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Famous

january 2006 | volume 7 | number 1

Anthony Hopkins

ON THE WORLD'S FASTEST INDIAN

Josh Lucas
TALKS GLORY ROAD

Latifah
BOOKS LAST HOLIDAY

UNDERWORLD:
EVOLUTION'S

Kate
Beckinsale

Colin FARRELL

The New World's leading man finds forbidden love
in the wilds of the 17th century

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February 2006



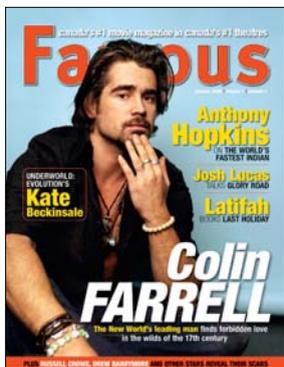
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MALICK'S FOURTH



It'll be easy to tell the obsessive cinephiles from everyone else this month. They'll be the first ones in line to see the new John Smith meets Pocahontas tale, *The New World*. And, with apologies to this month's cover boy, their excitement has nothing to do with star **COLIN FARRELL**. It's all about reclusive director Terrence Malick.

In case you were never a film major, and aren't someone who spends their Saturday nights speaking of cinema over a bottle of

port and a pack of Gauloise, I'll explain.

In the 1970s, Malick, a farmhand-turned-philosophy-major-turned-filmmaker, wrote and directed two very good — many would say great — movies, 1973's *Badlands*, in which Martin Sheen and Sissy Spacek starred as a couple of young lovers/murderers on the run, and 1978's *Days of Heaven*, also about a young couple on the run, this time Richard Gere and Brooke Adams fleeing trouble in Chicago for a Texas farm where they work as hired help against breathtaking backdrops.

Then Malick all but disappeared, turning into the film world's version of J.D. Salinger.

In the late 1990s he finally returned, directing the thinky, talky World War Two picture *The Thin Red Line*, but, despite benefitting from Malick's meticulous attention to detail and artful cinematography, many found the film to be uneven and disjointed.

So Terrence Malick's reputation as a great filmmaker rests with *The New World*. Is that reputation deserved, or did his disappearance from Hollywood inflate the legend? He has certainly put years of effort into *The New World*, painstakingly recreating 17th-century Jamestown, hiring an archaeologist who's one of the world's foremost experts on the early settlement, and a language expert to teach native actors how to speak Algonquin.

In "Exploring New Territory," page 32, Colin Farrell, who seems to have benefited from a bit of a disappearing act of his own this past year, does his best to describe what makes Malick special.

Another gorgeously shot new movie is *The World's Fastest Indian*, in which **SIR ANTHONY HOPKINS** plays a senior citizen who sets a speed record atop his out-of-date motorcycle. Just check out the stunning images that accompany our interview with Hopkins, "Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Movies," on page 16.

Speaking of sirs, **QUEEN LATIFAH** plays a character originated by Sir Alec Guinness in a remake of the 1950's dramedy *Last Holiday*. Read "Queen tours Europe," page 20, to find out why she took on a part that was so against type.

"Interview with the Vampire," page 24, is just that — our interview with **KATE BECKINSALE**, who reprises her role as a bloodsucker in the vampires vs. werewolves sequel, *Underworld: Evolution*.

And on page 28 you'll find "Courting Controversy," in which *Glory Road* star **JOSH LUCAS** talks about playing the first basketball coach to start an all-black lineup in an NCAA game.

—MARNI WEISZ



PUBLISHER SALAH BACHIR

EDITOR MARNI WEISZ

DEPUTY EDITOR INGRID RANDOJA

ART DIRECTOR MATTHEW PICKET

DESIGNER DANIEL CULLEN

PRODUCTION MANAGER SHEILA GREGORY

PRODUCTION ASSISTANT ZAC VEGA

CONTRIBUTORS RON DICKER

EARL DITTMAN

SCOTT GARDNER

SUSAN GRANGER

TERRY LAWSON

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CAUGHT ON FILM

KEIRA KNIGHTLEY, JESSICA ALBA, SYLVESTER STALLONE, NAOMI WATTS, LIEV SCHREIBER



PHOTO BY KEYSTONE

▲ You never know how a project like this one's going to turn out until opening night — but the critics seem quite thrilled with the ballet adaptation of *Edward Scissorhands* currently playing at Sadler's Wells Theatre in London, England (that's Sam Archer as our pointy-handed hero). It took choreographer Matthew Bourne eight years to convince the film's director, Tim Burton, to give him the rights.

>>> In this corner...an early look at 59-year-old Sylvester Stallone as his trademark character Rocky Balboa in the upcoming 6th *Rocky* movie. In this scene, shot in Las Vegas last month, Rocky weighs in for the fight that will bring him out of retirement. You'll have to wait until February 2007 to see who wins.



PHOTO BY TEDDY BLACKBURN/REUTERS

>>> Naomi Watts in the arms of her own big ape, actor/director Liev Schreiber, at a party following *King Kong's* New York premiere. The two have been dating since last spring and are currently filming *The Painted Veil* together, based on the novel by Somerset Maugham.

✓ Jessica Alba takes a break from filming *Awake* on a beach in Brooklyn, New York. The movie is about a man (Hayden Christensen) who suffers from a condition that leaves him paralyzed but aware during heart surgery, and Alba plays his wife. The movie should be out sometime this year.

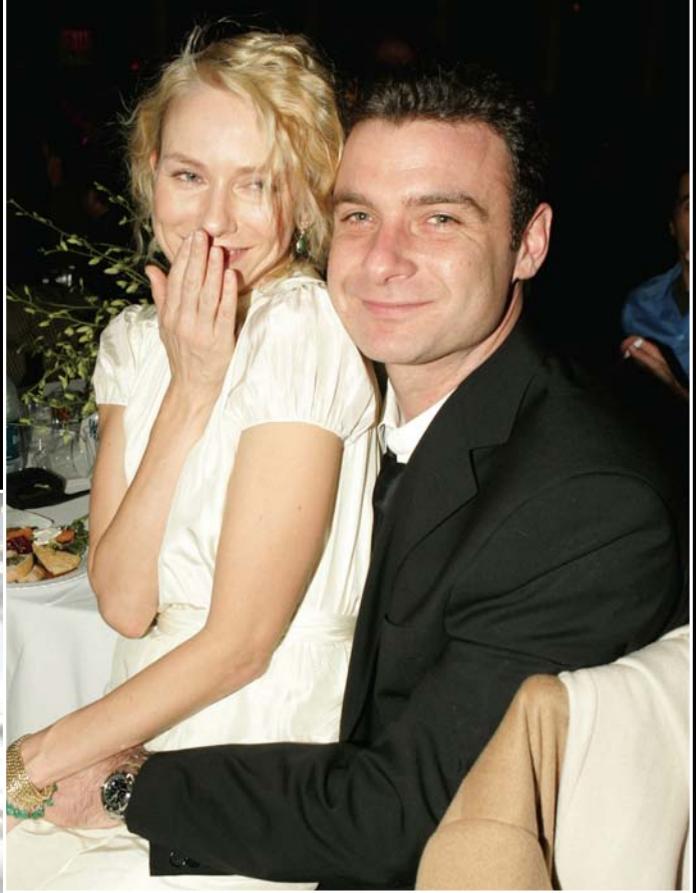


PHOTO BY CARLO ALLEGRI



PHOTO BY RONALD ASADORIAN/SPLASH NEWS



PHOTO BY DAVE HOGAN/GETTY

▲ Keira Knightley negotiates the stairs at the British Independent Film Awards at London's Hammersmith Palais. The *Pride & Prejudice* star was honoured with *Variety's* UK Personality of the Year.

RAZZIE AWARDS: You can make a difference

Oscar nominees will be announced on the 31st of this month. But unless you happen to be a noted Hollywood filmmaker, there's not much you can do to influence them. No, the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences couldn't care less what you think.

But someone does.

Act now and for a mere \$25 (U.S.) you can become a member of the Golden Raspberry Award Foundation and cast your ballot for another world-renowned, highly publicized and extremely popular awards show — The Razzies. You also get two tickets to the 26th Annual Razzie Awards ceremony, which will be held on March 4th at the Ivar Theatre in Hollywood (air, hotel and backless satin dress not included).

"Since part of what we're popping fun at about those

other Awards is their snooty, stuffy qualities, making *The Razzies* more democratic is part of its appeal," says John Wilson, who refers to himself as founder and Head Razzberry. There are currently about 700 voting members.

Although the nominees will have been chosen by now (also picked by members) you can still get in on the final ballot and help decide on such categories as Worst Actor, Worst Actress, Worst Picture, Worst Remake or Sequel and Worst Screen Couple.

Long popular as an antidote to the season's self-congratulatory award extravaganzas, the Razzies have increased their notoriety in the past couple of years thanks to some good-natured celebrities who showed up to collect their awards.

In 2002, Tom Green became



PHOTO BY BARBARA WILSON/JUPI

the first star to accept a Razzie in person when he did so five times for *Freddy Got Fingered*. And last year Halle Berry accepted her Worst Actress Razzie for *Catwoman*, parodying her Oscar speech from the year before with, "Thank you so much. I never, in my life, thought I would be up here."

As for Wilson's frontrunner for this year's Razzies...

"That would have to be *Dirty Love*, starring Jenny McCarthy and Carmen Electra, a singularly unfunny and truly disgusting 'comedy' that is an unfortunate combination of Bo Derek in *Bolero* and Tom Green in *Freddy Got Fingered* — both of which are past Worst Picture 'winners.'"

Log on to www.razzies.com to join. —MW



Horloge biologique



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CANADA'S TOP TEN

It's award season, and while Hollywood types line up to pick up their plaques, crystal ornaments and golden statues, we here in Canada are content to announce, and then screen, our best films of 2005 (in no particular order, of course, we *are* Canadian).

Established in 2001 by the Toronto International Film Festival Group, the films that comprise *Canada's Top Ten* are chosen by a 10-member panel of journalists, directors, producers and academics. Listed alphabetically, the winners are:

- ★ *C.R.A.Z.Y.* (director, Jean-Marc Vallée)
- ★ *Familia* (director, Louise Archambault)
- ★ *A History of Violence* (director, David Cronenberg)
- ★ *Horloge biologique* (director, Ricardo Trogi)
- ★ *The Life and Hard Times of Guy Terrifico* (director, Michael Mabbott)
- ★ *Memory for Max, Claire, Ida and Company* (director, Allan King)
- ★ *La Neuvaïne* (director, Bernard Emond)
- ★ *A Simple Curve* (director, Aubrey Nealon)
- ★ *Water* (director, Deepa Mehta)
- ★ *Where the Truth Lies* (director, Atom Egoyan)

The films will be screened this month in Toronto at Cinematheque Ontario (January 27-February 5), and will hit the road later this year to tour Vancouver, Montreal and Ottawa. Each Toronto screening includes a Q&A session with the filmmakers. For Cinematheque Ontario screening and ticket information log on to www.topten.ca, or call 416.968.FILM. —IR



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IN THEATRES FEBRUARY **THEY'RE ALREADY INSIDE.**

GREETINGS from Ellis Jacob, President and CEO, Cineplex Entertainment



Happy New Year! Welcome to the January 2006 issue of *Famous* magazine. The holiday season is a special time to reflect and focus on family and friends; to celebrate the relationships that give meaning to our personal lives and begin the year with renewed energy and focus. I would like to take this opportunity to wish all of you the best for 2006.

It was a very eventful year for the Cineplex Entertainment team in 2005.

In July, we announced the purchase of Famous Players by Cineplex Galaxy; a short time later the transaction was complete, and in October our new name — Cineplex Entertainment — was announced. Cineplex Entertainment now operates the best theatrical exhibition brands in the country: Cineplex Odeon, Coliseum, Colossus, Famous Players, Galaxy Cinemas and SilverCity.

Although this has been a time of great change for our two companies, for our guests very little will appear to have changed. Our theatre staff and management are committed to delivering an exceptional entertainment experience and will continue to provide the highest level of customer service to our guests.

While it is tradition during this season to reflect back upon the year, it is equally important to look forward and anticipate the achievements that lie ahead. At Cineplex Entertainment, we look forward to the launch of a number of new theatres being built and scheduled to open across the country. We have announced plans to open new theatres under the Cineplex Odeon, Galaxy Cinemas and SilverCity brands in Brockville, Milton, Collingwood and Oakville, Ontario, as well as in Brossard, Quebec, and Saskatoon, Saskatchewan.

On the web, we are currently building a new fully integrated and interactive website. At www.cineplex.com you will find all the latest movie news, theatre promotions, contests and, of course, movie listings for all of our locations across Canada. You can also get ahead of the box-office line by using Jump!, the Cineplex Entertainment online ticketing service, to buy your tickets from the comfort of your home or office.

On behalf of all of us at Cineplex Entertainment, may I wish you and your family a very happy and healthy new year. Enjoy the movies!

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Ellis Jacob". The signature is fluid and cursive, written in a professional style.

Ellis Jacob
President and CEO,
Cineplex Entertainment



now in theatres

| BY INGRID RANDOJA



JANUARY 6

BLOODRAYNE

WHO'S IN IT? Kristanna Loken, Ben Kingsley
WHO DIRECTED? Uwe Boll (*Alone in the Dark*)
WHAT'S IT ABOUT? Rayne (Loken) is a dhampir — half-human, half-vampire — living in 18th-century Romania who is obsessed with avenging her mother's rape at the hands of her father (Kingsley). This decidedly feminist bloodsucker flick was penned by *The L Word* writer Guinevere Turner and co-stars *Girlfight*'s Michelle Rodriguez.

HOSTEL

WHO'S IN IT? Jay Hernandez, Derek Richardson
WHO DIRECTED? Eli Roth (*Cabin Fever*)
WHAT'S IT ABOUT? Two American guys backpacking through Europe are led to believe there's a hostel in Slovakia run by beautiful women hot for Yankee travellers. Turns out it's a sadistic house of horrors. This one screened as a work-in-progress at the Toronto International Film Festival.

JANUARY 13

HOODWINKED

VOICES: Anne Hathaway, Glenn Close
WHO DIRECTED? Cory and Todd Edwards
WHAT'S IT ABOUT? The Little Red Riding Hood fable turns into an animated whodunit as the cops respond to a disturbance at Granny's, then have to figure out what happened between the old lady (Close), the kid in red (Hathaway) and the big, not-so-bad wolf.

THE MATADOR

WHO'S IN IT? Pierce Brosnan, Greg Kinnear
WHO DIRECTED? Richard Shepard (*Oxygen*)
WHAT'S IT ABOUT? A disillusioned hitman (Brosnan) and a travelling salesman (Kinnear) meet in a Mexico City bar and embark on a weird adventure.

THE NEW WORLD

WHO'S IN IT? Colin Farrell, Christian Bale
WHO DIRECTED? Terrence Malick (*Badlands*)
WHAT'S IT ABOUT? Roguish English settler John Smith (Farrell) founds Jamestown,

GRANDMA'S BOY

WHO'S IN IT? Allen Covert, Doris Roberts
WHO DIRECTED? Nicholaus Goossen (debut)
WHAT'S IT ABOUT? R-rated comedies are all the rage in Hollywood, and this one about a 35-year-old videogame tester (Covert) who's forced to move in with his grandma (Roberts) and her two roommates (Shirley Jones and Shirley Knight) takes raunchy potshots at geeks and seniors alike.

• HITS THEATRES JANUARY 6

Virginia, in 1607 and then explores even more dangerous territory when he romances pubescent native princess Pocahontas (Q'Orianka Kilcher). **See Colin Farrell interview, page 32.**

GLORY ROAD

WHO'S IN IT? Josh Lucas, Derek Luke
WHO DIRECTED? James Gartner (debut)
WHAT'S IT ABOUT? It's 1966 and Texas Western University basketball coach Don Haskins (Lucas) makes the then unheard of — bordering on unthinkable —





MATCH POINT

WHO'S IN IT? Scarlett Johansson, Jonathan Rhys-Meyers

WHO DIRECTED? Woody Allen (*Melinda and Melinda*)

WHAT'S IT ABOUT? Allen (now working out of London, England) returns to *Crimes and Misdemeanors* territory with this taut drama focusing on former British tennis pro and newlywed Chris (Rhys-Meyers), who begins a torrid affair with the seductive Nola (Johansson). But when Nola wants more than Chris can give, he looks to get rid of his problem, permanently.

• HITS THEATRES JANUARY 20



TRISTAN & ISOLDE

WHO'S IN IT? James Franco, Sophia Myles

WHO DIRECTED? Kevin Reynolds (*The Count of Monte Cristo*)

WHAT'S IT ABOUT? Filmmaking brothers Tony and Ridley Scott took on executive producing roles to fulfill their dream of turning this medieval legend into a big-screen action-weepee. English knight Tristan (Franco) loves Isolde (Myers), the daughter of the Irish King, but Isolde is engaged to marry another Englishman in order to create peace between the warring nations. Will love or politics prevail?

• HITS THEATRES JANUARY 13

decision to start an all-black lineup during the team's run to the NCAA championships. See Josh Lucas interview, page 28.

LAST HOLIDAY

WHO'S IN IT? Queen Latifah, LL Cool J

WHO DIRECTED? Wayne Wang (*Because of Winn-Dixie*)

WHAT'S IT ABOUT? This remake of the 1950 film starring Alec Guinness casts Latifah as a shy sales clerk who, upon discovering she is dying, decides to blow every last

penny of her hard-earned savings on a lavish European vacation. See **Queen Latifah** interview, page 20.

JANUARY 20

UNDERWORLD: EVOLUTION

WHO'S IN IT? Kate Beckinsale, Scott Speedman

WHO DIRECTED? Len Wiseman (*Underworld*)

WHAT'S IT ABOUT? This sequel to 2003's *Underworld* finds vampire babe Selene (Beckinsale) and her human/werewolf pal Michael (Speedman) battling the world's oldest bloodsucker, and dealing with an entirely new species of baddies. See **Kate Beckinsale** interview, page 24.

JANUARY 27

ANNAPOLIS

WHO'S IN IT? James Franco, Tyrese Gibson

WHO DIRECTED? Justin Lin (*Better Luck Tomorrow*)

WHAT'S IT ABOUT? Every generation needs its own version of *An Officer and a Gentleman*, so here ya go! Franco plays a first-year midshipman attending the United States Naval Academy, who ticks off a tough-as-nails instructor (Gibson) and engages in a relationship with another student (Brewster).

BIG MOMMA'S HOUSE 2

WHO'S IN IT? Martin Lawrence, Nia Long

WHO DIRECTED? John Whitesell (*Malibu's Most Wanted*)

WHAT'S IT ABOUT? Lawrence returns as FBI agent Malcolm Turner, who, this time, disguises himself as "Big Momma" to go undercover as a nanny and investigate his partner's murder.



NANNY MCPHEE

WHO'S IN IT? Emma Thompson, Colin Firth

WHO DIRECTED? Kirk Jones (*Waking Ned Devine*)

WHAT'S IT ABOUT? Mr. Brown's (Firth) seven unruly children have run off 17 nannies and it looks like it'll be 18 until Nanny McPhee's (Thompson) arrival. The woman with the bulbous nose, buck tooth and warts uses her own brand of magic on the Brown brood, and lo and behold, the more the kids behave, the more attractive she becomes.

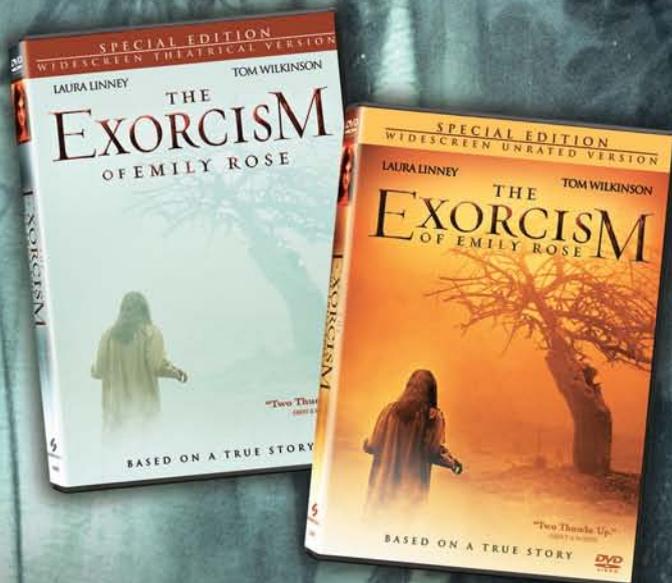
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ZEN AND THE ART OF MOTORCYCLE MOVIES

ANTHONY HOPKINS plays a senior citizen with a need for speed in the real-life drama *THE WORLD'S FASTEST INDIAN*. But in Hopkins' own real life, the notoriously intense actor has learned to relax, slow down and become downright serene | **BY RON DICKER**

Anthony Hopkins has found inner-peace, and life at work isn't bad either.

This month he plays real-life motorcyclist Burt Munro, who rides his obsolete machine to a land speed record in *The World's Fastest Indian*.

Munro, a New Zealander who took his 1920 Indian motorcycle to Utah's Bonneville Salt Flats in the 1960s, was dismissed as an old, foreign kook, but the 68-year-old persisted until he pushed that bike faster than anyone could have imagined.

"Burt Munro had this philosophy that he could live more in one minute on a motorbike than most people live in a lifetime," says Hopkins.

Of course, as Hopkins points out, there's a flipside to the thrill-seeking. When he fails to recite a line properly, there's always another take. Munro's failures could have killed him.

Apparently, there has been no such high drama for Hopkins away from movies lately. The notoriously intense actor seems

relatively Zen-like in this interview at last September's Toronto International Film Festival. A home at the beach and a second marriage to a woman 19 years his junior seem to have worked like a homeopathic Zolofit. "I'm in Malibu and life is good," he says.

So wonderfully anal in Oscar-nominated roles like the butler in 1993's *The Remains of the Day* and the misanthropic commander-in-chief in 1995's *Nixon* (he was also nominated for *Amistad*), off screen he has become the guy you want to stretch next to at the yoga retreat.

The World's Fastest Indian was perhaps the greatest indication of Hopkins' Buddha-like transformation, as he had to settle a major grudge with *Bounty* director Roger Donaldson to do it. Hopkins fought famously with Donaldson on the 1984 seafaring film because, according to the Welsh-born actor, Donaldson had an Australian's disdain for the British and was too demanding. ▶▶



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Burt Munro (Hopkins)
with a gal pal played by
Annie Whittle

feature. He had already made a documentary about Munro called *Offerings to the God of Speed* way back in 1971.

Although Hopkins also portrayed speedboat record holder Donald Campbell in the 1998 BBC film *Across the Lake*, he claims no need for speed or kinship with daredevils. He doesn't even know his way around an engine. But that didn't stop the 67-year-old from agreeing to be towed on a motorcycle at 80 miles an hour for some shots, or to doing his own stunts in a staged crash that sent him careening along the salt flats without trick photography.

John Madden, who directed Hopkins as a math genius gone mad in last September's *Proof*, said he admires Hopkins' ability to combine "intense vulnerability" and "strident bullying." Not long ago, Hopkins didn't have to act the latter. He confesses to mistrusting directors over the years, and his temper made things worse. "I'm still angry about some things, but not volcanic," he says.

Later this year Hopkins will appear in *Bobby*, about the assassination of American presidential candidate Bobby Kennedy, and will play the tainted judge in a remake of *All the King's Men*, the 1949 political fable that won the Best Picture Oscar. "It's quite dark," Hopkins says. "It was a really good part."

Praising a role is not automatic for Hopkins. For instance, he can't put enough distance between himself and 2002's *The Human Stain*, which featured him as a black man passing for a white Jew. "I was completely miscast and I shouldn't have done it," he says.

But a chance meeting a few years ago persuaded the two to bury the hatchet, and a "we must work together again" goodbye actually came to fruition with *The World's Fastest Indian*. In fact, the two had such a positive experience with the film that they're trying to raise money to make *Papa*, a biography of Ernest Hemingway.

"We fought hammer and tongs and we've become fine friends. He's great. It's a nice story," says Hopkins, then adds with a laugh, "He hasn't changed his methods, which used to drive me mad."

The reconciliation also gave Donaldson a name actor to complete his decades-long quest to turn Munro's story into a



FERRIS NEVER LOOKED SO GOOD!

He appears comfortable with all his recent choices. In *All the King's Men*, his Judge Stanton is lifted to state attorney general under the whirlwind rise to power of Governor Willie Stark (Sean Penn), an idealist country lawyer who learns to play political hardball.

The judge is perceived as the pillar of virtue until he threatens to bring down Stark's administration prompting the Governor to rip the skeletons from his closet. That unleashes a shockwave of events which turned the original *All the King's Men*, based on Robert Penn Warren's novel, into an enduring cautionary tale about the quest for power.

All the King's Men was shot in New Orleans before Hurricane Katrina struck, and the catastrophe was very much on the actor's mind when we spoke last fall.

"A piece of history is gone," he says. "But the New Orleans people have just come together in a huge mass of help and compassion, and I think that's great. And these are people who are not celebrities, just people giving. I respect them more than movie stars who go on TV and say how much they care. That's easy."

He's one proud Yankee, too. Hopkins officially became a citizen a few years ago, around the time he divorced his wife of 29 years and married antiques dealer Stella Arroyave. The move caused harrumphs at home — the old home.

He is unabashedly American. Admittedly bored with British theatre, he cherishes the day he told that institution to stuff itself. "I love America and still believe in the American dream," he says. "America is going through its twists and bi-ways at the moment but I'm optimistic enough to think it will pass and we wake up."

Hopkins' education in everything American may soon take a surprising turn, as he's considering a stint in Las Vegas. Can't imagine him in a sequined jacket asking conventioners to tip generously? Well, it's not that extreme, but Hopkins is composing a Las Vegas show with former Eurythmic Dave Stewart.

A long-time dabbler in music, Hopkins never thought he would try it professionally, but he's buying a special computer for his home studio and hopes to have the work ready for the show's launch in two years.

The new outlet helped ease him out of a minor depression, he says. But at the moment, he appears as far away from sadness as he is from his Malibu home.

This is the new Anthony Hopkins, *The Silence of the Lambs'* cannibal who no longer wants to eat himself up with tension.

"I don't get impatient in traffic," he says. "I'm in California by choice. If there's a big traffic jam, I turn on the radio." **E**

Ron Dicker is a freelance writer based in New York City.

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From left: Gerard Depardieu, Queen Latifah and LL Cool J in *Last Holiday*

QUEEN TOURS EUROPE

In ***LAST HOLIDAY***, **QUEEN LATIFAH** is a sad, timid woman diagnosed with a fatal illness. But don't worry, it's not all bad news. She flies to Europe, blows all her cash and realizes life really is worth living. Now if only they could find a cure... **| BY BOB STRAUSS**

She does bold and brash with an uncanny degree of class, but now Queen Latifah really has to prove herself. For her new movie, *Last Holiday*, meek and mild is the order of the day.

This could be quite a stretch for someone who made her name rapping with abundant self-esteem, in the process knocking the sexist hip-hop genre for a well-deserved and very necessary loop. And her acting successes have almost all been as confident women with strong personalities: entrepreneurial Khadijah on her breakthrough television series *Living Single*; Oscar-nominated Mama Morton in *Chicago*; loud, life-changing

escaped con Charlene in the hit comedy *Bringing Down the House*.

Recently, though, the Type-A personality act has been wearing thin. Her last three movies — *The Cookout*, *Taxi* and *Beauty Shop* — were box-office disappointments. And although Latifah still exudes the self-assurance that makes her a sought-after spokesmodel (for Cover Girl) and awards show host (the 2005 Grammys), she's well aware that it's time to try a new approach.

"I do have a tendency to play these strong roles," says the 35-year-old multitasker, who, besides acting and recording, runs her own production and talent management company. ►►

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“But my *Last Holiday* character is much more meek and humble and quiet. It was challenging! It was great though, I really enjoyed it. That’s why I took it, you know? Get to go the other way. I love being challenged.”

It’s quite another way. After all, the film is a loose remake of a 1950 British picture that starred the master of cinematic subtlety, Alec Guinness, in the role now played by Latifah.

Yes, you read that right.

While, obviously, a lot has been changed from the 56-year-old version, the new *Last Holiday* still requires Latifah to access a vulnerability previously unseen. When she’s diagnosed with a fatal illness, Latifah’s lonely clerk Georgia Byrd, heads off to Europe to try to finally enjoy her life while she still has one.

Wayne Wang, who has helmed such weepy, moving films as *The Joy Luck Club* and *Because of Winn-Dixie*, directed. And Latifah (which Jersey girl Dana Owens chose for her stage name) means “delicate and sensitive” in Arabic, after all.

But *Last Holiday* is not a complete change-up. As mousy Georgia has a better and better time on the Continent, she throws off her inhibitions and some of the raucous, rambunctious Queen we know starts to emerge.

No matter what she does different, Latifah figures it’s always a good idea to stay, at some level, true to herself.

“I think people see that and they like that,” says the actor, looking vibrant in jeans and a wide-sleeved, striped top as she sits in her Regent Beverly Wilshire hotel suite. “You know, all of the pretentiousness that can come along with a Hollywood career...and all of the crazy stuff that can come along with a rap career, the sexuality or the misogyny or any of those things that you could show...I didn’t show all of that. I chose to show a different point of view from the very beginning. Establishing that has allowed me to continue on.”

The daughter of a policeman and an art teacher, Owens went through several phases — as a power forward, she twice led her high school basketball team to the New Jersey state championship, and there were the minimum wage days at Burger King and other franchise outlets — before finding her forthright, feminist rap voice in the late 1980s.

Success in music, she says, allowed her to be pickier when choosing acting jobs.

“Coming from a hip-hop background made me a little more ballsy than some other actors might be,” Latifah notes. “I’m not dependent on acting for my only source of income, so I didn’t have to take any job that was thrown my way. I was fortunate not to have to do that and I feel for people who have to, but you’ve got to put food on the table sometimes. But I can continuously show who I want to show, so to speak.”

That’s not entirely the case, of course.

“Diet sucks,” Latifah grumbles. It’s her way of acknowledging that, even though she has all but single-handedly glamorized plus-size beauty in an anorexic pop culture, even the Queen must keep an eye on the calories.

Sometimes, she has to watch herself in other ways. Despite her straight-arrow background and the generally benign, positive nature of her creative output, Latifah has had to contend with both criminals (carjacked, bodyguard shot, in 1995) and the law (fined for weapon and marijuana possession a year later). There was also the tragic death of her brother, Lance, on a motorcycle she had given him.

One celebrity pitfall Latifah has avoided, however, is a love life scrutinized by the tabloids. She has always kept such personal matters to herself, although she’s happy to share her domestic goals.

“Eventually, I’m gonna wanna stop and have some kids. I can’t be in front of the camera then, but I want to still be able to work and contribute, and so a lot of what I’m doing right now is preparation for that situation.”

That includes developing movies through her company, Flavor Unit, whose projects include proposed new versions of *Truck Turner*, a 1974 flick about a bounty hunter who becomes the hunted, and 1975’s *Friday Foster*, which starred Pam Grier and was based on a comic strip about a magazine photographer.

Asked if she prefers producing to acting, Latifah came up with a characteristically distinctive answer.

“I like to act-duce! It’s always more challenging when you’re doing both at the same time. I love being able to create, me and

all the guys that work in our company, we love what we do.”

Music, however, remains her first love. As her impressive renditions of *Chicago*'s show tunes and last year's standards collection, *The Dana Owens Album*, demonstrated, she's not standing still in that artistic endeavour, either.

“I can do the same kind of album 50 times and be very happy with that, honestly,” she says. “But I want to bridge the gap of jazz and hip-hop a lot closer. I can really sing that music. I can play Vegas, you know. But I would like to do something a little more experimental, try to put some more beats to some of these classic records just to freshen 'em up, make 'em more fun.

“But, you know what? That's my problem. I have too many ideas, I think too many things. And I love music, I can't live without music. But I love so many different kinds of music that I can probably get into anything, so I'm trying to control the need to overexperiment.”

Admittedly, this goes against Latifah's basic artistic instincts. Just because she's exhibiting a little more self-control at the moment...well, that's just another kind of change.

As for whether the public wants, say, a new, mellower Latifah or not, she isn't worried. She's doing what she wants, and figures fans have the right to their own likes and dislikes, too.

“I don't put expectations on things like that,” Latifah says. “I give people more credit than I give focus groups, than I give statistics. Some people live and die for statistics and paperwork. But I don't believe you can control what people are gonna do. Just when you think they're gonna do this, they do that, and they may shock you.”

Bob Strauss is a Los Angeles-based entertainment writer.

CASTING ABOUT WILDLY

Last Holiday finds the curvy, black and female Queen Latifah playing a role originated by the lean, white and oh-so-British gentleman actor Alec Guinness. This casting choice is representative of Hollywood's “thinking-outside-the-box” when it comes to remakes, or as industry types like to call them “re-imaginings of the original.” Here are our picks for the Top-Five Weirdest Casting Transformations:



1. *Guess Who's Coming to Dinner's* elegant and black **Sidney Poitier** transforms into *Guess Who's* dumbed-down and white **Ashton Kutcher**.

2. The laconic **Gary Cooper** from *Mr. Deeds Goes to Town* becomes the oddball **Adam Sandler** of *Mr. Deeds*.

3. Everyone's favourite manly man astronaut **Charlton Heston** from *Planet of the Apes* is replaced by boyish former underwear model **Mark Wahlberg** in director Tim Burton's flawed version of the same film.

4. The whole point of the original *Alfie* was to have an ordinary-looking **Michael Caine** playing the role of a womanizer. Then why go with gorgeous pretty boy **Jude Law** in the 2004 remake?

5. Of course, the biggest casting headscratcher remains the replacing of the *James Bond* franchise's supersuave 007 **Sean Connery** with the drab and snotty **Roger Moore**. Ouch!

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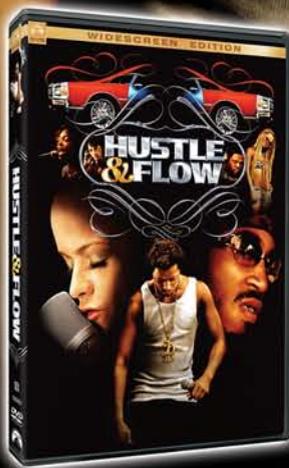
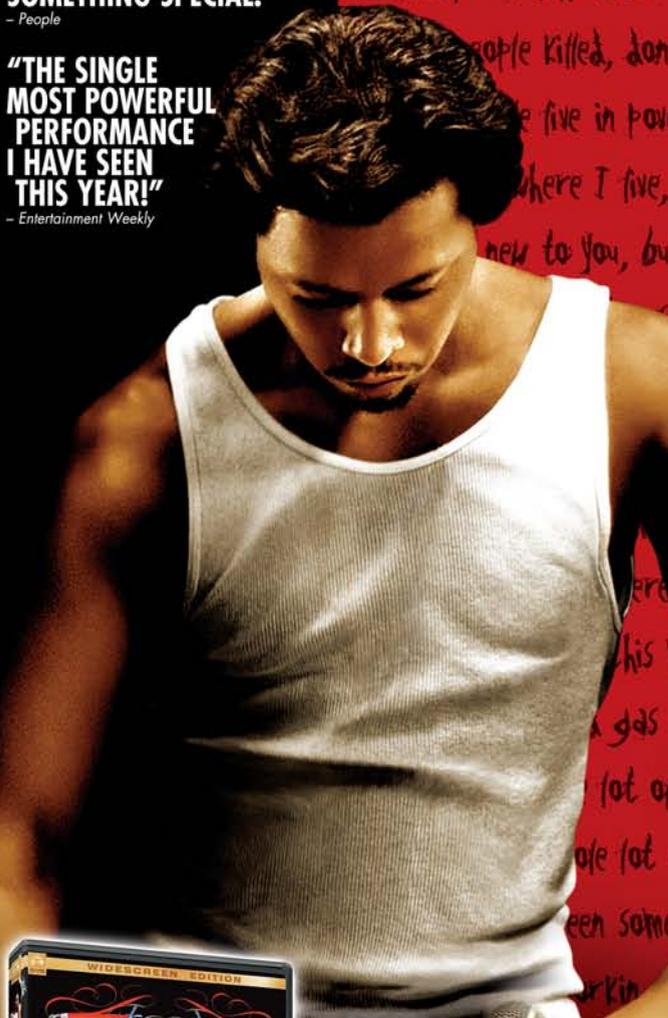
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INTERVIEW WITH THE VAMPIRE

KATE BECKINSALE talks about her reluctance to do the first *Underworld*, marrying its director and heading back to the world of fangs and fur for **UNDERWORLD: EVOLUTION** | BY EARL DITTMAN

Kate Beckinsale doesn't particularly like horror flicks. Or, as the delicate Brit puts it, "Monster movies are not my cup of tea."

Initially, she even passed on *Underworld*, the 2003 fang-fest in which she plays vampire Selene, whose race of bloodsuckers is pitted against werewolves in a centuries-old battle that continues this month in the sequel, *Underworld: Evolution*.

But had she not taken that role, the rest of her life would have been completely different.

"When I first got the offer I didn't even attempt to read the script," admits the 32-year-old London native, decked out in boots, jeans and a blouse, during an interview at a Manhattan hotel. "I just figured it wasn't a project for me, so why bother? But they kept calling me and bothering me about it, so I figured I'd meet with them."

She had no way to know at the time, but the "them" to which she refers just happened to include the man who would become her husband, director Len Wiseman. They married in May 2004, eight months after *Underworld* was released.

He was a relatively inexperienced filmmaker who had previously worked in the art departments for *Independence Day* and *Stargate*, but had never directed a full-length film.

"He was so enthusiastic and earnest about how it wasn't your average horror film and promised me I wouldn't be turning into a bat or anything off the wall like that, so I read it," she recalls. "He was right, *Underworld* was really more of a Romeo and Juliet-like romance set in this dark world of battling bloodsuckers and man-eaters than it was like your everyday monster or slasher movie."

"In retrospect," Beckinsale continues, "I will say — and not because I'm married to the man — but if it hadn't of been Len pitching *Underworld* to me at my first meeting for

the film, I probably wouldn't even have read it."

At that time, Beckinsale, the star of more genteel fare like *Much Ado About Nothing*, *The Golden Bowl* and *Serendipity*, was in a long-term relationship with Welsh actor Michael Sheen, who also had a role in *Underworld* as Lucian, leader of the werewolves. But, although they had a daughter, Lily, their relationship was coming apart. About the same time, Wiseman and Beckinsale found themselves drawn to each other.

"Len is such a wonderfully fun director to work with that I think that's probably what I first found attractive about him," muses Beckinsale. "He gets the job done and can be quite serious about it. But when the actors are having a rough time of it and are tired of hanging from wires, fighting werewolves or vampires, or are covered in sticky fake blood all day, Len is right there with the actors, encouraging them or even making them laugh. Action films can be quite torturous to make at times, but he definitely makes them easier to do."

Beckinsale, Wiseman and Sheen say they've stayed friends — which may actually be more than Hollywood rhetoric, since Sheen does reprise his role in the sequel.

Canadian Scott Speedman (best-known as Ben from TV's *Felicity*) is also back as Michael, a human with werewolf bloodlines who steals the heart of our leather-clad vampire.

Now, as the war continues, Selene and Michael investigate their own heritage in the course of figuring out how and why the war started. And the return of the very first vampire, Marcus (Tony Curran), from a 300-year exile could mean the end of the human race, unless Selene — who was responsible for his exile in the first place — can finish him off.

After the first *Underworld* was released, svelte, muscular Beckinsale had to gain some weight to play buxom Ava Gardner in Martin Scorsese's *The Aviator*. So when it was time to ▶▶



Kate Beckinsale goes ballistic in *Underworld: Evolution*. Below: Beckinsale with hubby and *Evolution* director, Len Wiseman

“Even though I had done a massive amount of weapons and firearms training for the first *Underworld*, it’s always good to brush up,” says Beckinsale

►► prepare for the sequel she headed back to the gym.

“I’ve always hated exercising and working out, even when I was a teenager in P.E. class. But I love to do my own stunts, so I have to be in shape, which means constant working out and exercising,” she says with a laugh. “Audiences have gotten very sophisticated and smart and know when there’s a stunt person flying through the air instead of you, so I always try to do as many of my own stunts as I can.”

Beyond the squats and the treadmill, Beckinsale also had to take a refresher course on how to fire a gun. “Even though I had done a massive amount of weapons and firearms training for the first *Underworld*, it’s always good to brush up, because I don’t go around shooting at the paparazzi every day, although I would like to sometimes,” she jokes, taking a shot at the press, who, in the past couple of years have reported that she’s difficult to work with and has breast implants (she says she doesn’t).

“After we did the first one I told Len that I had probably fired more guns in a movie than any human being had ever



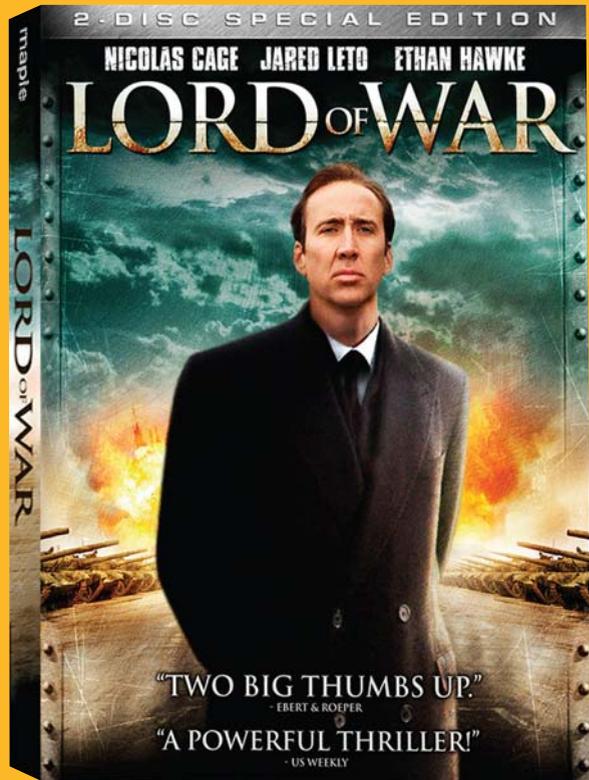
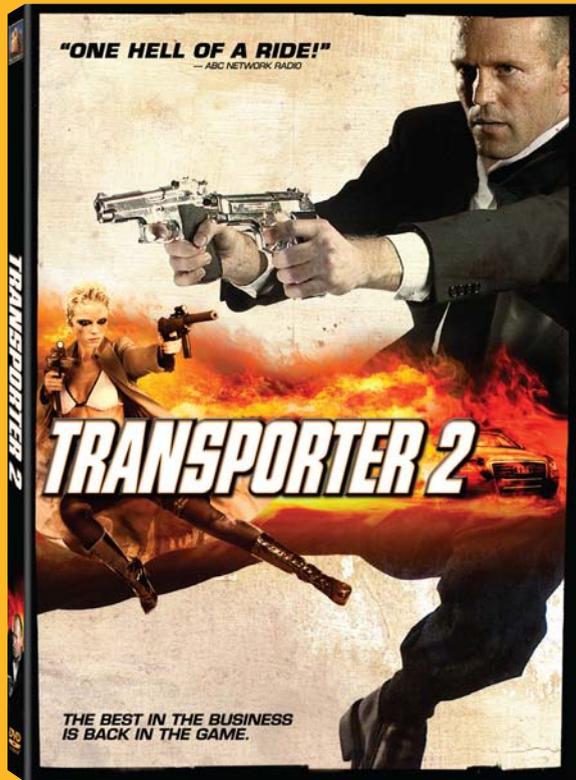
discharged in a film before,” she continues. “I was wrong. I think I doubled the shooting in the new film.”

Big guns, a skintight leather cat suit, a Gothic story about bloodsuckers and hairy beasts — that’s all very entertaining. But the truth for Beckinsale is that the *Underworld* movies changed her life in a very significant way by introducing her to Wiseman.

“He’s a wonderful partner and an incredible father to my daughter, Lily,” she says. “I’m so glad I did the first *Underworld* or my life might be very different at this moment.” **F**

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

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COURTING CONTROVERSY

JOSH LUCAS talks about the pressure of playing *GLORY ROAD*'s Don Haskins, the first college basketball coach to start five African-American players | **BY TERRY LAWSON**

For the better part of his 15 years in film, Josh Lucas fought against being typecast as the romantic hero. In supporting roles like Laura Linney's nasty ex-husband in 2000's *You Can Count on Me*, the predatory older lover of a gay teen in 2001's *The Deep End*, and the charming but conniving ex-con in 2003's *Undertow*, Lucas used his remarkable good looks in service of the dark side, though he denies he was making a specific point: "I just wanted to be involved with telling good stories through interesting characters," says Lucas. "Most of the leading-man roles I was offered just weren't that interesting," he says.

Either the parts have gotten meatier or the 34-year-old actor has loosened up, because he's front and centre in his next two films. In May he'll play the cruise ship poker shark who gambles his life for his fellow passengers in *Poseidon*, director Wolfgang Petersen's re-imagining of the 1972 sinking-ship disaster movie *The Poseidon Adventure*. And this month he steps up to the line as *Glory Road*'s legendary Texas Western basketball coach Don Haskins, who, in 1966, fielded the first college basketball team with five African-Americans as the starting lineup, and led it to the NCAA finals.

While awaiting surgery for a severe thumb injury suffered on the *Poseidon* shoot, Lucas accompanied *Glory Road*'s producer, Jerry Bruckheimer, to Bruckheimer's hometown of Detroit where he talked to *Famous* writer Terry Lawson about what he terms "the biggest acting challenge I've had so far."

Was it daunting to play one of the most famous basketball coaches in history in a story that's become a sports legend?

"This is the movie I've most loved being a part of, hands down. That said, it was the one I felt the most pressure making. Not only did I have the real Don Haskins looking at me, I had also Tim Floyd [the current coach of the USC Trojans, whose first professional job was as an assistant and recruiter for Haskins] and Pat Riley [the president and former coach of the NBA's Miami Heat, who played for the University of Kentucky, the team pitted against Texas Western in the final game] — three extraordinary world class coaches. It was probably not dissimilar to the feeling a player would have that comes on their court."

How much dramatic liberty can you take with a story like this? I mean, people can actually watch that final game on an ESPN Classics cable broadcast and compare it.

"We tried to replicate the game, the actual plays as closely as we could, while building them into the story. The game before the final, for example, actually did come down to a double-overtime because a player's winning shot was disqualified because he stepped on the line. There are moments you have to veer away from what actually happened, in order to get closer to the dramatic truth. For example, we have the players complaining about Haskins' training methods, when no one — no one — was ever allowed to even speak on Don Haskins' practice court, much less talk back. But we have to build the characters, and be true to what kind of people they were, and show why there was conflict between these players and this coach."

Then, I suspect, there's the problem of where the legend actually takes over the reality.

"Oh yeah, I had Haskins come to me one day and say,

'Look there's something wrong here. I never wore a tie during a game.' I said, 'Don, I want you to come to my trailer.' I literally had like a cocoon of photographs, hundreds of 'em, taken at games in the 1960s. And he's got a tie on in every one of them. After he won the championship, he became 'Don Haskins,' but up to that point he's got everything to prove. The year before he took over Texas Western's program he was coaching girl's high school basketball. He's living in the men's dormitory with his young beautiful wife and three children because that's what the school really was looking for, a dorm supervisor. They don't really care that he's coaching basketball until he starts recruiting all these black players, then they pay attention."

It seems shocking there was still so much prejudice in 1966 that Haskins' putting an all-black team on the court was so controversial, but the film also makes you wonder how much things have really changed in much of the United States.

"We filmed a lot of this in El Paso, Texas, where it all took place, but we also shot some early scenes in New Orleans. So, the night before we started filming, I went out drinking with Derek Luke, Mechad Brooks and the other actors playing the guys on the team. Bizarrely enough, some drunk white guy started talking loudly about one of the [black] actors being with this hot, young, beautiful white woman, and it got very aggressive, very quickly. Then there was this stunning moment when one of the white actors couldn't take it any more and, suddenly, this melee ensued. And it was this phenomenal moment where these people who didn't really know each other were just bonded, immediately. It was like, yes, we're telling this story that happened 40 years ago, but the underlying currents, amazingly, disgustingly, are still right here. I think the same thing that happened to the original team happened to us. Everybody got very, very close." ►►



Josh Lucas (left) with Derek Luke in *Glory Road*

►► **So, are you becoming more comfortable now with Hollywood and Hollywood filmmaking?**

“At this point, though it may sound like a cliché, my attraction to projects is the quality of the script, and the people who I would be working with. Wolfgang Petersen makes big, hit movies, but look at them — *Air Force One*, *The Perfect Storm*, *In the Line of Fire* — they’re all intelligent, character-driven movies.... Wolfgang made it really clear that what he wanted to do [with *Poseidon*] was examine the way people deal, in this case literally, with pressure, in a confined, claustrophobic space. This, after all, is the guy who made *Das Boot*, which is one of the best confined-space thrillers ever, but when you’re watching it, you’re not watching a thriller, you’re watching this intense human drama. So what he wanted from the actors was not for us to be acting, but reacting to all this terror that was going on all around us. So even though he was going to utilize CGI to make it more realistic than the original film could have ever been, he built these incredibly realistic sets.”

And that accounts for the sling and the injury?

“They tried their best to keep it as safe as possible, but there’s not much you can do when you’re shooting with water and fire and explosions with five cameras inside that kind of environment. I was on the side of a wall trying to get to the next level of the ship, and I got hit by a water cannon, and the wall shifted, and knocked me off the wall, right on to my thumb and I basically tore my thumb off. I had two pins put in to reattach it, and I have another exploratory surgery to see what happens next. I’m calling it the \$6-million thumb.”

Terry Lawson is a movie writer for the Detroit Free Press.

Josh Lucas's nuclear family

What predisposes someone to becoming an actor? In Josh Lucas's case it was the fact that his parents were anti-nuclear activists.

Born in Little Rock, Arkansas, in 1971, Lucas moved 30 times before he was 13 years old as his peacenik folks travelled the American South protesting nuclear activity. In an August 2005 *Time* interview Lucas revealed, “I would lie in bed the night before a new school and decide who I was going to be. It would usually be based on someone I admired from the school before.”



You can learn more about Lucas's background and film roles right from the horse's mouth at www.joshlucas.com, his official website. Check out the “Work” section,

where he shares thoughts and behind-the-scenes tidbits about each of his movies.

For *Glory Road* he reveals, “I was approached at the last minute to replace another actor and portray Don Haskins.” (He won't say who, but word is it was Ben Affleck.)

And for the critically panned summer flop *Stealth*, Lucas hedges his bets (presumably before the movie came out), writing, “The film is totally in the mind of director Rob Cohen, as almost all of it is CGI, and the political implications of the film are worrisome. Will it end up a military recruiting film or will it touch on the true horror of war? Will it be a metaphor for the current state of American foreign policy, or will it be a piece of turbo-injected propaganda?” —MW





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EXPLORING NEW TERRITORY

Playing adventurer John Smith in Terrence Malick's *THE NEW WORLD*, COLIN FARRELL often felt like he really was discovering America. Off-screen, a more mature Farrell has also entered a new world, getting to know his two-year-old son and finding ways to stay out of the spotlight | BY EARL DITTMAN

If it seems as if it's been ages since you read about Colin Farrell's seemingly incessant smokin', drinkin' and carousin' in the tabloids, it has. The 29-year-old actor has spent the past 12 months avoiding the red carpet and paparazzi, and trying to carve out a more normal life for himself, which includes getting to know the two-year-old son he has with former model Kim Bordenave.

He has also been working on a couple of projects — Michael Mann's big-screen adaptation of *Miami Vice* (he plays Crockett), and *The New World*, reclusive filmmaker Terrence Malick's much-anticipated fourth film.

"I'd been in work mode for a long time, man," says Farrell during an interview at a Beverly Hills hotel. "I had been doing a ton of movies, was always going to a lot of events, premieres and parties, and I just felt like I needed a little rest. But then I was offered the chance to work with Terrence Malick, one of the greatest directors of our time. I couldn't pass up that offer because not many actors get the chance to work with that man."

In fact, in his 32 years of making movies, Terrence Malick had only directed three films — albeit the classics *Badlands*, *Days of Heaven* and *The Thin Red Line* — before casting Farrell, Christian Bale, Christopher Plummer and newcomer Q'orianka Kilcher in *The New World*.

Malick's \$50-million (U.S.) retelling of the relationship between English colonial explorer John Smith (Farrell) and Algonquian Indian princess Pocahontas (Kilcher), *The New World* takes place amid the growing unrest between Native Americans and Europeans living in the East Coast settlement of Jamestown in the early 1600s.

Filmed in Virginia, Malick had an authentic Native American village constructed, borrowed replicas of ships from the Jamestown Settlement Museum to line the coast of his James Fort, commissioned a number of native artists to recreate period headgear, weapons and cooking utensils, and had more than 500 costumes designed and sewn for Pocahontas alone.

"To work with a director like Terry was unbelievable and fantastic," says Farrell. "He's very meticulous and really wants you to understand your character as much as you can. I mean, I really felt like I was John Smith at times. It was cool, man. But Terry made it easy to feel like an explorer, because he basically built us our own Jamestown."

What were your very first impressions of Terrence Malick?

"Oh, he's an incredible man. He must be something of an enigma for you. He's very, very shy. He's highly intelligent. He's very gentle with his intelligence, like not overtly mouthy. Just a very gentle spirit. Again, as intelligent as he is, and this is his intelligence as a person, he's very childlike and sees details everywhere. He'll be going, 'Oh, that's strange. Just gorgeous.'"

How does he inspire the actors?

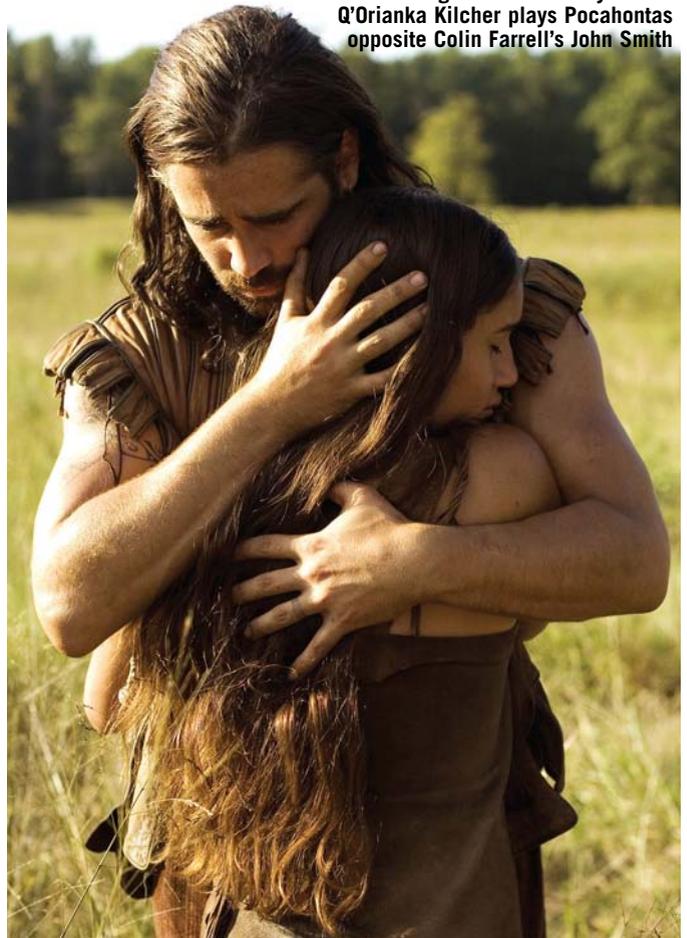
"Terry really paid attention to the smallest details, which, in

turn, inspired everyone to do the best job possible — I know I tried. If someone were to ask me what film I enjoyed doing the most, it would be *The New World*. Don't get me wrong, we worked a lot of long hours and did a whole lot of takes, but I really feel like it was all worth it. Even when I was dripping wet in my hot, smelly leather explorer outfit, after having worked 20 hours straight, I felt like Terry was helping me become a better and better actor. He's an incredible filmmaker that I'd work with again in a second. And I still got to spend time with my son, because he spent a lot of time with me on the set. I really got lucky."

Were you familiar with the story of Pocahontas and John Smith?

"Oh, yeah, I think everyone is. Although, the British might tell it differently than the Americans [laughs]. From what I know, the way it's told in *The New World* is pretty much how I imagined it. It's certainly not the damn Disney version of the story. It's a very realistic, incredible story of a number of history-changing events that went on in the 1600s." ▶▶

Young love: Fourteen-year-old Q'orianka Kilcher plays Pocahontas opposite Colin Farrell's John Smith



▶▶ **When did you first become aware of Terrence Malick?**

"It probably was *The Thin Red Line*, because I was a bit young to have seen the other two when they were released. After I saw it I think I went out and rented *Days of Heaven* and *Badlands*, and I couldn't believe how great they were. Terry has this incredible, one-of-a-kind vision of how to tell stories on film. I mean, look at *Days of Heaven*. Has there ever been a more beautiful film?"

Speaking of Disney, has becoming a dad had an effect on your work ethic?

"It didn't change my work ethic, but it certainly gives you a deeper resource to draw from. I mean, I have a beautiful son, and as long as I can be with him, and as long as he always knows where his dad is, and I can go work as well, I'm fine."

Are you able to spend a lot of time with him?

"Oh, yeah, he visited me in Virginia while I was doing *The New World*, and in Florida while I was filming *Miami Vice*. Then I took the time off that I wanted to and spent a couple of months just being a dad, son and normal guy. The older he gets, the easier it is to see him while I'm working. He's upstairs now. He's here in the hotel, and I have him while I'm here."

You really like being a dad, don't you?

"Heck, yeah! Look, we're born and we look at the world with open eyes, and we don't judge, and we don't betray. We're not jealous. We're not envious. We're not even wary, which is a danger to kids. They have to learn a certain amount of awareness, and that's my responsibility, and I enjoy doing it. I want to teach my son how to be happy, thankful and love everything about life."



You're certainly not the smokin' and drinkin' party animal the tabloids used to claim you were.

"When you become visible, no matter who you are, some members of the media like to take shots at you, no matter how false they are. I won't lie, I'm an average Irish bloke who likes to smoke and drink. But the only reason people say anything about my smoking is because I'm an actor. If I wasn't, there'd be no one around me going, 'Oh my God, look what he's doing!' Do you know what I mean? It's because I'm an actor. And if I have a beer, I just say, 'This is my day off. I'm not shooting today. I'm not working on a film. This is my day off.' But I never drink while I am working, that's bull. It is. I mean, there's too many people's hard work on the line making the movies that I'm in."

Your next film, *Ask the Dusk*, comes out in March, but was actually shot before *The New World*. What's that one about?

"It's brilliant. It's with Robert Towne [director of *Personal Best*, *Tequila Sunrise*]. Towne's been trying to get it made for 30 years. In it, I play a character called Arturo Bandini. He's an Italian-American writer in 1930s L.A. It's a beautiful book."

Then *Miami Vice* is due out next summer. Why did you decide to do that one?

"That's simple, mate, Michael Mann wrote a great script. It's a great script. It's not tongue-in-cheek. It's not the '80s. It's a different period. It's a different sensibility. Thank God we're not in silver shiny suits with the sleeves rolled up and not wearing socks. That kind of look wouldn't even be a very good undercover outfit. I wouldn't have done that movie." **E**

Earl Dittman is a Houston-based entertainment writer.



The New World's natives attack Jamestown

Julia Kwan's sense of direction

Julia Kwan's bold plan to dub Charlton Heston into Cantonese didn't work out, but that's a minor disappointment when you consider she did manage to write and direct her first feature film, *Eve and the Fire Horse*.

The film, set in 1970s Vancouver, focuses on nine-year-old Eve and 11-year-old Karena — two Chinese-Canadian sisters growing up in a traditional Chinese home who become obsessed with Christianity. That's where Charlton Heston comes in. In one scene, the sisters and their mother go to see a Chinese version of *The Ten Commandments*, although all we see is the trio gazing up at the big screen listening to a Cantonese-speaking Moses.

"It totally broke my heart that we couldn't get the rights to that," says Kwan on the line from her Vancouver home. "Wouldn't it be great to see Charlton Heston dubbed in Cantonese on the rock making his Red Sea speech? It didn't matter how much money we had, it is such an iconic image and they aren't going to give it to anybody."

Kwan, a graduate of Toronto's Ryerson Polytechnic University and the Canadian Film Centre's directing program, drew on her own upbringing to write *Eve and the Fire Horse*. "The environment in the film is very similar to the environment I grew up in, in terms of being about children of working-class, Chinese immigrants. I also grew up in a family where superstitions abound, and topics such as religion and childhood guilt really resonate with me."

Kwan manages to capture childhood wonder and uncertainty too, as the sisters straddle two cultures in search of answers to life's difficult questions. The movie was warmly received during its run at various film festivals (including last year's Toronto International Film Festival) and is scheduled to screen at this month's prestigious Sundance Film Festival in Park City, Utah.

Sundance is famous for attracting studio types obsessed with sniffing out new talent.

"I've been told that when you go to Sundance you have to have a completed second script 'cause everyone's gonna ask you for it," says Kwan. "They don't want an outline or a treatment, you have to know exactly what you want to do with your next movie. I don't have a completed script," she says with a laugh. "I'm just really looking forward to travelling, meeting people and living life again, filling the creative well."

"Having said that, I think my next project is going to be *Ghost Train*, based on the book by Paul Yee," she continues. "It's a Chinese ghost story set in the 1880s during the building of the Canadian railroad. I grew up with martial arts, people-flying-through-the-trees movies, and scary Chinese ghost stories. To this day if I see a Chinese woman with long, scraggly hair over her face I get kinda freaked out. I have that horror image in my head."

■ *Eve and the Fire Horse* opens in limited release on January 27th.

—INGRID RANDOJA

Warm. Cozy. Comfortable.

Now that we've got your attention, check out these soothing items that'll make a harsh January more palatable | **BY LIZA HERZ**

After the bacchanalian excess of the holidays, many of us want nothing more than to enrol in a spiritually affirming yoga class and stock up on those trendy faux-suede storage boxes in a futile bid to declutter our out-of-control lives.

Call it the Annual Post-Holiday Atonement Blues. You know the drill — drink less, eat less, exercise more. If you could self-flagellate with a birch switch, hey, you'd probably try that too.

True, the second the clock ticks over at New Year's, Christmas trimmings look as out of place as a sparkly Saturday night outfit at Sunday morning church. But that doesn't mean we should swing to the other pole of self-denial and asceticism. Trust me, your body will go into shock if you careen from a serious chocolate habit one day to nothing but steamed kale and grilled tofu the next.

We all need a break from eggnog and sausage hors d'oeuvres, but now is not the time to embark on radical programs. Much, much better to spend the month staying warm and cozy with good books and your favourite TV shows on DVD, while coddled in snuggly clothes and soothed with restorative beauty treatments.

Besides, once the gyms empty out in February and everyone else has broken their New Year's resolutions, you can go back. Just think — no lineups for the treadmill.

Until then, it's damn the downward dog; flannel PJs and hot chocolate all the way.

Happy New Year.

Rule #1: Only buy your winter coat from a Canadian company that truly gets the meaning of "minus 35 with wind chill."

The Canada Goose 'Mystique' Parka (\$598, www.canada-goose.com for retailers) was created for Mystique, Rebecca Romijn's X-Men character, so you can feel movie-star cool while still staying toasty.



Lovely (\$86 for 100 ml eau de parfum) is not the fragrance Carrie Bradshaw would create (which might smell like cigarettes, lemon vodka and new shoes). Rather it's spokesmodel Sarah Jessica Parker's and it's, well, lovely. With soft floral notes rising ethereally above a musky base, it's both cozy and deeply sexy all at once.



You want to go out but feel as toasty as if you stayed in? RK's shawl-collared **Chunky Knit Cardigan** (\$125, www.rkstores.com for locations) is as snugly as your PJs but is chic enough to be seen in public.



Vancouver's Dream Designs offers this **Flannel Niteshirt** (\$109, www.dreamdesigns.ca) made of organic cotton (no harsh synthetic dyes) so nothing touches your skin but cozy softness.

Adding water makes **Olay Regenerist Thermal Skin Polisher** (\$20, drugstores) heat up, while the glycolic acid and scrubbing micro-crystals do their best to reveal beautiful skin.



If it was a just universe, we'd be on a beach in Bora Bora right now. Oh well. **Healing Garden Organics Wild Honey Body Scrub** (\$12, drugstores), formulated with organic honey and mineral-rich salt, will erase winter's brutal effects on tender skin, leaving it soft and smelling great.



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intensif

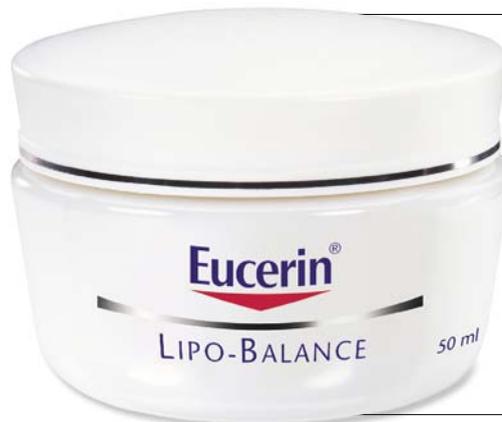


REPAIR & PROTECT
RÉPARÉ ET PROTÉGÉ

Just look at what those amazing hair scientists have invented! **Pantene Pro-V Winter Rescue Intensive Restoration Treatment** (\$6.50, drugstores) in the tube with the snowflake on it, is the perfect seasonal solution to calm frizz and infuse dried-out hair with much-needed moisture.



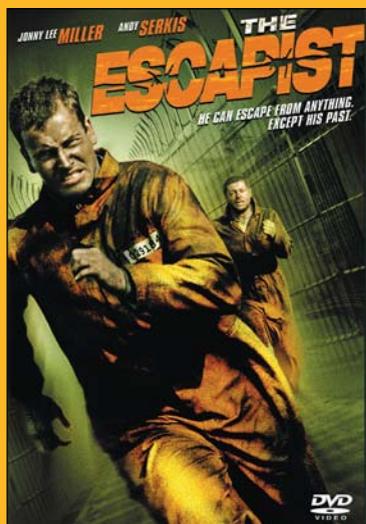
The **Converse Star 70 Fur XXHi Boot** (\$190, www.converse.com for retailers) is a brilliant nod to John Galliano's Dior boot-of-the-moment. It's modern with lots of complicated-looking hardware, while the fleece fur makes it snugly too.



Sixty-four percent of Canadians don't change their skincare routine as the weather worsens. To them we recommend **Eucerin Lipo-Balance Cream** (\$28, drugstores) to strengthen the skin's protective barrier and give their suffering dermis some intensive hydration.

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can't wait for...



The Pink Panther (February): Not a remake, but a prequel to Peter Sellers' original *The Pink Panther*, this movie has **Steve Martin** in the role of bumbling French lawman Inspector Jacques Clouseau.

The comedy's been in the works so long that it's no surprise the list of actors and directors once connected with the project is as long as the list of ways Clouseau finds to screw up. Kevin Spacey, Mike Myers and even *Rush Hour* sidekick Chris Tucker were in the running for the lead role at one time or another. Canadian Ivan Reitman (*Ghostbusters*) was once attached to direct and Jackie Chan was a possibility for Cato.

In the end, *Cheaper by the Dozen* helmer **Shawn Levy** got the directing nod, and they decided to do away with poor Cato, Clouseau's martial arts-expert manservant. Instead, French actor **Jean Reno** (*Just Visiting*) steps in as Clouseau's partner.

As for the story, a famous soccer coach is murdered in the presence of thousands of soccer fans and his ring — which sports the gigantic rose-coloured diamond, *The Pink Panther* — has been stolen. It's up to Clouseau to find it, and make Chief Inspector Dreyfus (**Kevin Kline**) proud.

All that stands in the way is a series of pratfalls, staircase catastrophes, spills and poking incidents that would make Benny Hill proud.

V for Vendetta (March): The first post-*Matrix* project for the **Wachowski Brothers**, Larry and Andy, turns out to be a writing gig, adapting *V for Vendetta*, the graphic novel by **David Lloyd** and **Alan Moore**. (*Matrix* assistant director **James McTeigue** makes his directorial debut.)



Although, truth be told, the brothers reportedly wrote a first draft of this screenplay before they even started the *Matrix* movies.

Hugo Weaving (*The Lord of the Rings'* Elrond) is V, a freedom fighter who uses terrorism to fight the leaders in a dystopian society where Germany has won a World War. **Natalie Portman** shaved her perfectly shaped head to play Evey Hammond, a young woman V rescues from police.

BRIEFLY...

MARCH

● **16 Blocks** — Sounds easy enough: **Bruce Willis** plays a cop who has to escort a witness (**Mos Def**) 16 blocks from a police station to a courthouse. But, of course, it's not.

APRIL

● **Lucky You** — **Curtis Hanson** (*In Her Shoes*, *8 Mile*) directs this drama about a gambler (**Eric Bana**) who battles opponents, and his own demons, at the World Poker Championships in Vegas.

MAY

● **Mission: Impossible 3** — Director **J.J. Abrams** (TV's *Lost*, *Alias*) takes over the franchise that stars **Tom Cruise** as secret agent Ethan Hunt.

famous trivia

1 Terrence Malick, the celebrated director of *The New World*, has directed only three other feature films in a career that stretches more than 30 years. Name the first.



James Franco

2 James Franco stars in two movies this month — *Annapolis* and *Tristan & Isolde*. Which late-'90s TV series about high school politics is considered to be his big break?

3 *Saturday Night Live* alumni Kevin Nealon, David Spade and Rob Schneider all appear in the new comedy *Grandma's House*. Which of the three had the longest stint on *SNL*, more than twice as long as the other two?

4 *Nanny McPhee* star Emma Thompson has won two Oscars, the first was a Best Actress for *Howards End*. But for which 1996 movie was she honoured for her writing talents with a Best Adapted Screenplay statuette?

5 The sequel *Big Momma's House 2* opens this month, with Martin Lawrence once again playing FBI agent Malcolm Turner. In the 2000 original, Turner's partner was played by an actor who has since gone on to more artistic roles in films like *American Splendor* and *Sideways*. Name him.

6 Torontonian Scott Speedman plays a werewolf hybrid in *Underworld: Evolution*. On which Canadian TV show did he get into a video booth and audition for a role in *Batman Forever*, catching the eye of an agent and jumpstarting his career?



Scott Speedman

7 Paul Walker stars in next month's drug thriller *Running Scared*. This is the fifth time that title has been used for a movie in just over three decades. The most notable of the previous movies was a 1986 action comedy about a couple of cops played by Billy Crystal and an actor/dancer who died of liver cancer in 2003. Name him.

8 In *Last Holiday* Queen Latifah plays a woman who learns she's going to die, so blows all of her money on a trip to Europe. What is Latifah's real first name — Karen, Dana, Michelle or Susan?

answers

1. *Badlands* 2. *Freaks and Geeks* 3. Kevin Nealon 4. *Sense and Sensibility* 5. Paul Giamatti 6. *Speakers Corner* 7. Gregory Hines 8. Dana

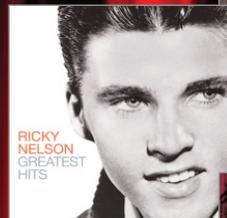
what's on the Famous Players Radio?



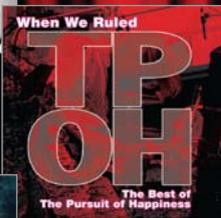
RICHARD ASHCROFT
Keys To The World



KENNY ROGERS
Water and Bridges
(not final artwork)



RICKY NELSON
GREATEST HITS



THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS
When We Ruled



VARIOUS
Music Inspired by
The Chronicles of Narnia



YELLOWCARD
Lights & Sounds



GOLDFRAPP
Supernature



SCIENTISTS EXPERIMENT WITH DEBUT ALBUM, THE COTTARS COME OF AGE | BY INGRID RANDOJA



PHOTO BY DAN MONICK

From left: Michael Tapper, Keith Murray and Chris Cain

BLINDED BY SCIENCE

They've got Napoleonic sex appeal and play songs about drinking too much, getting dumped by women and wasting precious time. It's a killer combo for the New York-based band **We Are Scientists**, whose ears are ringing with the buzz they've created. Their debut CD, *With Love & Squalor* (in stores January 10), offers straight-ahead, three-chords-are-good-enough-for-us rock, complemented by clever, self-deprecating lyrics.

"Thematically, the album is very much coming from a place of confusion and excitement mixed into one," says bassist Chris Cain on the line from Paris, France, where he, drummer Michael Tapper and guitarist Keith Murray are readying for an upcoming concert.

The band is finishing up their European tour where they've wowed critics, sold out shows, and recently took the time to pose for a fashion spread in Italian fashion magazine *L'Uomo Vogue*.

"In many ways it's sort of dreamlike," Cain says of the band's sudden rise in popularity. Although they've been together since 2000, it was only recently that they decided to get serious about what was, up until then, basically a hobby band.

"We played a lot of shows and put out a few EPs on our own, but it wasn't our goal to do this as a career," Cain says. "But about a year ago we started to feel like the material was at a place where it could have a broader appeal."

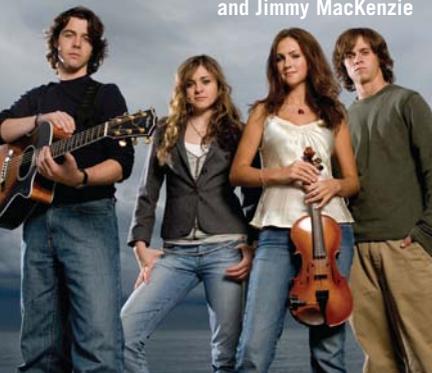
"We want to be musically interesting — and we do push ourselves not to do the obvious thing — but at the same time we're trying to do something that we, and people like us, would enjoy hearing and that doesn't necessarily take a ton of work to listen to."

The Cottars Evolve

They turn 'em out young in music-mad Cape Breton. The Celtic/folk quartet **The Cottars** consists of two brother-sister pairs between the ages of 15 and 18. Ciaran (17) and Fiona (16) MacGillvray met Roseanne (15) and Jimmy (18) MacKenzie in 2001 when they were all just kids. They bonded over their love of traditional Cape Breton music, but they also felt the music could evolve into something a bit more contemporary, which is evident in their third CD *The Cottars* (in stores January 10).

The album showcases Fiona MacGillvray's melodic lead vocals and the stellar fiddle-playing of violin prodigy Roseanne MacKenzie, who is considered to be Cape Breton's finest young fiddler. Toe-tapping jigs such as "The Honeysuckle Melody" meld seamlessly with radio-friendly tunes like "Hold On," and only a stone-hearted soul wouldn't sigh over the ballad "Georgia Lee."

From left: Ciaran and Fiona MacGillvray, Roseanne and Jimmy MacKenzie



OUT THIS MONTH

THE STROKES

First Impressions of Earth >> January 3

This crash-bang New York band attracts a whole lot of hype, but insiders believe their third CD, recorded in their own Manhattan studio and without label pressure, will live up to expectations.

JANE'S ADDICTION

The Best of Jane's Addiction >> January 24

One of the leading alternative bands (when alternative meant alternative) of the late '80s and early '90s finally gets its props with an official "best of" CD.

AUDIO BULLYS

Generation >> January 24

British critics stomped all over this London duo's latest house/sampling/new wave concoction, but they are notoriously, well, British. Check out the lads' version of Nancy Sinatra's "Bang Bang (My Baby Shot Me Down)," last heard on the *Kill Bill* soundtracks.

THE LOST SEASON OF 24

Videogame based on the popular TV show squeezes more action in between Seasons 2 and 3 | BY SCOTT GARDNER

24: THE GAME PS2

Since 2001, *24* has been one of the most innovative and exciting shows on TV. Now Sony's SCE Cambridge studio (*Ghost Hunter*, *MediEvil*), and publisher 2K Games are hoping to transfer a few of those thrills to the PS2.

Like the hit show, *24: The Game* follows counterterrorism agent Jack Bauer for 24 consecutive hours as he tries to foil a deadly plot against the United States, and generally has yet another really bad day on the job. The action is set between Season 2's stolen nukes and Season 3's deadly viruses, and promises to tie up a few loose ends still lingering from that time.

To add to the sense that the game is a lost season, star Kiefer Sutherland lends his likeness and voice, as do Elisha Cuthbert, who plays his daughter, Kim, and Carlos Bernard, as his right-hand man Tony Almeida.

The game also borrows the show's distinctive visual style, at times using a split-screen to show plot developments that are occurring simultaneously. *24* fans will also appreciate the locations styled after those in the show: sun-baked backroads, rundown warehouses and claustrophobic interrogation quarters.

Like the show, players juggle multiple storylines that add up to more than 100 missions. And to further recreate the series' nail-biting action, many missions impose very tight time limits. The third-person action sections include shooting, stealth, puzzles and sniping, plus a driving component and, interestingly, interrogations.

As any fan of *24* knows, no season is complete without Jack interrogating suspects by getting in their face and, oh, occasionally resorting to a spot of torture. In the game, suspects have a "stress gauge" and you, as Jack, decide how aggressively to question them. Your goal is to keep your suspect's stress in the target range long enough to wear him down and finally "break" him.



FULL SPECTRUM WARRIOR: TEN HAMMERS PC, PS2, XBOX



This intense strategy/action title is a sequel to 2004's acclaimed *Full Spectrum Warrior*, a game based on interactive simulations used for military training. Like the original, *Ten Hammers* gives you several four-man infantry squads to control, and your ability to strategically deploy them is the key to success.

No simple run-and-gun shooter, you have to lead your teams through 12 hostile Middle Eastern-inspired environments using your tactical smarts to outmaneuver what promises to be a much improved enemy AI. For example, when you toss a grenade at an enemy he will now run away, rather than morosely accept his fate.

The biggest change is the addition of a competitive multiplayer mode. Players can take control of either U.S. Army fireteams

or "Zekistani" militia groups, and engage in a variety of online match types.

TOP SPIN 2 X360

Ever since *Pong*, there has been a long and happy history of tennis videogames, and *Top Spin 2*, the first next-generation tennis title, looks set to carry on the tradition.

For starters, the game harnesses the graphic power of the Xbox 360 to create supersmooth animations of the characters, crowds and courts. Speaking of characters, *Top Spin 2* features 24 of the world's top pros, including Maria Sharapova, Venus Williams, Andy Roddick, Lleyton Hewitt



and Roger Federer, and you can play with them, as them or against them over multiple seasons. You can also create your own pro and customize their hairstyles, sweatbands, shirts, shorts and shoes.

TEST DRIVE UNLIMITED X360

With better-known racing titles like *Project Gotham 3* and *Need for Speed: Most Wanted* available at the Xbox 360 launch it would be a shame if the latest game in the venerable *Test Drive* series gets lost in the shuffle.

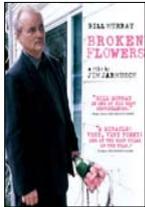


As you might expect, *Unlimited* features gorgeous, exotic, fully customizable cars and bikes, which you can cruise along more than 1,000 miles of diverse Hawaiian roads. But where *Test Drive* really impresses is in its massive online component that allows racers to cruise the island and look for people to compete against. For the first time, players can race other gamers in a "persistent" online world. For the uninitiated, that means when you log off and shut down, the world remains, and it will be different every time you get online.

new releases

GO HOME WITH **WEDDING CRASHERS**, **THE ARISTOCRATS** OR **OLIVER TWIST** | BY MARNI WEISZ

JANUARY 3



BROKEN FLOWERS

Stars: Bill Murray, Sharon Stone
Director: Jim Jarmusch (*Coffee and Cigarettes*)
Story: When an aging bachelor (Murray) gets an

anonymous letter from a woman claiming she gave birth to his son 19 years ago, he reluctantly sets off on a cross-country road trip to confront the most likely candidates. **DVD Extras:** outtakes with Bill Murray, extended scene, behind-the-scenes footage

THE CAVE

Stars: Cole Hauser, Morris Chestnut
Director: Bruce Hunt (debut)
Story: A team of professional explorers is hired to check out an underground network of caves discovered under a 13th-century Romanian Abbey. They're looking for previously unknown plants and the like — what they find is much more menacing. **DVD Extras:** "Designing Evolution" and "Into the Crew" commentaries



WEDDING CRASHERS

Stars: Vince Vaughn, Owen Wilson
Director: David Dobkin (*Shanghai Knights*)
Story: A couple of aging

divorce mediators crash weddings to take advantage of hot, emotional, female guests. But when one of them (Wilson) starts to have real feelings for the daughter (Rachel McAdams) of a powerful politician, his buddy (Vaughn) is forced to keep their secret. **DVD Extras:** cast and director commentaries, music video, deleted scenes

JANUARY 10

THE CONSTANT GARDENER

Stars: Ralph Fiennes, Rachel Weisz
Director: Fernando Meirelles (*City of God*)
Story: After uncovering a pharmaceutical

company's nasty practices in a remote Kenyan village, an activist (Weisz) is murdered and her formerly meek husband (Fiennes) has to find out why. Based on the novel by John le Carré. **DVD Extras:** Meirelles and le Carré talk about adapting the novel, "Embracing Africa: Filming in Kenya" documentary, deleted and extended scenes

RED EYE

Stars: Rachel McAdams, Cillian Murphy
Director: Wes Craven (*Cursed*)
Story: Already a jittery flyer, Lisa Reisert (McAdams) forgets all about turbulence and sticky landing gear after the cute guy sitting next to her on a flight to Miami reveals he's an assassin planning to kill the Deputy Secretary of Homeland Security. Even worse, if she doesn't help, he'll kill her father too.



SARABAND

Stars: Liv Ullmann, Erland Josephson
Director: Ingmar Bergman (*Fanny and Alexander*)
Story: In this long-awaited sequel to Bergman's 1973

Golden Globe-winning *Scenes From a Marriage*, Marianne (Ullmann) visits her ex-husband Johan (Josephson) 30 years after their divorce. **DVD Extras:** behind-the-scenes featurette, trailers



TRANSPORTER 2

Stars: Jason Statham, Amber Valletta
Director: Louis Leterrier (*Unleashed*)
Story: Former Special Forces operative Frank

Martin (Statham) takes a cushy job as chauffeur for a wealthy family living in Miami. But when their little boy is kidnapped, Martin has to use all of his old skills to find the tot. **DVD Extras:** deleted and extended scenes, making-of footage, an "inside look"



HUSTLE & FLOW

Stars: Terrence Howard, Ludacris
Director: Craig Brewer (*The Poor and the Hungry*)
Story: Winner of both the Audience and Cinematography awards at Sundance, this urban drama follows an aging pimp (Howard) who decides to take one last stab at his dream of becoming a successful rapper.

JANUARY 17

THE MAN

Stars: Samuel L. Jackson, Eugene Levy
Director: Les Mayfield (*American Outlaws*)
Story: What sort of script could possibly bring Sam Jackson and Eugene Levy together? One about comically mismatched partners (one a streetwise cop, the other a dental supply salesman — you figure out who plays who) forced together when the cop's partner is murdered and the killers mistake the nebbish salesman for an arms buyer. **DVD Extras:** gag reels, deleted scenes, "Sam Jackson's Guide to Cursing Like a Bad A&% Motha F\$#@**" featurette

TWO FOR THE MONEY

Stars: Al Pacino, Matthew McConaughey
Director: D.J. Caruso (*Taking Lives*)
Story: Brandon Lane (McConaughey) is a former football star who has a talent for picking winners. Walter Abrams (Pacino) is a bookie who hires Lane and takes advantage of that talent. All is well, until Lane's hot streak cools.

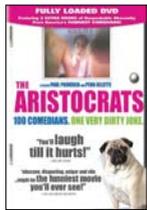
JANUARY 24



OLIVER TWIST

Stars: Ben Kingsley, Barney Clark
Director: Roman Polanski (*The Pianist*)
Story: A sweet little orphan boy (Clark) finds a

new — albeit dangerous — family on the streets of 19th-century London, England, in this retelling of the Dickens classic. Kingsley steps in as Fagin, the greedy authority figure for a gang of child pick-pockets.



THE ARISTOCRATS

Stars: Paul Provenza, Penn Jillette
Directors: Paul Provenza, Penn Jillette
Story: Provenza and Jillette ask the who's who

of modern (and not-so-modern) comedy to tell the dirtiest joke ever told — "The Aristocrats." Comedians from Jason Alexander to Emo Philips to Phyllis Diller proceed to spew forth obscene and scatological references in an attempt to gross out the audience. **DVD Extras:** "Be an Aristocrat" contest winners, "Behind the Green Room Door: Comics Tell Some of Their Favourite Dirty Jokes"

JANUARY 31

IN HER SHOES

Stars: Toni Collette, Cameron Diaz
Director: Curtis Hanson (*8 Mile*)
Story: Two sisters who have nothing in common but their shoe size (8 1/2) have to put aside their differences when one discovers the grandmother they never knew.
DVD Extras: alternate opening sequence, "A Community for Acting Seniors" featurette

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:** featurettes include "Relative Humidity: The Characters," "Extended Outlook: The Script" and "Trade Winds: The Collaboration"

TIM BURTON'S CORPSE BRIDE (JANUARY 31)



In keeping with the warmth and affection Tim Burton has always had for the macabre, this love story takes place between our world and the underworld, but it's the underworld that's full of life and colour, and our world that's dead, dry and gray.

The story begins on the streets and in the estate homes of dreary Victorian England where young Victor Van Dort (Johnny Depp) is about to marry Victoria Everglot (Emily Watson). But while rehearsing his vows in a ravine he slips the wedding ring on what he thinks is a twig, only to realize it's the bony finger of a female skeleton. She springs to life (well, sort of) and pulls him into the underworld where he's now beholden to marry her...and to listen to some really funny musical numbers sung (and danced) by dead bodies in various states of decay.

Harkening back to Burton's 1993 classic *The Nightmare Before Christmas*, this film uses stop-motion animation and lots of spooky, evocative imagery. The difference here is that while Burton only produced *Nightmare* (most think he directed, and he certainly had a lot to do with the final look of the film, but the director's credit went to Henry Selick), he did direct *Corpse Bride*.

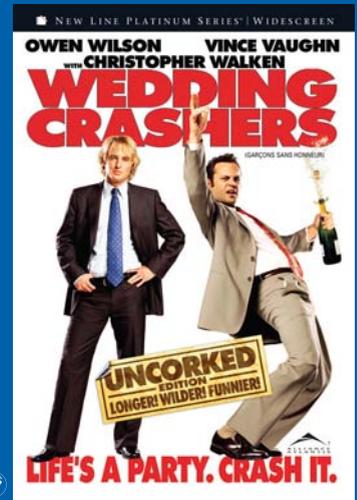
The DVD's bonus features include the "Tim Burton: Dark vs. Light" featurette about Burton's inspiration for the movie; "Voices from the Underworld," in which you meet the voice talent and see how they developed their characters; "Making Puppets Tick," a tour through the puppet workshop; plus behind-the-scenes footage, drawings, production notes and a feature about Danny Elfman, who composed the score and has been working with Burton since they did *Pee-wee's Big Adventure* together in 1985.



Animator Brad Schiff

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January 2006

HOROSCOPE | BY DAN LIEBMAN

Capricorn

December 23 ☆ **January 20**

You can't ignore a difficult situation, so start the year by speaking your mind. Along the way you'll boost your self-esteem. Send a reminder about an outstanding debt, then expect payment shortly. Watch out for a late-month tendency to reveal family secrets.

Aquarius

January 21 ☆ **February 19**

January emphasizes new friendships and new interests. You're extremely charismatic and highly persuasive, a magical combination. You're also in a good bargaining position at work. Avoid fads — especially fad diets — throughout the month.

Pisces

February 20 ☆ **March 20**

Someone is ready to give you a break, but you have to show that you're interested. This is a time for being decisive, even pushy. You discover that you and a new acquaintance share an unusual interest. Avoid taking chances when it comes to winter sports.

Aries

March 21 ☆ **April 20**

You're in an impulsive mood till the 21st. Translation: think twice before making generous offers, hide your credit cards, and reread emails before hitting the send button. Watch for a late-month opportunity to end a dispute with someone you really care about.

Taurus

April 21 ☆ **May 22**

You feel the need to spend time alone, especially after the 15th. You're highly creative after the 20th, and capable of producing an extraordinary piece of writing or art. Taurus rules the throat, and you could be vulnerable in that area. Wear a scarf.

Gemini

May 23 ☆ **June 21**

Be alert to opportunities to mend fences with someone you deal with regularly. Your communicating skills are even

stronger than usual during the weeks of the 16th and 23rd. Toward the end of the month, you learn something fascinating about a neighbour.

Cancer

June 22 ☆ **July 22**

It's a good month to spruce up your working environment and to upgrade technology. Watch out for a burst of overconfidence between the 14th and 22nd — you could start making mistakes. The tables are turned when a younger friend becomes your mentor.

Leo

July 23 ☆ **August 22**

You do your best work by concentrating on one job at a time, not by overextending yourself. An important decision about a partnership is made by the 23rd. Tone down your environment by avoiding loud colours and emphasizing warm, earthy shades.

Virgo

August 23 ☆ **September 22**

Be willing to give something extra to a job, and you should attract the attention of people in high places. It's also a good month to plan trips — even short ones. An entertaining new neighbour intrigues you.

Libra

September 23 ☆ **October 22**

People you deal with are unusually strong-willed. But you can get the upper hand, thanks to a winning blend of imagination and good humour. Expect last-minute changes in schedules. Don't settle on travel destinations until you've done lots of research.

Scorpio

October 23 ☆ **November 21**

Concentrate on last year's successes rather than mistakes as you shape your goals for 2006. Just be yourself after the 16th, and you'll make a favourable impression with those who matter. Small gifts arrive through the month. Acknowledge them promptly.

Sagittarius

November 22 ☆ **December 22**

Balance is the key this month. Expect an inner sense to tell you when you're being too intellectual and not emotional enough. Review guarantees and contracts carefully, especially after the 17th. Answers to family-related questions will arrive by the end of January.

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10

STARS EXPLAIN THEIR SCARS
| BY SUSAN GRANGER

CATHERINE ZETA-JONES
“When I was a child I contracted a virus that nearly killed me. They had to do a tracheotomy to open my windpipe — and the scar’s still there.”

RUSSELL CROWE “I had to have surgery on my shoulder and there are scars.... I posted pictures from the operation on my website.”

JENNIFER LOVE HEWITT “There’s a scar on my upper lip from where my cat clawed me.”

SEAN BEAN “See this scar above my eye? During a fight scene in *Patriot Games* Harrison Ford did it — accidentally, of course.”

DREW BARRYMORE “I was climbing this chain-link fence when I was a kid and got a big gash on my arm. The scar is still there.”

MARIAH CAREY “I have a scar on my back that I hate. I cover it with a butterfly or a heart, whatever, a temporary tattoo. When I was 18 I had a mole on my back and someone said I should get it removed, so I did. But it was not done correctly and I have this stupid scar.”

ORLANDO BLOOM “I fell from a third-floor window, shattering my spine, crushing one vertebra and fracturing three others. Doctors didn’t think I would walk again, but I had this operation and 12 days later walked out of the hospital on crutches. I have these scars on my back to prove it.”

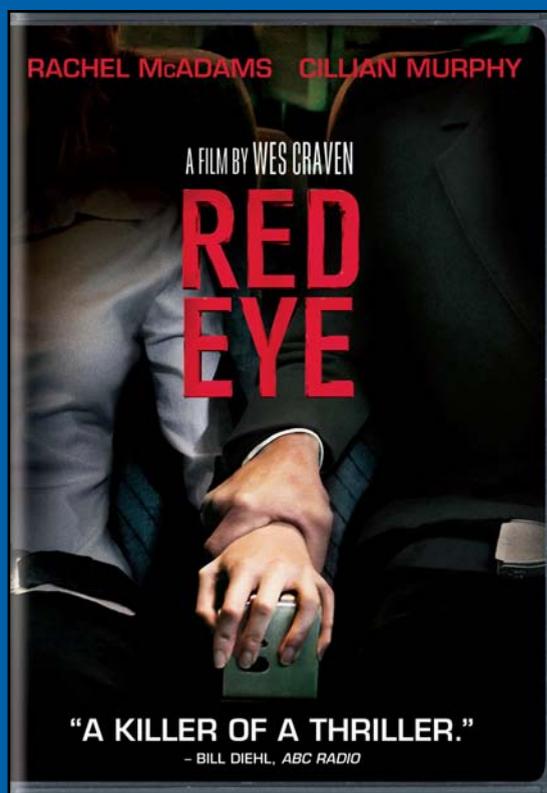
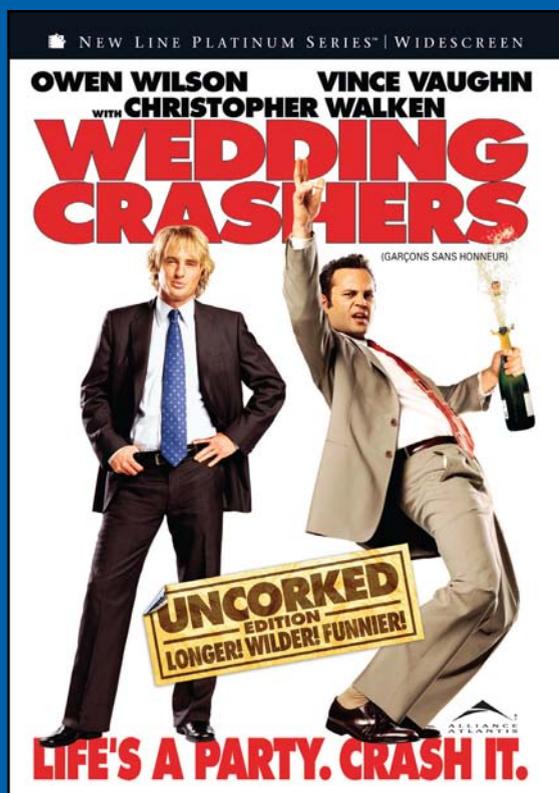
DENNIS QUAID “I have lots of scars on my arms and legs from when I played football in school. There are so many that I can’t even identify which I got in what game.”

TOMMY LEE JONES “I have ’em all over, top to bottom, stem to stern. I’m a part-time cattle rancher and eighth-generation Texan. That says it all.

HARRISON FORD “I have a two-inch scar below my bottom lip. It’s the result of a car crash.”

PHOTO BY JEAN-PIERRE MULLER/GETTY

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