983 black comedy about a starstruck wannabe stand-up comedian (Robert De Niro) who goes ballistic after getting turned down by his favourite late night talk show host (Jerry Lewis) proved to be an eerily prescient vision of star stalkers to come. Features Lewis in a rare — but perfectly nuanced — dramatic turn.

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december

HOROSCOPE | BY DAN LIEBMAN



sagittarius

November 22 >>> December 22

A VIP's vote of confidence helps you overcome recent feelings of insecurity. Friends may seem fickle after the 10th, but a romantic partner knows just how to comfort you. Volunteer jobs taken on now will bring major satisfaction in 2003.

capricorn

December 23 >>> January 20

Reconciliation is the theme this month. Take the initiative — and don't wait until New Year's Eve to kiss and make up. Your career seems sluggish, but December's behind-the-scenes activities will have a positive effect come late January.

aquarius

January 21 >>> February 19

Your spiritual side, emphasized throughout the month, helps you come to terms with a recent upset. Your way with language proves an important asset both professionally and personally. Seek clarification if you have even the smallest financial question.

pisces

February 20 >>> March 20

Unexpected guests and surprise announcements turn this into a doozy of a month. But there's also a gentle side to December, as random acts of kindness touch you deeply.

aries

March 21 >>> April 20

Apart from the usual distractions December brings, you'll find yourself intrigued by a mysterious new neighbour or acquaintance. The year closes with some overdue appreciation coming your way and the happy feeling that you're finally out of a serious rut.

taurus

April 21 >>> May 22

Avoid a late-month tendency to procrastinate, especially where money is involved. An annoying obstacle is removed, allowing you to branch out in new directions. When it comes to holiday events, you're way ahead of the trendsetters.

gemini

May 23 >>> June 21

Adversaries become less threatening, while your domestic environment turns into a comfort zone. Before backing anyone — politicians, relatives, co-workers — check their stories for gaps.

cancer

June 22 >>> July 22

Half your world wants you to go play, while the other half needs your shoulder to cry on. You'd better set some boundaries. Around the third week, one of your pet projects gets the green light. After that, a distant relative shows a generous side.

leo

July 23 >>> August 22

If you take the high road in family disputes, this can turn into one of the most peaceful holiday seasons on record. And while everyone else is distracted at work, your dedication to a current project may pay off handsomely in early 2003.

virgo

August 23 >>> September 22

Before the year ends — just don't wait until 11:59 on the 31st — try to reach a compromise on a key family issue. Watch out for a tendency to make rash decisions, especially around the 21st. And expect a late-month surge in your self-confidence.

libra

September 23 >>> October 22

December finds you focused on romance — particularly on what you're seeking in a partner. You're also less vague about defining long-term career ambitions. Your culinary contributions make a big impression from the 25th through the 31st.

scorpio

October 23 >>> November 21

If trying to make an impression — romantic or professional — it's time for Scorpio to switch from subtle to in-your-face. Your ability to teach through example makes a key difference for a younger friend. Resolve outstanding ethical issues by year's end.

DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS



1st Bette Midler
2nd Britney Spears
3rd Julianne Moore

4th Marisa Tomei
5th Frankie Muniz
6th Tom Hulse
7th Ellen Burstyn
8th Kim Basinger
9th John Malkovich
10th Kenneth Branagh
11th Teri Garr
12th Jennifer Connelly
13th Christopher Plummer
14th Patty Duke
15th Don Johnson

16th Benjamin Bratt
17th Bill Pullman
18th Brad Pitt
19th Alyssa Milano
20th John Spencer
21st Kiefer Sutherland
22nd Ralph Fiennes
23rd Corey Haim
24th Ricky Martin
25th Sissy Spacek
26th Jared Leto
27th Gerard Depardieu
28th Denzel Washington



29th Jude Law
30th Tracey Ullman
31st Val Kilmer

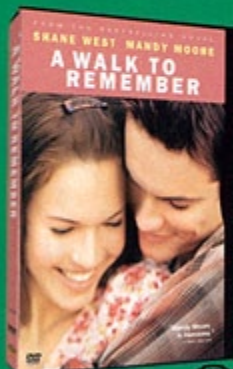


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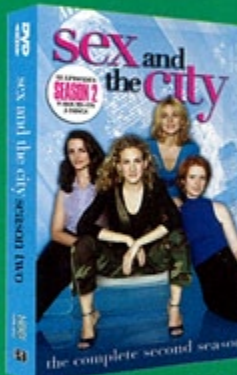
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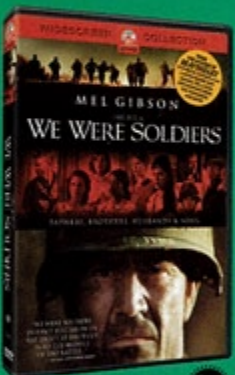
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