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Far US

february 2006 | volume 7 | number 2

**Virginia
Madsen**
TALKS FIREWALL

**Paul
Walker**
ON EIGHT BELOW
& RUNNING SCARED

The Pink Panther's
**Steve
Martin**
on resurrecting **Inspector Clouseau**





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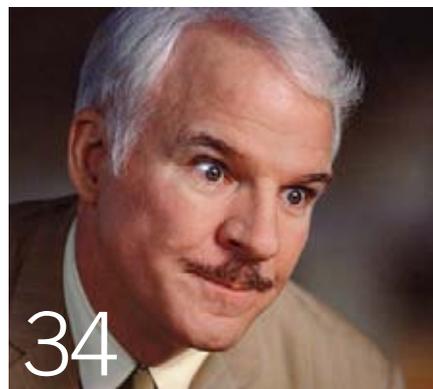
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He thought about it and then turned it down...twice. After all, it was the defining role of Peter Sellers' career. So what made **STEVE MARTIN** finally decide to take on Inspector Clouseau in the prequel *The Pink Panther?* | **BY EARL DITTMAN**

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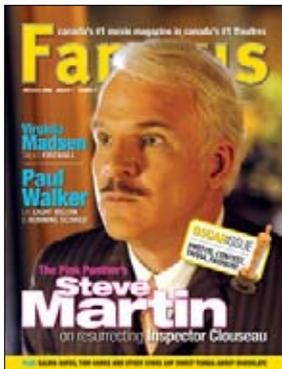
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A DATE WITH OSCAR



How do you watch the Oscars? Personally, I watch them at home, alone, with my office Oscar-pool ballot in hand. Sure, I'm usually invited to some Oscar get together or another, but I like to concentrate. I figure I've spent the past year watching, discussing and writing about movies — I want to get the most out of this show.

I love the cheesy openings, especially Billy Crystal's musical montages.

Of course, Crystal's a no-show this year, but that's okay, I'm anxious to see

how Jon Stewart does as host. He's a natural choice — Hollywood's current comedic darling, his *Daily Show* having won six Emmys in the past three years. But you never know. As Stewart made clear at this year's Emmys, David Letterman is one of his idols. And Letterman bombed bad when he hosted back in 1995.

To prime you for this year's awards, which take place March 5th, we've put together a great **Oscar Preview**, which starts on page 18. You'll find a quiz, a behind-the-scenes photo essay, fashion, a party game and a contest that will award one lucky winner free movies for a year.

My favourite host from the past few years has to be **Steve Martin**, who did the honours in 2001 and again in 2003. Dry and understated, his jokes were insider but not so insider that someone with an ounce of deductive ability couldn't get them. A few of my faves? "Hosting the Oscars is like making love to a beautiful woman. It's something I only get to do when Billy Crystal's out of town," "Please hold your applause until it's for me" and "Proceeds of the Oscars tonight will be divided up between huge corporations."

Although Martin isn't hosting the Oscars this year, fans can catch the comic actor in his new movie, *The Pink Panther*. Now, follow along. Even though the film shares a title with the very first Peter Sellers movie about bumbling Inspector Clouseau, it is in fact a prequel. For "In the Pink," page 34, Martin explains why, after turning the role down twice, he finally accepted.

Paul Walker gets a chance to prove his range with roles in two extremely different movies this month. First up is the Disney dog pic *Eight Below* and then it's *Running Scared*, a dark, stylized mob movie. Read "Nice and Nasty," page 28, to find out which of the two Walker's mom likes best.

And on page TK we have the surprising story of **Virginia Madsen**. You may remember her as that sexy blond starlet from the late 1980s and early 1990s, and you probably saw her as the sophisticated wine lover in last year's *Sideways*, but chances are you don't know about all the hardship that came in between. In "Virginia Madsen's Second Chance," page 32, the star of the Harrison Ford thriller *Firewall* fills you in on those middle years.

—MARNI WEISZ



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CAUGHT ON FILM

SCARLETT JOHANSSON, HARRISON FORD, MARC ANTHONY, JIM CARREY, TYRESE GIBSON

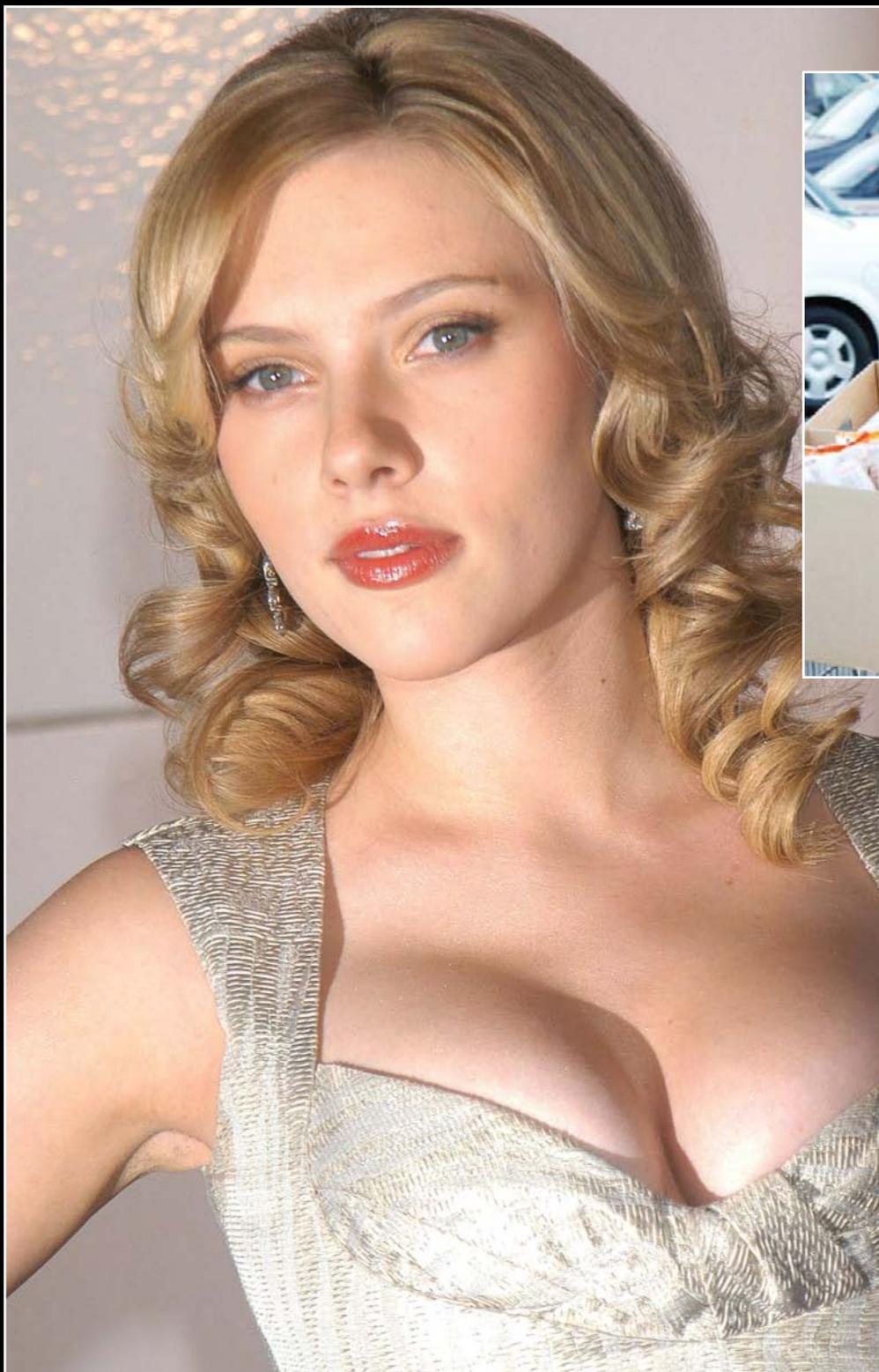


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PHOTO BY SPLASH/KEYSTONE

▲ As far as we know, Harrison Ford is not working on a movie about the Civil War. And yet, there it is. Ford is seen wheeling a cart of groceries to his car at a Whole Foods Market in Brentwood, California.

◀◀◀ Sometimes, for no apparent reason, you just have to use a picture of Scarlett Johansson. The 21-year-old actor was looking particularly buxom at the L.A. County Museum of Art for the premiere of *Match Point*.



PHOTO BY SPLASH NEWS



PHOTO BY ARNALDO MAGNANI/GETTY

▲ With the suit and the strut Marc Anthony may look like he's starring in *John Travolta: The '70s*, but he's actually on the Spanish Harlem set of *El Cantante*. The actor/singer/Lo-mate plays Hector Lavoe, the man credited with starting the salsa movement in 1975.



PHOTO BY LUCY NICHOLSON/REUTERS

▲ Talk about a wooden co-star... Jim Carrey and Téa Leoni clown around with some street performers in Berlin. They were in Germany to promote *Fun with Dick and Jane*.

◀◀◀ Hmm...doesn't really seem like a fair match. Frankie Muniz tries to stop Tyrese Gibson from driving to the net during a charity basketball game at L.A.'s Staples Center.

GROUND ZERO REBUILT IN L.A.

After September 11, 2001, the whole world had a lot of questions. Inevitably, one of them was, "I wonder how long it will take Hollywood to make a movie out of this." The answer will be released this August, when the Oliver Stone-directed *World Trade Center* hits theatres.

Nicolas Cage (seen centre in this first photo released from the movie) plays John McLoughlin and Michael Pena (far right) plays William Jimeno, two Port Authority officers who rushed to the scene after the first airplane hit and were caught under the rubble when Tower Two came down. They were the last two people found alive during the rescue operation, making their story a natural for Hollywood — just enough hope to make the ending bearable.

But what didn't seem bearable was inflicting a visual reminder of events on New York residents, so *Ground Zero*, with its twisted girders and unrecognizable piles of debris, was recreated on the other side of the country, on the outskirts of Los Angeles (seen top). —MW



The Mole Antonelliana, one of the most recognizable landmarks in Turin

TURIN: the Olympics, the shroud and...movies!

As the 2006 Winter Olympics kick off in Turin on February 10th, media attention on the industrial Italian city best known for its famous shroud will be immense. And one aspect we hope won't be overlooked is the city's rich history of cinema.

Considered the birthplace of the Italian film industry, 80 percent of Italian movies were shot in Turin prior to 1921. In 1937, Mussolini created the Cinecittà Studios in Rome, which quickly overshadowed Turin's movie industry. (Cinecittà is still a formidable force in the movie industry, with *Gangs of New York* and *The Passion of the Christ* shot there.)

Turin is also famous as the location for the original version of *The Italian Job*, a 1969 flick

which starred Michael Caine as a crook who plans to rob an armoured car on the streets of Turin by creating a traffic jam — the chase scene, which involved Mini Coopers racing through tunnels and winding streets, is considered classic.

Still proud of their cinematic heritage, Turin is host to numerous film festivals each year, including the Festival of Youth Cinema, the Cinema of Women and Cinema of Sport.

But perhaps the most impressive contribution to movies in Turin is the National Museum of Cinema, which is housed inside one of the most historic buildings in the city, the Mole Antonelliana.

Originally built as a synagogue in the late 1800s, the Mole now houses Italy's only

museum for movies, and one of the most important in the world.

And you don't have to fly to Turin to enjoy it (as if you could get a room now, anyway).

In 2001, the museum's website, www.museonazionealedelcinema.it, went online, providing the whole world with a taste of its formidable collection. Simply by clicking on different galleries you can peruse ornate early peepshow projectors, glamour shots of stars like Marlene Dietrich, a brochure from Fritz Lang's *Metropolis*, a poster for the Orson Welles classic *Quarto Potere* (you may know it as *Citizen Kane*), and props from movies both Italian and not. Lord knows why they have a monster model from 1984's *Gremlins*. —MW

WORLD TRADE CENTER SET PHOTO BY AUSTIN RAISHROOK/FLASH-KEYSTONE. TURIN PHOTO BY ALBERTO RAMELLA/PHOTOGRAPHER SHOWCASE

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DRUMMING UP interest

He used to share the stage with rock musicians. Now with his role in next month's **16 BLOCKS**, **SASHA ROIZ** shares the big screen with the likes of Bruce Willis. For this former musician, life has taken on a whole new tempo | **BY INGRID RANDOJA**

Sasha Roiz has gone from laying down beats as the drummer for the band Tricky Woo, to trying to lay down a beating on star Bruce Willis.

Roiz, an original member of the '90s raunch 'n' roll band from Montreal, made the transition from outlandish rocker to serious actor with a big-screen debut in *The Day After Tomorrow*, followed by roles in *Assault on Precinct 13* and *The Land of the Dead*. His newest pic is next month's thriller *16 Blocks* starring Bruce Willis.

"Mos Def plays a guy in the witness protection program who has to get to the courthouse and Bruce Willis' character is a cop who must bring him there safely," explains Roiz on the phone from his home in Toronto. "I'm one of a group of corrupt New York City cops who are trying to stop them because Mos Def's going to rat them out.

"The movie happens in real time and most of the movie is us chasing Bruce. It's like, 'Okay, you're chasing Bruce up the stairs! Now you're

chasing Bruce down the stairs.' Basically, we are in hot pursuit of Bruce."

Not many rock drummers have made the jump into acting. There's Phil Collins and...Phil Collins. For Roiz, playing drums in an in-your-face band was fun, but not his calling. He left Tricky Woo in '97, attended theatre school in Montreal and then England's prestigious Guildford School of Acting.

"Acting fulfilled a whole part of me that music didn't, which was the more academic or cerebral part," explains Roiz. "I needed to have this mental approach to something, whereas music is all about raw emotion. And after a while I knew living in a van and going to bed at six in the morning wasn't for me."

Roiz, who was born in Israel and moved to Montreal when he was a child, knows how lucky he's been. He landed his first movie job, as one of *The Day After Tomorrow*'s astronauts, straight out of Guildford, and he hasn't stopped working since. He's currently filming *Man of the Year* with

Robin Williams and director Barry Levinson (*Diner*, *Rain Man*) in Toronto. Roiz plays a Secret Service agent protecting Williams' character, a talk show host who's elected President of the United States.

"It's an amazing cast," says Roiz. "Christopher Walken, Laura Linney, Jeff Goldblum, who I love. I often joke that when Jeff Goldblum kicks the bucket that's when my career will take off. I mean, c'mon, how many tall Jews can this industry accommodate," he asks with a laugh.

"I got to meet Barry Levinson in the audition and he was such a sweet, sweet man. It always seems to be that way, these older, established guys are always sweet men.

"You'd think other directors could be that way. For instance, I had an audition this morning, for some commercial, and there was the biggest p---k of a director, some 28-year-old hotshot. I'm thinking, 'I was shaking hands with Barry Levinson the other day, and if he can manage to be a nice guy somehow I'm sure you can.'" **F**



now in theatres

| BY INGRID RANDOJA



WHEN A STRANGER CALLS

WHO'S IN IT? Camilla Belle, Tessa Thompson

WHO DIRECTED? Simon West
(*Lara Croft: Tomb Raider*)

WHAT'S IT ABOUT? In 1979 babysitters everywhere were traumatized by this nail-biter about a sitter who is harassed by a mysterious caller who keeps asking her, "Have you checked the children?" Now, a whole new generation of kiddie keepers will be freaked out by the remake that looks as if it still packs a scary punch.

• HITS THEATRES FEBRUARY 3

FEBRUARY 3

SPYMATE

WHO'S IN IT? Chris Potter, Emma Roberts
WHO DIRECTED? Robert Vince (*MVP: Most Valuable Primate*)

WHAT'S IT ABOUT? The daughter (Roberts) of a retired spy (Potter) is kidnapped by an evil scientist, requiring dad to enlist the help of his pal, Minky the monkey, to help save her.

FEBRUARY 10

FINAL DESTINATION 3

WHO'S IN IT? Mary Elizabeth Winstead
WHO DIRECTED? James Wong (*The One*)

WHAT'S IT ABOUT? Death doesn't take a holiday in Hollywood as studio execs continue to greenlight flicks for this unkillable series. High school senior Wendy Christensen (Winstead) has a premonition a roller coaster will crash and convinces her friends to get off. It does crash, but death doesn't like cheaters, and the teens spend the rest of the movie trying to avoid the Grim Reaper.

FAILURE TO LAUNCH

WHO'S IN IT? Matthew McConaughey, Sarah Jessica Parker
WHO DIRECTED? Tom Dey (*Showtime*)

WHAT'S IT ABOUT? The parents (Kathy Bates, Terry Bradshaw) of a 35-year-old man (McConaughey) who still lives at home hire a professional motivator (Parker) to woo him out of the nest.

CURIOUS GEORGE

VOICES: Will Ferrell, Drew Barrymore

WHO DIRECTED? Matthew O'Callaghan (debut)

WHAT'S IT ABOUT? The Man in the Yellow Hat (Ferrell) returns from Africa with a little monkey named George who just can't stay out of trouble. Laid-back rocker and surfing fiend Jack Johnson penned the soundtrack for this animated film based on the series of classic kids books.

FIREWALL

WHO'S IN IT? Harrison Ford, Virginia Madsen

WHO DIRECTED? Richard Loncraine
(*Wimbledon*)

WHAT'S IT ABOUT? When his wife (Madsen) and kids are kidnapped, hi-tech security expert Jack Stanfield (Ford) is forced to break into the bank where he designed state-of-the-art safeguards, and steal the ransom money. Paul Bettany steps in as the nefarious bank robber. **See Virginia Madsen interview, page 32.**

THE PINK PANTHER

WHO'S IN IT? Steve Martin, Kevin Kline

WHO DIRECTED? Shawn Levy (*Cheaper by the Dozen*)

WHAT'S IT ABOUT? Steve Martin has made a career out of recreating characters associated with great actors from the past. He's stepped into the shoes of Spencer Tracy (*The Father of the Bride* movies) Jack Lemmon (*The Out-of-Towners*), Phil Silvers (*Sgt. Bilko*) and Clifton Webb (*Cheaper by the Dozen* films). Add Peter Sellers to the list as Martin takes on the role of bumbling Inspector Clouseau in this prequel to the original 1963 film. The plot revolves around Clouseau searching for a pink diamond stolen from a soccer coach who was murdered in front of a stadium full of fans. [See Steve Martin interview, page 34.](#)

• HITS THEATRES FEBRUARY 10

FEBRUARY 17

EIGHT BELOW

WHO'S IN IT? Paul Walker, Bruce Greenwood

WHO DIRECTED? Frank Marshall (*Congo*)

WHAT'S IT ABOUT? This based-on-a-true-story family flick stars Walker as an Antarctic explorer who must leave his pack of beloved sled dogs behind when a huge storm batters the continent. However, bad weather won't stop the courageous canines from trying to find their way back to their master. [See Paul Walker interview, page 28.](#)

DATE MOVIE

WHO'S IN IT? Alyson Hannigan, Adam Campbell

WHO DIRECTED? Jason Friedberg, Aaron Seltzer

WHAT'S IT ABOUT? Friedberg and Seltzer, who co-wrote the *Scary Movie* trilogy, make their directorial debuts with this spoof of romantic comedies. Recent rom-coms such as *Wedding Crashers*, *Meet the Parents*, *Notting Hill* and *The Wedding Planner* are lampooned, and it looks as if no clichés are safe.

FREEDOMLAND

WHO'S IN IT? Samuel L. Jackson, Julianne Moore

WHO DIRECTED? Joe Roth

(*Christmas with the Kranks*)

WHAT'S IT ABOUT? Racial tensions run high when a white woman (Moore) claims a black man stole her car and kidnapped her young son. A veteran detective (Jackson) and a local newspaper reporter (Edie Falco) conduct a search for the missing boy, which leads them to Freedomland Village, an abandoned children's asylum. Based on Richard Price's best-selling novel.

FEBRUARY 19

WWE-PAY-PER-VIEW NO WAY OUT

Check www.famousplayers.com or www.cineplex.com for a list of theatres where you can watch it live, and to buy tickets. ▶▶





ULTRAVIOLET

WHO'S IN IT? Milla Jovovich, Cameron Bright

WHO DIRECTED? Kurt Wimmer (*Equilibrium*)

WHAT'S IT ABOUT? In this futuristic action pic, a disease called hemophagia creates a new race that is faster, stronger and smarter than the rest, leading to a war between humans and these new "hemophages." Jovovich plays an infected woman trying to protect a nine-year-old boy (Bright) whom the government believes is the ultimate threat.

• HITS THEATRES FEBRUARY 24

RUNNING SCARED

WHO'S IN IT? Paul Walker, Vera Farmiga

WHO DIRECTED? Wayne Kramer (*The Cooler*)

WHAT'S IT ABOUT? In his most ambitious role to date, Walker stars as mob flunkie Joey Gazelle, who is assigned various jobs, one being the disposing of guns used in hits. But Joey ain't too bright and hides the guns in his basement, where his son's friend finds one and uses it to commit a murder. Now Joey's gotta find the piece before the mob and the police get hold of it. See [Paul Walker interview](#), page 28.

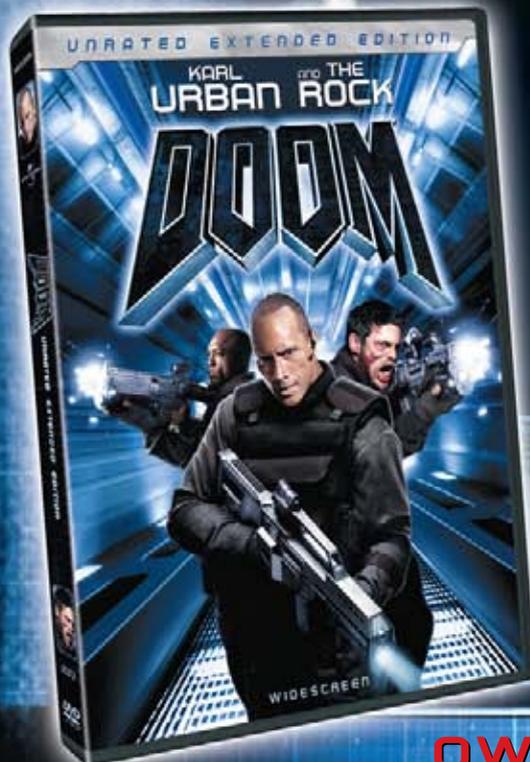
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WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT OSCAR?

It isn't really Oscar season until you take out your pen (that's right, we dare you to do this baby in ink) and complete *Famous* magazine's annual Oscar quiz. This year we're testing your Oscar smarts with three separate challenges. The Real to Reel quiz tests your knowledge of the real-life people who inspired Oscar-winning performances and the actors who played them, Picture This salutes the Best Picture category, while Say What?! highlights priceless quotes and comments uttered during, or about, the never-ending ceremony.
BY INGRID RANDOJA



REAL TO REEL

1 *Amadeus* star Tom Hulce may have stolen the movie as the irrepressible composer, but it was F. Murray Abraham who walked away with the Best Actor statue for his performance as *Amadeus*' real-life rival, named...

- A** Scarlett **B** Swanson **C** Salieri **D** Arkoff

2 Julia Roberts won the Best Actress statue in 2000 for her turn as *Erin Brockovich*'s eponymous hero. What was Brockovich's occupation?

- A** x-ray technician **B** legal assistant
C waitress **D** hairdresser

3 Who won a Best Supporting Actor Oscar for playing famed writer Dashiell Hammett in *Julia*?

- A** Melvyn Douglas **B** Jack Nicholson
C Ben Gazzara **D** Jason Robards

4 Ben Kingsley won the Best Actor Oscar for his turn in *Gandhi*. It was his first starring role. **True or False**

5 In 1967, the second Oscar tie occurred when Katharine Hepburn and Barbra Streisand both won Best Actress Oscars for their performances as real-life ladies in the films *The Lion in Winter* and *Funny Girl* respectively. Streisand played stage legend Fanny Brice. Who did Hepburn portray?

- A** Eleanor of Aquitaine **B** Queen Elizabeth
C Mary, Queen of Scots **D** Pope Joan

6 *Raging Bull*'s Robert De Niro won Best Actor for playing which real-life boxer?

- A** Jake La Motta **B** James Braddock
C Rocky Marciano **D** Jack Dempsey

7 Patty Duke won a Best Supporting Actress statue for her portrayal of Helen Keller in what film?

- A** *A Patch of Blue* **B** *The Country Girl*
C *The Miracle Worker* **D** *Butterflies are Free*

8 *The Hour*'s Nicole Kidman won Best Actress playing writer Virginia Woolf while wearing a prosthetic on which part of her body?

- A** her left index finger **B** her left foot
C her chin **D** her nose

9 Who won Best Supporting Actress for her turn as anarchist Emma Goldman in *Reds*?

- A** Diane Keaton **B** Meryl Streep
C Maureen Stapleton **D** Maggie Smith

10 Which one of these Best Supporting Actor winners did *not* base his performance on a real-life person?

- A** Jim Broadbent in *Iris* **B** Tim Robbins in *Mystic River*
C Martin Landau in *Ed Wood*
D Jason Robards in *All the President's Men*

ANSWERS:
 1. C 2. B 3. D 4. True 5. B 6. A 7. C 8. B 9. C 10. D
 Landau played Wood for his teen-age
 brother and Jason Robards played
 the godfather and John F. Kennedy
 in *On the Beach* and played the
 role of the president in *On the Beach*.

PICTURE THIS

1 Which winning film's tagline is "In love, there are no boundaries."
A *Casablanca* **B** *Out of Africa*
C *Driving Miss Daisy* **D** *The English Patient*

2 How many Oscars did Best Picture winner *The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King* win in total?
A 10 **B** 11 **C** 12 **D** 13

3 *Gone With the Wind* is the longest Best Picture winner, clocking in at 233 minutes. Which film, running only 91 minutes, is the shortest?
A *Marty* **B** *Rebecca* **C** *Rocky* **D** *Gladiator*

4 Which director has helmed the most Best Picture winners (3)?
A Billy Wilder **B** Frank Capra
C William Wyler **D** Milos Forman

5 Best Pic *Brokeback* was nominated for 10 Oscars, but didn't receive a single acting nod. **True or False**

6 Which actor appeared in the winning pics *Oliver!* and *Gladiator*?
A Russell Crowe **B** Derek Jacobi
C Richard Harris **D** Oliver Reed

7 In which winning film do you hear the line, "Hell of a thing, killin' a man. Take away all he's got and all he's ever gonna have?"
A *The Best Years of Our Lives* **B** *Platoon*
C *Unforgiven* **D** *In the Heat of the Night*

8 The finale of *Chariots of Fire* takes place at what sporting event?
A 1919 Commonwealth Games
B 1924 Olympics **C** 1925 World Series
D 1930 Tour de France

9 Name the first Best Picture winner to be widely available on home video before the Oscar ceremony.
A *The Silence of the Lambs*
B *Dances with Wolves*
C *Forrest Gump* **D** *Titanic*

10 How many silent films have won Best Picture? **A** none **B** one **C** two **D** three



SAY WHAT!?

1 Whose Oscar acceptance speech included the line, "I was going to thank all the little people, but then I remembered I am the little people."
A Mickey Rooney **B** Joe Pesci
C James Cagney **D** Paul Williams

2 Who holds the record for the longest Oscar acceptance speech?
A Laurence Olivier **B** Dustin Hoffman
C Greer Garson **D** Shirley MacLaine

3 What movie was inspired by Tom Hanks' moving Best Actor acceptance speech for *Philadelphia*?
A *In and Out* **B** *Jeffrey*
C *Longtime Companion* **D** *Rent*

4 Jonathan Demme won the Best Director statuette for *The Silence of the Lambs*. What word did he utter—almost 40 times—during his disjuncted acceptance speech?
A "um" **B** "like" **C** "truly" **D** "kinda"

5 Which eventual Oscar winner explained why he wasn't going to attend the ceremony by saying, "I've been there seven times and lost. Maybe if I stay away, I'll win."
A Randy Newman **B** Martin Scorsese
C Steven Spielberg **D** Paul Newman

6 Sally Field is famous for saying "Right now, you really like me!" during her speech. For which movie was she accepting the Best Actress statue?
A *Norma Rae* **B** *Places in the Heart*
C *Forrest Gump* **D** *Moonstruck*

7 Which host's opening monologue included the description of the awards as "Two hours of sparkling entertainment spread over a four-hour show."
A Billy Crystal **B** Steve Martin
C Whoopi Goldberg **D** Johnny Carson

8 What were the first words Barbra Streisand uttered when given her Best Actress Oscar for *Funny Girl*?
A "I deserve this." **B** "Hello gorgeous."
C "You look good enough to eat."
D "Hubba Hubba!"



9 A woman walked into a stall in the washroom of the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion during the 1980 ceremony and shouted, "Hey, someone left an Oscar in here!" Who left their statue in the loo?
A Sissy Spacek **B** Meryl Streep
C Diane Keaton **D** Mary Steenburgen

10 Whose acceptance speech included the phrase, "Shame on you, Mr Bush, shame on you."
A Susan Sarandon **B** Tim Robbins
C Michael Moore **D** Sean Penn

ANSWERS

1. **B** *Out of Africa* (1985)
 2. **B** 11 (2003)
 3. **A** *Marty* (1955)
 4. **C** William Wyler (1954, 1959, 1973)
 5. **True**
 6. **D** *Gladiator* (2000)
 7. **C** Whoopi Goldberg (1994)
 8. **D** "Hubba Hubba!" (1968)
 9. **A** Sissy Spacek (1980)
 10. **C** Michael Moore (2002)

1. **B** *Out of Africa* (1985)
 2. **B** 11 (2003)
 3. **A** *Marty* (1955)
 4. **C** William Wyler (1954, 1959, 1973)
 5. **True**
 6. **D** *Gladiator* (2000)
 7. **C** Whoopi Goldberg (1994)
 8. **D** "Hubba Hubba!" (1968)
 9. **A** Sissy Spacek (1980)
 10. **C** Michael Moore (2002)

Backstage

If you were in Beverly Hills right now you could saunter over to the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences on Wilshire Boulevard and take in their new photo exhibit — **All Access at the Academy Awards: Photographs by Art Streiber**, on display until April 16.

But since you're not, we offer you this taste of Streiber's show. The renowned photographer, who has shot for *Esquire*, *Elle*, *Entertainment Weekly* and *Vanity Fair*, has enjoyed virtually unfettered access to Oscar's back halls and red carpet corners over the past five years. The show reflects the candid moments the public rarely sees.

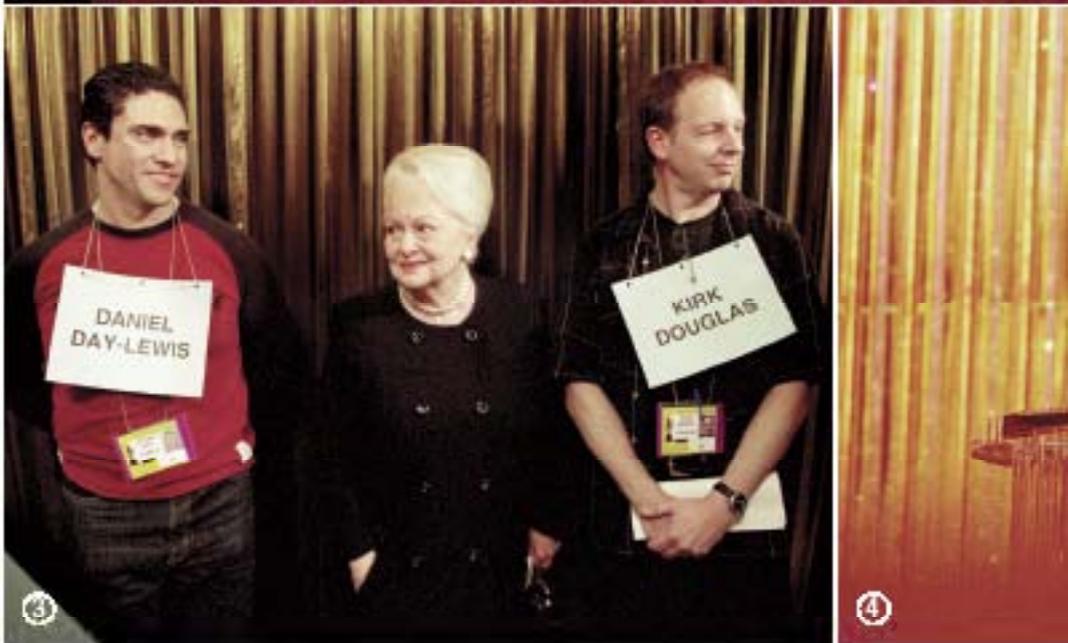
1 Jamie Lee Curtis plays to the cameras at the 76th Academy Awards.

2 Jack Nicholson (left) and Nicolas Cage (brazenly hiding their credentials) backstage during the 75th Academy Awards.

3 If an actor isn't available for rehearsal, a volunteer wearing a giant name tag stands in. Olivia de Havilland was the only one of these three stars to show up for the rehearsal before the 75th Academy Awards.

4 Last year's host Chris Rock seems strikingly alone at the podium during a rehearsal for the 77th Academy Awards.

5 In rather unglamorous surroundings, Charlize Theron is overcome with emotion after winning Best Actress for *Monster* at the 76th Academy Awards.



with OSCAR



ALL PHOTOS BY ART STUBBINS, COURTESY A.M.P.A.S.



AWARDS GALORE



Handicapping the Oscars is made a whole lot easier when you know which films and performances professional movie watchers (a.k.a. critics) have chosen as the year's best.

Check out our list of 2005 critics' picks to help you make your Oscar selections.



David Cronenberg shooting
A History of Violence

TORONTO FILM CRITICS ASSOCIATION

- Best Picture: *A History of Violence*
- Best Director: David Cronenberg, *A History of Violence*
- Best Performance, Male: Philip Seymour Hoffman, *Capote*
- Best Performance, Female: Laura Linney, *The Squid and the Whale*
- Best Supporting Performance, Male: Paul Giamatti, *Cinderella Man*
- Best Supporting Performance, Female: Catherine Keener, *Capote*

NEW YORK FILM CRITICS CIRCLE

- Best Picture: *Brokeback Mountain*
- Best Director: Ang Lee, *Brokeback Mountain*
- Best Performance, Male: Heath Ledger, *Brokeback Mountain*

- Best Performance, Female: Reese Witherspoon, *Walk the Line*
- Best Supporting Performance, Male: William Hurt, *A History of Violence*
- Best Supporting Performance, Female: Maria Bello, *A History of Violence*

LOS ANGELES FILM CRITICS ASSOCIATION

- Best Picture: *Brokeback Mountain*
- Best Director: Ang Lee, *Brokeback Mountain*
- Best Performance, Male: Philip Seymour Hoffman, *Capote*
- Best Performance, Female: Vera Farmiga, *Down to the Bone*
- Best Supporting Performance, Male: William Hurt, *A History of Violence*
- Best Supporting Performance, Female: Catherine Keener, *The 40-Year-Old Virgin*, *Capote*, *Ballad of Jack and Rose*, and *The Interpreter*

NATIONAL BOARD OF REVIEW

- Best Picture: *Good Night, and Good Luck*
- Best Director: Ang Lee, *Brokeback Mountain*
- Best Performance, Male: Philip Seymour Hoffman, *Capote*
- Best Performance, Female: Felicity Huffman, *Transamerica*

- Best Supporting Performance, Male: Jake Gyllenhaal, *Brokeback Mountain*
- Best Supporting Performance, Female: Gong Li, *Memoirs of a Geisha*

BOSTON SOCIETY OF FILM CRITICS

- Best Picture: *Brokeback Mountain*
- Best Director: Ang Lee, *Brokeback Mountain*
- Best Performance, Male: Philip Seymour Hoffman, *Capote*
- Best Performance, Female: Reese Witherspoon, *Walk the Line*
- Best Supporting Performance, Male: Paul Giamatti, *Cinderella Man*
- Best Supporting Performance, Female: Catherine Keener, *The 40-Year-Old Virgin*, *Capote*, *Ballad of Jack and Rose*, *The Interpreter*

SAN FRANCISCO FILM CRITICS

- Best Picture: *Brokeback Mountain*
- Best Director: Ang Lee, *Brokeback Mountain*
- Best Performance, Male: Heath Ledger, *Brokeback Mountain*
- Best Performance, Female: Reese Witherspoon, *Walk the Line*
- Best Supporting Performance, Male: Kevin Costner, *The Upside of Anger*
- Best Supporting Performance, Female: Amy Adams, *Amélie*

Reese Witherspoon as June Carter in *Walk the Line*.
Below: Catherine Keener and Philip Seymour Hoffman, both winners, in *Capote*



WASHINGTON AREA FILM CRITICS

- ★ **Best Picture:** *Munich*
- ★ **Best Director:** Steven Spielberg, *Munich*
- ★ **Best Performance, Male:** Philip Seymour Hoffman, *Capote*
- ★ **Best Performance, Female:** Reese Witherspoon, *Walk the Line*
- ★ **Best Supporting Performance, Male:** Paul Giamatti, *Cinderella Man*
- ★ **Best Supporting Performance, Female:** Amy Adams, *Junebug*

SAN DIEGO FILM CRITICS

- ★ **Best Picture:** *King Kong*
- ★ **Best Director:** Bennett Miller, *Capote*
- ★ **Best Performance, Male:** Philip Seymour Hoffman, *Capote*
- ★ **Best Performance, Female:** Joan Allen, *The Upside of Anger*
- ★ **Best Supporting Performance, Male:** Jeffrey Wright, *Brokeback Mountains*

- ★ **Best Supporting Performance, Female:** Rachel Weisz, *The Constant Gardener*

NATIONAL SOCIETY OF FILM CRITICS

- ★ **Best Picture:** *Capote*
- ★ **Best Director:** David Cronenberg, *A History of Violence*
- ★ **Best Performance, Male:** Philip Seymour Hoffman, *Capote*
- ★ **Best Performance, Female:** Reese Witherspoon, *Walk the Line*
- ★ **Best Supporting Performance, Male:** Ed Harris, *A History of Violence*
- ★ **Best Supporting Performance, Female:** Amy Adams, *Junebug*

CHICAGO FILM CRITICS

- ★ **Best Picture:** *Crash*
- ★ **Best Director:** David Cronenberg, *A History of Violence*
- ★ **Best Performance, Male:** Philip Seymour Hoffman, *Capote*
- ★ **Best Performance, Female:** Joan Allen, *The Upside of Anger*
- ★ **Best Supporting Performance, Male:** Mickey Rourke, *5th City*
- ★ **Best Supporting Performance, Female:** Maria Bello, *A History of Violence*

The GOLDEN Globes

The Golden Globes are chosen by the Hollywood Foreign Press, an eclectic organization whose members hail from around the world and covet their powerful positions. Due to the fact the Golden Globes are televised, and they kick-start the award season, people pay attention to the GGs and their picks often indicate who will walk away with an Oscar. Here are this year's winners.

- ★ **Best Picture (Drama):** *Brokeback Mountain*
- ★ **Best Picture (Comedy or Musical):** *Walk the Line*
- ★ **Best Director:** Ang Lee, *Brokeback Mountain*
- ★ **Best Actor (Drama):** Philip Seymour Hoffman, *Capote*
- ★ **Best Actor (Comedy or Musical):** Joaquin Phoenix, *Walk the Line*
- ★ **Best Actress (Drama):** Felicity Huffman, *Transcendental*
- ★ **Best Actress (Comedy or Musical):** Reese Witherspoon, *Walk the Line*
- ★ **Best Supporting Actor:** George Clooney, *Syriana*
- ★ **Best Supporting Actress:** Rachel Weisz, *The Constant Gardener*

LAST YEAR'S LOOKS



Clockwise from top left: **Natalie Portman** looking gorgeously Grecian; **Gwyneth Paltrow's** satin corset; fashion plate **Maggie Gyllenhaal** in silk and sequins; **Johnny Depp** bucks tradition; **Hilary Swank** shows off her Million Dollar Back; **Cate Blanchett** soars in canary yellow

ALL PHOTOS COURTESY AM.P.A.S

LOVE IS IN THE AIR.



LATE FEES ARE NOT.

**Rent or buy 'Just like Heaven'
and 'Elizabethtown' on DVD from February 7th.**



Rentals are due back at the date and time stated on the transaction receipt. There is no additional rental charge if a member keeps a rental item beyond the prepaid rental period. However, if a member chooses to keep a rental item for more than a week after the end of the rental period, BLOCKBUSTER® will automatically convert the rental to a sale on the eighth (8th) day after the end of the rental. If the member returns the item within 30 days of the sale date, BLOCKBUSTER will credit back to the membership account the amount previously charged to the member's account but the member will be charged a one-time restocking fee of \$1.75 per unit plus applicable taxes. See store for complete terms and conditions. Membership rules apply for rental. Release date subject to change. Availability may vary by location. BLOCKBUSTER name, design and related marks are trademarks of Blockbuster Inc. © 2006 Blockbuster Inc. All rights reserved. TM, ® & Copyright © 2005 by Paramount Pictures. All Rights Reserved. TM & © 2006 DreamWorks LLC. All Rights Reserved.

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FAMOUS MAGAZINE'S OSCAR PARTY GAME

Have the Academy Awards failed to hold your attention over the past few years? Here's the perfect solution:

The 1st Annual Famous magazine Oscar Party Game!

(This year's Oscars take place on March 5, 2006, check local listings for times.) Make sure you have plenty of food on hand — crab puffs, chips, pretzels, nachos, whatever you like. But the catch is, you can only eat when one of the utterly predictable, completely expected things on this list occurs. Last reveller standing (or eating) wins.

- A winner thanks their agent
- Someone says, "Oh my God"
- A presenter pulls out their glasses
- Jack Nicholson grins
- The host refers to how late the show is running
- A woman wearing a beaded dress wins
- Anyone uses the word "inspiration"
- Someone makes a political statement
- Someone refers to how heavy the statue is
- A Canadian appears on camera
- Someone mispronounces Gyllenhaal (it's Jill-in-hall)
- A winner walks off stage in the wrong direction
- A winner tells the orchestra to stop playing
- A winner feels they must share the win with the other nominees
- Someone makes a joke about Botox
- Someone makes a joke about Tom Cruise



OSCAR CONTEST

WIN

FREE MOVIES FOR A YEAR!

Famous magazine is going to give one lucky winner (and a guest) free access to all Cineplex Entertainment, Famous Players and Galaxy cinemas for one full year. That means you and a guest can see all of next year's Oscar winners and nominees without ever handing over a single dime!



TO ENTER, just answer the following questions about the Academy Awards and send it to us by March 15, 2006. And how easy is this? All of the answers can be found somewhere in this issue of *Famous*.

Famous

1. Which film won this year's Toronto Film Critics award for Best Picture?

2. Which nominee in last year's Best Supporting Actress category co-stars with Harrison Ford in a movie out this month?

3. How many silent films have won a Best Picture Oscar?

4. Name the photographer who has an Oscars photo exhibit currently on display at the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences.

Send this entry form to: Oscar Contest, c/o Famous magazine, 102 Atlantic Ave., Suite 100, Toronto, Ont., M6K 1X9 by March 15, 2006

Name: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ Province: _____

Postal Code: _____ Email: _____

Phone number: _____

OFFICIAL RULES OF THE CONTEST:

1. To participate, you must be a resident of Canada and at least 18 years of age on March 15, 2006. 2. The contest is not open to employees of Cineplex Entertainment, Cineplex Media, Famous magazine, their representatives, agents, advertising agencies, promotional and contractual partners and persons with whom any of the above are domiciled. 3. Contest entrants agree to abide by the terms of these Official Rules and by the decisions of the judging organization, which are final on all matters pertaining to the contest. By entering, participants release and hold harmless Cineplex Entertainment, Famous magazine and their respective parents, subsidiaries, affiliates, directors, sponsors, officers, employees and agents from any and all liability for any injury, loss or damage of any kind arising from or in connection with the contest or any prizes won. 4. Contest void in Quebec.

NICE AND NASTY

You'll see two very different sides of **PAUL WALKER** this month — first as a dog-loving explorer in the Disney family pic *EIGHT BELOW*, and then as a desperate gangster in the brutal *RUNNING SCARED* | BY EARL DITTMAN

With Paul Newman good looks, a cool attitude and roles in some pretty successful movies — *Pleasantville*, *The Fast and the Furious* flicks, *Into the Blue* — Paul Walker could be near the top of the A-list by now. But the 32-year-old California native seems to be doing his best to stay out of that position.

Believe it or not, he turned down the role of Superman in the much-anticipated *Superman Returns*, due out this summer. Walker has said he was afraid to give the next seven years of his life and career over to the character, assuming there would be sequels.

This month he takes advantage of his freedom, appearing in two movies that fall at opposite ends of the spectrum. First, there's *Eight Below*, a family film in which he plays an Antarctic explorer who's forced to leave his pack of sled dogs behind when a colleague is injured and needs to be flown out. His character spends the rest of the movie trying to get back to those dogs.

Then there's *Running Scared*, a dark, stylish thriller in which Walker plays Joey Gazelle, a minor mobster whose job is to dispose of incriminating, used weapons. But instead of getting rid of the guns he stores them in his basement. And when his son's friend steals a gun and uses it to kill his abusive stepfather, Gazelle's entire family is put in jeopardy.

Earl Dittman recently spoke with the busy actor in Los Angeles.

Early reports are that *Running Scared* is pretty shocking. What makes it so scary to watch?

"I just want you to go see it and judge for yourself, because it can be a really tough, brutal film. I was born and raised on the West Coast, and in it, I play an Italian mobster. Who would've ever thought? I would've never thought I could even do it. It's a really intense role and very heavy. But it's a great film.



Top: Paul Walker plays an Antarctic explorer in *Eight Below*. This picture: Walker as a mob flunkie in *Running Scared*



“It was freezing at times. I didn’t think it could get that cold,” says Walker

I think it’ll show a lot of people that there’s more to my talent than just driving fast cars and water diving. And I do curse a whole lot in the movie.”

So this isn’t one to take the kids to?

“It’s not a family movie by any stretch of the imagination. I don’t think my daughter [seven-year-old Meadow] will be seeing it, that’s for sure. I mean, just after seeing the trailer for *Running Scared*, my own mother was bawling. She was actually crying. She said to me, ‘You did such a good job in *Into the Blue*. But that *Running Scared* movie looks terrible.’ I was like, ‘Oh no, it’s great. Mom, you just saw the trailer, how can you decide if you’ll like it or not?’ She said, ‘I just know it’s going to be too violent for me. Just promise me that you’re going to make a movie for

the kids, for Meadow, and your nieces and nephews.’ And I told her I’d do the best that I could.”

Is that why you decided to do *Eight Below*?

“It’s funny how that all happened because I was really considering a totally different project to do.... Then, all of a sudden, like days after my mother’s pleas, the offer came in for *Eight Below*. I was like, ‘You’ve got to be kidding me. This is just too coincidental.’”

So you’re not a mobster in *Eight Below*?

“No, not this time. I’m an Arctic guide in the movie, who decides to explore uncharted parts of Antarctica with a fellow pal, who is also an explorer/guide, and our team of sled dogs. It was a fun part because I’m really good with dogs. I have a team of dogs, and I like them

more than a lot of people in Hollywood [laughs]. I haven’t seen the finished cut yet, but apparently they had their first screening last week and it scored in the 90s, which is good from what I understand. It’s great.”

Where did you make *Eight Below*?

“In Greenland and in northernmost British Columbia, just outside of this small town called Smithers. They were really sweet and wonderful townspeople and treated us almost like family. But it was freezing at times. I didn’t think it could get that cold. I hope mom and the kids in the family appreciate the torture I went through to make the movie.”

Do you think that becoming a dad at a young age made you more grounded?

“I think that it has, to a big degree. But, ►►



Walker with Vera Farmiga
in *Running Scared*

to be honest with you, I think that it spun me for a while, because I was so scared because it wasn't planned."

Meadow was born in 1999, how old were you then?

"I was 25 when I found out, and I was freaking out. Seriously, it took me probably two years to recover from the time that I found out. But everything's great now. Being a dad is so cool, but it is a true reality check. Meadow brings me down to earth. I would never go to someplace like Disneyland on my own, because I take her with me and suddenly I'm like a big kid myself. That's what she does for me."

Where do you go to get away from Hollywood?

"Well, I like riding horses a lot. I even bought my own. I'd been riding other people's horses, but I finally bought my own and his name is Cowboy, I didn't name him. He's a Paint. He's a cutting horse. He's really young. He's still really green and so we're always learning together, but I like it that way."

How have you remained such a nice guy?

"Do you know why? Because I want you to like me. That's what it is. I want people to like me. It's important that people like me. I don't know why I'm telling you this, but the thing of it is that I like who I am and I think that who I am is better than that guy in that other movie. That's one thing. I feel

"I don't know why I'm telling you this, but the thing of it is that I like who I am and I think that who I am is better than that guy in the other movie," says Walker

like I'm in competition with that guy all of the time. And when I come into contact with fans and people on the streets, and they think that he's cool, you know what, I'm cooler."

You just finished *Flags of our Fathers*, which was directed by Clint Eastwood, and I don't mean to sound rude, but I can't imagine that Clint is a *Fast* and *the Furious* fan, is he?

"Nah, not at all [laughs]. But he knew who I was, which I was surprised about. When he did *Space Cowboys*, there was a sequence in the beginning of the movie that he was considering me for. His wife was actually the one who told me that they watched *Pleasantville*, and he initially wanted me to play the role in *Space Cowboys*, but he decided later to go with someone else. But it was like, 'So Clint Eastwood actually knew who I was.' That was cool."

What was it like working with Clint those first couple of days on the set?

"Well, I introduced myself at a kick-off party. It apparently went off pretty well because several people came up to me and they were like, 'Man, Clint thought that was really cool the night of the party when you went up and introduced yourself.' I was just like, 'That's how I do it. That's just how I was brought up.' He's a lot like my dad or grandfather in the way that he carries himself and his demeanour, so I wasn't really too intimidated by him. I'm more intimidated in working with Jessica Alba than I am working with a guy like Clint Eastwood [laughs]."

Why didn't you do the new *Superman*?

"Because I'm insane I guess [laughs]. At least, that's what people are saying. People keep saying I could have made a gazillion dollars on that franchise. I could have my own fleet of jets and buy my own island. Look, I'm doing okay. I'm no Tom Cruise or Ben Affleck. I'm not loaded, but I'm very comfortable financially. The thing with Paul Walker is that he is very low maintenance. My favourite brand of runners cost me \$23 and I rarely pay more than \$40 for my jeans. Throw in a shirt that costs \$20 or a T-shirt that costs \$10 on the beach, and I'm dressed. You don't need to make gazillions to manage that. I know I sound like a broken record but 12 years ago I was living out of a garage and pan-handling so this is heaven to me. I don't do the red carpet thing unless I really have to, and I'm not a party kind of guy. You don't see Paul Walker doing the party circuit. I go to barbecues or take a trip to Mexico with my buddies."

Do you enjoy being a celebrity?

"Yeah, I like the perks. I mean, to me, I guess being a celebrity or famous person has never really been a big draw for me. I mean, I like the idea of making movies, but really it's one of the few professions or careers that really allows you to live more than one life. And so, you know, I'm pursuing a bunch of different things, and I think aside from maybe possibly selling real estate or being a fireman, there really aren't too many other professions that I get to have my cake and eat it, too." **G**

Earl Dittman is a Houston-based entertainment writer.



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Sideways brought
VIRGINIA MADSEN back from
the brink of obscurity, and now
FIREWALL gives the resurrected
actor a chance to star
opposite Harrison Ford

| BY EARL DITTMAN

VIRGINIA MADSEN'S SECOND CHANCE

Remember Virginia Madsen? No, not the mature, intriguing Virginia Madsen who earned an Oscar nomination last year for her performance in *Sideways*. The old Virginia Madsen. The one who appeared in all those movies from the mid-'80s through the mid-'90s — *Dune*, *The Hot Spot*, *Ghosts of Mississippi*, *The Rainmaker*.

And then she disappeared. Well, unless you were really into made-for-TV and straight-to-video movies.

"I had gotten to the point where I was doing movies that just didn't matter to me," the still-stunning 42-year-old recalls, dressed in tight black jeans and a low-cut matching top during an interview at a Toronto hotel. "Basically, I was on the money train and I was being underestimated and that was what was bothering me the most. I didn't really care about anyone's opinion, because to me, I was experimenting. I was learning about filmmaking and learning about acting. Then it stopped being about acting and it was just about making money, and I just was really not satisfied with that."

When Madsen began to feel that her agency had no faith in her acting ability, and only considered her one of their more profitable meal tickets, she showed them the door.

"I began to realize that my representation really didn't think that I was talented," recalls the Chicago-born sister of actor Michael Madsen (*Kill Bill* movies). "I also found out that my agent was probably on the money train, too, so I wasn't really being allowed to do what I was capable of. It was just a lot of craziness, and so I fired everyone. I stepped back, got divorced [from *Birth* star Danny Huston], got pregnant [with boyfriend model/actor Antonio Sabato Jr.], had a baby [son Jack in 1994] and I moved to New Mexico."

Madsen's relationship with Sabato was short-lived, forcing the now-single mother to book several minor acting gigs in order to keep food on the table. "When I went back to work, I really didn't want to," Madsen remembers. "I had waited so long to have a baby and there was just nothing cooler than being with him. I'd always wanted to have children and I thought that I would have about five, and as it is I'm blessed with having him."

The more time Madsen spent away from Southern California, the less offers came in, so she began to take roles in high-profile TV series (*The Practice*, *CSI: Miami*) and independent productions

PHOTO OF VIRGINIA MADSEN AT LAST YEAR'S OSCARS COURTESY A.M.P.A.S.



Husband and wife Harrison Ford and Virginia Madsen protect their kids in *Firewall*

(Madsen), with a comfortable life. But master thief Billy Cox (Paul Bettany) has devised a way to outsmart the security specialist, and in an effort to extort \$100-million dollars, Cox — electronically and virtually — becomes Stanfield. To complete his mission, Cox and his accomplices have to take Stanfield's family hostage until the money has been secured. In an effort to save his family, Stanfield has to breach his own security system and incriminate himself as the thief.

"What I liked about it the most is that it's more than a wife-in-danger kind of role, it gives me a chance to really act again, and I really enjoy that," Madsen says. "This film has made me realize how much I love acting. I mean, honestly, you can't get much better than a Harrison Ford movie, can you?"

Firewall isn't the only film Madsen has coming out over the next year. Having just completed her part in director Robert Altman's big-screen adaptation of Garrison Keillor's radio series *A Prairie Home Companion* (which also stars Robin Williams, Meryl Streep, Kevin Kline and Tommy Lee Jones) and the family drama *The Ripple Effect*, Madsen is currently filming the political drama *The Astronaut Farmer* with Billy Bob Thornton and Bruce Willis. Later this year, she'll begin work on *In the Shadow of Wings*, a drama with Joan Plowright and Tim Roth. And while her career is on a major upswing, even in her darkest hour, Madsen says she never, ever considered giving up being an actor — and never will.

"I never left all the way, but I really was halfway out the door," she says. "Really, I have a lot of other interests, so I have a really full life. I'm quite happy not working. But I also need to make a living, and acting is still my passion, so I couldn't retire. I wasn't ready to leave it. I don't think that I ever will be, it's too much fun. I play dress up, that's my job, to play dress up. How cool. And I travel and I meet great people and it's creative. I'm so fortunate that I pursued a dream and it was a dream realized and now that I'm grown up I realize that very few people in the world do that or get the opportunity to do that. And so I think that it'd be foolish of me and kind of arrogant to turn my back on that. What would that say to my son?" **F**

Earl Dittman is a Houston-based entertainment writer.

that often never saw the light of day.

"There were so many movies that I did that either went straight-to-DVD or are sitting on a shelf somewhere, collecting dust," Madsen explains, sipping on a hot cup of tea. "In fact, there's this great film called *The Florentine*. The cast included myself, my brother Michael, Tom Sizemore, Luke Perry, Mary Stuart Masterson, Jill Hennessy, Burt Young and Jim Belushi. It was made about five years ago, and it was such a good film, but no studio would distribute it. It was a shame."

Even worse, as Madsen drew closer to her 40th birthday, the remaining film and TV offers dwindled to near zero. Her lack of paying gigs threw her finances into such chaos there was a real danger she would lose her home. But, before she and Jack could be evicted, her new reps told her about a script by wunderkind filmmaker Alexander Payne titled *Sideways*, a dry comedy about wine, growing old and finding love.

But Madsen wasn't optimistic about her chances of landing the female lead — a lonely waitress with a nose for vino.

"I wasn't even given an entire script to read, just two scenes," Madsen remembers. "I immediately knew that everyone in the world would want to be in this movie and someone else probably would've been signed on without me ever having read a line. I was really upset that I only got a couple of scenes. I was like, 'This is so TV.' That's what they do with networks...and then they're going to tell me that I was wrong for it. I told my reps, 'That's an outrage! Tell them I'll

call them later.' But when I read these two scenes it was all there. I knew exactly who this woman was. It was so beautifully written that it was just me. So I called them back up and told them I wanted to read."

After a handful of meetings, Payne agreed that Madsen was perfect for the role. Once *Sideways* hit the film festival circuit, Madsen received almost unanimous praise, and a star was born — again. Her performance so impressed critics and her peers, Madsen ended the year with Academy Award, Screen Actors Guild and Golden Globe nominations for Best Supporting Actress, as well as a message on her answering machine from Harrison Ford asking if she would like to co-star with him in his upcoming action-thriller *Firewall*. She thought it was a prank.

"When I heard it, it sounded like Harrison Ford, but I just figured somebody was playing a trick on me, because this was before *Sideways* had really taken off. But I found out it was real and I called him right back, going, 'I'll do it! I'll do it,'" she recalls with a laugh. "Overnight, it was like people in the industry remembered who I was again, and I knew that Jack and I wouldn't have to sleep under any bridges. More than that, I was really impressed that Harrison Ford wanted me, specifically, to be in a movie with him. That was a real vote of confidence, and a nice paycheck."

Firewall features Ford as Jack Stanfield, an anti-theft specialist for a Seattle-based bank, a job which provides his two children and his architect wife, Beth

After turning the project down twice, **STEVE MARTIN** finally committed to **THE PINK PANTHER**. Here he tells us why | **BY EARL DITTMAN**

IN THE

PINK

In the four decades since Peter Sellers turned Chief Inspector Jacques Clouseau into a cultural icon via the 1963 comedy *The Pink Panther*, a handful of actors — including Kevin Spacey and Mike Myers — have toyed with the idea of resurrecting the role. But one by one, each got cold feet. The character, after all, is so intrinsically bound to Sellers, the brilliant British actor who died of a heart attack in 1980 at age 55.

Then Steve Martin got a hold of the project. And, although he admits he had those same trepidations, Martin pressed on.

“The only thing that concerned me was whether our version of *The Pink Panther* could be successfully updated and vitalized with another actor — presumably me,” the 60-year-old, Texas-born actor/writer/comedian recalls with a laugh during an interview in Toronto last fall. “The thing about Peter Sellers was that he was the absolute, perfect person for that character that he created. So my task was to, within the context of *The Pink Panther*, create a character that I feel that comfortable in and feel that funny in.”

Martin collaborated with his *Cheaper by the Dozen* director Shawn Levy and enlisted the aid of co-stars Kevin Kline, Beyoncé Knowles and Jean Reno for this prequel to the 1963 Blake Edwards-directed comedy (which spawned a slew of sequels).

Sporting the same title as the original, 2006's *The Pink Panther* finds Clouseau on the case of a murdered soccer coach whose world-famous diamond, nicknamed “The Pink Panther,” was stolen when he was killed. Kline plays Clouseau's boss, Chief Inspector Dreyfus, Beyoncé is Xania, an international pop singer, and Reno is Gendarme Gilbert Ponton, a sidekick of sorts for Clouseau, since the film has no Cato (Clouseau's martial arts-expert manservant in the Sellers films).

Why did you want to do another version of *The Pink Panther*?

“More than anything, I was just looking for a physical comedy to do. Then, all of a sudden, this came along. That's when I sort of questioned myself about whether or not I could handle it.... I decided that I could, I was up to it, and I liked the team I was going to work with, so I went ahead and did it. By the way, you'll love it.”

Isn't it true, though, that you actually passed on *The Pink Panther*...twice?

“It was a very difficult decision. I thought



The Pink Panther's befuddled Steve Martin (centre) with co-stars Jean Reno and Beyoncé Knowles

about it for two months, and I did turn it down twice. But what changed my mind was actually Shawn Levy, the director of the movie.... We were just talking about it and I said, ‘Well, I did have this one idea.’ Like, I'd kind of pass it to him and then Shawn said, ‘Well, that sounds kind of funny,’ and then I went and said, ‘Well, let me play with the script a little bit.’ So I went home and started writing the script without anyone knowing it, really, and I liked what I came up with and so here I am talking about doing *The Pink Panther* [laughs]. Making it a prequel really solved any creative or mental problems I had about playing Inspector Clouseau.”

So working with Levy convinced you?

“Well, what gets me these days, I've found, is the script. But I always found the *Panther* script so moving at the end that no matter what had gone on before — and the script was rewritten after I signed on — but the end always made me kind of teary.... So I liked Shawn, I liked his enthusiasm and I liked the spirit of his comic timing. And now, these days, I do look at that a lot, who's going to be around with me on the set. Kevin is incredible, we all know that, and so is Beyoncé. I mean, that Beyoncé is a natural talent at everything, singing, acting, dancing, and probably even figure skating.”

Are you saying that your co-stars have to have the same level of enthusiasm for a film as you before you'll do it?

“Listen, I have no enthusiasm for anything [laughs]. I'm kidding, but I'm kind of

serious. See, if you're enthusiastic, I'll be enthusiastic. Like, with Clouseau, I'm very, very enthusiastic and very challenged by it. I just wanted *The Pink Panther* to be really, really funny. And if Jean, Kevin, Beyoncé and every single crew member wanted it to be as funny as I did, chances are, it'll be that way.”

Who makes you laugh?

“Who's around now that you might know? It's hard to say. I like David Letterman and Scooby-Doo. Daffy Duck is fun. I had dinner with him once.”

Do you feel pressure to be funny in real life?

“I don't feel pressure when I'm around strangers. I like to be funny around friends. I feel pressure to be funny when I'm doing interviews. Although, I'm not being very funny.... When I was shooting *Shopgirl*, there was an extra on the set, and I think that I said to the director, ‘So then I would just walk up to this mark,’ and the extra went, ‘Ha ha ha,’ and I had no idea what she was laughing at.”

When did you know that you were funny?

“I don't know if I ever thought that I was funny, but I knew that I loved comedy early on from watching television and watching movies.”

What do you think of *Saturday Night Live* these days?

“I think that they're brilliant. I mean, I don't know all of their names even, but I know some of the people that I've worked with like Molly Shannon. She's not on ▶▶



the show anymore, but she's fabulous. A lot of people on there are funny."

Does watching the show bring back memories?

"No, it doesn't bring back memories, but I still might do the show again. We've talked about it. It'd be kind of fun."

What are your goals these days?

"Well, to keep doing good work however that manifests itself and, let's put it this way, to do less bad work."

Do you see *Shopgirl* as the end of your Los Angeles trilogy after *L.A. Story* and *Bowfinger*?

"I never thought of it that way, but that's what I'm going to say from now on [laughs]."

It seems like you are still fascinated with Los Angeles and the people that live there. True?

"Oh yeah. I love Los Angeles, because it's home for me now. I hated it 20 years ago, so I left. By the way, it was terrible, it was filled with smog. But now it's changed."

What's changed about it?

"The smog. That's one of the biggest

things that changed. Another thing is 'no smoking.' I don't know if you are a smoker or not, but I used to go to a restaurant or work in a nightclub, come home and everything stunk. Especially my hair, because I had long hair and I would think, 'What is that smell?' It took me a long time to figure out that it was in my hair. I don't know, the environment just got so much better. And money helps."

So you don't feel that, with the smoking ban, we're starting to micro-manage people's habits?

"No, because to me smoking is such a blatant intrusion. I used to sit on an airplane and a guy would light up right next to me. Aside from being a health issue, it's such a courtesy issue to me."

Do you still have a hunger for acting and screenwriting?

"Definitely writing."

Do you have to work or could you quit at any time?

"I can retire at any moment, and I'd be completely fine.... I kept thinking about retiring. But then it dawned on me... You've been in the business four decades, you're not going to stop."

What re-energized you?

"Well, years ago I took some time off. After *Sgt. Bilko* I just hated myself. By the way, I'm not criticizing the movie, I just thought, 'What am I doing?' I took a couple of years off and just didn't do anything. Maybe three years. Then, one day, I was sitting in my backyard trying to write something funny and I wrote *Bowfinger*."

What is taking time off like for Steve Martin?

"My days are completely full. Like I said, I would write. Not every day, but when I felt like it. I have a life. I get up in the morning and I exercise, then I have lunch. In the afternoons, I would write and sometimes I would have dinner. I travel. I go places in the summer."

Will you ever do standup again?

"No, not at all. First of all, you have to really dedicate yourself to it. You just can't go out for a couple of nights and go, 'I've got it.' You've got to be on the road for a year. I don't want to go on the road for a year. I've got a dog now. He's the sweetest dog."

Are you happy?

"I'm pretty happy, but you can't be all the time. I think that it is the artist's job to be unhappy. I mean, not to be unhappy in life, but to be dissatisfied with what you've done, because, then, you'll always keep going forward. You can't walk around feeling invincible, because there are too many variables in this business to walk around with a big head, you'll just be knocked down. And I've been knocked down, and I've come back."

Are you happy in your personal life?

"Very much. I really am."

Do you think that happiness reflects in an actor's career?

"I realized a long time ago, and I don't even know if it's true, I remember having this thought, though, that working on acting is best done by working on yourself. And the smarter and richer you become, the better actor you are going to be, because you are going to know more about people. I know it made me a better writer, that's for sure." 

Earl Dittman is a Houston-based entertainment writer.

coming | soon |

can't wait for...

| BY MARNI WEISZ

American Dreamz (April)

This satiric comedy written and directed by **Paul Weitz** (*About a Boy*, *In Good Company*) has the potential to be either extremely funny or extremely offensive — perhaps both, but we're betting on the former.

Poking fun at both pop culture and politics it revolves around an *American Idol*-esque talent show called *American Dreamz* that's hosted and produced by the self-loathing Martin Tweed (**Hugh Grant**). **Mandy Moore** plays wannabe pop star Sally Kendoo who enthusiastically embraces everything that's false and plastic about fame.



But when Tweed decides to shake up the show by finding an Arab contestant, he unwittingly invites a terrorist bomber to compete. Which makes more sense when you know that the President of the United States (**Dennis Quaid**) is planning to make an appearance as a guest judge. No mystery how Weitz leans politically —

Quaid's President is a sheltered, ignorant eccentric whose decision to read a newspaper for the first time in four years leads him to spiral into madness, while **Willem Dafoe** (made up to look a lot like **Dick Cheney**) plays his Chief of Staff, who does everything possible to keep the Prez from finding out about the real world.

BRIEFLY...

MARCH ☞ *R.V.* — Looks like **Chevy Chase** has passed the beleaguered-dad-taking-his-unappreciative-family-on-a-road-trip torch to **Robin Williams**, who leads his brood on an R.V. tour through the Colorado Rockies in this slapstick comedy.

APRIL ☞ *Take the Lead* — This real-life story about Pierre Dulane (**Antonio Banderas**), who taught dance in the New York public school system, was shot in Toronto last year. Look for *Degrassi: The Next Generation*'s **Lauren Collins** as one of the dance students.

MAY ☞ *Over the Hedge* — DreamWorks' latest animated feature may be cute, but it's also a pointed commentary on urban sprawl. As a group of animals emerges from a winter's hibernation they realize that the peaceful wilderness where they used to forage for nuts and berries has been replaced by a brand-new subdivision.



Poseidon (May) If for no other reason, you should see *Poseidon* because cutie-pie star **Josh Lucas** completely destroyed his thumb to make it. (Everyone together: "Awww...") He even needed surgery to correct the nearly detached digit — the result of a botched action scene in which he was pushed into a wall by rushing water.

Anyway...if you haven't already guessed, this is a remake of the 1972 disaster flick *The Poseidon Adventure*. Lucas plays John Dylan, a professional gambler who is one of a handful of survivors after a luxury liner goes down in the middle of North Atlantic Ocean. **Kurt Russell**, **Emmy Rossum** and **Richard Dreyfuss** play other passengers who follow Dylan as he races to find a way out of the upside-down ship before it becomes completely submerged. The thriller was directed by **Wolfgang Petersen** (*Das Boot*, *The Perfect Storm*) who knows something about filming boats going down at sea.

MARIE-CHANTAL PERRON:

All the kiddies of Québec know her as Mademoiselle Charlotte, star of 2002's *La Mystérieuse Mademoiselle C.* and 2004's *L'Incomparable Mademoiselle C.*



Famous in Québec

The separation issue. Habs vs. Leafs. The country has never been as divided as it is right now, looking at the striking photography of **Jocelyn Michel**. Those who live in Québec see three of the province's most famous movie stars — Anne-Marie Cadieux, Isabelle Blais and

Marie-Chantal Perron; those who don't, merely see three intriguing people set against Michel's evocative scenarios.

Michel — a regular snapper for our sister publication, *Famous Québec* — will show these photographs (and more) at Montreal's **Foyer Luce-Guilbeault** at the

Cinémathèque québécoise (rvcq.com) from **February 17 to 26** as part of the **24th Les Rendez-vous du cinéma québécois**. The celebration of Québec's year in cinema also includes screenings of short and feature films, documentaries and animation.

ISABELLE BLAIS:
She played Rémy Girard's far-away daughter in the Oscar-winning *The Barbarian Invasions*, and also starred in *Québec-Montréal* and *Les Aimants*.



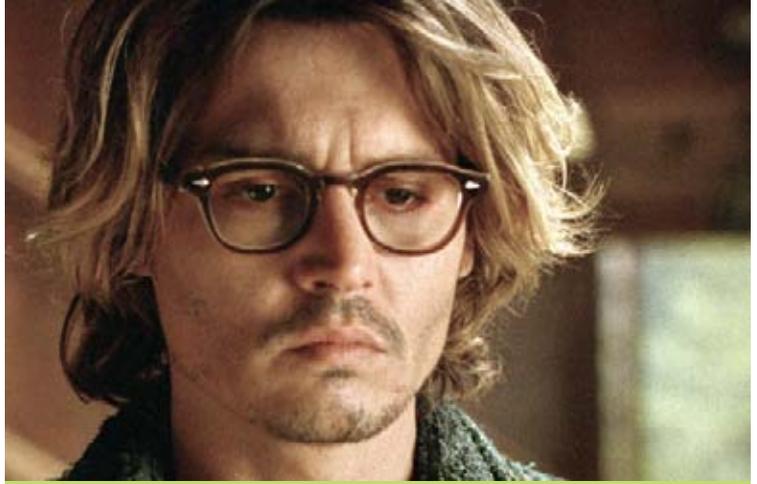
ANNE-MARIE CADIEUX:
For years she was Robert Lepage's muse, but her more recent roles include last year's *Maman Last Call* and the TV shows *Cover Girl* and *Annie et ses hommes*.

CARELL GETS SMART, DEPP PLAYS HEROIN ADDICT, AND DANES GOES TO LOURDES

BY INGRID RANDOJA

DANES IS A BIG WINNER

Claire Danes once again proves she's no dramatic lightweight by joining **Maggie Smith**, **Joan Allen**, **Brenda Blethyn** and **Kathy Bates** for the Irish dramedy *Pushers Needed*. The movie, directed by Irishman **Jimmy Smallhorne**, focuses on a group of working-class housewives who win a trip to Lourdes, the French town that draws millions of Catholic pilgrims each year, many in search of a miracle. No word yet on a North American release date.



DEPP Bombay-bound

Johnny Depp made waves early last year when his production company plopped down \$2-million (U.S.) for the film rights to Australian author **Gregory David Roberts'** novel *Shantaram*. Based on Roberts' real-life experiences, the book recounts his daring escape from prison, where he was serving 19 years for armed robbery, a crime he committed while addicted to heroin. Roberts makes his way to Bombay (now called Mumbai), India, where he lives in the city's slums, hooks up with the local mafia, and becomes a gunrunner, counterfeiter and smuggler, which helps pay for his other job, running a free health clinic. Depp will play Roberts — a role **Russell Crowe** was desperate to snag — and **Emily Watson** and **Helena Bonham Carter** have also signed on. Veteran Aussie filmmaker **Peter Weir** (*Master and Commander: The Far Side of the World*) will direct the film, which should be out in 2007.

SMART-ALECK CARELL

Don't get us wrong, we think **Steve Carell** is hilarious, but will the laughs keep coming when fans see him in *five* movies this year, and *four* next year? That's a lot of face time for any actor. That said, out of his nine upcoming films look for this September's *Get Smart* remake to be one of the sharpest. The redo of the '60s TV comedy is helmed by **Peter Segal** (*The Longest Yard*) and focuses on CONTROL's inept Agent 86, Maxwell Smart (Carell), as he matches what little wits he has with spies from the evil KAOS organization. Plus, his operating budget has been cut, meaning the secret agent is forced to work with out-of-date technology on a shoestring budget.

BRIEFLY

- **Sarah Michelle Gellar** has agreed to star in *The Grudge 2*.
- The debonair **Hugh Jackman** will play a guy who only dates heartbroken women in *The Rebound Guy*.
- Singer **Mary J. Blige** channels jazz legend Nina Simone in an upcoming bio-pic.
- *Jarhead's* **Jamie Foxx** returns to the Middle East to star in *The Kingdom*, about a squad of counter-terrorism investigators searching for the group responsible for an attack on American civilians.
- Look for **Will Smith** to play a depressed superhero in a mid-life crisis in *Tonight, He Comes*.

famous trivia



Harrison Ford in *Firewall*

1 Harrison Ford plays a security expert who's forced to rob a bank in the new action-thriller *Firewall*. This is his first movie in almost three years. Can you name his last?

2 Will Ferrell voices The Man in the Yellow Hat in the big-screen animated feature *Curious George*. In which of the following *Saturday Night Live* spin-off movies did Ferrell not have a role — *The Ladies Man*, *Superstar*, *A Night at the Roxbury* or *Wayne's World*?

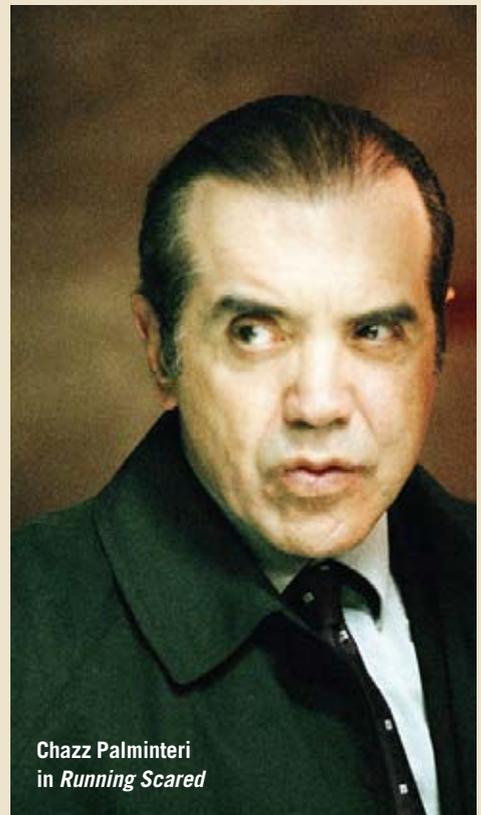
3 On which popular soap opera did *Eight Below* star Jason Biggs play Pete Wendall in the 1994-1995 season?

4 Chazz Palminteri plays a dirty cop in this month's *Running Scared*. Which 1993 film about a gangster-ridden borough of New York City did he write based on his own childhood? Clue: Robert De Niro starred and made his directorial debut.

5 Alyson Hannigan stars in *Date Movie*, a spoof of romantic comedies. Speaking of romance, on which TV show did Hannigan play one of primetime TV's first lesbian characters?

6 Which star of the mystery-thriller *Freedomland* took over Jodie Foster's character in the Hannibal Lecter films?

7 Matthew McConaughey plays a thirtysomething guy who still lives with his parents in *Failure to Launch*. In which of McConaughey's early movies did his character famously say, "That's what I love about these high school girls, man. I get older, they stay the same age."



Chazz Palminteri
in *Running Scared*

answers

1. Hollywood Homocide 2. Wayne's World 3. As the World Turns 4. A Bronx Tale 5. Buffy the Vampire Slayer 6. Julianne Moore 7. Dazed and Confused

Gifts with heart

Valentine's Day is all about pampering, whether it's your sweetie or yourself

BY LIZA HERZ

Valentine's Day is a bit like a conga line at a party. If you don't join in, you look like a wet blanket, and if you do, you may look rather foolish (all those tacky cards, cheap red lace). That said, how can we quibble with a holiday that centres on chocolate, champagne and the odd wispy bit of lingerie?

After our pitiful attempts at New Year's gym attendance and writing long lists of resolutions about sit-ups and fibre intake, we should reward ourselves with the spoils of the season. And for us, that means shopping.

For the most part, February is fashion's No Man's Land. Yes, the "resort" collections are now in stores, and if you're lucky enough to be heading to an island those bikinis and caftans are worth checking out. But if you're not going anywhere this February, let Valentine's offer a little relief from the doldrums of winter.

The colour red, while signifying all things amorous, can also work as a wonderful counterpoint to seasonal dreariness. Also, red is our national colour. During this Olympic month, while you may not be hillside in Turin for the luge event, you can at least sip your Starbucks while wearing a turtleneck sweater from Hbc's Team Canada line. And not to worry — the sweater is cleverly edged with bands of white to make even the least athletic among us look svelte.

See? We can even turn watching the Winter Games into a rationalization for buying new clothes, then showing them off while drinking coffee in public. It's a skill.

Who says fancy chocolates have to be imported? Old favourite **Laura Secord** now dazzles with some new flavours, like Orchard Pear and Pistachio Marzipan to name but two, and a new minimalist white-on-white box (\$13 for 200 g).





Wear your heart on your nightstand. Use this **Sterling Silver Heart Box** (Tiffany & Co., \$380) for stylish storage of your vitamins or, if you're lucky, some Tiffany diamond stud earrings.



Now that every female we know owns a black puffer coat, a **Red Bag** (Roots, \$128) is a welcome dose of colour. Caution — adding a red scarf or gloves may look like seasonal overkill.



Ohmygod, how cute is this? ELLE Girl's **For the Love of Shoes Savings Bank** (\$35, The Bay) is a great Valentine's gift for yourself or a friend. Start socking away those toonies now and be rich enough to splurge on pricey heels once the slush disappears.



Baring some skin this Valentine's Day? Spritz yourself with **Sugar Baby...Pretty Sweet Shimmer 'n' Shine Body Spray** (\$15, Shoppers Drug Mart) for glimmery limbs that smell like candy.



Ask Team Canada to be your Valentine and show your support by donning this red turtleneck sweater (\$65, The Bay) from Hbc's **Official Canadian Olympic Apparel**. The clever cut makes you look as slender and fit as an Olympian. Well, almost.



Light summer fragrances can be too citrusy and just plain wrong this time of year. **New Valentino V Absolu eau de parfum** (\$90 for 50 ml, The Bay) layers floral notes of heliotrope and rose that fuse with a warm base of cedarwood and musk for complexity and elegance.



A classic red lipstick like Revlon's **Superlustrous Lipstick in Valentine** (\$9.50 department and drug stores) is both wonderfully seasonal and iconically chic. Apply carefully but without a lipliner for a soft, modern mouth.

KILLER CARS

Full Auto's rides are equipped with more than power windows and anti-lock brakes | BY SCOTT GARDNER

FULL AUTO XBOX 360

Several generations ago (that's console generations) some savvy game makers noticed the popularity of both driving games and shooting games, and cleverly combined them, creating the classic "cars with guns bolted on 'em" action genre.

Developed by Toronto-based Pseudo Interactive, and published by Sega, *Full Auto* for Xbox 360 is the first next-generation combat racer. Although it may not revolutionize the genre, it does promise to use the increased processing power of the 360 to deliver stunning graphics, crazy-fast driving and fully interactive environments.

The story, for what it's worth, goes something like this: in the

near future a mysterious organization known as The Shepherds is holding your city hostage, and coerces you, a retired driver, into participating in a deadly series of street races. But of course it's not really about narrative, it's about picking a great-looking car, strapping a wide selection of machine guns, cannons and rocket launchers onto it, and taking to the streets.

What really separates *Full Auto* from other combat racing is that your over-the-top weaponry allows you to blast both other racers *and* the environment around you. The advanced physics engine means giant signs on the sides of buildings fall to the street, structures



crumble and entire gas stations explode during the course of a race. So even if you can't catch the car ahead you can still use a rocket to drop an apartment block on him.

Another nifty feature never seen in a racing game before is the ability to turn back time. Daring driving and good shooting

will earn you limited amounts of this "unwreck" time, then if you hit a jump wrong or smash into a wall, the touch of a button allows you to replay the last few seconds.

The game's only obvious limitation: You may need a Y chromosome to truly appreciate such vehicular mayhem.



STACKED WITH DANIEL NEGREANU PC, PS2, PSP, XBOX

Creating a poker title that conveys all the complexities of a high-stakes game of Texas Hold 'Em is a tricky proposition, but *Stacked* has two things going for it. One is the participation of North York, Ontario's Daniel Negreanu, who happens to be the all-time World Poker Tour money winner. The second is the exclusive use of the University of Alberta's "Poki" AI system, considered to be the most advanced poker-playing software on the planet.

Since *you*, however, are probably not the most advanced poker-playing human on the planet, *Stacked* features in-depth

tutorials that start with basics such as hand values, and move on up to betting strategies. But don't get too comfortable — as you progress through the game's career mode your Poki-powered AI opponents actually adapt to your style of play.

Fortunately, though, the ever-helpful Negreanu also appears in the game with tips based on the cards you have and the cards the computer has. Once you've sharpened your skills it's time to go online and participate in massive tournaments against other real players.

RESONANCE XBOX, PS2

This third-person survival-horror game puts you in the pointy shoes of Faye Wynter, a young Renaissance noblewoman blessed (or cursed) with special witch-like powers. Like last year's excellent *Jade Empire*, *Resonance* blends puzzle solving, a deep storyline and other elements of a role-playing game with a real-time combat system.

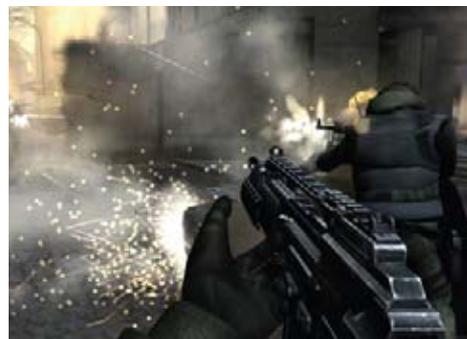
As a child, Faye was orphaned by the Inquisition and then raised by the king, who felt responsible for her parents' fate. Now grown, she works as a special envoy for the king until his untimely death sends her off on a journey of mystery and intrigue. Hounded by the Inquisition, she

tries to discover the meaning behind her special powers, and her role in an epic struggle between religion and science.

BLACK PS2, XBOX

Developed by Criterion games and Electronic Arts — the team that collaborated on the stellar *Burnout* racing series — the intense, violent, *BLACK* has a terrific pedigree and could be the last great first-person shooter for the current generation of consoles.

BLACK puts you on a covert strike force that travels the globe carrying out "black ops" — missions so secret and deadly that their very existence is denied by the government. Operatives are trained to the highest level in the lethal arts, and the team's motto is "by any means necessary."





GAMES OF THE MONTH

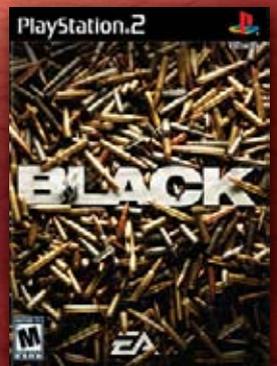
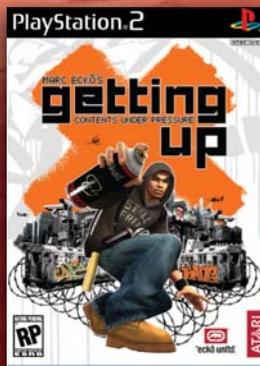
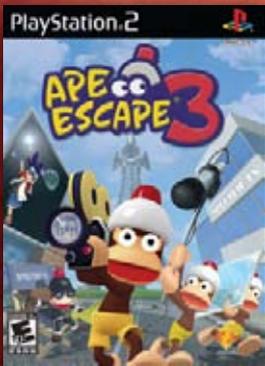
APE ESCAPE 3

MLB 06
THE SHOW

MARC ECKO'S GETTING UP:
CONTENTS UNDER
PRESSURE

24:
THE GAME

BLACK



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new releases

GO HOME WITH **WALLACE & GROMIT, THE WEATHER MAN** OR **JULIA** | BY MARNI WEISZ

FEBRUARY 7



DOOM

Stars: Dwayne Johnson, Karl Urban
Director: Andrzej Bartkowiak (*Exit Wounds*)
Story: Twelve years after the release of the

groundbreaking videogame comes this shoot-'em-up for the big screen. Dwayne "The Rock" Johnson plays Sarge, a Marine who's sent to investigate when something goes terribly wrong at a research station on Mars. **DVD Extras:** featurettes on the *Doom* videogame franchise and cast training

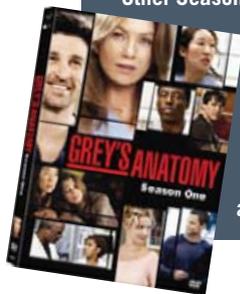
ELIZABETHTOWN

Stars: Orlando Bloom, Kirsten Dunst
Director: Cameron Crowe (*Vanilla Sky*)
Story: A failed shoe designer (Bloom) returns to his small Kentucky hometown for his father's funeral. There, he reunites with his quirky family and makes a connection with a flight attendant (Dunst) who wants to show him life ain't so bad.

TV on DVD

There's nothing new about a show involving young doctors learning their trade and having affairs in the starched confines of a hospital, but for some reason *Grey's Anatomy* (starring Patrick Dempsey, Ellen Pompeo and Canadian Sandra Oh) has garnered quite a devoted following. If you're late to jump on the bandwagon, the first season is out on DVD February 14th.

Other Season Ones out this month include Queen Latifah's *Living Single* (Feb. 14), and three cheesy-but-lovable sitcoms from the 1980s — *Charles in Charge*, *Growing Pains* and *Gimme a Break!*, all available on February 7th.



JUST LIKE HEAVEN

Stars: Mark Ruffalo, Reese Witherspoon
Director: Mark Waters (*Mean Girls*)
Story: A sad widower (Ruffalo) finally finds an apartment in San Francisco only to have its previous occupant (Witherspoon) return and insist she still lives there. Oh yeah, and she might be dead.



WAITING

Stars: Ryan Reynolds, Anna Faris
Director: Rob McKittrick (debut)
Story: The first of two

movies that co-starred Reynolds and Faris last fall (the second was *Just Friends*), *Waiting* was the one about a group of discontent wait staff at a restaurant called Shenanigans who spit in patrons' food and sing silly birthday songs while trying to figure out their lives over the course of one eight-hour shift.

WALLACE & GROMIT IN THE CURSE OF THE WERE-RABBIT

Voices: Peter Sallis, Ralph Fiennes
Directors: Steve Park, Nick Box
Story: The first full-length feature about inventor Wallace and his mute dog Gromit ended up on many critic's lists for the Best of 2005. In it, the pair try to find an ethical way to trap the mysterious beast who has been munching on neighbourhood gardens right before the annual Giant Vegetable Competition. **DVD Extras:** deleted scenes, "A Day in the Life of Aardman," "How Wallace and Gromit Went to Hollywood"

FEBRUARY 14

PROOF

Stars: Anthony Hopkins, Gwyneth Paltrow
Director: John Madden (*Shakespeare in Love*)
Story: Based on the Pulitzer Prize-winning play, in this moving drama a young woman (Paltrow) fears the madness that plagued her mathematician father (Hopkins) before

his death has been passed on to her. Jake Gyllenhaal steps in as Paltrow's love interest and fellow math whiz. **DVD Extras:** director commentary, deleted scenes, making-of feature

SAW II

Stars: Donnie Wahlberg, Shawnee Smith
Director: Darren Lynn Bousman (*Identity Lost*)
Story: On a budget of just \$4-million (U.S.) this horror sequel made an amazing \$87-million at the box office, proving some people just can't get enough of psychotic killers, innocent people held captive in booby-trapped shelters and games that end with piles of dismembered body parts. **DVD Extras:** deleted scenes, storyboards, director and cast commentaries, featurettes on props and deconstructing the traps

ZATHURA

Stars: Josh Hutcherson, Jonah Bobo
Director: Jon Favreau (*Elf*)
Story: Two bickering young brothers (Hutcherson, Bobo) discover that an old dusty board game called Zathura has the power to transport them into space where dangerous adventures await. Based on the book by Chris Van Allsburg, who also wrote (the very similar) *Jumanji* and *The Polar Express*. **DVD Extras:** Commentary with Favreau and Peter Billingsley (Ralphie from *A Christmas Story*), who co-produced

FEBRUARY 21

DOMINO

Stars: Keira Knightley, Mickey Rourke
Director: Tony Scott (*Man on Fire*)
Story: Promoted as being based on the life of model-turned-bounty-hunter Domino Harvey, several discrepancies arose after the film's release — like the fact that Harvey wasn't really a model. Also adding to the controversy, the fact that the real Harvey died of a drug overdose just a few months before the film came out. **DVD Extras:** commentaries, deleted and alternate scenes, "I am a Bounty Hunter"



NORTH COUNTRY

Stars: Charlize Theron, Woody Harrelson

Director: Niki Caro (*Whale Rider*)

Story: Inspired by true events, this stirring drama

stars Theron as Josey Aimes, who leaves her abusive husband and returns to her small-town Minnesota home where she takes a job at the local mine. Bad idea. The men at the mine don't want women honing in on their territory so they abuse Aimes and her female co-workers in an attempt to make them quit. Instead she takes them to court. **DVD Extras:** deleted scenes

THE WEATHER MAN

Stars: Nicolas Cage, Michael Caine

Director: Gore Verbinski (*The Ring*)

Story: A popular Chicago weatherman lands an audition for a big New York morning show hosted by Bryant Gumbel (playing himself). But moving to New York could mean leaving his family, which is already faltering. **DVD Extras:** "Relative Humidity: The Characters," "Extended Outlook: The Script," "Trade Winds: The Collaboration"

FEBRUARY 28

THE ICE HARVEST

Stars: Billy Bob Thornton, John Cusack

Director: Harold Ramis (*Analyze That*)

Story: When a mob lawyer (Cusack) and a strip-club owner (Thornton) successfully steal \$2-million from the local mob boss on Christmas Eve all they want to do is get out of town. But an ice storm, and a string of frustrating incidents, prohibit them from doing that.

DVD Extras: two alternate endings, featurettes, director commentary

PRIDE & PREJUDICE

Stars: Keira Knightley, Matthew MacFadyen

Director: Joe Wright (debut)

Story: Jane Austen's tale about the unlikely love affair between spirited but moderately stationed Elizabeth Bennet and prideful but noble Mr. Darcy holds up surprisingly well, especially since the BBC version is so beloved by so many.

This one is a bit grittier, but just as beautiful. **DVD Extras:** director commentary, "Behind the Scenes at the Ball," "A Bennet Family Portrait"

DVD SPOTLIGHT: JULIA (1977)

Since this is our Oscar issue, it seems fitting to focus on 1977's *Julia*, which earned 11 Oscar nominations at the 50th Academy Awards and is released on DVD for the very first time this month.

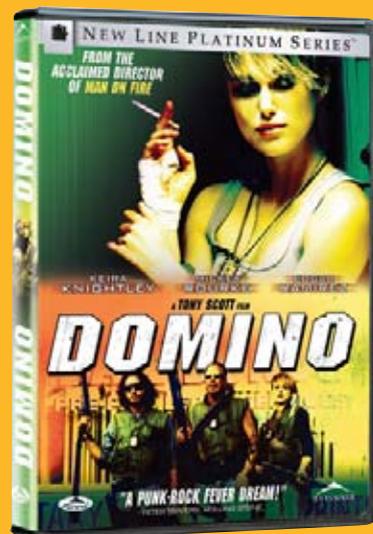
A semi-biographical drama about author Lillian Hellman (played by Jane Fonda), the film follows Hellman to Vienna in the 1930s to visit her friend Julia (Vanessa Redgrave), a fervent anti-Fascism campaigner who convinces Lillian to join the cause by smuggling money through Nazi Germany. Jason Robards steps in as Hellman's on-again/off-again love interest, writer Dashiell Hammett (*The Thin Man* stories).

Both Redgrave and Robards won Oscars for their supporting roles, each making a bit of history in the process. For Robards, it was his second win in a row (after *All the President's Men*), only the fourth time in history that had been done. And for Redgrave the win marked the first time an actor had won a Supporting statue for playing a film's title role. Plus, this is where Redgrave made her memorable and very controversial acceptance speech attacking "militant Zionist hoodlums" who didn't like her stance on the Israeli/Palestinian issue. Writer Alvin Sargent also won for Adapted Screenplay, and *Julia* probably would have won more awards had it not been released the same year as *Annie Hall* and *Star Wars*.

This is a two-disc Collector's Edition, but info about extras was scarce at press time. One bonus you can look forward to is seeing Meryl Streep in her very first big-screen role (albeit a tiny one) as the sister of one of Hellman's friends.



UNCOVERED:



Hidden Gems:
Discover a brilliant selection of great new films that we can recommend like 'Domino' at BLOCKBUSTER®, another great new film that everyone else seems to have missed.

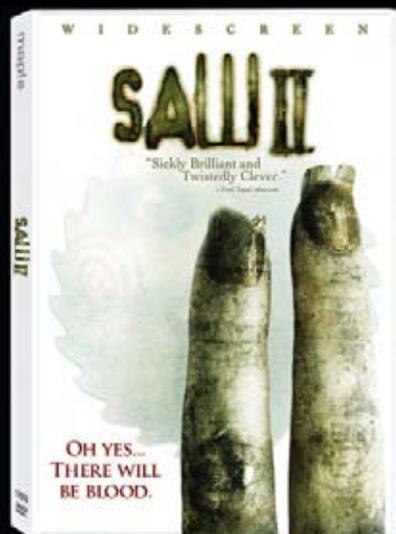
Rent or buy 'Domino' on DVD from February 21st.



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star | gazing |

February 2006

HOROSCOPE | BY DAN LIEBMAN

Aquarius

January 21 ☆ **February 19**

Gutsy Aquarius has no problem standing up to bullies this month, or taking on social causes. But February has an affectionate side too, and it continues well beyond Valentine's Day. Avoid extremes in all areas, especially exercise and wardrobe.

Pisces

February 20 ☆ **March 20**

Every time you think you're near the end of a task, you discover there's more to do. But by the end of February you can breathe a sigh of relief and take pride in some extraordinary achievements. Don't brush off any flirtations that come your way.

Aries

March 21 ☆ **April 20**

You're surrounded by charming, persuasive people, and can easily be sweet-talked into changing your mind. Enjoy a new winter sport, but watch out for a tendency to push yourself too hard. Midmonth marks the start of a period of enterprise and creativity.

Taurus

April 21 ☆ **May 22**

Anyone who tries to take advantage of your kindness — especially by volunteering your services — had better watch out. Right now, you're assertive, opinionated and full of surprises. You're also quite funny, and should think about doing stand-up comedy.

Gemini

May 23 ☆ **June 21**

If you've been writing letters of complaint or going after unpaid bills, you're about to get results. Lost objects start to surface. Your initial reaction to a new neighbour or co-worker is changing for the better. And a friend makes good on an ancient promise.

Cancer

June 22 ☆ **July 22**

You'll be making important decisions that involve personal as well as professional goals. The middle of the month is excellent for promoting off-the-wall ideas

or making sales pitches. A family situation becomes intense before being resolved by the 28th.

Leo

July 23 ☆ **August 22**

It's a good month to redecorate a room, teach a course and market your ideas. Plan to spend a lot of time waiting around — and carry some kind of portable project. The most romantic time for you is after Valentine's Day.

Virgo

August 23 ☆ **September 22**

Watch out for a tendency to make decisions without thinking about the long-term effects. Platonic friendships are front-and-centre late in the month as you and a new acquaintance establish a strong bond. If you wait for ideal conditions, you'll never finish a major job.

Libra

September 23 ☆ **October 22**

You click with friends of friends, but be sure to leave time for the people who mean the most to you. Libra's renowned diplomacy comes to the rescue in settling a neighbourhood feud. Give more thought to what you want to be when you grow up.

Scorpio

October 23 ☆ **November 21**

New faces brighten the month, and your social life is far more active than it's been. Friends take you into their confidence, sharing intriguing news. Be sure you don't reveal anything before it's official. Older family members are more responsive to suggestions.

Sagittarius

November 22 ☆ **December 22**

Challenges find you this month, even when you're not looking for them. Some are professional, others personal. In all situations, rely on your people skills. Mid-February is excellent for networking. The eccentric side of your personality takes over after the 20th.

Capricorn

December 23 ☆ **January 20**

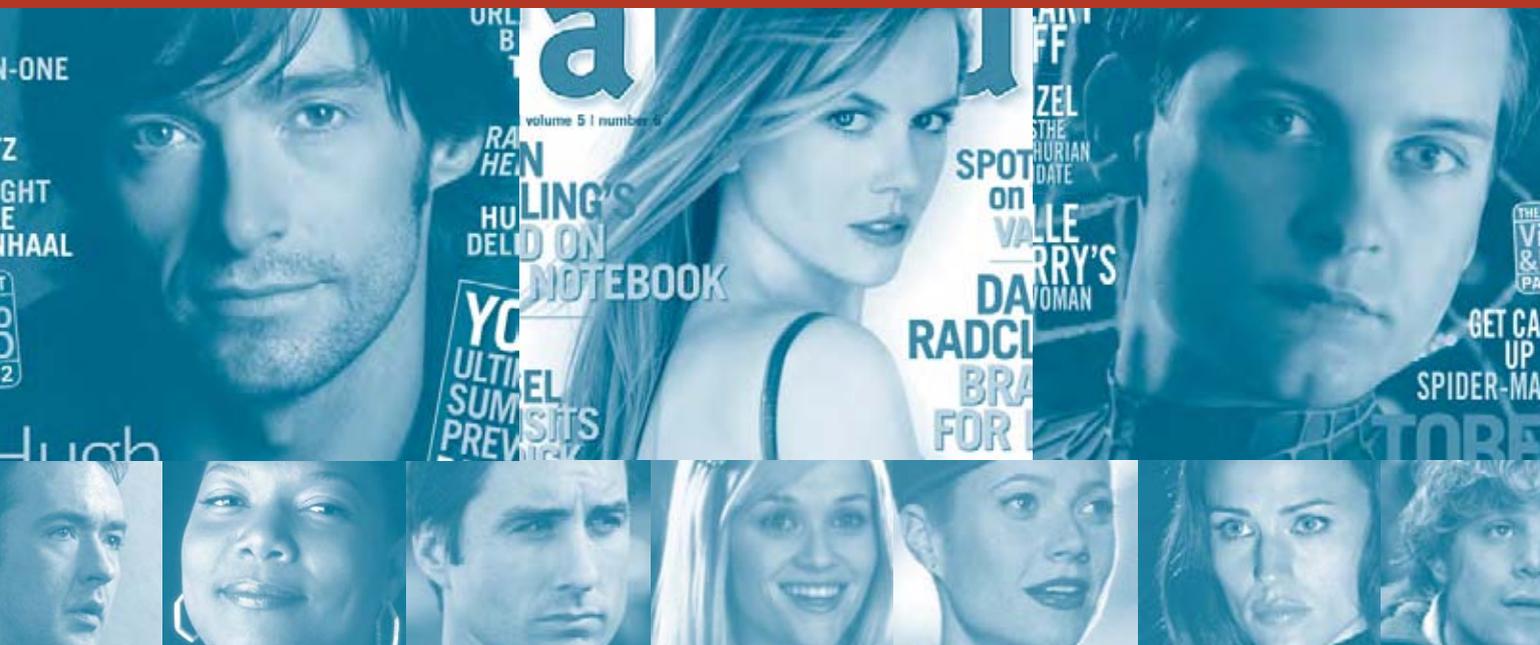
You keep running into the same person — and a lot more than coincidence is involved. Family disputes can be settled as long as you make a big compromise. It's a good month for home businesses and craft projects. Consider making money from a creative interest.

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10

STARS TALK ABOUT CHOCOLATE

BY SUSAN GRANGER



SALMA HAYEK

"When I heard about *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* I said to myself, if there's a place in the world where the river can be made of chocolate and the flowers can be made of candy and you can chew gum and fly, and then you can burp yourself back to Earth, I gotta be there."

MICHELLE PFEIFFER "Chocolate is the greatest gift to women ever created, next to the likes of Paul Newman and Gene Kelly. It's something that should be had on a daily basis. And I say that even though I'm not a big sweets person. But chocolate is the good stuff."

SHARON STONE "I'm a chocolate fiend, but only dark chocolate. I'm thinking of marketing my white-and-chocolate macadamia nut cookies. They're yummy. They're so not on my diet."

JODIE FOSTER "I don't eat chocolate because, otherwise, I remember how much I love it and I'd eat it every single day."

ALICIA SILVERSTONE "I love Cocoa Pebbles cereal but my favourite thing in the world is a box of European chocolates which, for sure, is better than sex."

TOM HANKS "After *Forrest Gump* people started giving them to me — and I still enjoy eating chocolates."

GOLDIE HAWN "I'm a moderate eater but a hot fudge sundae is something else."

WINONA RYDER "I'm crazy about Eskimo Pies...vanilla ice cream covered with a hard chocolate crust."

JENNA ELFMAN "I'm partial to cheap chocolate candy, like those chocolate coins in a little mesh bag."

RON HOWARD "I love Hershey bars, Butterfingers, ice cream with chocolate sauce on top, brownies, chocolate chip cookies. I'm lucky I'm not 200 pounds."



PHOTO BY VERA ANDERSON/WIREIMAGE



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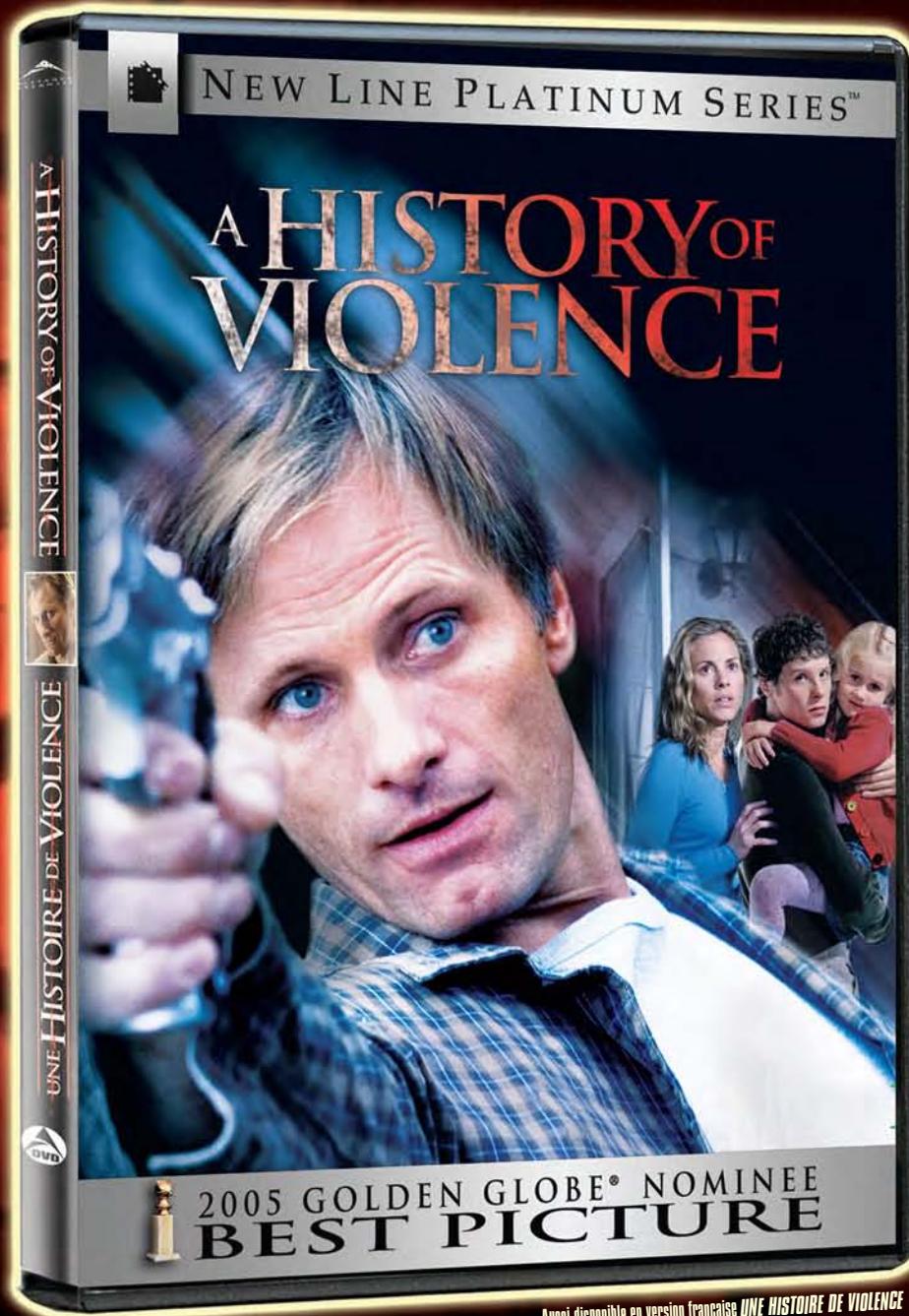
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- Deleted scene with commentary by director David Cronenberg
- “Acts of Violence” documentary
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— DAVID ANSEN, NEWSWEEK

STREET DATE: MARCH 14, 2006



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