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Famous

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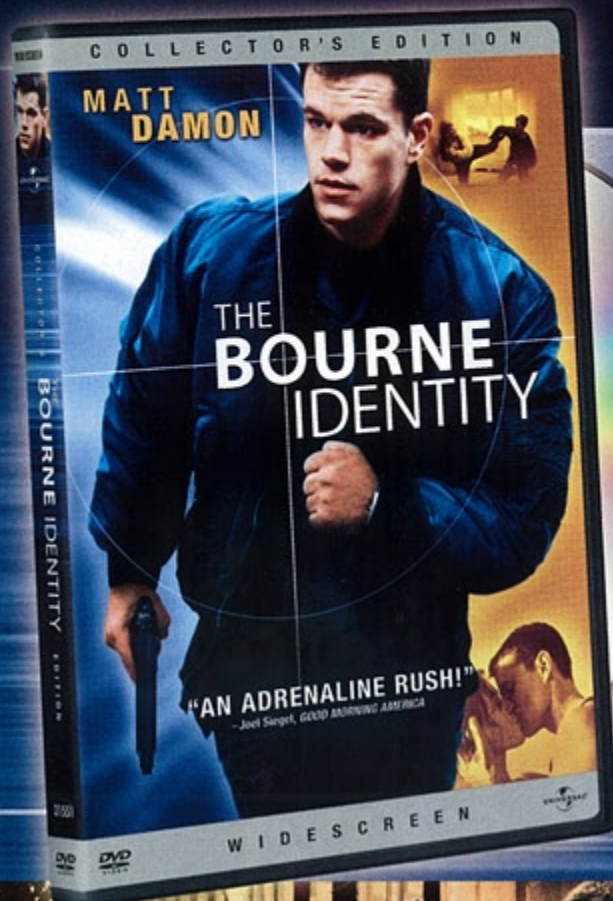
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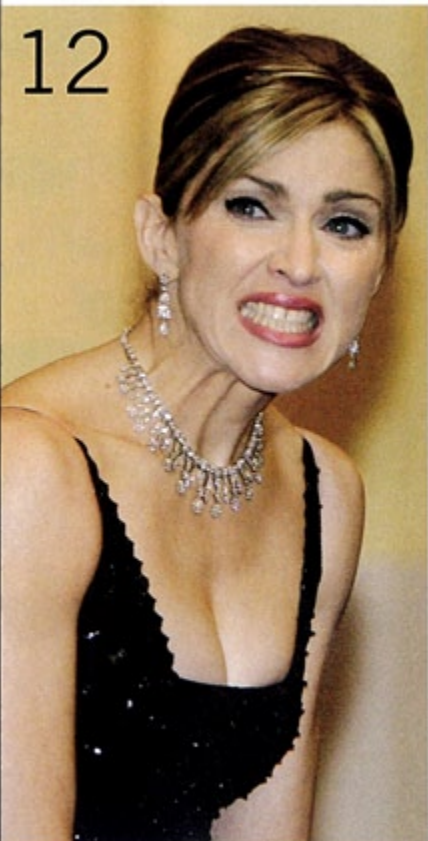
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Chicago's CHANGING POPULATION



Richard Gere
in *Chicago*

Read our cover story and you'll find out that, had they made the screen adaptation of Broadway's *Chicago* a few years ago, the cast would have been very different. At that time Goldie Hawn was tapped to play murderous showgirl Roxie Hart, a role which eventually went to Renée Zellweger, Madonna was the favourite for Catherine Zeta-Jones's Velma and John Travolta was considering a return to dance pics with Richard Gere's role, lawyer Billy Flynn.

But that's just a taste of the project's casting permutations. Queen Latifah finally nabbed the role of prison matron Mama Morton, but not before Rosie O'Donnell, Bette Midler, Pam Grier and Kathy Bates had been attached. Charlize Theron, Cameron Diaz, Nicole Kidman, Gwyneth Paltrow and Jennifer Lopez were all rumoured to be among the female leads. And, aside from Travolta, Kevin Kline, Hugh Jackman and Kevin Spacey each topped the list of Billy Flynn probables at one time or another.

Why so much flux? In part, because this film has been in some stage of production for more than 20 years. But it's probably also because any time an actor opens their mouth to sing, or tries to dance in a film, they're inviting a whole new level of criticism. In "Song and Dance Man," page 32, **Richard Gere** tells you why he was reluctant to take the part, and what eventually changed his mind.

Heath Ledger did a bit of dancing for his breakthrough role in *A Knight's Tale*, and it seemed to work for him. Now the heartthrob reunites with that period pic's co-star (Shannyn Sossamon) and director (Brian Helgeland) for *The Sin Eater*, a spooky modern murder mystery set in New York City. In "Losing his Religion," page 28, Ledger tells you about his character, a disillusioned priest who has a chilling theory about the culprit.

A Guy Thing promises to be a romantic comedy with a bit of an edge. Why? Because it stars Jason Lee — best known for quirky, off-beat pics like *Mumford* and *Chasing Amy* — and **Selma Blair**, also known for pushing the boundaries. Like that kiss she shared with Sarah Michelle Geller in *Cruel Intentions*, or her role in Todd Solondz's disturbing comic drama *Storytelling*. If you don't know her yet, you should. And "Blair Bares All," page 20, is a good place to start. —Marni Weisz

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Josh Lucas
in *Sweet Home
Alabama*

SHE'S NO ANNE MURRAY

As a long-time reader I found the Chantal Kreviazuk article in the October 2002 issue of *Famous* in very bad taste. As a role model for readers of your magazine, her foul language and arrogant diva attitude reveal her to be a person without any class or humility. Pretty much any other female Canadian singer would exemplify qualities of grace, sensitivity, wit and intelligence and be worthy of an opinion in your magazine. Chantal is simply an embarrassment.

Matthew Hagel — Calgary, Alta.

After reading your interview with Chantal Kreviazuk, I was disappointed to find that one of my favourite Canadian artists could have such an ugly attitude towards someone she doesn't know...what did Nicole Kidman ever do to her?! Have a little class Chantal!

Marit Chorney — Grasswood, Sask.

LUCAS FILMS

Your magazine is a great pick-up bonus in the theatre. All the articles have been very entertaining and very informative.

Hence, the request. I recently watched *Sweet Home Alabama* and I instantly fell in awe of Josh Lucas. I would appreciate any information about him — his past work, future projects, stats, etc.

Toni S. — Toronto, Ont.

He is pretty dreamy, isn't he? The man with the unbelievably blue eyes was born in



Kreviazuk

Arkansas (an accent he surely drew upon for his lovable redneck in Sweet Home Alabama), but moved around a lot as a child, with his family eventually settling in Tacoma, Washington.

Lucas made his big-screen debut as one of the stranded, and very hungry, rugby players in 1993's Alive, then spent most of the '90s appearing in less-than-memorable films like Father Hood (1993), True Blue (1996) and Restless (1998). In 2001, a short, but creepy, part as the older lover of a teen boy in the critically acclaimed The Deep End seemed to get him on track, and that same year he co-starred in A Beautiful Mind as Martin Hansen, John Nash's prime competitor at Princeton.

You'll have to wait until next summer for your next dose of Josh, when he'll appear in The Hulk as Bruce Banner's rival, Major Glenn Talbot.

SHAKEN BY BOND ERROR

Your team does a wonderful job on this publication and it is always a "must read" when we visit our local Famous Players theatre. I am hazarding a guess that I am not the first to contact you regarding an error, and probably not the last, but I hope you will take this feedback with the grain of salt it deserves. In "By the Numbers: 37 Facts about the James Bond Franchise," you made a small error in identifying that Shirley Bassey was the "Only singer to record two Bond songs [*Goldfinger* and *Moonraker*]." A favourite of the Broccoli family, Shirley actually recorded three Bond themes, and "Diamonds are Forever" should be added to your list. Keep up the good work.

Rod Morgan — Toronto, Ont.

FAMOUS FAN

I found your magazine in a Famous Players theatre in downtown Montreal. I was entertained with all of your features even before watching a movie. I can't wait to read next month's issue. Congratulations on a wonderful magazine!

Cliff Evans — Montreal, Que.

NOT AN EGOYAN FAN

Atom Egoyan is widely considered this country's most important director, according to Marni Weisz. Really? In what respect? If this is indeed the case, then is it any wonder that this country is such a cinematic laughing stock?

J. Butler — Toronto, Ont.

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New-found talent

When Joanne Kelly starts work on a new movie, she has a strange request of the director. "I get people to compile lists of the movies I should see, films that may have influenced them," she explains.

It's not that the 23-year-old is trying to suck up. It's just that she hasn't seen a lot of movies, and sometimes that puts her at a disadvantage.

But that's something you have to deal with when you're an actor from Bay d'Espoir, a tiny community of about 1,100 people on Newfoundland's south central coast — a town so small that it's "a few hours" from the nearest movie theatre in Grand Falls.

"There was a theatre in Bay d'Espoir for a while when I was a kid," Kelly recalls. "I think I remember seeing *E.T.* there. But it went out of business."

She's happy, though, to have grown up in Bay d'Espoir, which translates to "Bay of Hope" but comes out "Bay d'Espair" when it's uttered by the locals. "Yeah, whenever you tell someone where you're from they say 'You're from the Bay of Despair?'" Kelly says, laughing.

She doesn't think coming from such a small East Coast town has held her back in any way. In fact, it helped her understand the character she plays in her first big-screen flick, this month's *The Bay of Love and Sorrows*. The adaptation of a David Adams Richards book tells of a group of friends in Miramichi, New Brunswick, who get into trouble when a plan to make money takes a criminal turn. Terrence Malick's bloody classic *Badlands* was on director Tim Southam's "to-watch list."

Since leaving Newfoundland for Nova Scotia's Acadia University at 17, Kelly has done a bunch of theatre (mostly Shakespeare), some TV (including guest spots on *Mutant X* and *Tracker* and the movie of the week *Family Doctor* with Paul Sorvino and Olympia Dukakis) and a second feature film, the upcoming *Crime Spree*, in which she shares the screen with Gérard Depardieu and Harvey Keitel.

Right now, Kelly's living in Vancouver where she's shooting a new sci-fi series for the U.S. cable network Showtime. But she's dreaming about an upcoming trip home to Newfoundland — her first time back in three long years. Because, as much as she loves her home town, all the love in the world can't erase that \$1,400 plane fare, or the three-hour ride in from Gander airport. —MW



WHOLE WHEATON

If you've seen *Star Trek: Nemesis*, you will have noticed that at least one regular crew member from *Star Trek: The Next Generation* didn't have much of a part. Wil Wheaton, who played Wesley Crusher on the series from 1987 to 1990, shot several scenes for *Nemesis* but was cut from the film, except for a brief moment when he can be seen sitting with the other crew members at a wedding.

For the legions of Trekkies who despised Wesley, this may come as welcome news. In a message posted on Wheaton's personal website, www.wilwheaton.net, the actor recalls how it felt to know that his character was reviled. "Imagine being a teenager, trying to handle all the things a teenager has to deal with. Now multiply that times being on a huge TV show, and all these people hate you," he writes. "It was tough."

He must have some fans, though. Why else would he create a site filled with updates about his life, recollections about his career and lists of recommended books, CDs and videogames? Visitors can also buy merchandise, learn about Wheaton's pet social causes and even send him a message — although a personal reply is unlikely.

Wheaton stresses that he doesn't take himself too seriously, so we shouldn't either. "People (and by people, I mean *Star Trek* fans who were the inspiration for the Comic Book Guy on *The Simpsons*...you know who you are) have

been dumping on me for over 10 years," he writes, "and if I took myself too seriously, I'd probably be sitting in an urn next to River Phoenix."

In 1986's *Stand by Me*, Wheaton co-starred with Phoenix, who died of a drug overdose in 1993. "He was a wonderful actor, and a wonderful person, and it really f-cking sucks that nobody tried to stop him from becoming a complete junkie," he writes. "When I see the bullsh-t hacks who are passing for young, hot actors these days, I really miss River. Because he was a real actor, not a pre-packaged bunch of hype and marketing."

On the site, Wheaton explains why he quit the *Star Trek* series. "I was in a situation where I was constantly having to pass on really good movie roles because I was on the series," he writes. But his post-*Trek* career has been spotty — a number of forgettable films and some guest appearances on TV. He's also done some improvisational theatre and continues to appear at *Star Trek* conventions.

Wheaton confirms that he was Ashley Judd's first on-screen kiss (when she appeared in an episode of *The Next Generation*). "Uncle Willie went to bootytown," he writes. And he also confirms that the leeches in the boys' underwear in *Stand by Me* were real. "Can you imagine the sh-t [director] Rob Reiner got for putting real leeches on 12-year-olds? I mean, I still have a scar from it, if you get my drift." —JK



FILMS SHOOTING ACROSS THE COUNTRY THIS MONTH

GODSEND

Location: Toronto
Director: Nick Hamm (*The Hole*)
Cast: Robert De Niro, Rebecca Romijn-Stamos

After months of feeling blue...literally, in Vancouver, where she reprised her role as Mystique for *X-Men 2*, Rebecca Romijn-Stamos is in Toronto to star as a woman who loses her child and then lets a crazy doctor (Robert De Niro) clone her a new one. Needless to say, things go horribly wrong. Shooting should wrap up in February.



THE DAY AFTER TOMORROW

Location: Montreal
Director: Roland Emmerich (*Godzilla*)
Cast: Dennis Quaid, Jake Gyllenhaal

After suffering through a devastating ice storm several years ago, Montreal is being used for this flick about the onset of a new Ice Age. Dennis Quaid plays a scientist trying to save the world from the chilling effects of global warming while also racing north (against the flow of people fleeing south to safety) in search of his son (Jake Gyllenhaal) in New York City. The film shoots until March and will likely hit theatres next summer.



CAUGHT ON FILM

THE STARS AT WORK, REST AND PLAY



PHOTO BY MICHAEL CAULFIELD/WIREIMAGE



PHOTO BY JAMES DEWANEY/WIREIMAGE

▲ When you're Paul Newman, and you have a little charity project, you get a bit of support. **Julia Roberts** (left) and **Annette Bening** are just a couple of the celebs that participated in a reading of "The World of Nick Adams" at L.A.'s Kodak Theatre. The show, based on a collection of Hemingway stories, benefited Newman's camp for chronically and terminally ill kids. Tom Hanks, Matt Damon and Jack Nicholson also took part.

<<

Ben Affleck and his little co-star **Raquel Castro** take a break from shooting Kevin Smith's latest, *Jersey Girl*, in Central Park. The film, about a guy who becomes an instant dad when he marries a single mom, is due out this summer.

>>
 Maybe **Madonna** really, really had to pee as she waited in line to meet Queen Elizabeth at the London premiere of *Die Another Day*. Co-stars Rosamund Pike and Rick Yune show better bladder control.



PHOTO BY DAN CHUNG/REUTERS



PHOTO BY JEFFREY MAYER/WIREIMAGE

<<
 What can you really say? Something about flotation devices? That's cliché. Wonder if she has to sleep on her back? Anyway, **Pamela Anderson** and **Kid Rock** attend the *8 Mile* premiere at Mann Village Theatre in Westwood, California.

√ Sunny and warm at this time of year? No, **Heather Graham** and director **Chris Weitz** weren't in L.A. They were in Australia taking in the Melbourne Cup at Flemington Race Course.



PHOTO BY SERGE THOMANN/WIREIMAGE

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SEE A VIEW FROM THE TOP, SPEND A COUPLE HOURS IN CHICAGO OR GET TO KNOW THE RECRUIT



Julia Stiles and Jason Lee
in *A Guy Thing*

DECEMBER 25

CHICAGO

Who's In It? Renée Zellweger, Richard Gere
Who Directed? Rob Marshall (debut)

What's It About? Toronto stands in for Chicago in the roaring '20s for this big-screen version of the popular Broadway musical. Zellweger plays chorus girl Roxie Hart, who goes to jail for killing her cheating lover (Dominic West) and meets Velma Kelly (Catherine Zeta-Jones), whose lawyer is the "King of Razzle Dazzle" Billy Flynn (Gere). See **Richard Gere interview**, page 32.

DECEMBER 27

THE HOURS

Who's In It? Meryl Streep, Nicole Kidman
Who Directed? Stephen Daldry (*Billy Elliot*)

What's It About? Inspired by Michael Cunningham's 1998 Pulitzer Prize-winning homage to Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway*, this drama tells three different stories: In 1923, Woolf (Kidman) suffers from depression while struggling to write her book. In 1949, a pregnant housewife (Julianne Moore) is so taken by the book she neglects the planning of her husband's birthday party. In present day, a woman (Streep) throws a party for her friend (Ed Harris) who nicknamed her Mrs. Dalloway and who is dying of AIDS.

JANUARY 10

DARKNESS FALLS

Who's In It? Chaney Kley, Emma Caulfield
Who Directed? Jonathan Liebesman (debut)
What's it About? A young man (Kley) whom the whole town thinks is crazy helps his

only friend (Caulfield) when her little brother is threatened by a centuries-old evil that was the inspiration for the tooth fairy.


NARC

Who's In It? Ray Liotta, Jason Patric
Who Directed? Joe Carnahan (*Blood, Guts, Bullets and Octane*)

What's it About? Toronto doubles as Detroit in this story about an undercover narcotics investigator recovering from a drug problem (Patric). The action begins when he's taken off probation to investigate the murder of a young cop, and is paired with the dead officer's vengeful partner (Liotta).

25TH HOUR

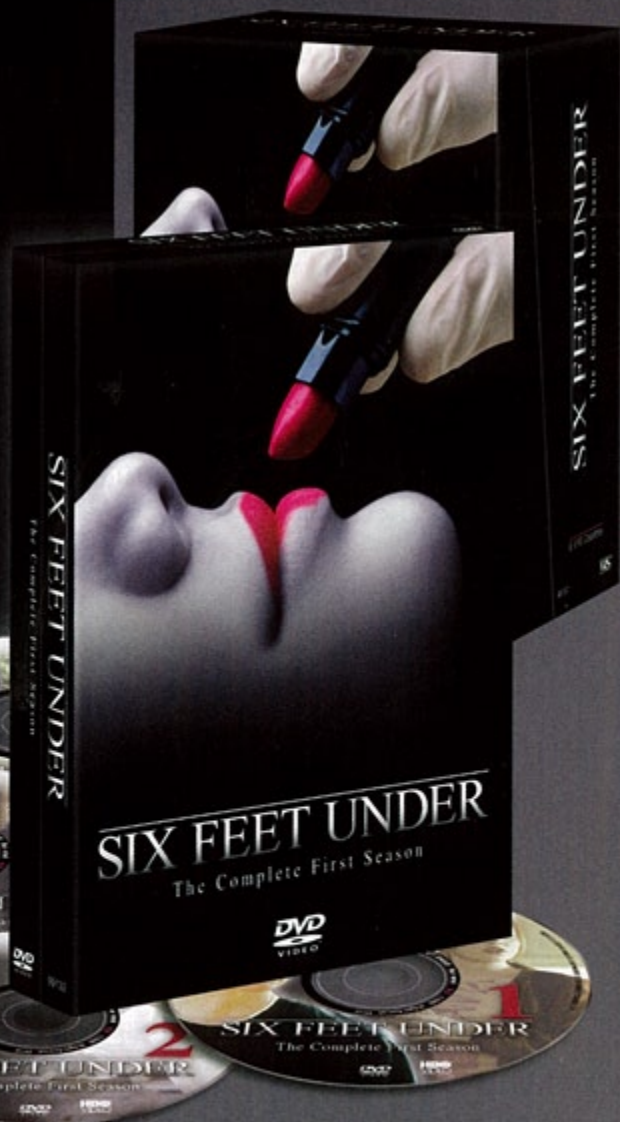
Who's In It? Edward Norton, Rosario Dawson
Who Directed? Spike Lee (*Summer of Sam*)
What's It About? Based on David Benioff's novel of the same name, this is the story ▶▶



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Julianne Moore in *The Hours*

of a man (Norton) who spends one last night in New York City with his girlfriend (Dawson) and best friends (Barry Pepper and Philip Seymour Hoffman) before going to prison for seven years on a drug conviction. Incidentally, both Norton and Hoffman starred in *Red Dragon*, which is a remake of *Manhunter*, wherein Hannibal Lecter was played by Brian Cox, who plays Norton's father in this movie. It's a small world, after all.

JUST MARRIED

Who's In It? Ashton Kutcher, Brittany Murphy
Who Directed? Shawn Levy (*Big Fat Liar*)
What's It About? Kutcher plays a traffic reporter newly married to a writer from a wealthy family (Murphy). During their honeymoon in Venice, they struggle to figure out if their decision to wed was a good one.

JANUARY 17

KANGAROO JACK

Who's In It? Jerry O'Connell, Estella Warren
Who Directed? David McNally (*Coyote Ugly*)
What's It About? Two pals from Brooklyn (O'Connell and Anthony Andersen) are forced to deliver \$100,000 in mob money

to Australia, only to end up losing it when a kangaroo takes off with a jacket containing the dough. A chase across the Outback — and hilarity, no doubt — ensues. The cast includes veteran actors Christopher Walken and Dyan Cannon.

A GUY THING

Who's In It? Jason Lee, Selma Blair
Who Directed? Chris Koch (*Snow Day*)
What's It About? A man (Lee) wakes up the morning after his bachelor party in bed

with one of the dancers hired to entertain (Julia Stiles). Turns out she's related to his fiancée (Blair) and just won't go away, leaving him to stress out about what may or may not have happened between them. See Selma Blair interview, page 20.

NATIONAL SECURITY

Who's In It? Martin Lawrence, Steve Zahn
Who Directed? Dennis Dugan (*Saving Silverman*)
What's It About? A white ex-cop now working as a security guard (Zahn) is forced to team up with a man he was once accused of beating (Lawrence) to find the people trying to kill them both.

THE SIN EATER

Who's In It? Heath Ledger, Shannyn Sossamon
Who Directed? Brian Helgeland (*A Knight's Tale*)
What's It About? The stars and director of *A Knight's Tale* reunite for this supernatural thriller about a young priest (Ledger) helping a detective (Sossamon) investigate the mysterious death of the French ambassador. See Heath Ledger interview, page 28.

JANUARY 24

A VIEW FROM THE TOP

Who's In It? Gwyneth Paltrow, Christina Applegate
Who Directed? Bruno Barreto (*Carried Away*)
What's It About? A young woman (Paltrow) sees working as a flight attendant as her ticket to travel the world. Applegate plays her flight attendant school rival and Candice Bergen is a veteran flight attendant who inspires her. Watch for Rob



Edward Norton in *25th Hour*

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Lowe as a pilot and appearances by Mike Myers, Regis Philbin, Kelly Preston, Christian Slater and Robert Stack.

JANUARY 31

THE RECRUIT

Who's In It? Al Pacino, Colin Farrell
Who Directed? Roger Donaldson

(*Species*)

What's It About? Filmed mostly in Toronto last winter, this is the story of a secret CIA training facility where a trainee (Farrell) suspects his instructor (Pacino) of being a double agent for the Chinese.

BIKER BOYZ

Who's In It? Laurence Fishburne, Derek Luke

Who Directed? Reggie Rock Bythewood (debut)

What's It About? The leader of a motorcycle club for African Americans (Fishburne) and his son (Luke) try to retain a drag-racing championship title. Based on a true story.

FINAL DESTINATION 2

Who's In It? A.J. Cook, Andrew Downling

Who Directed? David Ellis (*Homeward Bound II: Lost in San Francisco*)

What's It About? Downling takes over from Devon Sawa as the guy blessed with ESP in this sequel to the 2000 hit about a teen who can see deaths before they happen. This time, instead of a plane crash, everyone is brought together by a traffic accident. Shot in Vancouver.

THE BAY OF LOVE AND SORROWS

Who's In It? Joanne Kelly, Peter Outerbridge

Who Directed? Tim Southam (*Island of the Dead*)

What's It About? Based on the David Adams Richards novel, the film follows a group of friends in Mirimachi, New Brunswick, who get into trouble when one of them uses the others' money to set a drug deal in motion.

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

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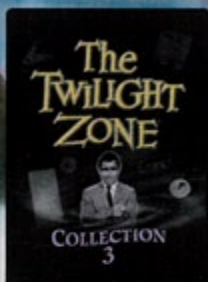
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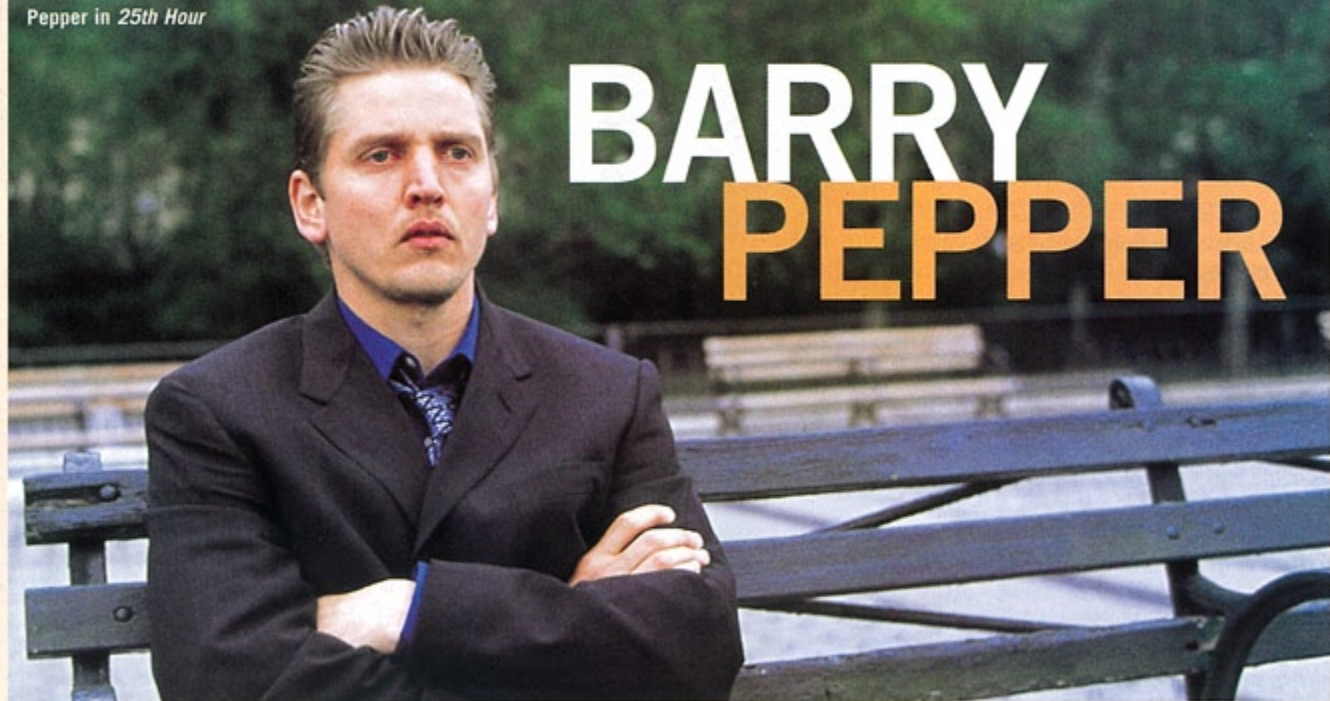
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Pepper in *25th Hour*

Now appearing in...*25th Hour* as one of three friends helping Monty Brogan (Edward Norton) celebrate his last day in New York City before going to prison for seven years.

Bio bits: Barry Pepper may not be a household name but he's one of those actors whose face you recognize.

He was born on April 4, 1970 in Campbell River, B.C., as the last of three sons. When Pepper was just five years old his family hit the open seas in a homemade 50-foot vessel that would be their home for the next five years.

Once back in British Columbia, Pepper's family built a farm on Denman Island, a rural community about 15 miles from Courtenay, populated by hippies, poets and artists. Although heavily influenced by his environment, Pepper took an interest in playing sports while attending high school. In college he studied marketing and graphic design but saw acting in his future after joining the Vancouver Actors Studio.

But first, Pepper dipped his toes into the music industry. In the early '90s he was part of a short-lived pop band called Banned in the U.K., whose hit single "C'mon and Get My Love" earned the group a Juno nomination for Best Dance Recording.

Around the same time, Pepper landed a starring role on *Madison*, a Canadian teen drama series that lasted four seasons.

He also appeared in several made-in-Canada series and TV movies including *The Outer Limits*, *Lonesome Dove* and *Sliders*. In 1998, he made his U.S. movie debut in the Howie Long action flick *Firestorm*.

Hollywood beckoned so Pepper and pal Ryan Reynolds (his former *Madison* co-star) packed up his 1971 Dodge Dart Swinger and headed south to California. Pepper was quickly hired by Steven Spielberg to play a God-fearing sniper in

Saving Private Ryan (1998), then appeared with Will Smith and Gene Hackman in *Enemy of the State* (1998), and opposite Tom Hanks in *The Green Mile* (1999). He followed these with a part in the bomb *Battlefield Earth* (2000) but rebounded with a role in last year's *We Were Soldiers* with Mel Gibson. His most acclaimed role, though, was on the small screen. In 2001 Pepper gave a striking performance as baseball legend Roger Maris in the Billy Crystal-directed U.S. cable movie *61**.

Last year Pepper returned to Canada to shoot *The Snow Walker* in Churchill, Manitoba. The Canadian film is based on the Farley Mowat book *Walk Well My Brother* and is due in theatres later this year.

Trivia: Loves fly fishing, rock climbing and mountain biking. • Was awarded the Order of California and Spirit of America awards for his positive portrayal of servicemen. • Three of his movies (*Battlefield Earth*, *Knockaround Guys*, *The Snow Walker*) were made in Canada.

Sample roles: Matty in *Knockaround Guys* (2002), Joe in *We Were Soldiers* (2002), Jonnie in *Battlefield Earth* (2000), Dean in *The Green Mile* (1999), Detective Pratt in *Enemy of the State* (1998), Private Jackson in *Saving Private Ryan* (1998)

Love life: Married his high school classmate Cindy (now a furniture designer) in 1997. The couple has a two-year-old daughter, Annaliese.



On being in a boy band: "I [didn't] have any idea what I was doing at the time. I was in a very experimental time in my life. They didn't really care if I could sing or dance, they said they'd send me for lessons. That was a disastrous, but interesting, six months of my life. It was fun, but really silly." [TV Guide Online, May 2000] —JK

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Selma Blair with Jason Lee in *A Guy Thing*

BLAIR BARES ALL

A Guy Thing's **Selma Blair** on staying single, her worst movie, being accused of having an eating disorder, and taking it all off | BY SEAN DALY

The first thing you notice about Selma Blair is the gigantic diamond solitaire that sparkles each time she raises her hand to take a sip of Diet Coke. "This ring is worth more than I am," the Michigan-bred actor cracks, sliding her slender 5' 4" frame into an armchair at L.A.'s Ritz-Carlton Hotel. "This is Fred Leighton's [the famous jewellery designer]. It's borrowed and needs to be returned. I can't put it in my drawer, because it's worth too much, so I have to wear it."

One might have guessed the giant rock was a gift from 22-year-old Jason Schwartzman. She had been dating the *Slackers* star and son of actress Talia Shire for 18 months and relates details of the relationship on a strictly need-to-know basis. But Blair, not exactly known for mincing her words, insists she has no plans to wear a diamond of her own any time soon. "I had been engaged a few years ago to a very lovely

man," the 30-year-old reveals, "but I keep giving the rings back. I'm not even thinking of marriage now. There's too much I want to do."

Like make movies. This month, Blair stars opposite Julia Stiles and Jason Lee as — ironically enough — an anxious bride-to-be, in the comedy *A Guy Thing*.

"I play a woman who is obsessed — not with getting married — but with making my wedding plans," she explains. "I finally found my Mr. Right and now I have to book the right band and the country club." But there is one small problem: her groom (Lee) meets a gorgeous hula dancer (Stiles) at his bachelor party, and when he wakes up with her the following morning, he begins to question his decision to marry.

"It's all done in a kind of screwball way," says Blair. "It's not your typical 'everyone lives happily ever after' story. But it's still not anything that will put you to tears."

Sound a bit familiar? "I don't want to say it's exactly like *My Best Friend's Wedding* or no one will go see it because they've already seen that movie," she defends. "But there are certain elements that are similar. It just doesn't have the cute ending everyone might hope for."

Blair is hoping she will have more success with *A Guy Thing* than she did with her last pairing with Stiles. "We did a movie together called *Down to You* that we all want to forget," she says, remembering the 1999 box-office stinker. "Actually most people *did* forget to see it, which is fine in my book. But my mother liked it. She was like, 'I thought that was a really nice movie.'"

Makes you wonder what Mom must have thought about her daughter's performance — and graphic sex scenes — last year in director Todd Solondz's red-hot drama *Storytelling*. "Stuff like that doesn't really freak her out," Blair insists. "I do think she probably says, 'Oh, Selma, what will my friends think?' That's her big concern. Otherwise my mom is pretty bullet-proof."

So is Blair, especially in areas where many actresses might feel vulnerable. Like appearing nude. "I'm happy to do it," she smiles. "It's very strange to me that once you become a big enough star you don't do it or you get more money for it." The actress, who appeared *sans* clothing throughout most of *Storytelling* — a film which

made her lesbian kiss with Sarah Michelle Gellar in *Cruel Intentions* seem tame by comparison — insists she is not begrudging anyone who can negotiate a pay raise to show some skin. "I just don't think my little boobies are worth enough to get paid extra for in a movie," she says with a laugh. "It's strange for me that some people equate a star with not having to get naked. If I ever have the good fortune to become a big star, nudity is fine by me."

Would she ever pose for *Playboy*? Probably not. "I'm truly not the kind of girl who would feel comfortable in a whole magazine spread of my spread," she says. "The kind of sexy I might see in myself I don't think is anything that would translate into a magazine. But it doesn't bother me at all seeing other people in *Playboy*. If a woman wants to show off her spec-rackular new boob job, good, go for it."

While Blair likes to joke about not having "sex appeal that sells magazines,"

she is, finally, comfortable in her own skin. "It took me a long time to get really healthy and happy," she sighs. One reason — constant badgering from the media about her weight. While promoting *Legally Blonde* in 2001, the rail-thin actress was routinely quizzed about her eating habits, or what some believed might have been an eating disorder. "They told me I looked unhealthy," she revealed after meeting with members of the foreign press. "They compared me to Calista Flockhart. It was really devastating." Blair contends she is simply a "flat-chested girl," who maintained a much fuller figure the previous year when she first appeared with Reese Witherspoon in *Cruel Intentions*.

While Blair refers to Witherspoon as "one of my closest friends," she has not lost track of the girls she was close to at Kingswood/Cranbrook prep school in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan. "My best friends were Kelly, Susan and Francis,"

“If I ever have the good fortune to become a big star, nudity is fine by me,” says Blair



Blair as an anxious bride-to-be in *A Guy Thing*



James Brolin and Blair in *A Guy Thing*

▶ says the former field hockey star. "We all had nicknames from the preppy handbook. I was Bitsy, Kelly was Corky..."

Wait, there's more. "We had monogrammed stationary. We wore our pearls that we all got for our 12th birthdays. And we all had plaid bedrooms. Mine was pink and white striped from Ralph Lauren. My mom taught me to always carry a napkin and a hanky."

But she wasn't always this prim and proper. "I was a real punk rebel in ninth grade," Blair admits. "Sid Vicious and Johnny Rotten were my idols. I wore the field hockey skirt but I ripped it up and wore boxer shorts underneath with my combat boots and I dyed my hair orange.... I got kicked out of school because of my bad attitude."

Blair eventually cleaned up her act and graduated *summa cum laude* from the University of Michigan before heading to New York with hopes of launching a career in photography. Acting rarely crossed her mind before she landed a part in a college rendition of *The Little Theater of the Green Goose*. She remembers, "I figured if I didn't make it [as an actor], I'd be happy if I just got a Clearasil commercial and lived off that for a couple of years."

Instead, after briefly studying at the Stella Adler Conservatory in the mid-'90s, Blair landed a supporting role in the Kevin Kline comedy *In & Out*, a guest-starring spot on the CBS drama *Promised Land* and, eventually, her own short-lived sitcom *Zoe* on the WB Network.

Despite the success, Blair says she has always been a bit challenged when it comes to romance. She is weary of dating actors "because they are too good looking," so her opportunities for meeting the right guy are limited.

Her high school friends are all married now, and for each one she was a bridesmaid. "So I'm always walking down the aisle with their idea of the perfect bachelor for me as the groomsman," she moans. "Now I think they realize that I'm probably not the settling-down type, so they don't wish me on any of their dear guy friends." **F**

Sean Daly is a freelance journalist based in Los Angeles.

coming soon

THE JUNGLE BOOK II >> FEBRUARY

Voices: John Goodman, Haley Joel Osment

Director: Steve Trenbirth (debut)

Story: The original voice of Baloo the bear, Phil Harris, died in 1995, and the kid who leant Mowgli his pipes is all grown up — so the makers of this sequel to the classic 1967 animated feature needed to recast. Looks like they probably got their first choices with Goodman and Osment. Picking up where the first film ended, Mowgli is finding life in the village a bore compared to living in the wild so he ventures back into the jungle where the evil tiger Shere Khan is lying in wait and hoping for revenge.

DAREDEVIL >> FEBRUARY

Stars: Ben Affleck, Jennifer Garner

Director: Mark Steven Johnson (*Simon Birch*)

Story: Another hard-edged comic book adaptation, *Daredevil* sees Ben Affleck don a costume not unlike Michael Keaton's Batman suit, to fight crime in and around New York City. Only those little things on top of his head aren't ears, they're horns — which should give you some idea of just how dark this script is. In his off-time, this superhero is blind attorney Matthew Murdock who lost his sight when he was hit with a radioactive isotope. But what most people don't know is that Murdock also gained a radar-like ability which allows him to see far better than any other human.

DUPLEX >> MARCH

Stars: Drew Barrymore, Ben Stiller

Director: Danny DeVito (*Death to Smoochy*)

Story: This comedy was first scheduled to open last summer but the studio pulled it so that it wouldn't compete at the box office with *The Adventures of Pluto Nash*. Hey, how could anyone have known? Drew Barrymore and Ben Stiller play a couple who devise a plot to kill the perfectly sweet old lady (Eileen Essell) who lives in a perfect house in a perfect neighbourhood — because they want the place for themselves.

ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO >> MARCH

Stars: Antonio Banderas, Salma Hayek

Director: Robert Rodriguez (*Desperado*)

Story: First there was 1992's *El Mariachi*, Rodriguez's \$7,225 (U.S.) debut about a guitar player who's mistaken for a killer who carries his guns in a guitar case. Then there was 1995's *Desperado*, basically the same plot, but with a \$7-million budget and leading man Antonio Banderas taking over for no-name Carlos Gallardo. Now comes the third in the trilogy — a \$30-million number in which Banderas takes on a corrupt general.

DREAMCATCHER >> APRIL

Stars: Thomas Jane, Morgan Freeman

Director: Lawrence Kasdan (*French Kiss*)

Story: If we tell you this one's based on a book about four young friends who gain psychic powers after saving their young Down's syndrome friend from bullies, and years later find themselves battling a mysterious evil force while on a winter hunting trip in Maine, could you tell us who wrote the book? Yes, it's yet another adaptation of a Stephen King novel. Freeman plays a military officer sent in to deal with the situation.

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Les Dangeureux's Stéphane Rousseau and Véronique Cloutier are huge in Quebec

PHOTO BY JAN THUIS

DISTINCT FILM SOCIETY

A UNIQUE STAR SYSTEM AND SENSE OF HUMOUR TRANSLATE INTO SUCCESS FOR QUEBEC MOVIES | BY MATHIEU CHANTELOIS

Year-end lists of top-grossing movies generally don't include Canadian films — except in Quebec, where homegrown fare often attracts big audiences. In 2001, a hockey comedy called *Les Boys III* ranked sixth in the province with a haul of \$3.5-million, and last year a record number of Quebec-made films passed the million-dollar mark.

"We know 2002 will be one of the best years we've seen for cinema here," says Guy Gagnon, president of Alliance Atlantis Vivafilm. "It may even be the best year for Quebec cinema."

Virtually unseen by English Canadians, movies like *La Mystérieuse Mademoiselle C*, *Un Homme et son Pêché* and *L'Odyssée d'Alice Tremblay* were huge hits in Quebec last year. And the diversity of films in the province continues to broaden.

"We make suspense films, police stories, dramas, movies for children, black comedies," explains Rock Demers, president of La Fête Productions. "Quebec has never seen such a diversity in the genres of films produced."

Credit for this goes to a new generation of filmmakers like Denis Villeneuve,

Manon Briand and Rodrigue Jean. "Quebec cinema suffers a lot less from the old image of movies built around a conversation at the kitchen table," says Demers. The same can be said of Canadian films in general, but Quebec directors seem to make more comedies than their counterparts in English Canada. Is it that Quebecers have a distinct sense of humour while English Canadians simply laugh at the same jokes as their neighbours to the south?

"Maybe," says Michele Larocche of the distribution company Christal Films. "But it's mostly because Quebec enjoys a certain advantage over English Canada. Here, the American domination isn't as imposing.... The stars in English Canada are imported from the United States. Quebecers find their own stars on television series, variety shows, radio, newspapers, magazines.... This is why when we present a movie with [Quebec superstars] Patrick Huard or Luc Picard we are almost guaranteed to find an audience."

Simon Beaudry, president of Alex Films, a Quebec company specializing in cinema statistics, agrees. "While English Canadians are interested in

Julia Roberts' love life and Oprah Winfrey's weight, the Quebec press follows [radio and TV host/actor] Véronique Cloutier's love life and [singer/actor] Ginette Reno's weight. That shows the vitality of our star system."

While Quebec's movie industry is flourishing, American movies still dominate theatres in the province. Beaudry says last year U.S. movies accounted for 85 percent of the box office receipts (compared to 95 percent in the rest of Canada). This means budgets for Quebec films are small — on average about \$2.5-million per film. Still, there are some advantages.

"Often, when we work on American megaproductions, we have to give in to an imposing structure and a heavy administrative workload," says Demers. "It is sometimes very difficult to remain creative under these conditions." He pauses. "But of course it would be nice to have a bigger budget."

Gagnon thinks the future of movie-making in Quebec will only get brighter. "More than ever, Quebec is a passionate place to make cinema. Quebecers have good stories, are talented people, great directors and great comedians," he says. "With limited budgets we often make miracles in Quebec. Here, people believe in cinema." —with files from John Kennedy

Mathieu Chantelois edits Famous Quebec.

A TASTE OF 2002 QUEBEC CINEMA

Un Homme et son Pêché

Director Charles Binamé brings Quebec's first hit radio and TV series, *Les Belles histoires des pays d'en haut*, to the big screen. The movie stars Roy Dupuis, who spent years on TV's *Nikita*.

Les Dangeureux

Louis Saïa, director of the *Les Boys* trilogy, released this comedy about a kidnapped pop singer, featuring two Quebec superstars: TV host Véronique Cloutier and stand-up comic Stéphane Rousseau.

La Turbulence des Fluides

Manon Briand, director of *2 secondes*, returns with another movie starring Pascale Bussièrès and Jean-Nicolas Verrault. The film got a rare wide release in France last fall, no doubt because famed director Luc Besson co-produced.



Losing his religion

HEATH LEDGER PLAYS A DISILLUSIONED PRIEST INVESTIGATING A STRING OF SPOOKY MURDERS IN *THE SIN EATER* | BY BARRETT HOOPER

“**A** *irolg Irtap te Oilif te iutirips otnas. Tucis tare ni oipicnirp te cnun te repmes te ni aluceas muroluceas. Nema.*”

Heath Ledger may be a Hollywood heartthrob, one of those guys women refer to as a “cutie,” but he’s creeping me out. He sounds as if he’s possessed by the devil, and at any moment I expect him to drop to the floor in convulsions or spew pea soup while his head spins around.

Turns out Ledger’s speaking Latin, a creepy language to begin with, it being dead and all, and he’s speaking it

backwards. A nifty little trick he learned for his new movie, *The Sin Eater*, and which he gleefully demonstrates during our conversation in his Manhattan hotel room, which, given the film’s subject matter, appropriately overlooks a gothic cathedral near Central Park.

The Sin Eater is a supernatural thriller in which the 23-year-old Aussie plays Alex, a Roman Catholic priest investigating the death of the French ambassador in New York. Unusual marks on the body have led Detective Lucy Sinclair (Ledger’s *A Knight’s Tale*

love interest, Shannyn Sossamon) to suspect a connection to the occult, while Alex believes it’s the work of the fabled Sin Eater, an excommunicated priest who absolves sinful people of their transgressions in a deadly ritual. “He’s like a cross between Dr. Kevorkian and Father Merrin from *The Exorcist*,” says Ledger, who stepped into the role after Antonio Banderas backed out.

“It’s such a strange, unusual movie,” he continues, “with such a sense of doom about it. Quite bizarre.”

Ledger was named for the doomed protagonist of *Wuthering Heights*, and is known for cutting a similarly romantic figure on-screen. He played an American revolutionary in *The Patriot*, a medieval jousting champion in *A Knight’s Tale*, and a 19th-century British cavalry officer in *The Four Feathers*. So *The Sin Eater*

is certainly a change of pace. "It's so much darker than other things I've done, really gritty," he says. "The average person isn't going to totally understand what's going on and it's quite scary, I think."

But it's not demonic spirits or Satanic possession that Ledger fears. Instead, he admits rather sheepishly to being afraid of all kinds of silly things, such as accidentally slicing open one of his wrists and bleeding to death.

"It's a really weird phobia," he says in his gravely Aussie accent. So it's odd that he would choose to have a tattoo encircling his left wrist, with "KAOS" inscribed in thick, black ink across the veins and tendons — the initials of his three sisters, Kate, Ashleigh and Olivia, and mother, Sally. "It keeps them close," he says, tracing the letters with his fingers.

Until we began comparing tattoos — Ledger has several in addition to KAOS, including one on each arm that he designed himself — Ledger was a bit reluctant to talk. When I entered his hotel room he retreated quickly to a chair near the window, and then spoke in short, direct sentences, rarely making eye contact.

His reticence was understandable. Just the day before, for example, he did 68 television interviews to promote the new movie. "Hurts a little, the repetition," he says softly, shaking his head, "...explaining what the film is about, who my character is."

For the record, Alex is a disillusioned cleric whose quest to solve the mystery behind the deaths causes him to question his faith. "Is this Sin Eater character really evil? Or is he some sort of misunderstood being who serves as the last recourse for those who would otherwise be damned," he continues with a nod, eyeing a basket of croissants near the mini-bar.

"Want one," he asks, then, without waiting for an answer, he tosses me a

"It's such a strange, unusual movie, with such a sense of doom about it," says Ledger. "Quite bizarre."

croissant, takes another for himself and begins tearing large bites out of it.

Dropping back into his chair, Ledger stretches his legs out on the coffee table and traps an Evian bottle between his sneakers. In one fluid motion he flips the bottle into a waiting hand, takes a quick swig and tosses it back onto the table, where it rattles off my cassette recorder. "Oh, sorry mate," he says quickly, checking to make sure the recorder's still working. "Sorry, mate," he repeats into the microphone. "Wouldn't want you to miss anything

important." The sarcasm, however good-natured, is unmistakable. And the message is clear: What's important to Ledger is hardly what might be considered important by celebrity standards.

But acting is all he's really known. Ledger admits he's never had a real job. "Which I feel quite guilty about," he says. The actor got his start in the Globe Shakespeare Company in Perth, Australia, catching the acting bug from his older sister Kate, and went on to play the title role in *Peter Pan*. "I just loved it," he says, "and kept doing it. I blinked my eyes and I was getting paid. Doors kept opening and I kept walking through them." He landed a role as one of Australian television's first gay characters while still a teen. That led to a starring role as a Celtic prince opposite *Felicity's* Keri Russell on Fox's short-lived swords-and-sorcery drama *Roar*. "It was a *Braveheart* rip-off," he says with a laugh.

Although the show was cancelled, it won Ledger legions of female fans and eventually an agent in the U.S. Then came the hit movie *Ten Things I Hate About You* with Julia Stiles, which was followed by a year of unemployment and noodles for breakfast, lunch and dinner because he refused to be pigeon-holed in Freddie Prinze Jr. territory. "There's little depth in those kinds of scripts," he says. "You can only take the psyche of a teenager to a certain level."

His patience paid off with *A Knight's Tale*, *The Patriot* and *Monster's Ball*, in which he gave perhaps his strongest



Heath Ledger in a scene from *The Sin Eater*



▶▶ performance yet as the conflicted son of Billy Bob Thornton's racist prison guard. But even now he finds himself pushed to do projects he doesn't believe in. "They want me to do a romantic comedy, something where teenage girls will like me again and for that reason I won't do it," he says. "Until they want me to do a big action movie and run around in a pair of jeans with a handgun, and then I'll be like 'How about a romantic comedy?'"

The media has had some fun mucking around in Ledger's own romantic life over the past couple of years. But that's what romances with actors like Heather Graham (*Boogie Nights*) and his current love Naomi Watts (*The Ring*) will get you. "I'm not that hungry for everyone to know everything about me but f-ck 'em if they do find out sh-t about me. I don't give two sh-ts what people think."

Ledger grins, plucks a cigarette from a pack of Camel Lights next to a well-stuffed ashtray and a couple of half-eaten apples. He climbs onto the arm of his chair, feet on the cushion, and leans against the window sill. After a long drag, he exhales slowly, pokes

holes in the smoke cloud, and dangles the cigarette out the window.

His familiar long mess of curls has been sheared to stubble for a scene in his next film, *The Kelly Gang*, which he was shooting in Australia until just days before we spoke. In it, he plays Ned Kelly, Australia's answer to Robin Hood. "Ned Kelly is Australia. Our sense of humour, our modesty, our curiosity for the criminal all spawned from Ned Kelly. The first feature film ever shot in Australia was about Ned Kelly," he says, sucking the life from his cigarette and running a hand across his brush cut.

The Kelly Gang was directed by one of Ledger's "best mates," Gregor Jordan, who also helmed the dark comedy *Two Hands*, one of Ledger's earliest films. And the actor took a severe pay cut to work with him again, earning just \$50,000 (U.S.) compared to the \$2-million he picked up for romping about the Middle Ages in *A Knight's Tale*.

But Ledger's loyalty to his mates is worth more than multimillion-dollar movie contracts. He did *The Sin Eater* because it reunited him with his pals from *A Knight's Tale*, namely Oscar-winning writer-director Brian Helgeland, damsel-in-distress Shannyn Sossamon and squire Mark Addy, who plays Alex's priest-friend.

"I can't work with a guy just because he's a brilliant actor or director," Ledger says. "If he's a prick I can't just ignore it, I'll tell him." He grinds his cigarette butt in the ashtray. "Or hit 'im."

He even has his Aussie friends, the same ones who fell asleep during the *A Knight's Tale* premiere, he gleefully points out, read the scripts he's sent to get a second opinion, because he trusts them to be straight with him, "and they get a kick out of that." Although, there's been little for Ledger's mates to read the last four months as he's sent every script back to his agent, "just in case I really love something. I need a little breathing space and don't want to work right now."

And, some day, a little hiatus like this one might turn into a permanent break. When making movies stops being fun, Ledger says, he'll "chuck it all, just f-ckin' bail — just to see the look on my agent's face." **F**

Barrett Hooper is an entertainment writer for The National Post. This is his first story for Famous.

famous trivia

1 Which star of *25th Hour* is a Yale graduate, who majored in history?

2 Where was *National Security's* Colm Feore born — Ottawa, Victoria, Boston, New York or Fredericton?

3 What was the last movie *The Sin Eater's* director Brian Helgeland and stars Shannyn Sossamon and Heath Ledger did together?

4 Which star of *A Guy Thing* has appeared in three film versions of Shakespeare plays — *O (Othello)*, *10 Things I Hate About You (The Taming of the Shrew)* and *Hamlet*?

5 In which 1983 ensemble piece that also launched the careers of Tom Cruise, Patrick Swayze and Emilio Estevez, did *A View From the Top's* Rob Lowe make his big-screen debut?

6 With which of the following actors has *The Recruit's* Al Pacino not had a romantic relationship — Diane Keaton, Beverly D'Angelo or Mary Elizabeth Mastrantonio?

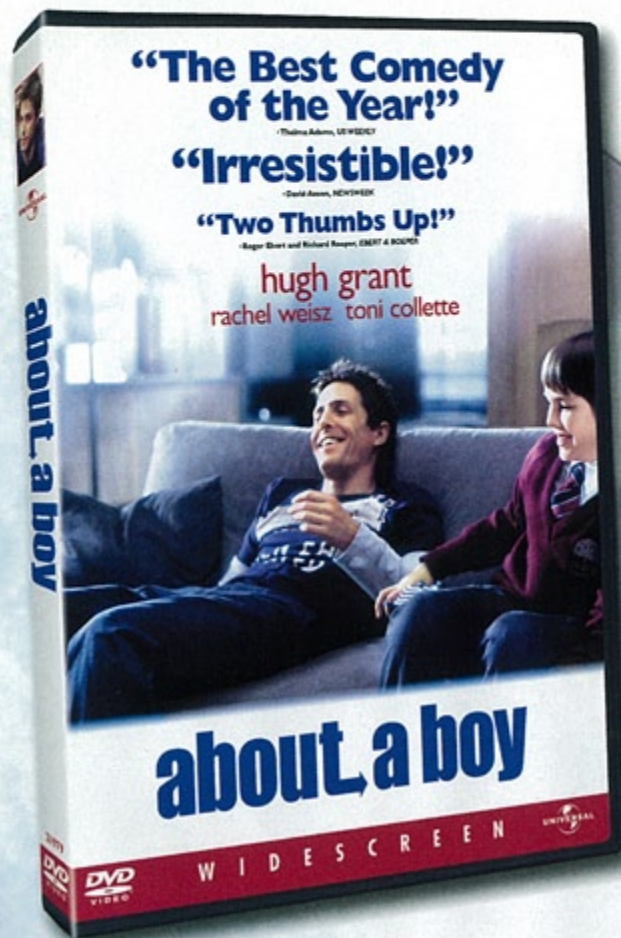
7 In which movie did *Kangaroo Jack's* Jerry O'Connell make his big-screen debut?

ANSWERS

1 Edward Norton 2 Boston
3 *A Knight's Tale* 4 Julia Stiles
5 *The Outsiders* 6 Mary Elizabeth
Mastrantonio 7 *Stand by Me*

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SONG AND DANCE MAN

WERE MONTHS WITH A VOICE COACH AND DANCE TEACHER ENOUGH TO TURN **RICHARD GERE** INTO A BONA FIDE MUSICAL STAR? AUDIENCES WILL FIND OUT THIS MONTH WITH THE RELEASE OF *CHICAGO*

| BY EARL DITTMAN

Richard Gere isn't sure how to react to the baffled looks he gets from people when he tells them he's starring in the big-screen version of the Broadway musical *Chicago*.

"When I tell them that I'm going to sing and dance in it, they get this expression on their faces like, 'You're kidding, right?' — I almost feel like I should be insulted," Gere says, laughing. "I feel like I need to jump on a table and start singing and tap dancing just to prove I can do it."

For an Academy Award-nominated actor whose career has been built on intense and complex characters like the hardened male escort in *American Gigolo*, the alienated soldier-in-training of *An Officer and a Gentleman* or the cheated-on and lied-to husband in *Unfaithful*, it's understandable that some have trouble imagining Gere as a song-and-dance man. But what many don't realize is that the Philadelphia native began his career on the New York stage belting out tunes.

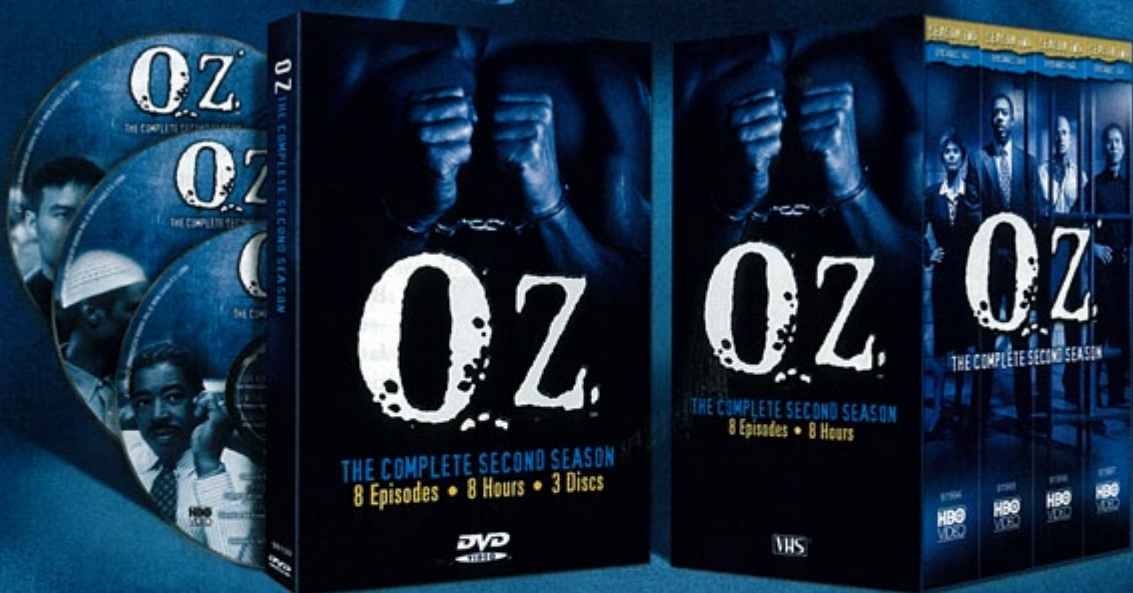
"In a lot of ways, doing *Chicago* has given me the chance to return to my roots," the 53-year-old explains, making himself comfortable in a chair in his



Richard Gere and
Renée Zellweger
in *Chicago*

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Richard Gere
as Billy Flynn

“CATHERINE CAME FROM A MUSICAL BACKGROUND SO I DON’T THINK IT’S MUCH OF A SURPRISE SHE’S IN *CHICAGO*,” SAYS GERE. “AND SHE DOES SOME INCREDIBLE, AMAZING SINGING”

▶▶ Big Apple hotel suite. “About 25 years ago, when I came to New York, I got my break doing rock operas like *Grease* and *Soon*. Even before that I was in rock bands and sang in regional theatre. I actually had two careers — as an actor and a musician.... I mean, music has always been a big part of my life and my career, it’s nothing foreign to me. Of course, it’s been a while since I sang professionally.”

But, initially, director/choreographer Rob Marshall had a bit of trouble convincing Gere he could handle the dancing duties that came with his role as Billy Flynn, the slick, headline-seeking defense attorney representing the two murderous 1920s flappers (Catherine Zeta-Jones and Renée Zellweger) at the centre of the film.

“The part called for me to sing in more of a Broadway musical kind of voice, which I’ve never sung like in my entire life,” Gere explains. “But I thought it was something I could handle with a couple of lessons.... However, there is a big scene at the very end where I have to do a tap dance. That’s when I said to Rob, ‘I don’t know about this. I may not be able to do it.’ Rob was very supportive, though. He reminded me of all the various action scenes I’ve had to do over the years and said, ‘Believe me, tap dancing is a breeze compared to all of that. You can do it. We’ll get you the best in the business to make you look great.’ I thought

about it, then I said, ‘Okay, you’re the director. I hope your instincts are right.’”

According to those who have seen the finished product, Gere’s singing is great and the tap sequence is a showstopper.

“I pulled it off okay, if I must say so myself,” Gere says with a smile. “Honestly, it turned out so much better than I ever expected. I got a singing coach who taught me these amazing things about voice. I didn’t realize I could actually carry a note and stay on key. My own training was just singing more bluesy/rock stuff. So to change how I sounded, and to learn from a professional who trains opera singers how to sing was so much fun for me.

“And, as for the dancing, I spent three months very intensively working on it. Luckily, I had a wonderful teacher and these great choreographers working with me. When we were filming the number, though, there were all these girls dancing around me, and all I could do was just try to keep up. I got such a big laugh out of watching myself in the dailies.”

Naturally, a film set in Chicago during the roaring ’20s had to be filmed in Toronto, which it was through most of last winter. (And re-shoots were done there as late as this past September.)

But bringing *Chicago* to the big screen took three decades, dozens of rewrites, countless cast changes and more than a handful of broken deals and shattered dreams. Even before the Bob Fosse-directed musical (with songs by the Broadway duo John Kander and Fred Ebb) opened to raves on the Great White Way, Hollywood producers were negotiating to turn the dark, comic story of Roxie Hart and Velma Kelly, two homicidal Jazz Age babes on trial for their lives, into a feature film. But when *Chicago* failed to match the box-office numbers of another musical that debuted on Broadway that same year — *A Chorus Line* — those plans were shelved. And by the late ’70s it was obvious that the conventional motion picture musical had fallen from grace. The final nail in *Chicago*’s coffin was hammered in when the movie version of *A Chorus Line* tripped and fell on its face.

“Movie musicals, as an art form, were considered a dead issue in the ’80s and ’90s,” Gere explains. “No one wanted to make them because they thought no one wanted to see them, especially an old-style one like *Chicago*.”

“Movie musicals, as an art form, were considered a dead issue in the ’80s and ’90s,” Gere explains. “No one wanted to make them because they thought no one wanted to see them, especially an old-style one like *Chicago*.”

But in 1996, a drastically reworked version of the musical was mounted for a limited run on Broadway. Much to everyone’s surprise, *Chicago* became a bigger hit the second time around, breaking box-office records and winning six Tony



Catherine
Zeta-Jones
in *Chicago*

Awards. Hollywood immediately began to dust off the now-yellowed pages of the various *Chicago* screenplays. Realizing another rewrite was in order, a new script was penned, followed by the announcement that Goldie Hawn and Madonna would star as the singing and dancing jailbirds Roxie and Velma, and John Travolta as their smooth-as-silk lawyer. However, no one, especially the proposed stars, were all that jazzed by the new screenplay. When costly script-doctoring failed to please all parties, one-by-one, the principal players began to bow-out of *Chicago: The Movie*.

"To me, *Chicago* is one musical that can't be successfully translated to the screen," John Travolta said in an interview shortly after he walked away from the project. "The script I read just didn't do it justice. The structure was all wrong. I didn't feel like it would be a good movie for me to do."

"I just didn't like [the screenplay]," Goldie Hawn said earlier this year, echoing Travolta's sentiments. "Unless someone did something major to improve it, it wasn't going to work."

Marshall thought he knew how to make those improvements. Although he had been pegged to lens a big-screen version of *Rent*, Marshall leapt at the chance to whip *Chicago* into shape. Enlisting the services of Oscar-winning *Gods and Monsters* writer/director Bill Condon, the two re-envisioned the entire concept by adding more meat to the storyline and transforming the musical numbers into lavish dream sequences. Once the new screenplay hit the circuit, Hollywood stars started lining up for a chance to appear in the new, improved *Chicago*.

"I had to be in it, that's how impressed I was the first time I read the script," Gere remembers. "It's now such an incredible piece. And the way the musical numbers are done — this kind of expressionistic version of how Roxie sees situations and people — is a real smart concept."

While Marshall's casting of Catherine Zeta-Jones as Velma seemed like a logical choice, many an eyebrow was raised when Renée Zellweger landed the role of Roxie. "Catherine came from musical theatre, so I don't think that it's much of a surprise she's in *Chicago*," Gere says. "And she does some incredible, amazing singing. She's superb. But Renée is phenomenal, because who would have ever thought she could wail? I didn't. She's got this Billie Holiday voice that is going to break your heart. And I don't think that the production of this piece has ever broken a heart before. This ain't your mama's *Chicago*, that's for sure."

According to Gere, the three decades of heartache, casting changes and script rewrites have resulted in a film which should reach beyond diehard musical fans to a broader, mainstream audience. And maybe it's arriving just in time.

"I think *Moulin Rouge* showed everyone that there's a whole generation of film lovers out there who want to get lost in the magic of musicals again, like they did in the Golden Age of Hollywood," he says. "*Chicago* is not an art house movie. It's this great big, wonderful, commercial, popcorn movie filled with great dancing and singing. I'm just happy I had at least a little bit of talent to be in it. In the future, when people ask me which film of my career is my favourite, my answer will always be *Chicago*. It's the kind of movie that I definitely want to be remembered for." **F**

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

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EUGENE LEVY TAKES THE LEAD, BRAD PITT PICKS UP SOME TROJANS AND LIAM NEESON STUDIES SEX | BY JOHN KENNEDY



LEVY CHARGES AHEAD

After years of cracking up audiences as part of ensembles, **Eugene Levy** is finally becoming a leading man. The Hamilton-born actor has taken the title role in the action-comedy *The Man*, playing an Alcohol Tobacco and Firearms agent trying to crack an illegal firearms ring in San Francisco. But before he straps on his holster, Levy will reprise his role as **Jason Biggs'** father in *American Wedding*, the third *American Pie* flick. The comedy starts shooting this month with director **Jesse Dylan** (*How High*). Levy has already wrapped his supporting role as **Steve Martin's** best friend in *Bringing Down the Houze*, a comedy about a lonely man who meets an imprisoned woman (**Queen Latifah**) online and then has his life turned upside down when she escapes from jail to be with him. Levy and his *Best in Show* collaborator **Christopher Guest** have also finished *A Mighty Wind*, a comedy about a folk trio (Guest, **Michael McKean** and **Harry Shearer**) that reunites after 30 years for a comeback tour.



OPIE GOES WEST

Director **Ron Howard** will follow *A Beautiful Mind* with a psychological suspense drama set in the Old West. Howard will begin shooting the still-untitled film in March with stars **Cate Blanchett** and **Tommy Lee Jones**. It's the story of a man (Jones) who goes home to make peace with his estranged daughter (Blanchett). When her daughter is kidnapped the pair must find a way to get her back.

SEX WITH CONDON

Liam Neeson is boning up on the life of the late **Alfred Kinsey** to play the renowned sex researcher in a pic slated for production in Toronto this March. *Kinsey* will be directed by **Bill Condon** (*Gods and Monsters*), who also wrote the screenplay. **Laura Linney** is set to play Kinsey's wife and **Chris O'Donnell** will portray sex researcher **Wardell Pomeroy**. **Sir Ian McKellen** will play the "host" of the film, which is based on a biography of Kinsey, as well as Condon's own research. Neeson and McKellen are both familiar with working in Canada — Neeson was here for *K-11: The Widowmaker* and McKellen shot both *X-Men* films here. *Kinsey* will also be a reunion for Neeson and Linney, who both appear in *Love Always*, a romantic comedy due out later this year.

PITT'S LEGENDARY PICS

Not long after stepping out of *The Fountain*, the now-postponed feature he planned to do with *Requiem for a Dream* director **Darren Aronofsky**, **Brad Pitt** has agreed to play Achilles in an epic adventure called *Troy*. Pitt and director **Wolfgang Petersen** (*The Perfect Storm*) will start filming the legendary tale of *The Iliad* — described by Warner Bros. as a story of destiny, love and loyalty during the Trojan War — this spring with hopes of having the flick in cinemas by Summer 2004. The actor must have a thing for mythological adventures, he appears next summer as the voice of the titular sailor in the animated feature *Sinbad: Legend of the Seven Seas*.



B R I E F L Y

Adam Sandler's next project will be *Fifty First Kisses*, a comedy about a man who tries to get a woman with short-term memory loss to fall in love with him over and over. Sandler will produce the pic, which has no director yet. ■ **John Leguizamo** will star in, co-write, produce and possibly direct a still-untitled romantic comedy about a man trying to decide whether to marry the love of his life. ■ **Joan Allen** has joined the cast of *Notebook*, starring **Rachel McAdams** and Canadian actor **Ryan Gosling** as a young couple who are reunited after World War II. Allen will play McAdams' mother in flashbacks. The flick will be directed by **Nick Cassavetes** (*John Q*).

GRAB YOUR STICK

NHL 2K3 climbs to top of hockey game standings

BY MARK MAGEE



NHL 2K3 >> GAMECUBE, PS2, XBOX

Every country has a sport they get mindlessly worked up about. In America, it's football. In India, it's cricket. In Italy, it's football (the other kind). And here in frozen Canada, it's hockey. Of course, you can't really explain the appeal of the sport of broken teeth, you can only live it. Which is exactly what *NHL 2K3* lets you do.

Sega's 2K sports franchise has managed to give the big boys (EA Sports & 989 Sports) a run for their money over the last few years, but now that Sega has made their titles available for all platforms, they've started to pull ahead. And this — their latest version of the ongoing NHL hockey series — proves once again that their position at the head of the pack is well-earned.

The graphics and sound are uniformly exceptional, but the same could be said about most hockey titles. Ultimately, what gives *NHL 2K3* the edge is its gameplay and artificial intelligence. While other titles give you brain-dead drones for teammates, *NHL 2K3* serves up a clever bunch of goons who play just like their real-life counterparts. Plays are set up more naturally as offensive-minded teams take bigger risks and defensive teams trap up the zones lickety-split (unfortunately, playing with a trap-happy team is still as boring as watching a trap-happy team). Individual players also stick to their own style — notorious grinders play the boards, while the snipers go hunting for the perfect cherry-pick.

Of course, if none of this appeals to you, you've obviously forgotten what country you're living in. After all, this is the only land in the world where the rehiring of a hockey commentator gets more press than a potential war.

Dead or Alive Xtreme Beach Volleyball >> XBOX

So you say hockey doesn't float your boat? Well then, maybe you'd be more interested



in the latest jigglefest from the makers of the infamous "girls-in-revealing-clothing-do-battle" game *Dead or Alive*. This time around, the ladies strap on some seriously skimpy bikinis and go head-to-head in the bounciest sport of all — beach volleyball. Sure, it's all very puerile and sexist, but you must admit, they really did a bang-up job perfecting the physics of flying globes.

War of the Monsters >> PS2

Fans of giant-monster movies rejoice! Finally, you can step into the shoes of a huge ape or an enormous 1950s-esque robot and battle it out amongst city skyscrapers. Long-in-the-tooth gaming fans will be reminded of the old-school classic *Rampage*. Everyone else will just enjoy kicking the oversized praying mantis's butt.

Capcom vs. SNK 2 >> XBOX

The opening salvoes have been fired in the first round of the great online console wars, and it's safe to say that the smartest shot so far has been Xbox's decision to release an online version of the popular Capcom vs. SNK fighter. After all, what could be more fun than giving the beat-down to some schmuck in Korea while you kick back on the couch in your underwear. Then again, if you yell a victory "boo-ya" and nobody hears, did it really happen?

The Getaway >> PS2

At first glance, this long-awaited car-chase sim about a hard-boiled London gangster who nabs cars on the go might look like a bit of a bite on the legendary *Grand Theft Auto* series. But while *GTA* is all about open-ended roaming, *The Getaway* is primarily a story-driven title that's less like a game and more like an interactive movie. It's also the sickest looking game to come down the pike in a long time. The designers used British Ordnance Survey maps and actual photographs to recreate 20 picture-perfect square miles of modern downtown London. Gear!

Legend of Zelda: A Link to the Past >> GSA

Our old pal Link arrives on the GameBoy Advance in an updated version of his 1992 Super Nintendo outing. The classic 2D gaming style may not win any awards for graphics, but the puzzles and dungeons are just as fun and challenging as ever. Best of all, the game includes a brand-new multiplayer adventure, *The Four Swords*, which allows you and three pals to go questing together

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MATCHBOX TWENTY STRIKES UP A CONVERSATION AND DANIEL BEDINGFIELD TALKS THRU IT | BY JOHN KENNEDY



Rob Thomas (left) and Adam Gaynor (centre) with the rest of matchbox twenty

PHOTO BY MARK SELIGER

ROCK STEADY

Rock stars are supposed to trash their hotel rooms, right? Tell that to **Rob Thomas** and **Adam Gaynor** of **matchbox twenty**, who are examining a granite-top coffee table at the Four Seasons in Toronto and fretting over a crack they think they may have caused. "We dropped it," Thomas says sheepishly. "We were trying to move it." Not exactly a Led Zeppelin moment.

Thomas and Gaynor are here to talk about their latest CD, *More Than You Think You Are*, which has spawned the infectious hit "Disease." More than 20 million copies of matchbox twenty's first two albums have been sold worldwide, thanks to chart toppers like "Push," "3AM," "Bent" and "Real World."

Thomas says the band takes it all in stride. "We never talk about success," he explains. "We managed to have enough to keep us out there and do it in a way where our songs were much more popular than we were."

As the band's camera-friendly lead singer, though, Thomas has found fame and fortune outside of matchbox twenty. His collaboration with **Santana** on the hit track "Smooth" kept him in the public eye between matchbox twenty records. Gaynor insists the rest of the band wasn't jealous of Thomas's success. "We all had a chance to win three Grammys in our time off. Rob just happened to write a song

that did," he says. "I think everybody in matchbox twenty has the down time to do whatever they want."

If caring about the condition of hotel furniture is un-rock 'n' roll, consider the fact that Thomas and most of his bandmates are happily married. How does he lead a domestic life and still write convincing rock songs?

"Your job is to expand on a moment and you're describing a moment in your life," Thomas explains. "A lot of our relationship songs aren't

man-woman, they're relationships like how people deal with each other and what makes people tick. That, if anything, gets more interesting when you're married because you're travelling around the world and meeting all kinds of people. I think I have a lot more to draw from."

BETTING ON DANIEL

"It's such a schizophrenic album. I can't believe I made it. How irresponsible of me," exclaims **Daniel Bedingfield**, raising his arms in mock shame. The 22-year-old New Zealand native is talking about his debut CD *Gotta Get Thru This*, a hook-packed roller coaster ride of club beats, guitar pop and soulful ballads.

Bedingfield acknowledges the diversity of the album — which he wrote, performed and



Daniel Bedingfield

OUT THIS MONTH

Cinder | *Break Your Silence*

>> JANUARY 21

Straight ahead rock 'n' roll from this brand new band, produced by Scott Weiland of the Stone Temple Pilots.

Ry Cooder | *Mambo Sinuendo*

>> JANUARY 28

Cooder collaborated with Cuban guitar legend Manuel Galban and bassist Orlando Lopez (of the Buena Vista Social Club sessions) to create music he says is "powerful, lyrical and funny."

Lou Reed | *The Raven*

>> JANUARY 28

Heavily inspired by 19th-century author/poet Edgar Allan Poe, Reed's new CD features guests like David Bowie, Steve Buscemi, Willem Dafoe and Amanda Plummer. Yes, you read that right.

recorded almost entirely in his bedroom — but insists it's all him. "Naked honesty, writing from your heart...what life is really about," he says.

The title track has become a huge international hit but, vocally, it belies Bedingfield's capabilities. He says his voice varies depending on "the tone of the song, what I'm feeling at the time and what's going to express it the most." But he swears there's some consistency. "If you listen to the album long enough you start to pick up things that I do in every song. I can't really develop a sound but there are signatures to my sound. Everything is simple and very bass-line driven, all with very hooky melodies and big harmonies."

The current single from the album is "James Dean" which includes a reference to "the Brad Pitt smile." Bedingfield says he counts two of Pitt's films — *Fight Club* (1999) and *12 Monkeys* (1995) — among his all-time favourites.

Bedingfield's already thinking ahead to his next album. "It's going to be a fusion of Dr. Dre and Nirvana with Propellerheads and overtones of Sting, Michael Jackson and Stevie Wonder," he vows. Sounds like another case of sonic schizophrenia.

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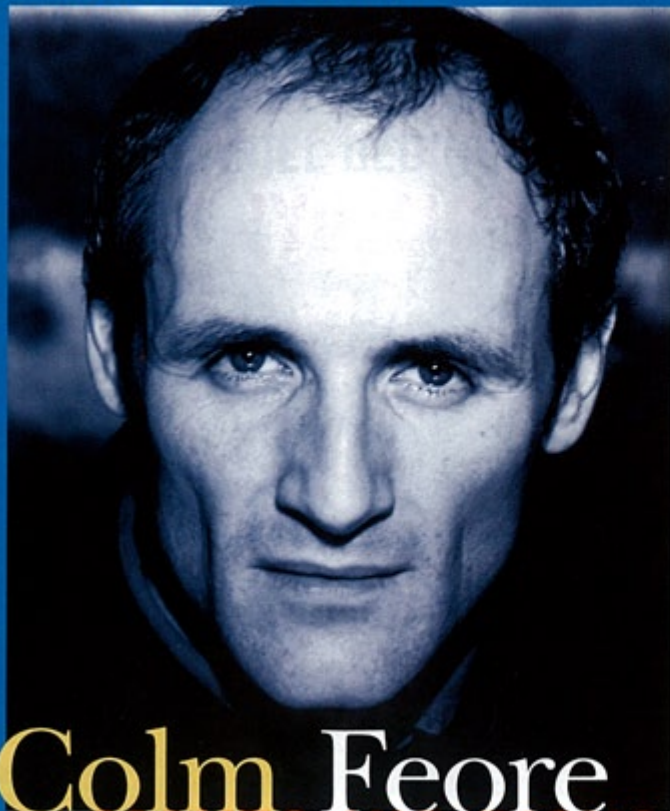


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† Projected North American box office.



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Colm Feore MAKES HIS PICKS

Colm Feore could be the hardest working man in show business. Last fall he hosted a concert for Queen Elizabeth, picked up a Gemini for his portrayal of Pierre Trudeau, starred in the Stratford Festival's production of *My Fair Lady*, shot a feature film called *Highwayman* with Jim Caviezel and flew to Mexico to do scenes with Antonio Banderas for the HBO film *And Starring Pancho Villa as Himself*.

This month, if he wanted to, Feore could go to a theatre and watch himself in two movies — as district attorney Martin Harrison in *Chicago* and as Detective McDuff in the action comedy *National Security* with Martin Lawrence.

Somehow Feore found time to speak with *Famous* from his home in Stratford, Ontario.

WHAT ARE YOUR FIVE FAVOURITE FILMS?

"Number one is *Local Hero* [1983]. I love it because it's a gentle character-driven story about a small Scottish town about to be overrun by an oil company, and when they send the oil man out to find out how easy it would be to buy the whole town he becomes seduced and converted by the locals into seeing things a different way. It's a delightful, gentle, moody film, and very witty. • Number two is *Mephisto* [1981]. There's a phenomenal central performance by Klaus Maria Brandauer playing an actor in the Nazi era who really wants to succeed and is tested as he moves up in the ranks and becomes one of the Nazis' favourite actors. It's kind of a stern warning to all actors and their ambitions. • Because I have kids and I see things through their eyes, number three has to be *Raiders of the Lost Ark* [1981]. It is one of the best action-adventure do-the-right-thing movies where the hero's not all shining armour and good intentions. Sometimes he just wants to

steal stuff. And, of course, it stars Harrison Ford. • Number four is *The Princess Bride* [1987] for a lot of the same reasons, because it does for love stories what *Raiders* does for action. And with Robin Wright Penn being delicious as the object of everyone's desire...what is to discuss? • Number five is *Pinocchio* [1940] which is perhaps one of the first groundbreakers in storytelling and cautionary tales for children — you know, watch you don't make an ass of yourself."

ALL YOUR PICKS HAVE "THE LITTLE GUY" STANDING UP AGAINST OVERWHELMING ODDS AND TRYING TO DO THE RIGHT THING.

"I think we go to the movies occasionally to be reassured. There are a lot of other dark and horrible movies that I like but I don't revisit them for any kind of spiritual comfort and I wouldn't hold my kids' hands and say 'pass the popcorn' at them. Whereas all of these, particularly *Pinocchio*, you say, 'Listen, you may not be perfect, you may be a bit stiff and wooden, but if you do the right thing and see it through, there's a good chance, if your heart's in the right place, you'll be a real live boy, or a girl.'"

TELL ME ABOUT YOUR ROLE IN *NATIONAL SECURITY*.

"I play a cop who may or may not be a bad cop. There's a crime and we're trying to get to the bottom of who's responsible and it looks like it's going to be Martin Lawrence because he's completely incompetent as a cop try-out...but he could be a security guard. It's an action comedy. It's rock 'n' roll stuff. [Director] Dennis Dugan liked to have stuff blow up. We had some wild stuff going on. It was exceptionally cool."

YOU'RE ALSO IN *CHICAGO*. THAT MUST HAVE BEEN FUN TO DO.

"It could possibly blow the roof off the whole movie musical thing. You get Renée Zellweger and Catherine Zeta-Jones dancing, and in comes Richard Gere and suddenly the walls explode, and in come 50 half-naked women...I mean, come on, what's not to like? We've got action, we've got drama...I think it could be extraordinary."

WITH SO MUCH WORK IN SUPPORTING ROLES IT SEEMS TO ME THAT YOU'VE GOT THE IDEAL CAREER FOR AN ACTOR.

"You're absolutely right. Don't tell anybody. It's absolutely perfect. It's a completely perfect balance. I am, without question, one of the luckiest actors in the world. I've called it, without any sense of modesty, just flying below the radar, because the only people who really need to know me are the producers and directors who are making the movies. Everyone else should just come and buy a ticket. I just show up and pretend to be somebody else. The lunches are usually pretty cool and the locations are pretty neat."

YOU'RE SO IDENTIFIABLE AS A CANADIAN ACTOR AND YET YOU WERE BORN IN BOSTON.

"I do dead Canadians. If he's dead and he's Canadian and he's famous I'll be playing him at some point. I joke, but I have played about five or six famous Canadians so there's a certain amount of 'wait a minute, he's ours.' But it was an accident at birth. I've lived in Canada for 40 years."

—John Kennedy

new RELEASES

GO HOME WITH **THE GOOD GIRL**, **THE BANGER SISTERS** OR **UNDERCOVER BROTHER**

JANUARY 1

BARBERSHOP

Stars: Ice Cube, Cedric the Entertainer
 Director: Tim Story (*The Firing Squad*)
 Story: The Cube stars as the reluctant owner of a struggling barbershop who doesn't realize how important his snip shack is to the community until he agrees to sell it.

JANUARY 7

THE GOOD GIRL

Stars: Jennifer Aniston, Jake Gyllenhaal
 Director: Miguel Arteta (*Chuck & Buck*)
 Story: Tired of her stoner hubby, a young woman (Aniston) decides to start gettin' it on with the stock boy at the discount store where she works. Well, it's an interesting definition of "good."

SIGNS

Stars: Mel Gibson, Joaquin Phoenix
 Director: M. Night Shyamalan
 (*Unbreakable*)

Story: This deliciously creepy movie about a farmer who discovers crop circles in his fields proves that characters and slow-build atmosphere trumps "in-your-face" scares every time. We're looking at you *FearDotCom*...

JANUARY 14

ABOUT A BOY

Stars: Hugh Grant, Toni Collette
 Directors: Paul and Chris Weitz
 Story: An immature and self-centered bachelor (Grant) invents a fictional son in order to help him score with single moms in this surprisingly sweet and insightful romantic comedy. Based on the novel by Nick Hornby (*High Fidelity*, *Fever Pitch*).

BLUE CRUSH

Stars: Kate Bosworth, Matthew Davis
 Director: John Stockwell (*Crazy/Beautiful*)
 Story: They carve gnarly curls! They hang

10!! And they do it all while wearing sexy bikinis!!! Three surfer babes search for love and the perfect wave in this estrogen-fuelled sports flick.

FEARDOTCOM

Stars: Stephen Dorff, Stephen Rea
 Director: William Malone (*Creature*)
 Story: A cop (Dorff) discovers that people are dying exactly 48 hours after they've viewed the website "feardotcom." So he decides to log on himself. Great idea, Officer Lemming.

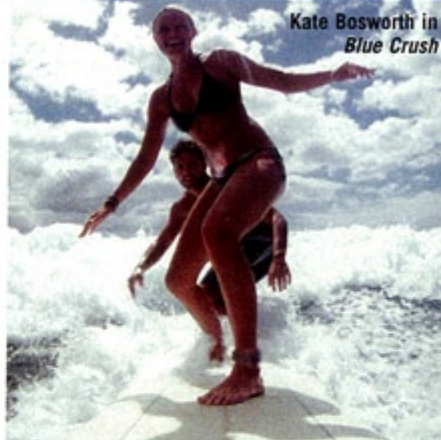
UNDERCOVER BROTHER

Stars: Eddie Griffin, Chris Kattan
 Director: Malcolm D. Lee (*The Best Man*)
 Story: "The Man" has kidnapped a black presidential candidate and forced him to open a chain of fried chicken restaurants! Now it's up to Undercover Brother (Griffin) to save him in this blaxploitation send-up.

JANUARY 21

THE BOURNE IDENTITY

Stars: Matt Damon, Franka Potente
 Director: Doug Limon (*Go*)
 Story: After getting hauled out of the



Kate Bosworth in *Blue Crush*

Mediterranean, an amnesiac man (Damon) tries to discover his real identity. Maybe all those secret agents who are trying to kill him might have a suggestion...

SIMONE

Stars: Al Pacino, Catherine Keener
 Director: Andrew Niccol (*Gattaca*)
 Story: When the star actress walks off the set of his latest film, a desperate movie producer (Pacino) creates a digital replacement. Only problem is, everyone else thinks she's the real deal.

JANUARY 28

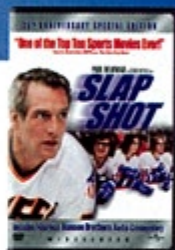
THE BANGER SISTERS

Stars: Goldie Hawn, Susan Sarandon
 Director: Bob Dolman (debut)
 Story: Two aging former groupies reunite after years apart, only to find that one of them (Sarandon) has turned all prim and proper. But, thankfully, the power of friendship helps her rediscover her inner slut.

new to DVD

SLAP SHOT: 25TH ANNIVERSARY COLLECTOR'S EDITION

The continuing popularity of this hockey comedy has inspired a special anniversary edition. Included is a wide-screen version of the film and commentary from the Hanson Brothers. Perfect for those who find people skating into each other hilarious.



FEAR AND LOATHING IN LAS VEGAS

"We were somewhere around Barstow on the edge of the desert when the drugs began to take hold." Thus begins Hunter S. Thompson's classic gonzo tale of depravity and drug abuse, a skewed, psychedelic road trip that was perfectly adapted for the screen by the master of the surreal, director Terry Gilliam (*Brazil*). This slick new edition includes multiple audio commentaries, documentaries, deleted scenes, artwork by Ralph Steadman and, of course, an interview with Thompson himself.

GO TO WWW.BLOCKBUSTER.COM FOR MORE INFORMATION

january

HOROSCOPE | BY DAN LIEBMAN

capricorn

December 23 >>> January 20

Ignore the chilly reception you get from business acquaintances. Focus on the goal — not on individuals — and you'll make major professional advances by the 31st.

aquarius

January 21 >>> February 19

You'll make some money in the first quarter of the new year. The key is to do the research throughout January. Family matters seem complicated, especially after the 20th. But you can handle them once you make time to relax, observe and reflect.

pisces

February 20 >>> March 20

Friends who've rallied around you need some support. Intuitive Pisces should be able to read the signs. If you're trying to pitch an idea or contact a VIP, bypass the middle guys and go directly to the head honcho.

aries

March 21 >>> April 20

January starts with an impressive victory. Perhaps a major project gets the backing you need. And you're finally able to focus on your strengths instead of obsessing on what are really minor flaws.

taurus

April 21 >>> May 22

You'll spend much of this month booking appointments, making travel arrangements

and finding good deals. You're smiling more, too, thanks to a new face in the neighbourhood. Meanwhile, continue to put an emphasis on health and fitness.

gemini

May 23 >>> June 21

Romance continues to have an adventurous side. The third week is especially good for creative writing, whether in a journal, a letter to a friend or something you might actually publish someday. You're feeling rejuvenated at work and can finally begin to assert yourself.

cancer

June 22 >>> July 22

This is a good period for tracking down lost friends. Travel is also a good idea, especially long visits to nearby destinations. By month's end, a difficult relationship becomes more cordial. Finally, make sure all professional agreements are in writing.

leo

July 23 >>> August 22

Influential types are highly receptive to your ideas. New acquaintances may seem needy but, at least initially, give them the benefit of the doubt. And forget about hiding from that person you've been trying to duck.

virgo

August 23 >>> September 22

You're relishing the limelight like seldom before. Around the 22nd, enjoy a couple of



KATIA SMIRNOVA

choice opportunities for showing off. It's hard to change opinions right now but, no matter, you seem to be winning every argument anyway.

libra

September 23 >>> October 22

This is not the month for Libra to study every side of every situation before making a move. A few impulsive actions — notably where relationships are concerned — can bring delightful results. Check out late-month entrepreneurial opportunities.

scorpio

October 23 >>> November 21

Hard-to-reach people are more accessible after the 15th, so don't mince words when you have the chance. Try helping a loved one come to terms with a recent adjustment. Reading between the lines at work helps provide you with a sense of the future.

sagittarius

November 22 >>> December 22

The high road is the best route to take this month. Ignore a co-worker's snippy remarks and forgive a family member's blunder. A partner shows an unexpected nurturing side. It pays to respond in kind. Enjoy a late-month career boost from an unexpected source.

JANUARY BIRTHDAYS



1st Saffron Burrows
2nd Cuba Gooding Jr.
3rd Mel Gibson

4th Dyan Cannon
5th Diane Keaton
6th Rowan Atkinson
7th Nicolas Cage
8th David Bowie
9th Joely Richardson
10th Pat Benatar
11th Amanda Peet
12th Kirstie Alley
13th Julia Louis-Dreyfus
14th Faye Dunaway
15th Chad Lowe

16th Kate Moss
17th Jim Carrey
18th Kevin Costner
19th Dolly Parton
20th David Lynch
21st Geena Davis
22nd Diane Lane
23rd Jeanne Moreau
24th Matthew Lillard
25th Mia Kirshner
26th Paul Newman
27th Bridget Fonda
28th Elijah Wood



29th Heather Graham
30th Gene Hackman
31st Minnie Driver



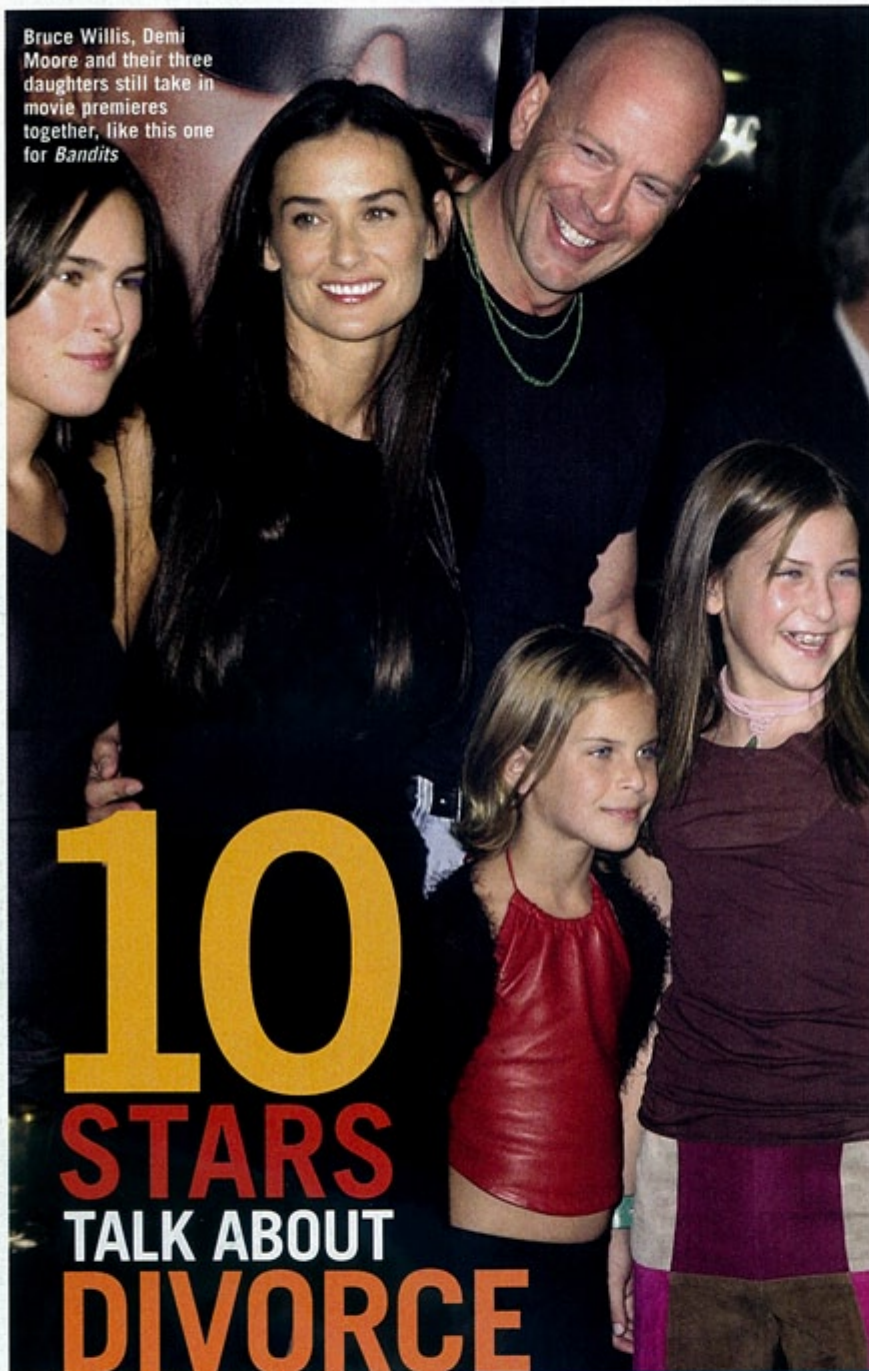
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Bruce Willis, Demi Moore and their three daughters still take in movie premieres together, like this one for *Bandits*



10 STARS TALK ABOUT DIVORCE

PHOTO BY STEVE GRANITZ/WIREIMAGE

BY SUSAN GRANGER

VAL KILMER "After eight years of marriage to Joanne [Whalley], I found out I was getting divorced on television. I heard it on the news one evening. Joanne moved to Los Angeles and filed for divorce while I was away working. In L.A., before whoever takes the piece of paper and files it, it goes through, probably the internet, but certainly the Xerox machine. I'm sure, before Joanne got home, it was on the local news. I saw it on CNN."

BRUCE WILLIS "My divorce from Demi [Moore] was as amicable as anything I've ever heard of. I mean, we're still great friends, you know. We talk every day and still have three children that we have to raise. I'm very proud of the way we've handled it."

ROD STEWART "Instead of getting married again, I'm going to find a woman I don't like and just give her a house."

TOM HANKS "I got a divorce when my first two children were quite young. I explained to my son the best I knew how, but it was a hideous process. It was a nightmare...oh, terrible. Their mother [actress/producer Samantha Lewis] and I don't talk a lot anymore, but we're very respectful of each other. I wouldn't say we're friends, or even friendly. But we're very respectful of each other's place and position."

DON JOHNSON "Melanie [Griffith] and I could not make it as husband and wife. We divorced — twice. But her happiness directly relates to the happiness of our daughter Dakota. So I pray for her happiness like I pray for my own."

TED TURNER "Jane [Fonda] came home and announced, 'I've become a Christian.' Before that, she was not a religious person. That's a pretty big change for your wife of many years to tell you. That's a shock — and, no doubt, among other things, it led to our divorce."

PETER FALK "My wife and I decide to get divorced every three years. One of the problems of getting a divorce is that you've got to be in sync. If it's out of whack, it's hard. I once said, 'If we all pull together, we can really make this divorce work.'"

KEVIN COSTNER "I married my college sweetheart, Cindy Silva, who was the most beautiful girl who'd ever paid attention to me. Living with a sex symbol is difficult though. I lost a marriage. I wish that wouldn't have happened. I behaved in a way that I wish I hadn't behaved. If you're going to make excuses for it, you ain't going to go forward.... Had I maybe been more mature, more something...but my reactions were my reactions. And they caused me a great amount of pain."

FARRAH FAWCETT "Marriage is purely a business contract. It kills romance. I learned that many years ago when Lee Majors and I divorced. It takes me a long time to end a relationship. I don't want to deal with causing pain, so I stay longer than I should. But you don't grow from your successes, you grow from your failures. Divorce marks the failure of a marriage."

ROBIN WILLIAMS "Ah, yes, divorce... from the Latin word meaning to rip out a man's genitals through his wallet."

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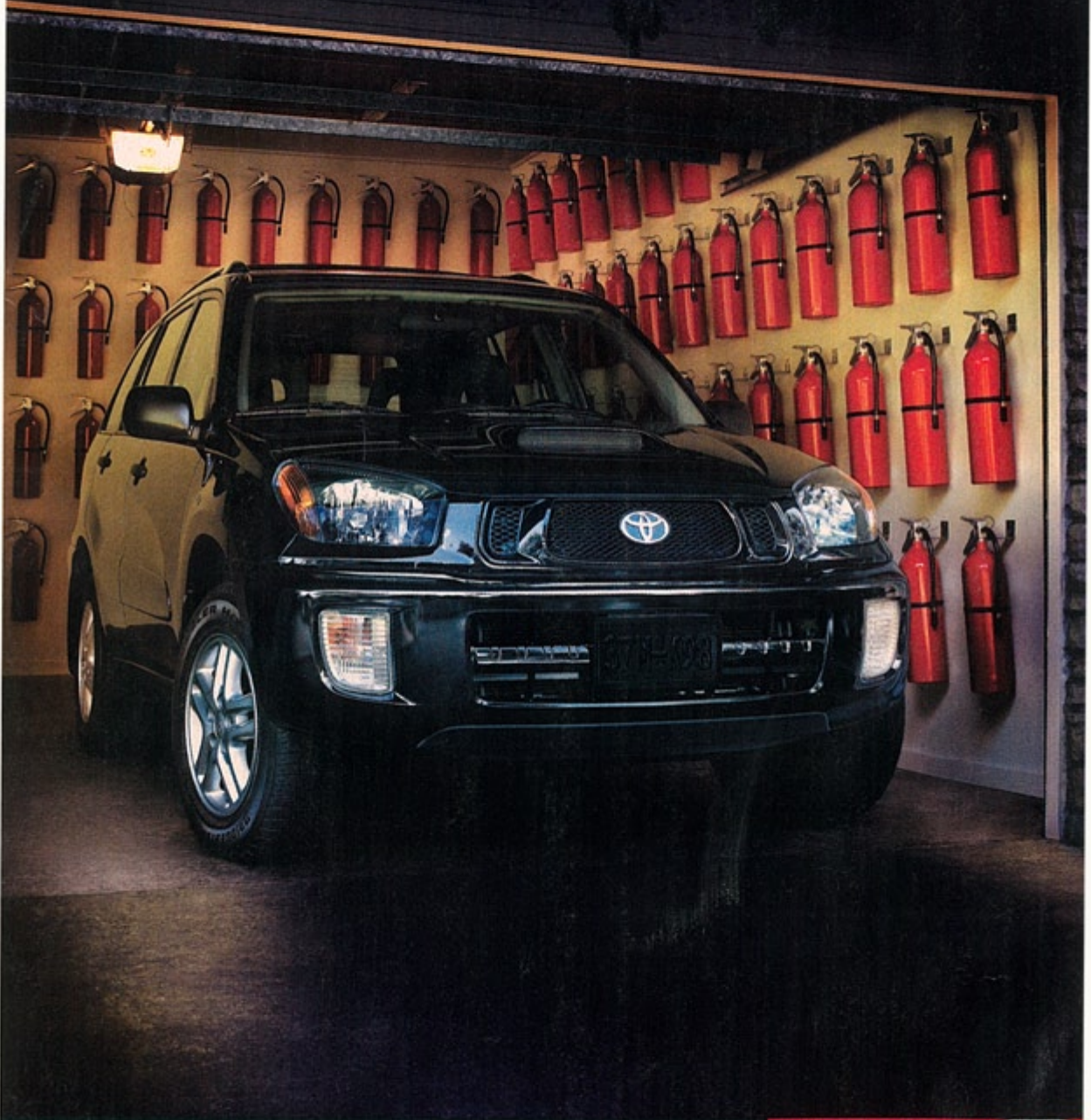
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