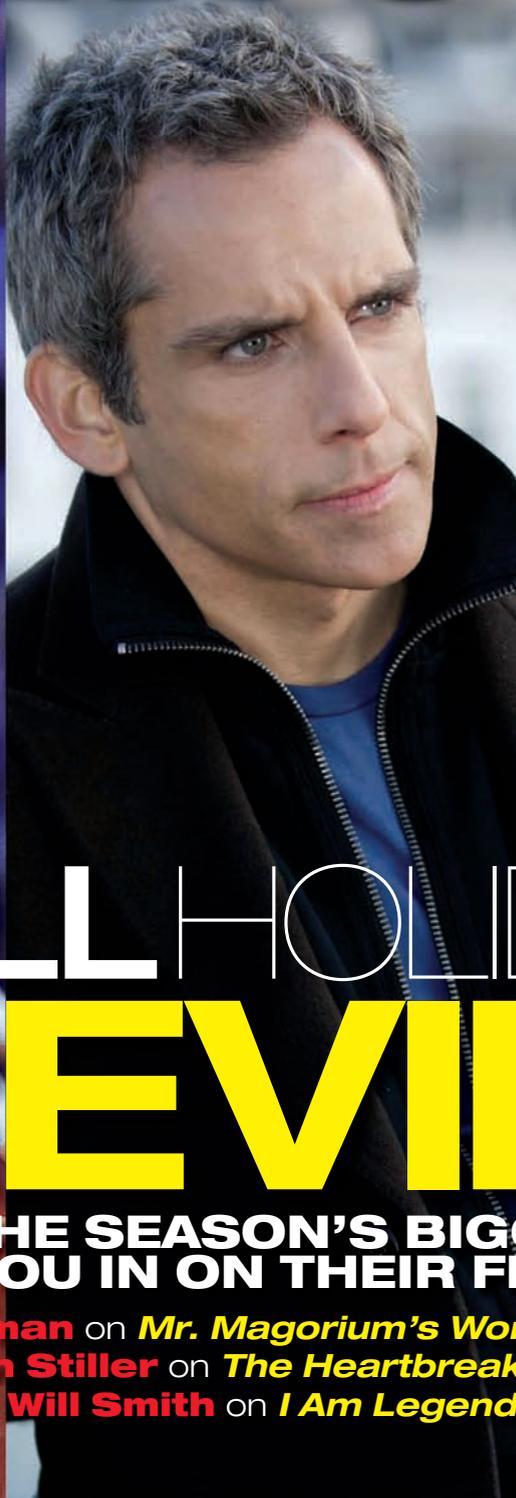


canada's #1 movie magazine in canada's #1 theatres

Famous

october 2007 | volume 8 | number 10



FALL HOLIDAY PREVIEW

THREE OF THE SEASON'S BIGGEST STARS
FILL YOU IN ON THEIR FLICKS:

Natalie Portman on *Mr. Magorium's Wonder Emporium*

Ben Stiller on *The Heartbreak Kid*

Will Smith on *I Am Legend*

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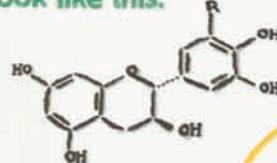
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FALL HOLIDAY MOVIE PREVIEW

A rule of thumb for film fans: the cooler it gets outside, the better the movies inside the theatre. It's time for Hollywood to get all serious, releasing heavy dramas, costume flicks and family fare. Of course, there are laughs to be had as well, and we have the scoop on all of it. Plus, writer Earl Dittman interviews stars from some of the season's most anticipated movies

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SEASON'S TICKETS



We are such slaves to the sun. The colour of our clothes, our schedules, and even our moods change based on how many hours of sunlight we can suck through our pores each day.

In summer we wear pastels and bright hues, think nothing of meeting a friend for coffee at 9 p.m., and feel light and free. Come fall and winter, we swaddle ourselves in brown and black, have trouble leaving the house after dinner

and tend to feel introspective, even glum.

The sort of entertainment we choose also changes as darkness creeps in. Movies like *Knocked Up* and *Superbad*, so light and funny in those halcyon days of vitamin-D overload, seem strangely out of place. Instead we start buzzing about films that deserve Oscar consideration — you know, the serious flicks.

That doesn't mean you can't find a funny movie or a family-friendly film this time of year — two of the three movies we spotlight in this, our Fall-Holiday Preview Issue, fall into those categories. It's just that, overall, we have to think a bit more at the movies from now until New Year's. But the payoff is usually worth the effort.

That **Fall-Holiday Preview** starts on page 15. You'll find info on almost every movie coming to theatres in the next three months, and I defy you to find a theme. Unlike past years, there's no predominance of fantasy flicks or sequels or comic-book spin-offs. It's truly a mixed bag.

Ben Stiller's *The Heartbreak Kid* is one of the first fall films out of the gate, opening October 5th, and represents a last kick at slapstick comedy before we become entirely reflective. Read our interview with Stiller, page 16, to find out why this actor known for working with the same people over and over again felt it was finally time to re-team with his *There's Something About Mary* cohorts, The Farrelly Brothers.

On page 24, Harvard grad **Natalie Portman** talks about acting like a kid again to play the clerk at a magical toy store in November's *Mr. Magorium's Wonder Emporium*.

And **Will Smith** ushers in the dark days of winter with December's lonely and atmospheric sci-fi *I Am Legend*. Check out our Will Smith interview, page 32, to find out what *Star Wars* had to do with his decision to play the last man in New York — perhaps the world — not infected with a virus that turns people into bloodsucking monsters. —**MARNI WEISZ**



Famous

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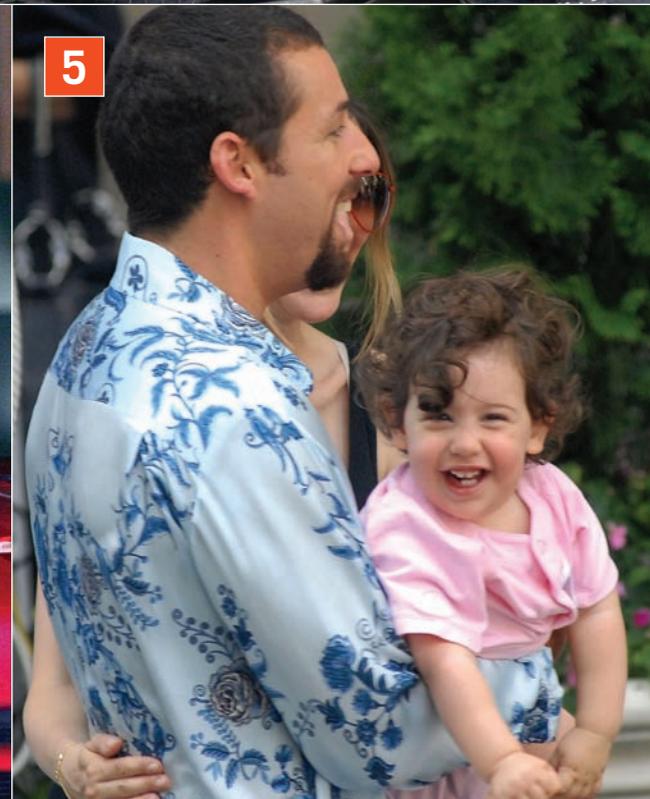
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3



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5

1 Who's that coquette behind the fan? Why, it's Cameron Diaz. All the women on the New York set of *What Happens in Vegas...* seemed to be carrying pretty fans. We're not sure if they're part of the movie, or it was just a really hot day.

PHOTO BY BRIAN PRAHL/SPLASH-KEYSTONE

2 Does he ever look uncool? While preparing to shoot *Bond 22* in Tuscany, Daniel Craig uses a retro-looking camera to get some shots of the Palio de Siena bareback horse race taking place below his balcony.

PHOTO BY SPLASH-KEYSTONE

3 Angelina Jolie proves she's tougher than her cameraman and soundman combined while filming a high-speed scene for her upcoming thriller, *Wanted*, in Chicago. We're sure it wasn't the guys, but their union, that insisted on all the protection while poor Angie hung from the hood of a Viper.

PHOTO BY JAMES DEVANEY/WIREIMAGE

4 Fight scene or sex scene? If you said fight scene, give yourself 10 points! Will Smith and Charlize Theron battle it out on the L.A. set of *Hancock*. The action pic about a superhero (Smith) who gets involved with his publicist's wife (Theron) opens next summer.

PHOTO BY MIKE EMORY/KEYSTONE

5 Aw, what a happy girl. Looks like Adam Sandler's daughter Sadie has inherited her dad's sense of humor. The one-year-old certainly found something to laugh about on the New York set of papa's next flick, *You Don't Mess With the Zohan*.

PHOTO BY BOBBY BANK/WIREIMAGE

ACTORS CALL THE SHOTS



Ben Affleck directs *Gone Baby Gone*. Inset: David Schwimmer on the set of *Run, Fat Boy, Run*

which stars Simon Pegg (*Hot Fuzz*). However, the California-based Schwimmer did leave his home turf, migrating to London to shoot the British comedy.

- Like her father Clint before her, **Alison Eastwood** makes the leap from performing to directing. Although not a household name, Alison Eastwood (*Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil*, *Poolhall Junkies*) has been acting since she made an appearance in *Bronco Billy* (starring her father) at age eight. Her first flick behind the camera, the family drama *Rails & Ties*, is being produced by her dad's production company.

Picture Deal at Disney, must have felt a little family support was in order and cast brother Casey in the lead role. Also, by adapting a Lehane book — Affleck wrote the screenplay as well — he had the benefit of working in his hometown of Boston.

- Rounding out the list is the most interesting movie of them all, Oscar-winner **Anthony Hopkins'** second feature, the stream-of-consciousness effort *Slipstream*. Opening in limited release in the U.S., *Slipstream* is an almost experimental work that unfolds in the mind of an aging Hollywood screenwriter (Hopkins) while he's on the set of his latest whodunit. —IR

It's not uncommon for actors to become directors, but it is rare to have four actor-directed features hit the screen in the same month, as is the case this month.

- **Ben Affleck** kicks things off with his first film, the crime drama *Gone Baby Gone*, based on Dennis Lehane's (*Mystic River*) book. Affleck, whose only other directing credit is the 16-minute short *I Killed My Lesbian Wife, Hung Her on a Meat Hook, and Now I Have a Three-*

- Unlike Affleck, *Friends* star **David Schwimmer** has a long list of small-screen directing credits to his name — 10 episodes of *Friends*, two of *Joey*, the TV movie *Since You've Been Gone* — and chose to stick to what he knows, comedy, for his big-screen debut, *Run, Fat Boy, Run*,

QUEEN WILL ROCK YOU

In 1981, Queen marched into the Montreal Forum and played two incredible shows, which, thank the rock gods, were filmed on 35mm and stand as the only Queen concerts shot on film. First released in 1983 as *We Will Rock You*, this concert film, now titled *Queen Rock Montreal*, returns to the big screen digitally restored for one night — October 17th. The chance to see Freddie Mercury and his prodigious overbite strut across a 60-foot screen while the band plays rock anthems such as “Bohemian Rhapsody” and “Under Pressure” is a Queen fan's dream. And tickets are only \$9.95! GO TO WWW.CINEPLEX.COM FOR LOCATIONS AND SHOWTIMES.



Artifact

This month's objet de film: **HMS Bounty**

The HMS Bounty — Hollywood's oft-used stand-in for history's HMAV Bounty and other ships of the time — sits docked in Liverpool, England, prior to a trip to Tahiti. That journey, which was scheduled to begin September 30th in Spithead, England, will retrace the real Bounty's 1787 voyage during which mutineers took control of the ship in the South Pacific (they didn't want to return home to England). In 1960, Lunenburg, Nova Scotia, shipwrights Smith and Ruthland used archival drawings to build this seaworthy replica for 1962's *Mutiny on the Bounty*. After the shoot, some wanted to destroy the ship but Marlon Brando — who played head mutineer Christian Fletcher — lobbied to save it. The ship went on to star in a number of TV shows and movies, including 1983's *Yellowbeard*, the 1990 TV movie *Treasure Island* with Charlton Heston, and the recent *Pirates of the Caribbean* flicks. —MW

HMS BOUNTY PHOTO BY DAVID MUNN/IREIMAGE





BROOKE NEVIN'S got game

It's fitting that Toronto-born actor Brooke Nevin stars as the daughter of a coach in this month's sports parody *The Comebacks*, considering her dad, Bob Nevin, played in the NHL for 19 seasons, won two Stanley Cups and served as an assistant coach for the L.A. Kings in the 1970s.

"The thing with my dad is that he actually retired before I was born," says the 24-year-old Nevin on the line from L.A. "He wasn't off playing hockey games, but sports was a big part of my upbringing, I would play tennis and golf and that sort of thing."

In *The Comebacks*, Nevin plays Michelle Fields, the rowdy daughter of washed-up football coach Lambeau Fields (David Koechner), who's hired to coach a ragtag college team. The comedy is a send-up of jock flicks such as *Remember the Titans*, *Radio* and *Invincible*.

"No one's taken a shot at inspirational sports movies yet," notes Nevin. "People were just waiting for it, and I think [*The Comebacks*] is a really great romp,

and I'm really glad to be part of a film that's the first to do it."

Michelle Fields is the kind of gal your parents' parents would call "easy," and anyone with a Y chromosome is fair game to her. "Michelle is very spunky, she has issues around rebelling against parental figures, and that takes many forms, including sometimes inappropriate displays in public or dating boys that she doesn't think her father would approve of," says Nevin with a laugh.

The blond-haired, brown-eyed actor was born and raised in Toronto and knew early on that performing was her calling.

"I started begging my mom to get me into commercials or on TV where I could act outlandish and be the centre of attention at a very young age. I remember when I was 13 I gave her an ultimatum saying, 'Mom, that's it, I'm getting old now. In Hollywood you gotta start young.' So at 13 I finally got an agent.

"My first professional paid gig was *Goosebumps*, which I call the rite of

passage for teenage Canadian actors because if you look back you'll see Hayden Christensen or Ryan Gosling, a whole bunch of actors, we either did *Goosebumps* or *Are You Afraid of the Dark?*"

After appearing in a string of TV projects and training with Second City's improv group in Toronto, Nevin moved to L.A. in 2003 — "I heard Hollywood call my name" — and is now starting to land movie roles (look for her in the upcoming films *Sherman's Way* and *Infestation*).

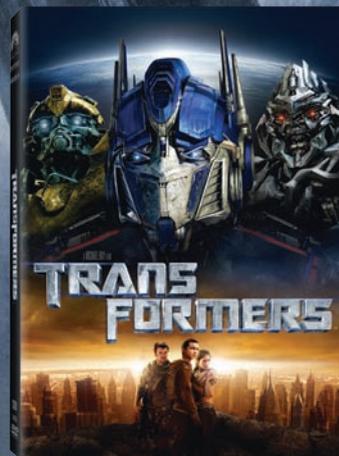
"You just keep persevering, do a good job and people finally put the dots together," she says of her increasing profile. And, unlike her cinematic alter ego, Michelle Fields, Nevin is not prone to making poor choices.

"I keep saying I have yet to go through my teenage, young adult rebellion. I try and take part in more productive activities, you know hiking, watching old movies and just connecting with people, things that don't necessarily involve illicit substances." —Ingrid Randoja

PHOTO BY TROY BORRUSO



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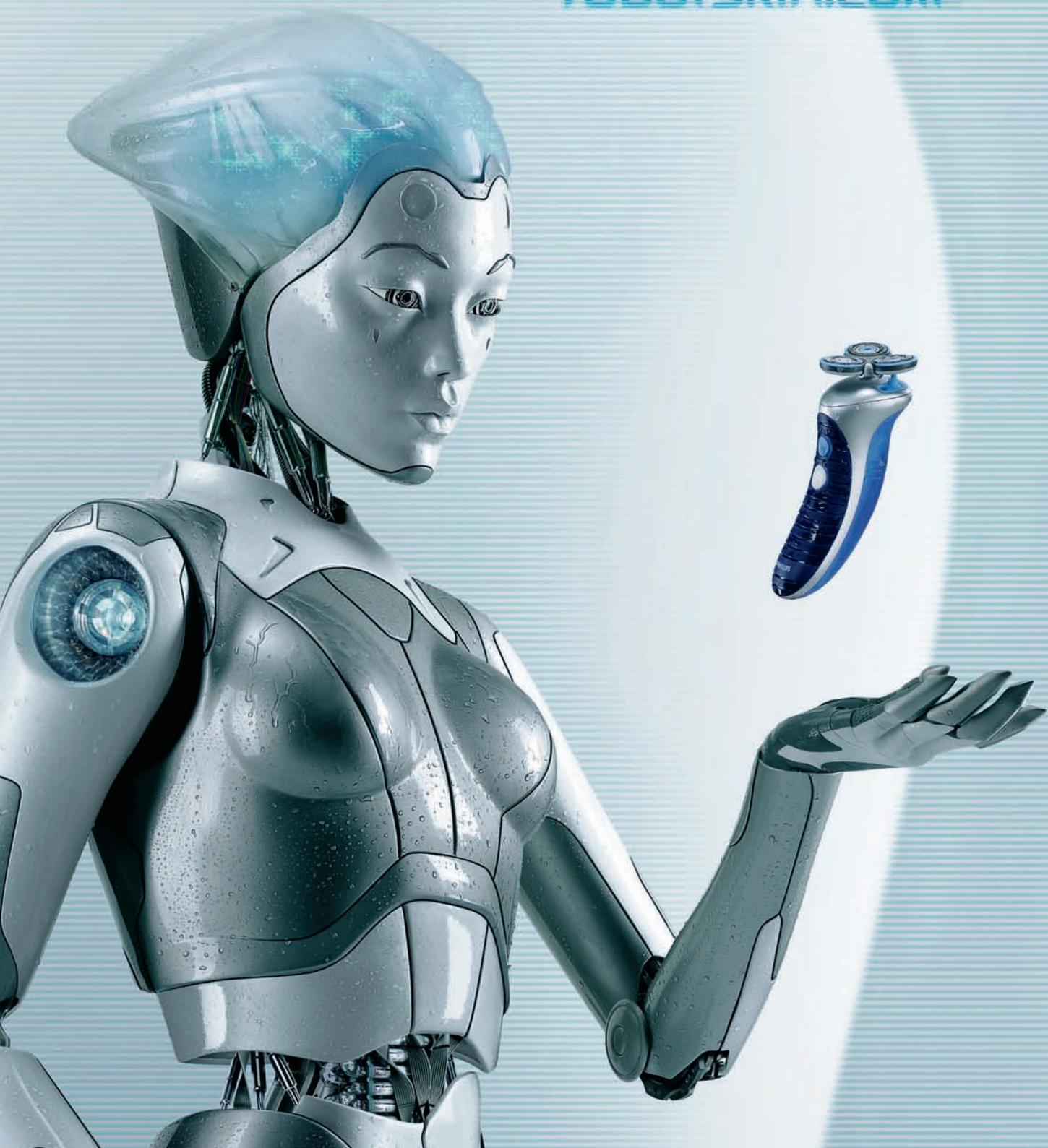


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FALL HOLIDAY MOVIE PREVIEW 2007



Lust, Caution, *It's a Boy-Girl Thing*, *The Seeker: The Dark is Rising*, *The Darjeeling Limited*, *The Heartbreak Kid*, *Feel the Noise*, *Michael Clayton*, *Poor Boy's Game*, *Grace is Gone*, *We Own the Night*, *Elizabeth: The Golden Age*, *December Boys*, *Rendition*, *Reservation Road*, *Nightmare Before Christmas in 3D*, *30 Days of Night*, *My Kid Could Paint That*, *Gone Baby Gone*, *Rails & Ties*, *Dan in Real Life*, *Sleuth*, *Martian Child*, *Run, Fat Boy, Run*, *The Tracey Fragments*, *The Comebacks*, *Things We Lost in the Fire*, *Saw IV*, *Bee Movie*, *The Kite Runner*, *American Gangster*, *I Could Never Be Your Woman*, *Fred Claus*, *Lions for Lambs*, *Love in the Time of Cholera*, *No Country for Old Men*, *Mr. Magorium's Wonder Emporium*, *Beowulf*, *My Blueberry Nights*, *Enchanted*, *Hitman*, *This Christmas*, *August Rush*, *The Mist*, *Margot at the Wedding*, *I'm Not There*, *Pathology*, *The Christmas Cottage*, *Cassandra's Dream*, *Atonement*, *Walk Hard*, *The Golden Compass*, *Leatherheads*, *Perfect Christmas*, *Alvin and the Chipmunks*, *Juno*, *I Am Legend*, *Be Kind Rewind*, *National Treasure: Book of Secrets*, *Sweeney Todd*, *P.S. I Love You*, *Alien Vs. Predator 2*, *The Diving Bell and the Butterfly*, *The Water Horse: Legend of the Deep*, *Charlie Wilson's War*, *The Savages* ▶▶▶

Ben Stiller

GIVES **THE HEARTBREAK KID** A SECOND CHANCE

BY EARL DITTMAN

The first time Ben Stiller worked with the Farrelly Brothers, Bobby and Peter, the result was *There's Something About Mary*. The crude, slapstick comedy was a huge success, thanks in part to several memorable bits of physical humour, including a scene in which Stiller's character gets his privates caught in his fly, and another in which Cameron Diaz mistakes a bodily fluid for hair gel.

Funny, yes. But not exactly family fare. Which might explain why fans have been waiting nine years for the trio to reunite. In that time Stiller and his wife, actor Christine Taylor (*Dodgeball: A True Underdog Story*), have had two kids, daughter Ella and son Quinlin. And, like so often happens, living in a house full of rugrats made Stiller's movie choices more, shall we say, conservative. Witness last year's surprise hit *Night at the Museum*, or the voice work he did for the animated feature *Madagascar*.

"When you have kids, you want to be able to go to movies that you can take the whole family to and actually all enjoy together — especially if you are starring in it," says the 41-year-old native New Yorker in a recent L.A. interview. That desire to show his kids his movies meant a shift

away from hard-edged comedies like *Mary*, *Zoolander* and *Meet the Fockers*. "I remember trying not to even use the word 'Fockers' around my daughter for as long as I could, because I didn't want her going around saying it."

But Stiller started to feel that he was limiting himself.

"Like any parent, I realized that if I didn't want my kids to see some of my movies until they were older, then I could always change the channel, block it or something like that," says Stiller, whose own parents, Jerry Stiller and Anne Meara, have been successful actors since the 1950s.

While there have long been rumours of a *There's Something About Mary* sequel, one Farrelly brother says it just ain't so. In a phone interview last year, Bobby Farrelly told me that he and Peter had considered the idea, but quickly rejected it.

"The studio that we did *Mary* at wanted another one really bad," he says, "but we had a lot of other ideas that we wanted to try out first. Will we ever do one? You learn to never say never, but there's not one planned in the immediate future. I think people just get anxious when we are making a movie and just call it *Untitled Farrelly Brothers Project*, thinking we are trying to hide the fact it is a *Mary* sequel."

For their second outing together — labeled *Untitled Farrelly Brothers Project* throughout most of its early life — the trio chose to remake the 1972 mid-life crisis comedy *The Heartbreak Kid*. That



Actually, Eddie (Ben Stiller) is the one who feels burned after marrying the wacky Lila (Malin Akerman) in *The Heartbreak Kid*

film, which earned a handful of Oscar and Golden Globe nominations, was written by Neil Simon based on the short story "A Change of Plan" by Bruce Jay Friedman, who wrote the screenplays for films like *Stir Crazy* and *Splash*. It starred Charles Grodin and Cybill Shepherd as star-crossed lovers who meet right after he's married another woman.

"It's always risky to remake a great movie or adapt a television show for film because there are a lot of ways to go wrong," says Stiller, who starred in the big-screen redo of TV's *Starsky & Hutch*. "But if you can bring something new, fresh and exciting to the story, then the chances of it being accepted and given a fair shake go up tremendously."

Stiller says he loved Charles Grodin's performance in the original, and thinks director Elaine May — whose directing career came to a crashing halt with

1987's *Ishtar* — did a tremendous job.

"So when Peter and Bobby started talking to me about doing an updated version of it, I knew it would have to be something that just knocked me out," he says. "The first one was very much about love, relationships and the society of the 1970s. It was funny, but in that '70s cynical kind of way. So the guys completely updated everything, and it has made it so fresh and funny."

This time, Stiller plays Eddie Cantrow, an aging bachelor who's worried he may end up old and alone, particularly after attending an ex-girlfriend's wedding. So, just six weeks after he starts dating the lovely Lila (Malin Akerman), he proposes.

After the wedding, Eddie and Lila take off for a honeymoon in Cabo San Lucas, Mexico. And that's when Eddie starts to realize he's made a huge mistake — Lila is crude, dumb and has terrible taste in

music. Just as this sad picture is becoming clear, Eddie meets Miranda (Michelle Monaghan) and instantly feels she's the one with whom he should spend the rest of his life.

"It definitely earns its R-rating," Stiller says. "The Farrellys aren't worried about being politically correct or if anyone is shocked by some of the scenes, they just want every joke, gag or antic to be hilarious. The thing about The Farrellys is that you know what you're going to get before you walk into the theatre. It might make you blush at times, but it's always going to make you laugh."

Intensely close to his folks, Stiller was delighted when The Farrellys asked if he'd like his own father to play Eddie's dad. "It's always great to work with my parents, it's really an honour for me because I consider them both such great actors and comedians," says Stiller, who

worked with his mom in last year's *Night at the Museum*. "It's interesting to kind of go back and forth with someone you're related to, especially when you're playing father and son," he says.

Stiller says he often wonders what line of work he'd be in had he not grown up surrounded by actors, but insists that he and his wife won't be disappointed if there is no third generation of acting Stillers.

"We're going to let [our kids] make their own decisions and definitely not throw them in front of a camera until they want that," he says. "I'd like to give them a fighting chance to decide what they want to do. If either of them decides to become an actor when they're older, that's cool with me. I'll support them 100 percent, just like my parents stood behind me." **E**

Earl Dittman is a Houston-based entertainment writer.

OCTOBER PREVIEW



Christopher Eccleston in *The Seeker: The Dark is Rising*

OCTOBER 5

LUST, CAUTION

WHO'S IN IT? Tony Leung, Tang Wei

WHO DIRECTED? Ang Lee
(*Brokeback Mountain*)

WHAT'S IT ABOUT? Set in Japanese-occupied Shanghai, this World War Two spy drama stars rising Chinese star Wei as a young woman who is assigned the task of seducing — then killing — a powerful Chinese businessman (Leung).

IT'S A BOY-GIRL THING

WHO'S IN IT? Samaire Armstrong, Kevin Zegers

WHO DIRECTED? Nick Hurran (*Little Black Book*)

WHAT'S IT ABOUT? This latest in a long line of body-switching teen comedies sees brainy Nell (Armstrong) and jock Woody (Zegers) swap bods after having a fight in front of an Aztec statue.

THE SEEKER: THE DARK IS RISING

WHO'S IN IT? Alexander Ludwig, Ian McShane

WHO DIRECTED? David L. Cunningham (*After...*)

WHAT'S IT ABOUT? Young Will Stanton (Ludwig) doesn't think there's anything

particularly special about himself — until the day he finds out he's the last in a long line of immortal beings called the Old Ones. What do the Old Ones do? Just protect all of humanity from an evil force called The Dark, that's all. Based on the book by Susan Cooper.

THE DARJEELING LIMITED

WHO'S IN IT? Owen Wilson, Jason Schwartzman

WHO DIRECTED? Wes Anderson (*Rushmore*)

WHAT'S IT ABOUT? With a script co-written by Anderson, Schwartzman and Roman Coppola (Francis Ford's son and Schwartzman's cousin), this comedy revolves around three brothers (Wilson, Schwartzman, Adrien Brody) who have grown apart. After their dad dies and their mom disappears, the boys take an eventful train trip through India in the hopes it will strengthen their bond.

THE HEARTBREAK KID

WHO'S IN IT? Ben Stiller, Malin Akerman

WHO DIRECTED? Peter and Bobby Farrelly

(*There's Something About Mary*)

WHAT'S IT ABOUT? Stiller plays aging

bachelor Eddie Cantrow, who decides to marry his new girlfriend Lila (Akerman) because his friends convince him it's the best he'll ever do. But while on his honeymoon he a) discovers he can't stand Lila, and b) falls in love with another woman (Michelle Monaghan). See Ben Stiller interview, page 16.

FEEL THE NOISE

WHO'S IN IT? Omarion Grandberry, Giancarlo Esposito

WHO DIRECTED? Aljandro Chomski

(*Today and Tomorrow*)

WHAT'S IT ABOUT? When a young man from the Bronx gets into trouble with some local thugs he flees to Puerto Rico to hide out with the father he hardly knows.

MICHAEL CLAYTON

WHO'S IN IT? George Clooney, Tom Wilkinson

WHO DIRECTED? Tony Gilroy (debut)

WHAT'S IT ABOUT? Lawyer Michael Clayton (Clooney) is in charge of "fixing" the dirtiest and most difficult cases represented by his law firm, including a class-action suit against U-North, a pesticide company accused of poisoning people. But when one of the firm's partners (Wilkinson) is overcome by guilt from having represented the company for years, Clayton's job gets a whole lot harder.

POOR BOY'S GAME

WHO'S IN IT? Danny Glover, Rossif Sutherland

WHO DIRECTED? Clément Virgo (*Lie With Me*)

WHAT'S IT ABOUT? Donald Sutherland's son Rossif plays Donnie, a white boxer who went to jail for nine years after beating Charlie, a black kid, so brutally it left him handicapped. Now that Donnie's been released, the black community wants revenge in the form of a boxing match between Donnie and unbeatable black boxer Ossie Paris (Flex Alexander). But an unlikely bond develops between Donnie and Charlie's father (Glover) that may help heal the deepest wounds.

OCTOBER 7

WWE NO MERCY

Live Event 8-11 p.m. ET / 5-8 p.m. PT

Primal rage takes over as WWE Champion John Cena, Randy Orton, Triple H, Batista, Rey Mysterio and Undertaker collide. Check www.cineplex.com for a list of theatres where you can watch it live, and to buy tickets. ▶▶

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▶▶ OCTOBER 12

GRACE IS GONE

WHO'S IN IT? John Cusack, Alessandro Nivola
WHO DIRECTED? James C. Strouse (debut)
WHAT'S IT ABOUT? Stanley's (Cusack) wife Gracie is killed while serving in Iraq, leaving him to inform his two daughters that their mother is dead. But Stanley, never a touchy-feely kinda guy, can't do it, and instead takes the girls on a road trip to their favourite amusement park hoping to work up the courage to tell them along the way.

WE OWN THE NIGHT

WHO'S IN IT? Joaquin Phoenix, Mark Wahlberg
WHO DIRECTED? James Gray (*The Yards*)
WHAT'S IT ABOUT? It's 1988 and Bobby Green (Phoenix) manages a hot Manhattan nightclub owned by the Russian mafia, which doesn't sit too well with his cop father (Robert Duvall) and cop brother (Wahlberg). It's only a matter of time until Bobby is forced to choose between becoming a full-fledged baddie or working undercover to catch the criminals.

ELIZABETH: THE GOLDEN AGE

WHO'S IN IT? Cate Blanchett, Clive Owen
WHO DIRECTED? Shekhar Kapur (*The Four Feathers*)
WHAT'S IT ABOUT? This sequel to *Elizabeth* once again stars the luminous Blanchett as Queen Elizabeth I. It's been almost 30 years since we last saw the monarch, who now faces her greatest challenges as England's ruler — the impending invasion of the Spanish Armada and a brewing assassination plot. Thank goodness she can count on trusted advisor Walsingham (Geoffrey Rush) and the hunky seafaring Sir Walter Raleigh (Owen) for advice.

DECEMBER BOYS

WHO'S IN IT? Daniel Radcliffe, Teresa Palmer
WHO DIRECTED? Rod Hardy (*Route 52*)
WHAT'S IT ABOUT? Radcliffe plays the oldest of four orphan boys spending their summer holidays on the Australian coast with a young couple who may adopt one of them at season's end.

OCTOBER 19

RENDITION

WHO'S IN IT? Jake Gyllenhaal, Reese Witherspoon
WHO DIRECTED? Gavin Hood (*Tsotsi*)
WHAT'S IT ABOUT? Gyllenhaal plays CIA

analyst Douglas Freeman, who is unnerved after participating in a brutal interrogation of Egyptian-born chemical engineer and terror suspect Anwar El-Ibrahimi (Omar Metwalley) at a secret detention facility outside of the States. Back in the U.S., Anwar's American wife Isabella (Witherspoon) desperately searches for her missing husband and eventually crosses paths with Douglas, whose conscience demands he tell her all he knows, including details about his own "hands-on" involvement.

RESERVATION ROAD

WHO'S IN IT? Joaquin Phoenix, Mark Ruffalo
WHO DIRECTED? Terry George (*Hotel Rwanda*)
WHAT'S IT ABOUT? Two fathers, Dwight (Ruffalo) and Ethan (Phoenix), have their lives tragically enmeshed when one is behind the wheel during an accident that takes the life of the other one's son. Based on the novel by John Burnham Schwartz.

NIGHTMARE BEFORE CHRISTMAS IN 3D

VOICES: Chris Sarandon, Catherine O'Hara
WHO DIRECTED? Henry Selick (*Monkeybone*)
WHAT'S IT ABOUT? For the second year in a row, those who live near a theatre with 3D capability (Colossus Toronto, SilverCity Mississauga, Coliseum Scarborough, Banque Scotia Montreal, Niagara Square) will be able to see the spooky story of Jack Skellington, King of Halloweentown, in eye-popping 3D.

30 DAYS OF NIGHT

WHO'S IN IT? Josh Hartnett, Melissa George
WHO DIRECTED? David Slade (*Hard Candy*)
WHAT'S IT ABOUT? For one month each year there is absolutely no sunlight in Barrow, Alaska. What a great place for bloodthirsty vampires — what with their allergies to the sun — to wreak havoc! Only the sheriff (Hartnett) and his wife (George) can save their town from becoming the world's Number One destination for fanged tourists.

MY KID COULD PAINT THAT

WHO'S IN IT? Marla Olmstead, Mark Olmstead
WHO DIRECTED? Amir Bar-Lev (*Fighter*)
WHAT'S IT ABOUT? Imagine swirling patterns in vibrant hues composed with depth and, apparently, great thought. No, not the works of Kandinsky or Pollock, but of a four-year-old girl. Marla Olmstead is the barely-out-of-diapers painter featured in a skeptical *60 Minutes* piece a ▶▶

Spotlight:



OCTOBER 19
GONE BABY GONE

What does everyone have against Ben Affleck?

A quick Google search for "Gone Baby Gone," Affleck's directorial debut, reveals almost unanimous praise for the film's gloomy and foreboding trailer — but most of it is couched in phrases of disbelief that Affleck's first film behind the camera may actually be good.

Based on a novel by Dennis Lehane (the author of *Mystic River*, as the film's website, trailer and official synopsis won't let you forget), *Gone Baby Gone* revolves around two private investigators — Patrick Kenzie (Ben's brother Casey Affleck) and Angie Gennaro (Michelle Monaghan) — who are asked to help out when four-year-old Amanda McCready is abducted. Patrick grew up in Dorchester, the tough part of Boston where the crime took place, and the girl's family hopes he may have better luck than the cops convincing its tight-lipped residents to talk.

It goes without saying (but we'll say it anyway) that one of the reasons Affleck chose this story for his directorial debut is that it takes place in his beloved Beantown. Aside from his brother, obviously also a Bostonian, Affleck cast Robert Wahlberg (brother to Donnie and Mark) as a police detective. The Wahlberg clan grew up right in Dorchester, where they were very well acquainted with both the cops and the robbers.

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COMING SOON TO THEATRES THIS FALL

►► couple of years ago. This documentary asks similar questions about the nature of modern art, the talent of our young artist, and the veracity of her parents' claims.

OCTOBER 26

RAILS & TIES

WHO'S IN IT? Kevin Bacon, Marcia Gay Harden
WHO DIRECTED? Alison Eastwood (debut)

WHAT'S IT ABOUT? Clint's 35-year-old daughter makes her directing debut with this drama about a mother who brings her son along when she parks her car on a railroad track with a train approaching. The crash kills the mother, but the son survives and forms a bond with the guilt-ridden conductor (Bacon) and his wife (Harden).

DAN IN REAL LIFE

WHO'S IN IT? Steve Carell, Juliette Binoche
WHO DIRECTED? Peter Hedges (*Pieces of April*)

WHAT'S IT ABOUT? Widowed father of three Dan Burns (Carell) is ready to get back into the dating game, and wouldn't ya know it, the woman he falls for happens to be his brother's (Dane Cook) new girlfriend (Binoche).

SLEUTH

WHO'S IN IT? Jude Law, Michael Caine
WHO DIRECTED? Kenneth Branagh (*Henry V*)

WHAT'S IT ABOUT? Twenty-five years ago Caine starred in the 1972 film version of the Broadway play, portraying hairdresser Milo Tindale, who engages in a game of cat and mouse with his lover's jealous husband (then played by Laurence Olivier). In this remake, Caine stars as the scheming husband while Law plays Milo.

MARTIAN CHILD

WHO'S IN IT? John Cusack, Bobby Coleman
WHO DIRECTED? Menno Meyjes (*Max*)

WHAT'S IT ABOUT? When his fiancée passes away, a sci-fi writer (Cusack) decides to fill the hole in his life by adopting a boy (Coleman) who believes he's from Mars. Based on the book, and life, of sci-fi writer David Gerrold, a single parent who adopted a boy.

RUN, FAT BOY, RUN

WHO'S IN IT? Simon Pegg, Thandie Newton
WHO DIRECTED? David Schwimmer (debut)

WHAT'S IT ABOUT? *Friends* alumni Schwimmer makes his big-screen directing



Josh Hartnett in *30 Days of Night*

debut with this comedy about chunky English bloke Dennis (Pegg), who leaves his fiancée at the altar. Years later he realizes his mistake, and in order to impress her vows to get in shape and run the New York City Marathon.

THE TRACEY FRAGMENTS

WHO'S IN IT? Ellen Page, Slim Twig
WHO DIRECTED? Bruce McDonald (*Picture Claire*)

WHAT'S IT ABOUT? Fifteen-year-old Tracey Berkowitz (Page) is going nuts dealing with a horrible home life, a brother who thinks he's a dog and an aspiring rock star boyfriend (Twig). Director McDonald employs multiple split screens and the music of Broken Social Scene to tell Tracey's tale.

THE COMEBACKS

WHO'S IN IT? David Koechner, Brooke Nevin
WHO DIRECTED? Tom Brady (*The Hot Chick*)

WHAT'S IT ABOUT? It's about time someone parodied the cliché-ridden sports movie. Koechner stars as Lambeau Fields, a washed-up football coach who tries to turn a team of ragtag college players into a well-oiled machine. Canadian Nevin pops up as Coach Fields' daughter, while former NFLers Eric Dickerson, Lawrence Taylor and Michael Irving make cameo appearances. See Brooke Nevin interview, page 12.

THINGS WE LOST IN THE FIRE

WHO'S IN IT? Halle Berry, Benicio Del Toro
WHO DIRECTED? Susanne Bier (*Brothers*)

WHAT'S IT ABOUT? After Audrey's (Berry) husband is murdered, she asks her hubby's best friend, Jerry (Del Toro), to move in with her and her two kids. The thing is, Jerry has some substance abuse issues that are not exactly under control.

SAW IV

WHO'S IN IT? Tobin Bell, Lyriq Bent
WHO DIRECTED? Darren Lynn Bousman (*Saw III*)

WHAT'S IT ABOUT? Halloween is upon us, which means the latest installment from the gruesome *Saw* franchise. Yes, master torturer Jigsaw (Bell) is dead, but we get the feeling he's left enough traps and games lying around to inflict some serious damage...even from the grave.

OCTOBER 28

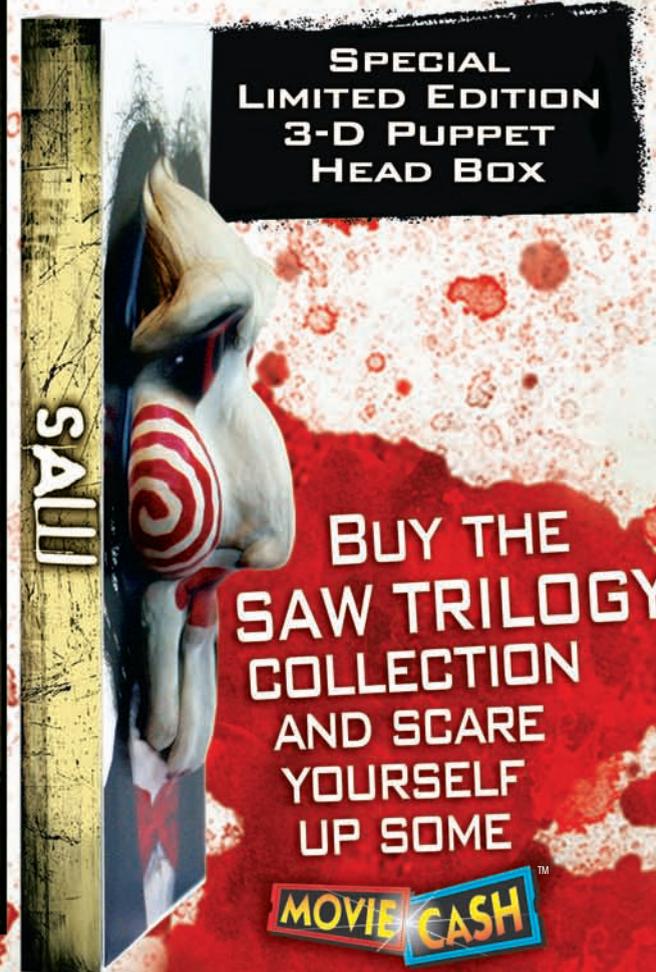
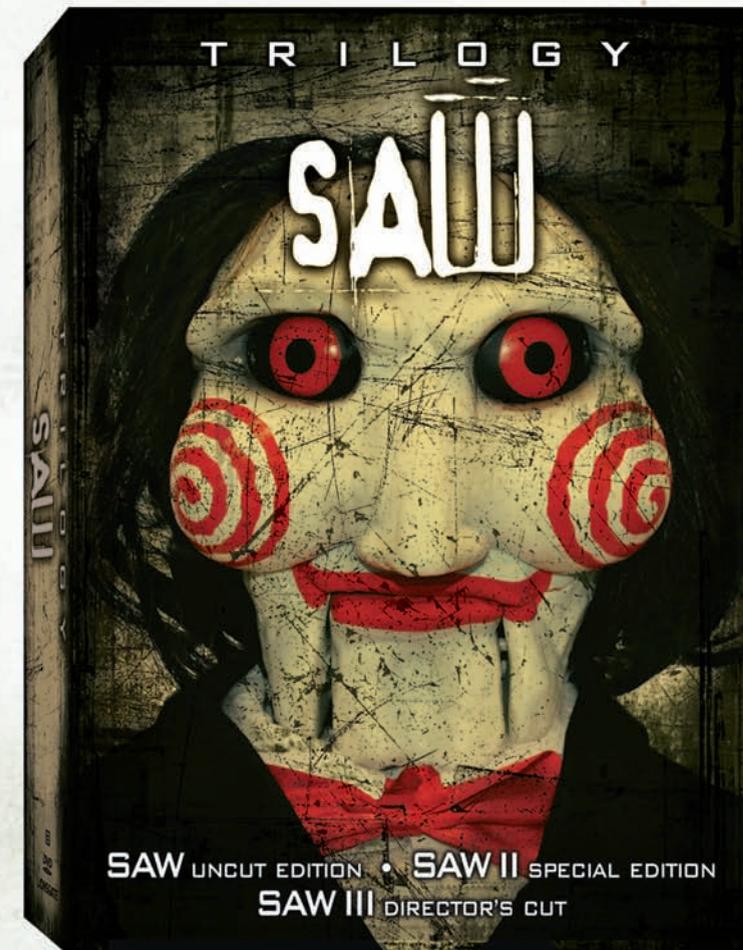
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▶ FUTURE SHOP™

Natalie Portman

TAKES YOU INSIDE **MR. MAGORIUM'S WONDER EMPORIUM**

Natalie Portman was on the Berlin soundstage of the dark, futuristic political thriller *V For Vendetta* when she got a letter from Zach Helm explaining what he wanted to do with his directorial debut — a movie that could not be more different than *V*.

“It was so passionate and sweet, it really moved me,” the 26-year-old Portman recalls in a recent New York interview. “Basically, in the letter he said that he wanted to make a movie that was just as important to children as roller coasters, boxed apple juice and raisins are. Then, when I read *Mr. Magorium's Wonder Emporium*, I was like, ‘I want to do this!’”

Portman was already committed to make *Goya's Ghosts*, Milos Forman's quasi bio-pic of the legendary Spanish painter, before she could report to *Mr. Magorium's* Toronto set. But Helm didn't mind waiting. “He is a big fan of Milos Forman, so he was like, ‘I understand, I'd want to work with him, too,’” recalls Portman, still sporting her short hairdo.

“I just wanted to have fun and get lost in Zach's fantasy world, because I get bored easily,” says the Jerusalem-born, Harvard-educated Portman with a smile.

“I'm always trying to do different things, because I feel like if I can keep myself interested then there's the hope of keeping an audience interested.”

The film co-stars Jason Bateman as the store's accountant and Dustin Hoffman as the zany Mr. Magorium. A few years ago Hoffman lobbied hard for the role of Willy Wonka in *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* but lost out to Johnny Depp.

“I was so excited that we were all going to be in the film together, especially Dustin because I knew he was looking to play a character unlike any one he had done before,” says Portman. “We were going to be like kids let loose in a toy store.”

Portman plays Molly Mahoney, an employee of the most fantastic toy store known to man. The Emporium is a magical world where the toys come to life, but only to those who believe in the store's miraculous powers — which, initially, doesn't include Molly.

Eventually, the store's eccentric, 243-year-old owner, Mr. Edward Magorium (Hoffman), decides it's time to find someone to take care of his enchanted toy kingdom after he's gone, and he wills the Emporium to a shocked and bewildered Molly, who doubts her ability to manage the store.

Although Henry Weston (Bateman), the Emporium's uptight and conservative accountant, had expected to inherit the store, he starts to warm up to Molly and becomes an unlikely supporter.



Natalie Portman in
*Mr. Magorium's
Wonder Emporium*

“The set was so incredible, overflowing with toys, games and everything fun you can imagine, it was like we were in Mr. Magorium's actual store, it was fantastic,” beams Portman, recalling the massive Toronto soundstage that housed the Emporium.

“It was wonderful to be back in a city that I love so much and knew so well,” she says. “When I was younger, my cousins used to live in Toronto, so my parents and I would drive out to visit them every year. We didn't fly, we drove, and it was an adventurous 13-hour car ride from New York. I always had fun when we went, so being there brought back so many fond memories. Whenever I would have time off, I would explore every place I remembered in Toronto, and explore new places. I just wish we had more time there.”

Portman even ventured out to enjoy some of Toronto's nightlife.

“I always go out when I'm not working,”

says Portman, who even praises Toronto's paparazzi for their good-natured behaviour. Unlike many of her 20-something Hollywood contemporaries, Portman says she seldom has problems with the tabloids or the paparazzi — even in L.A.

“A lot of the people who get all the attention sometimes invite it themselves,” she says. “The way that I'm usually out of the public eye is that I go out and party with my friends who are not famous people, or we go to each other's apartments, not the Hollywood clubs with movie stars. That's not the group of people that I hang out with and do things with — nothing newsworthy. My friends are amazing people, but they are not tabloid fodder. So I think that it's probably just not interesting to the press, and I also generally feel respected. I also have learned not to talk about my private life.”

Over the years, Portman has been romantically linked to some of her male

co-stars, but when it comes to discussing her beaux, she does indeed keep her lips sealed.

“College definitely helped my love life is all I'll say,” she says of her years as a 4.0 student at Harvard. “Other than that, there's not much to talk about. But I'm still young, so anything can happen. Plus, I don't have to spend my summers beaming around the galaxy [anymore],” she says, referring to her years spent playing Queen Amidala for George Lucas. “I would be in school during the year and then during the summer break I would do *Star Wars*. So I definitely can do more now that I'm done with school and done with *Star Wars*, so you never know who or what I might meet.”

If you're hoping to snag a date with the apparently available Portman, there is one attribute she says she finds particularly attractive.

“I really do admire other people,

whether it's a friend or a boyfriend, who are really engaged in trying to make the world a better place,” says the devout vegetarian and animal-rights activist. “There are too many people who are involved in themselves too much and aren't looking out.... I don't care for that type of person much because we have to make this world a better place for our children.”

Empathy and an awareness of the world around oneself are qualities that are evident in Portman as well. In fact, those qualities seem to inform her decisions about which roles to take, and even her choice to be in this profession at all.

“As an actor, my job is to imagine other people's lives, and what a better thing to practice than that, to think about what other people experience,” she says. **E**

Earl Dittman is a Houston-based entertainment writer.

NOVEMBER PREVIEW



NOVEMBER 2

BEE MOVIE

VOICES: Jerry Seinfeld, Renée Zellweger
WHO DIRECTED? Steve Hickner, Simon J. Smith
WHAT'S IT ABOUT? Seinfeld's first movie role since pulling the plug on his beloved sitcom — in fact, his first movie role ever — sees him voicing disgruntled honeybee Barry B. Benson in this animated feature. After graduating from college Benson does the unthinkable and, instead of making honey like everyone else, leaves the hive to explore New York City. That's where he discovers that humans, including a sympathetic florist (Zellweger) with whom he becomes friends, actually steal and eat the honey bees work so hard to make. Barry decides to sue.

THE KITE RUNNER

WHO'S IN IT? Khalid Abdalla, Shaun Toub
WHO DIRECTED? Marc Forster
(Stranger Than Fiction)
WHAT'S IT ABOUT? Forster's final film before helming the next 007 blockbuster, *Bond 22*, is this drama about an

Afghan-born man (Abdalla) living in the States who returns to his homeland after his childhood friend is killed and his son is kidnapped by the Taliban. Based on the best-selling novel by Khaled Hosseini.

AMERICAN GANGSTER

WHO'S IN IT? Russell Crowe, Denzel Washington
WHO DIRECTED? Ridley Scott (*Gladiator*)
WHAT'S IT ABOUT? Washington plays real-life drug kingpin Frank Lucas, who built a drug empire in the 1960s and '70s by smuggling heroin out of Vietnam in the coffins of dead soldiers. Crowe — doing his best American accent — plays Richie Roberts, an investigator-turned-lawyer who's trying to nail Lucas, all the while developing a reluctant respect for the criminal.

NOVEMBER 9

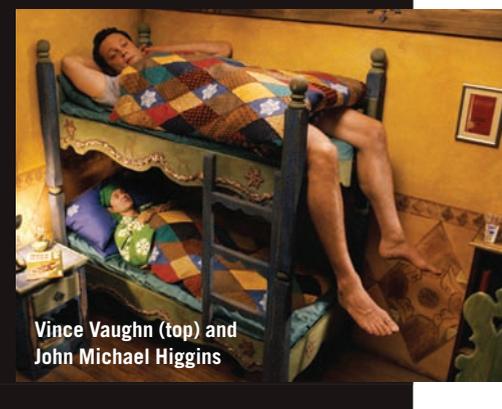
I COULD NEVER BE YOUR WOMAN

WHO'S IN IT? Paul Rudd, Michelle Pfeiffer
WHO DIRECTED? Amy Heckerling (*Loser*)
WHAT'S IT ABOUT? The Year of Pfeiffer continues with this romantic-comedy ▶▶

Spotlight:

NOVEMBER 9 FRED CLAUS

Vince Vaughn makes his *Elf*. But where Will Ferrell's candy-coloured Christmas movie saw him playing an innocent man-child out of place among the little people of the North Pole, Vaughn is a surly bad seed, more in line with Billy Bob Thornton's conman from *Bad Santa*. Vaughn plays Fred Claus, older brother to that jelly-bellied saint, Santa Claus (Paul Giamatti). All his life Fred has been compared to his little bro, and come up lacking. So he left the Pole and moved to the big city where he made a living as a repo man, and a dishonest one at that. When he's caught stealing items he's repossessed, it looks like Fred will go to jail. Santa, no surprise, comes to the rescue, agreeing to bail Fred out on the condition that he move back to the North Pole and repay his debt by helping the elves make toys. David Dobkin, whose last movie was Vaughn's *Wedding Crashers*, directs the film. Expect the same acerbic wit here. A fantastic supporting cast should also push this film from seasonal piffle to annual fave. Look for Miranda Richardson as Mrs. Claus, Kathy Bates as the Claus boys' mom, Kevin Spacey as the business-minded Clyde and John Michael Higgins — who played Jennifer Aniston's harmonizing brother opposite Vaughn in *The Break-Up* — as Willy the elf.



Vince Vaughn (top) and John Michael Higgins

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Enchanted's Princess Giselle (Amy Adams)

▶▶ in which she plays a middle-aged TV producer who falls for a younger guy (Rudd). Actually, this film was made a couple of years ago — before Pfeiffer's other 2007 films, *Hairspray* and *Stardust* — but has been bumping around the schedule for quite some time. Before this summer, Pfeiffer hadn't had a film in theatres since 2003.

LIONS FOR LAMBS

WHO'S IN IT? Meryl Streep, Tom Cruise
WHO DIRECTED? Robert Redford
(The Legend of Bagger Vance)
WHAT'S IT ABOUT? This intricate political drama is the first movie developed by Tom Cruise since being dumped by Paramount and taking over the United Artists branch of MGM. Redford, who also directs, plays a professor who unwittingly inspires two former students to join the fight in Afghanistan, while Cruise plays an ambitious Presidential hopeful who reveals something to a reporter (Streep) that may harm those soldiers.

NOVEMBER 16

LOVE IN THE TIME OF CHOLERA

WHO'S IN IT? Benjamin Bratt, Javier Bardem
WHO DIRECTED? Mike Newell
(Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire)
WHAT'S IT ABOUT? Based on the novel by Gabriel García Márquez, this drama stars Bardem as Florentino Ariza, who has been in love with Fermina Daza (Giovanna Mezzogiorno) since they had a youthful fling. But she rejected him and married Dr. Juvenal Urbino (Bratt). That doesn't mean Ariza can't keep trying.

NO COUNTRY FOR OLD MEN

WHO'S IN IT? Josh Brolin, Tommy Lee Jones
WHO DIRECTED? Joel and Ethan Coen
(Intolerable Cruelty)
WHAT'S IT ABOUT? The Coen Brothers put their quirky twang on this thriller about Llewelyn Moss (Brolin) who discovers a whack of cash in the back of a truck that's surrounded by dead bodies. He takes that cash, setting a bloody chain of events in

motion. Lee plays the sheriff saddled with the case and Javier Bardem steps in as a professional killer with a bad haircut.

MR. MAGORIUM'S WONDER EMPORIUM

WHO'S IN IT? Natalie Portman, Dustin Hoffman
WHO DIRECTED? Zach Helm (debut)
WHAT'S IT ABOUT? From the outside, Mr. Magorium's Wonder Emporium looks like any other toy store. Inside, it's anything but. The shop is clearly magical — toys come to life, can behave or misbehave, and turn on and off all on their own. But when Mr. Magorium (Hoffman) decides that he's leaving and his assistant Molly (Portman) will be in charge, this wondrous place develops a dark side. See Natalie Portman interview, page 24.

BEOWULF

WHO'S IN IT? Ray Winstone, Anthony Hopkins
WHO DIRECTED? Robert Zemeckis
(Cast Away)
WHAT'S IT ABOUT? You may remember the old English poem *Beowulf* from school. Written in the Middle Ages it involves the warrior Beowulf (here played by Winstone) battling the demon Grendel (Crispin Glover). This live-action, but digitally enhanced (it looks like a videogame), retelling of the epic poem embellishes certain parts of the story, including a trumped up role for Grendel's mother (Angelina Jolie, using the same accent she developed for *Alexander*).

MY BLUEBERRY NIGHTS

WHO'S IN IT? Norah Jones, Jude Law
WHO DIRECTED? Kar Wai Wong
(2046)
WHAT'S IT ABOUT? "Come Away With Me" singer Jones's big-screen debut sees her starring in this episodic romance about a young woman who takes a trip across the States encountering strange characters — including a gambler (Natalie Portman) and an alcoholic cop (David Strathairn) — along the way. Law plays a café owner who feeds her pie.

NOVEMBER 18

WWE SURVIVOR SERIES

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GO BIG.





The Mist

►► NOVEMBER 21

ENCHANTED

WHO'S IN IT? Amy Adams, Patrick Dempsey
WHO DIRECTED? Kevin Lima (*102 Dalmations*)
WHAT'S IT ABOUT? An evil queen banishes fairy tale, cartoon princess Giselle (Adams) to modern-day Manhattan (cue the live action). There, she falls in love with the only New Yorker who's nice to her, a divorce lawyer (Dempsey).

HITMAN

WHO'S IN IT? Timothy Olyphant, Dougray Scott
WHO DIRECTED? Xavier Gens (*Frontier(s)*)
WHAT'S IT ABOUT? Olyphant plays genetically enhanced clone Agent 47 — named for the last two digits of the barcode on the back of his skull — whose ice-cold demeanour and mad shooting skills make him the world's most efficient hitman.

THIS CHRISTMAS

WHO'S IN IT? Columbus Short, Mekhi Phifer
WHO DIRECTED? Preston A. Whitmore II (*Crossover*)
WHAT'S IT ABOUT? The Whitfield family gathers for their first Christmas together in four years. And before they can open the presents, there's a lot of baggage that needs to be unwrapped.

AUGUST RUSH

WHO'S IN IT? Freddie Highmore, Keri Russell
WHO DIRECTED? Kirsten Sheridan (*Disco Pigs*)
WHAT'S IT ABOUT? Highmore (that cute kid from *Finding Neverland*) plays orphaned August Rush, a brilliant musician who uses his talent to try and track down his cellist mom (Russell) and guitarist dad (Jonathan Rhys Meyers), whose intense relationship came to an unfortunate end.

NOVEMBER 23

THE MIST

WHO'S IN IT? Thomas Jane, Marcia Gay Harden
WHO DIRECTED? Frank Darabont (*The Shawshank Redemption*)
WHAT'S IT ABOUT? This third Stephen King story adapted by Darabont (after *Shawshank* and *The Green Mile*) takes place in a small town being attacked by strange creatures that arrived with a violent thunderstorm. Jane plays one of several people who take refuge in the local supermarket.

MARGOT AT THE WEDDING

WHO'S IN IT? Nicole Kidman, Jack Black
WHO DIRECTED? Noah Baumbach (*The Squid and the Whale*)
WHAT'S IT ABOUT? Baumbach's follow-up to

the critically acclaimed *The Squid and the Whale* once again taps the creative treasure trove of dysfunctional-family dynamics. Kidman plays Margot, who can't figure out why her sister Pauline (Jennifer Jason Leigh) is marrying Malcolm (Black). After all, as Margot puts it, he's the kind of guy they used to reject when they were 16.

NOVEMBER 28

I'M NOT THERE

WHO'S IN IT? Richard Gere, Christian Bale
WHO DIRECTED? Todd Haynes (*Far From Heaven*)
WHAT'S IT ABOUT? Very strange. Six different actors — Gere, Bale, Marcus Carl Franklin, Heath Ledger, Ben Whishaw and even Cate Blanchett — play multifaceted rocker Bob Dylan at different stages of his life.

NOVEMBER 30

PATHOLOGY

WHO'S IN IT? Milo Ventimiglia, Alyssa Milano
WHO DIRECTED? Marc Schoelermann (debut)
WHAT'S IT ABOUT? A group of medical students studying pathology (the nature and cause of disease) try to figure out the best way to kill someone so that it can't be detected. But what starts out as a game doesn't end that way.

THE CHRISTMAS COTTAGE

WHO'S IN IT? Peter O'Toole, Jared Padalecki
WHO DIRECTED? Michael Campus (*The Passover Plot*)
WHAT'S IT ABOUT? Campus — who hasn't directed a feature film since something called *The Passover Plot* came out in 1976 — returns to the helmer's chair for this seasonal story about how mega-popular Thomas Kinkade (Padalecki) became an artist after learning that his mother was about to lose their house.

CASSANDRA'S DREAM

WHO'S IN IT? Ewan McGregor, Colin Farrell
WHO DIRECTED? Woody Allen (*Scoop*)
WHAT'S IT ABOUT? McGregor and Farrell play brothers who turn to crime in order to relieve their financial woes. But going illegit does very bad things to their relationship. This is Allen's third film in a row that was shot in England. Has the director turned his back on his beloved New York for good?

JAZZ
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Will Smith's

ON HIS OWN FOR **I AM LEGEND**

BY EARL DITTMAN

Will Smith has made plenty of science-fiction movies. Some of his most successful films fall into that genre — *Men in Black*, *Independence Day*. But, when Smith dreams big about his career, there's another sci-fi — one that he had nothing to do with — the actor thinks about. *Star Wars*.

"I remember when I sat and watched *Star Wars* for the first time, it really changed my life," says Smith in a recent New York interview. "I think I might have been 11 or 12. *Star Wars* really messed me up so bad. I'm sitting and watching, and I couldn't believe that a human mind actually conceived *Star Wars*. And, to this day, I still talk about the way *Star Wars* inspired me. I still get a chill remembering when I first saw it. So I wanted to be able to do that for people. I wanted to be able to inspire people with a movie I was in."

Star Wars is a pretty high bar to set for yourself. While his December release *I Am Legend* isn't likely to have the same effect on movie history, it certainly has the potential to give moviegoers a few chills, and perhaps even inspire them to

marvel at the mind that first conceived the story, novelist Richard Matheson.

"I read it straight through, and it absolutely blew me away," Smith says of the script, which was based on Matheson's 1954 novel of the same name. "It was a character I felt like I had to play, because he's pure emotion. He's basically the last man alive, so you can only imagine the emotions he's feeling. Even though the story was written in the '50s and there are a lot of science-fiction elements in it, the film could take place today."

In fact, the story *has* been updated from the late 1970s (when Matheson's tale takes place) to the present day.

Smith plays military scientist Robert Neville, who may be the last human being on Earth. When a manmade virus unexpectedly mutates and escapes the confines of a classified lab it quickly infects the world's population, transforming its victims into bloodthirsty mutants.

Neville, apparently the only person on Earth not affected by the virus, spends his days transmitting radio messages from his home base in a desolate New York City across the globe in hopes of contacting others who were able to avoid the pandemic. The rest of his daylight hours are spent trying to reverse the effects of the plague by using his own disease-free blood to find a cure. Oh, and hunting down and killing vampire-like creatures.

You see, Neville's sharing Manhattan with an organized group of mutant, blood-

sucking New Yorkers, the Infected, who are determined to rid the planet of the last true human being. (Hence the film's eerie tagline "The Last Man on Earth is Not Alone.") But as the attacks on Neville's heavily barricaded habitat begin to escalate (the vampires have to avoid the sunlight), he starts to fight back.

This is the third time Matheson's book has been adapted. It first hit screens in 1964 as the forgettable Vincent Price, B-movie *The Last Man on Earth*. But its second celluloid incarnation, 1971's *The Omega Man*, was a big hit thanks to star Charlton Heston's performance as a lonely hero on the edge of sanity.

"I've always loved that movie, and I can watch it over and over again," says Smith. "It's one of those kind of movies that you have to stop and watch, especially if you're channel surfing. It doesn't matter what scene you come in on, you just have to see it until it's over. The story just draws you in. Even when you are young,

you know that it has some deep things to say. It's just that good."

Barely three years old when *The Omega Man* came out, the Philadelphia native had a big life ahead of him — as a platinum-plated recording artist, a TV sitcom star (*The Fresh Prince of Bel-Air*) and one of Hollywood's biggest movers and shakers — before he would become the new Robert Neville.

The project itself also went through a long and complicated history before hooking up with Smith.

In the mid-'90s, after Tom Cruise and Michael Douglas passed on a version of *I Am Legend*, Arnold Schwarzenegger and director Ridley Scott decided to bring the story back to the screen. In late 1997, they were just about to begin filming in Houston (as a stand-in for L.A.) when the film's budget ballooned to \$108-million (considered pocket change these days) and the moneymen got cold feet.

Several years, directors and permuta-

tions later, Smith was approached to star in a version of *I Am Legend* directed by Frances Lawrence, whose only big-screen credit to date was *Constantine*. But with a new script penned by Oscar-winning screenwriter Akiva Goldsman (*A Beautiful Mind*), Smith needed little convincing.

"I don't think most people need to be told, but this is a crazy business, you never know what is going to happen," Smith says with a laugh. "There were so many times that this film could have fallen through — for good."

Speaking of long-term projects, Smith and his wife, actor Jada Pinkett Smith, celebrate their 10th anniversary this month. Over those 10 years, Smith has developed a reputation for being a family man first, often bringing the couple's three children, Trey (from a previous marriage), Jaden (his co-star in *The Pursuit of Happyness*) and Willow, along to movie premieres and other public events.

When asked if he ever wonders what

his purpose in life is, Smith offers up a surprising answer. "I think that's something that you can't really put words to, but I feel that it's definitely not acting for me," he says.

"I know that there's something else. I think that the amount of goodwill that I've been able to create and the energy and the hope that people feel watching the movies, I think that there's absolutely something else for me to do. I feel like acting is kind of a steppingstone at this point to whatever that greater purpose is. I think that God, Mother Nature, the universe or whoever you believe in will show me the path. I think that my only job is to stay in touch, just to stay in touch with people, feel people and feel the energy, and I think that the universe will call me to wherever."

A greater purpose? Feel the energy? The universe will call him? Sounds like an idea for Smith's next sci-fi. **E**

Earl Dittman is a Houston-based writer.



Who's there? Will Smith stars as the lone human fending off monsters in *I Am Legend*

DECEMBER PREVIEW

DECEMBER 7

ATONEMENT

WHO'S IN IT? Keira Knightley, James McAvoy
WHO DIRECTED? Joe Wright (*Pride & Prejudice*)

WHAT'S IT ABOUT? Set in 1930s England, this drama (based on Ian McEwan's acclaimed novel) finds precocious 13-year-old Briony Tallis mistakenly accusing Robbie (McAvoy) — the young man in love with her sister, Cecilia (Knightley) — of rape, which sets off a series of events that change both her life, and the lives of her family and friends.

WALK HARD

WHO'S IN IT? John C. Reilly, Jenna Fischer
WHO DIRECTED? Jake Kasden (*Orange County*)

WHAT'S IT ABOUT? Kasden and Judd Apatow wrote this spoof of musical bio-pics that casts Reilly as Dewey Cox, a singer-songwriter who climbs to the top of the music biz. Highly anticipated cameos include White Stripes' front man Jack White playing Elvis, and an appearance by the Beatles — Paul McCartney (Jack Black), John Lennon (Paul Rudd), George Harrison (Justin Long) and of course, Ringo Starr (Jason Schwartzman).

LEATHERHEADS

WHO'S IN IT? George Clooney, Renée Zellweger
WHO DIRECTED? George Clooney (*Good Night, and Good Luck.*)

WHAT'S IT ABOUT? Clooney is said to have watched tons of old screwball comedies in order to replicate that lost cinematic art form for this romantic-comedy about the coach (Clooney) of a 1920s football team who recruits a star college player (John Krasinski) to boost his fledging pro team. (In the first half of the 19th-century college football drew the huge crowds, while professional football was considered

barbaric and was mostly ignored by the public.) Zellweger plays a journalist who finds Clooney's attempt at pigskin legitimacy distasteful.

DECEMBER 14

PERFECT CHRISTMAS

WHO'S IN IT? Morris Chestnut, Gabrielle Union
WHO DIRECTED? Lance Rivera (*The Cookout*)

WHAT'S IT ABOUT? A struggling singer-songwriter (Chestnut) takes a part-time job as a shopping mall Santa and is asked by a little girl to find her divorced mother (Union) a new husband.

ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS

WHO'S IN IT? Jason Lee, David Cross
WHO DIRECTED? Tim Hill

(*Garfield: A Tale of Two Kitties*)

WHAT'S IT ABOUT? Not to be judgmental or anything Jason, but *Alvin and the Chipmunks*? Dude, seriously. We've got three words of warning for you: Cuba... Gooding... Jr. 'Nuff said. This live action-CGI hybrid flick stars Lee as nice guy ▶▶



Dakota Blue Richards in *The Golden Compass*

Spotlight:

DECEMBER 7 THE GOLDEN COMPASS

When writer/director Chris Weitz (*About a Boy*) announced that *The Golden Compass*, based on the first book of author Philip Pullman's celebrated *His Dark Materials* trilogy, would shy away from mentioning God or religion so as not to upset religious groups, the book's fans were not amused.

Although the fantasy tale takes place in a parallel world to ours, it points out the narrow-mindedness of Western Christian thinking and the damage it inflicts on people, especially the young.

The plot follows 10-year-old tomboy Lyra (newcomer Dakota Blue Richards) and her *dæmon* Pantalaimon (a *dæmon* is an animal companion specific to each person) as she runs away from school and heads for the far north in search of her uncle, Lord Asriel (Daniel Craig), and to rescue her friend who has been kidnapped by the child-stealing Gobblers. Using the compass-like alethiometer to guide her, Lyra encounters witches, talking polar bears and the evil Mrs. Coulter (Nicole Kidman), who is compelled to stop Lyra's mission.

Interestingly, Weitz resigned from the project in 2004, wary of the movie's huge technical challenges. He was replaced by director Anand Tucker, who left in 2006 due to artistic differences with the studio, opening the door for Weitz's return.

Your new favourite toy.





Johnny Depp and Helena Bonham Carter in *Sweeney Todd*

►► David Seville, the manager of singing chipmunks Alvin, Simon and Theodore.

JUNO

WHO'S IN IT? Ellen Page, Michael Cera
WHO DIRECTED? Jason Reitman
(*Thank You for Smoking*)

WHAT'S IT ABOUT? When eccentric teenager Juno MacGuff (Page) discovers she's pregnant she sets out to find the perfect couple — Jennifer Garner and Jason Bateman — to adopt her unborn child.

I AM LEGEND

WHO'S IN IT? Will Smith, Salli Richardson
WHO DIRECTED? Francis Lawrence
(*Constantine*)

WHAT'S IT ABOUT? Scientist Robert Neville (Smith) believes he's the lone, unscathed survivor of a viral outbreak that killed most of the people on the planet. The remaining victims have morphed into vampire-like creatures who prowl the night trying to kill Neville, while he desperately searches for a way to reverse the infection. Author Richard Matheson wrote the novel on

which the film is based in 1954, and in the book the epidemic takes place in the then far-off year of 1979. See Will Smith interview, page 32.

DECEMBER 16

WWE ARMAGEDDON

Check www.cineplex.com to buy tickets and for a list of theatres where you can watch the event live.

DECEMBER 21

BE KIND REWIND

WHO'S IN IT? Jack Black, Mos Def
WHO DIRECTED? Michel Gondry
(*The Science of Sleep*)

WHAT'S IT ABOUT? You have to love the premise of writer/director Gondry's (Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind) daft new comedy: Mike's (Def) pal Jerry (Black) accidentally de-magnetizes every VHS cassette in Mike's video store, so the pair decide to re-enact the movies their most loyal customer — a woman (Mia Farrow) with developing dementia —

enjoys the most, such as *Ghostbusters*, *Rush Hour 2* and *The Lion King*.

NATIONAL TREASURE: BOOK OF SECRETS

WHO'S IN IT? Nicolas Cage, Diane Kruger
WHO DIRECTED? Jon Turteltaub
(*National Treasure*)

WHAT'S ABOUT? Treasure hunter Benjamin Gates' (Cage) great, great grandfather is erroneously linked to Abraham Lincoln's assassination. To clear his name, Gates and his gal (Kruger), father (Jon Voight) and wisecracking sidekick (Justin Bartha) kidnap the American President (Bruce Greenwood) to get their hands on the Book of Secrets. The book, given to every U.S. President, is a conspiracy nut's dream, containing the truth about Lincoln and Kennedy's assassinations, the missing Watergate tapes and Area 51.

SWEENEY TODD

WHO'S IN IT? Johnny Depp, Helena Bonham Carter
WHO DIRECTED? Tim Burton (*Corpse Bride*)

WHAT'S IT ABOUT? Can Johnny Depp's pipes carry one of Broadway's most difficult singing roles? We'll find out when Depp and Burton team up for the sixth time to film the 1979 Broadway opera about a barber named Sweeney Todd (Depp), who murders his customers and sends their bodies to the neighbouring pie shop owned by Mrs. Lovett (Bonham Carter), who in turn uses the remains to make her meat pies. Yum.

P.S. I LOVE YOU

WHO'S IN IT? Hilary Swank, Gerard Butler
WHO DIRECTED? Richard LaGravenese
(*Freedom Writers*)

WHAT'S IT ABOUT? After Holly's (Swank) husband Gerry (Butler) dies, she discovers he's arranged to have 10 messages sent to her, one per month, with each message containing a task she must complete in order to get on with her life.

DECEMBER 25

THE DIVING BELL AND THE BUTTERFLY

WHO'S IN IT? Mathieu Amalric, Emmanuelle Seigner
WHO DIRECTED? Julian Schnabel
(*Before Night Falls*)

WHAT'S IT ABOUT? Audiences in Cannes cried rivers of tears after viewing this heart-wrenching bio-pic of *Elle France's* editor Jean-Dominique Bauby (Amalric), ►►

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Alex Etel in *The Water Horse: Legend of the Deep*

▶▶ who, at the age of 43, suffers a stroke that leaves him paralyzed everywhere except his left eye. By mastering a blinking pattern he is able to dictate his memoirs, which form the basis of the film.

ALIEN VS. PREDATOR 2

WHO'S IN IT? John Ortiz, Steven Pasquale
WHO DIRECTED? Colin and Greg Strause
WHAT'S ABOUT? The sequel to *AvP* brings the creatures from *Alien* and *Predator* to a small Colorado town where they enact a monster mash for the ages.

THE WATER HORSE: LEGEND OF THE DEEP

WHO'S IN IT? Emily Watson, Ben Chaplin
WHO DIRECTED? Jay Russell (*Ladder 49*)
WHAT'S IT ABOUT? Families that don't want to spend Christmas day watching monsters rip each other to bits will enjoy this sweet monster film about a Scottish boy who finds an egg that hatches a legendary sea creature. As the cute little critter grows, the boy and his family decide to hide it in a loch, or lake. You may have heard of it, Loch Ness.

CHARLIE WILSON'S WAR

WHO'S IN IT? Tom Hanks, Julia Roberts
WHO DIRECTED? Justin Chadwick (*Sleeping With the Fishes*)
WHAT'S IT ABOUT? Texas congressman Charlie Wilson (Hanks) was known for his liberal leanings and partying ways (he was nicknamed Good Time Charlie). However, he was also a keen political strategist who, in the 1980s, helped channel millions of CIA dollars to Afghan rebels fighting their Soviet invaders, which ultimately helped bring down the Soviet regime.

DECEMBER 26

THE SAVAGES

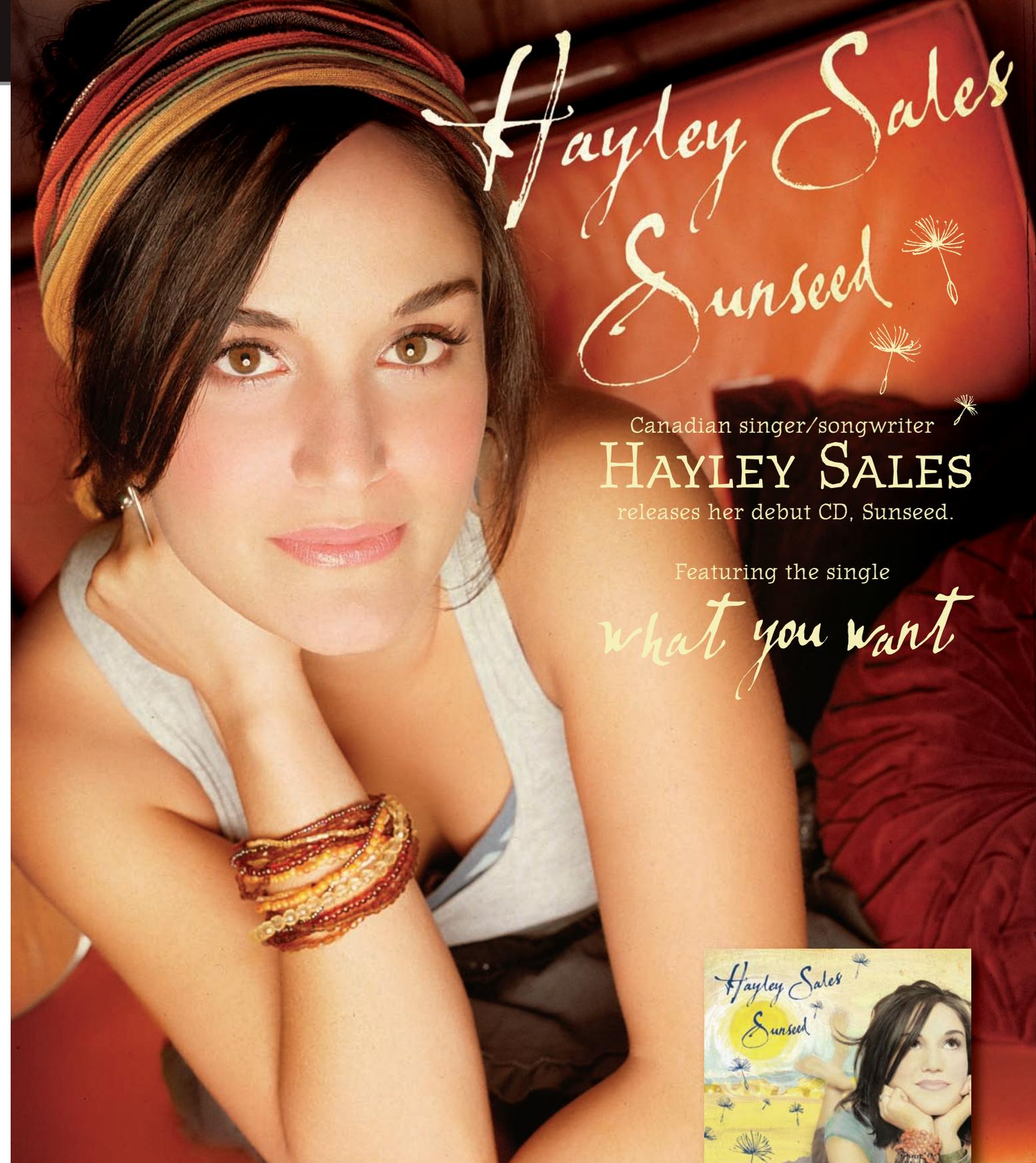
WHO'S IN IT? Philip Seymour Hoffman, Laura Linney
WHO DIRECTED? Tamara Jenkins (*Slums of Beverly Hills*)
WHAT'S IT ABOUT? An estranged brother (Hoffman) and sister (Linney) reunite in order to take care of their father (Philip Bosco) who is in the early stages of dementia.

THE METROPOLITAN OPERA ROMÉO ET JULIETTE

LIVE PERFORMANCE: Saturday, December 15 at 1 p.m. ET (10 a.m. PT).
ENCORE PERFORMANCE: Saturday, January 5 at 1:30 p.m. ET (10:30 a.m. PT).

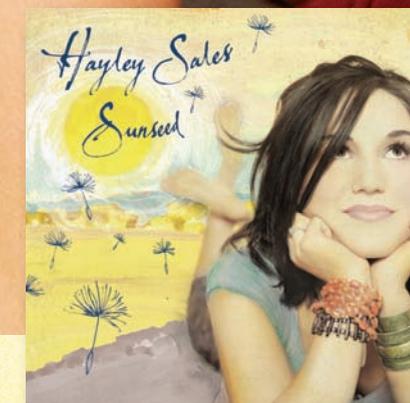
Last year, Cineplex introduced live (and encore) performances straight from New York's Metropolitan Opera, and audiences came out in droves. So, no surprise, the opera is back! The 2007/2008 season kicks off with a sensual interpretation of one of Shakespeare's best-known plays (few will have trouble following this narrative). Plácido Domingo conducts composer Charles Gounod's take on the tragic love story, with Anna Netrebko and Rolando Villazón in the title roles. Check www.cineplex.com for a list of theatres where you can watch it live, and to buy tickets.

CHECK WWW.CINEPLEX.COM FOR SHOWTIMES AND LOCATIONS
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IN STORES AND ONLINE NOW



The season's hottest looks take a bit of courage

STRONG BOLD

fall

Big.

The oversized fur cuffs, giant cowl neck and gumball-sized buttons on this chunky knit and tweed combo from Michael Kors look positively restrained in his signature neutral palette.



PHOTOS: 1 AND 2, COURTESY WINNERS; 3, CHRIS MOORE/GETTY; 4, KEYSTONE

His Girl Friday.

Rent this Cary Grant, Rosalind Russell classic, then get a newsroom job and a clutch of suits, like this one from Charles Nolan. Menswear goes womanly this fall with nipped waists, killer pinstripes and a good spiky shoe (all the better to keep surly male editors in line).



Exotica.

A colourful, fringed scarf from a flea market purchased on this continent or any other provides a welcome dose of colour this fall. Nicolas Ghesquière for Balenciaga pairs one with slouchy jodhpurs and a shrunken jacket for the ultimate in laidback ethno-cool.



The Shining.

Christopher Bailey for Burberry Prorsum mixes textures and adds a dose of high-shine patent leather for a look that's indisputably rock-chick tough while a slim profile makes the outfit chic but very wearable.

THIS FALL'S FASHIONS ARE NOT FOR THE FAINT OF HEART. PREPARE FOR BOLD, EXAGGERATED SILHOUETTES (WIDER PANTS, SHRUNKEN JACKETS WITH THREE-QUARTER-LENGTH SLEEVES) AND STRONG ACCESSORIES (LACE-UP OXFORDS, PLATFORM MARY JANES) TO KEEP RETRO-INFLUENCED OUTFITS FROM LOOKING LIKE TRAGIC, RUMMAGE SALE COSTUMES. DELICATE JEWELLERY? SAVE IT FOR ANOTHER YEAR. THIS FALL GO BIG OR DON'T GO OUT AT ALL.





Not only do these **Fidelity Lilac Jeans** (\$198, Rainbow) sport a new, wider leg, but the higher waist holds in tummies and lets you say goodbye to muffin tops and peek-a-boo thongs.

If you find this fall's stiletto bootie too daunting for the sidewalk, a great knee-high lace-up, like **Rockport's Leiden** (\$240, rockport.com for retailers) has all the guts but provides ease of walking too.



This **Windowpane-Checked Jacket** (\$300, Winners) is ladylike dressing on acid: sleeves are shortened to bracelet length and billow, buttons are on growth hormones. Wear it with a tight pencil skirt and platform peep-toe sandals.

The **Super Shopper Tote** (\$348, Roots) is spacious but with a slender profile and minimal hardware. Plus, it's rendered in a mouth-watering, textured, jet patent leather.



Dark Beauty

1 This fall's straight styles require hair that's in perfect condition. **John Frieda Frizz-Ease Reinforce Strengthening Crème Masque** (\$10, drugstores) contains avocado oil, protein and vitamins to keep your hair resilient, strong and glossy.

2 This fall, choose either a dark lipstick or a pale gloss. Get both in **Lancôme's Destiny Cube** in "Deep Fascination," a covetable 17-sided die (\$75, Sears) that houses lipstick and gloss on one end, super-smoky eye shadow on the other.

3 **CoverGirl LineExact Liquid Liner** in **Very Black** (\$7, drugstores) comes in a stubby tube for easier handling with an idiot-proof tip to give you a

professionally done eye. Apply close to the lashline and then flick up at the outer corner. Perfect.

4 Maroon five. Well, 10 really. Shorter, squared-off fingernails dipped in a dark oxblood red or a rich purple-black like **OPI's Midnight in Moscow** (\$12.50 at salons and spas, opi.com) are the perfect fall accessories.

5 Untidy beachy hair is for summer. Groomed and straightened rules this fall. Previously available only to stylists, the **HotHeads Brush** (\$50, Hotheads.ca for retailers) has three kinds of bristles for snag-free straightening with no frizz, so blow-drying is a snap.



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BARKER'S BACK WITH *JERICHO*

Horror author raises hell with paranormal shooter | BY SCOTT GARDNER



CLIVE BARKER'S *JERICHO*

PC, PS3, XBOX 360

Horror author, filmmaker and producer Clive Barker may not be as well known as Stephen King or even Dean Koontz, but his dark fantasies are just as depraved, and his best movie adaptations — like *Hellraiser*

(1987) and *Candyman* (1992) — are smart, terrifying and oozing with sinister sexuality.

Not surprisingly, Barker's already lent his demonic talents to videogames. About five years ago *Clive Barker's Undying* (Mac, PC) was critically acclaimed but barely sold, and two years ago the impressive

movie-game venture *Demonik* (PC, X360) sunk amid financing woes. This time, however, he seems pretty confident, saying his new game “promises to be the most spectacular, creative and unflinching realization of a Clive Barker nightmare.” An ominous threat considering what lurks in the shadowy corners of the man's mind.

A squad-based, first-person shooter, *Jericho* is named for the Jericho Team — a seven-soldier strike force trained to contain paranormal events.

While that may sound familiar, this isn't a garden-variety run 'n' gun game. First twist: although proficient in the usual conventional weapons, each grunt has a parapsychological ability — like clairvoyance, alchemy, blood magic or pyrokinesis — that's vital to survive combat and solve puzzles. Second twist: you can change characters on the fly to exploit each specialty as you need it, while simultaneously ordering your squadmates

around. Third twist: Jericho Team has a few of the usual looming, steroid-case jarheads found in most shooters, but adds several stylishly (okay, scantily) dressed female commandos.

“But what about the evil,” you ask, “and the horror?” Never fear — or rather, go ahead and fear because it's big.

Ground zero is a lost desert city where archaeological work has, oops-a-daisy, opened a dimensional rift and released an ancient evil preying (and none too fond of) humanity.

As the Jericho squad navigates the ancient streets and corridors they discover that warriors from earlier ages have already tried to contain the evil. But as the troopers move in, their actions unbind and reanimate the old struggles, layer by layer, having a time-travel effect as the Jerichos encounter heroes and monsters from ancient Samaria, Rome, the Crusades, WWII and a final, super-secret era. (Don't tell, but it's Iraq.)



Guitar Hero III: Legends of Rock

PS2, PS3, Wii, X360

This series is so addictive it may soon be classified as a controlled substance. Holding a guitar-shaped controller (a bit smaller than a real axe) you play fret buttons on the neck and hit the strum bar as rhythm-based “notes” scroll across the screen, and the virtual band rocks out.

When you lose the beat it sounds like those first weeks of *Idol*, but keep up, work the whammy bar and you're a god.

Legends has new multiplayer co-op and battle modes, every system finally gets wireless controllers and more than half of the 70 songs are from the original masters — not sound-alikes. But here's a taste of what devotees really care about: “Evenflow” by Pearl Jam, “She Bangs the Drums” by The Stone Roses, AFI's “Miss Murder,” “Cult of Personality” by Living Colour and — break out your top hat — “Welcome to The Jungle” by Guns N' Roses.

Ratchet & Clank Future: Tools of Destruction PS3

Ratchet, the furry, big-eared Lombax adventurer, and his diminutive robot sidekick Clank are back for their seventh adventure since 2002, and their first on a next-gen console. And this time...well,

nothing much is really different, and that's the best possible news for fans.

Gameplay is fast, colourful and imaginative with 3D platforming, shooting and driving missions, and plenty of eccentric villains. Happily, developers Insomniac have, um, ratcheted up the comedy quotient, and dreamed up a new arsenal of weapons and gadgets, including the Groovitron — a grenade that makes enemies dance to the tune of “Stayin' Alive.”



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new releases

A MIGHTY HEART, SPIDER-MAN 3 AND REIGN OVER ME HIT VIDEO STORES | BY MARNI WEISZ

OCTOBER 2

JINDABYNE

STARS: Laura Linney, Gabriel Byrne

DIRECTOR: Ray Lawrence (*Lantana*)

STORY: This eerie drama begins as four friends set off on a camping trip to a remote part of Australia. When they finally reach camp one of them discovers the body of a dead girl floating in the river. Instead of returning to the city immediately, they stay the night and then spend the next day fishing. When they return home their families, and the media, are aghast at their decision to put their vacation above the needs of the dead girl. **DVD EXTRAS:** deleted scenes, "Jindabyne - The Process"

OCTOBER 9



REIGN OVER ME

STARS: Adam Sandler, Don Cheadle

DIRECTOR: Mike Binder (*The Upside of Anger*)

STORY: Sandler's latest foray into dramatic acting

sees him playing Charlie Fineman, a dentist who's been living as a virtual hermit in his New York apartment since September 11, 2001 — the day his wife and daughters were killed in the terrorist attack. Cheadle plays an old friend trying to coax Charlie out of his depression.

DVD EXTRAS: photo montage, making-of documentary, "extended jam session" with Sandler and Cheadle

28 WEEKS LATER

STARS: Robert Carlyle, Rose Byrne

DIRECTOR: Juan Carlos Fresnadillo (*Intacto*)

STORY: This breakneck sequel to 2002's *28 Days Later* (the film credited with stoking the zombie-flick revival) takes place six months after the rage virus turned nearly everyone in England into bloodthirsty automatons. With London deemed safe for repopulation a handful of Brits are allowed to return. Bad move,

zombies abound. Gone are the first film's heroes, replaced by Carlyle as a dad trying to protect his two kids and Byrne as an American doctor searching for a cure.

DVD EXTRAS: director and writer commentary, "Code Red: Making of *28 Weeks Later*," flash-animated graphic novel, deleted scenes



SURF'S UP

VOICES: Shia LaBeouf, Jeff Bridges

DIRECTORS: Ash Brannon, Chris Buck

STORY: This animated documentary (wrap your

head around that one) follows the exploits of Cody Maverick (LaBeouf), a cocky young penguin competing in the prestigious Big Z Memorial Surf Off. Z, you see, was a legendary surfer who went missing after an accident and is presumed dead. Bridges lends his voice to the Geek, a laidback hippie penguin who may not be exactly who he seems.

YOU KILL ME

STARS: Ben Kingsley, Téa Leoni

DIRECTOR: John Dahl (*The Great Raid*)

STORY: This dry comedy stars Kingsley as a hitman from Buffalo whose drinking problem is having a detrimental effect on his job performance. Sent to San Francisco to dry out and attend AA meetings, he gets a part-time job at a funeral parlour and falls for a hot sales executive (Leoni). **DVD EXTRAS:** director commentary, behind-the-scenes featurette

OCTOBER 16



THE INVISIBLE

STARS: Justin Chatwin, Margarita Levieva

DIRECTOR: David S. Goyer (*Blade: Trinity*)

STORY: After being beaten and left for dead, the only

way angst-ridden teen Nick (Chatwin) will survive is if his body — which was dumped

in a ravine — is discovered. Fortunately, his soul is able to leave his body and return to his high school, where it haunts the girl (Levieva) responsible for his injuries and coaxes her into a change of heart.

A MIGHTY HEART

STARS: Angelina Jolie, Dan Futterman

DIRECTOR: Michael Winterbottom (*The Road to Guantanamo*)

STORY: Daniel Pearl (Futterman) was a Jewish journalist working for the *Wall Street Journal* in Pakistan when he was kidnapped by Muslim extremists, held captive and then beheaded.

This recounting of the futile search for Pearl is based on a book by his widow, Mariane Pearl (Jolie).

THE HOAX

STARS: Richard Gere, Alfred Molina

DIRECTOR: Lasse Hallström (*Chocolat*)

STORY: The true story of Clifford Irving (Gere), a writer who, in the 1970s, pretended to be in contact with reclusive billionaire Howard Hughes so that he could pretend to write Hughes' authorized biography. All that pretending came to a halt when Hughes pulled himself out of seclusion just to call Irving a liar and a fake. **DVD EXTRAS:** deleted scenes, director commentary, "Stranger than Fiction," "Business as Pleasure," "Mike Wallace: Reflections on a Con"



THE REAPING

STARS: Hilary Swank, AnnaSophia Robb

DIRECTOR: Stephen Hopkins (*The Life and Death of Peter Sellers*)

STORY: A former priest (Swank) who now makes a living debunking "miracles" travels to the odd southern community of Haven, Louisiana, to try and explain their suddenly red river, all those dead frogs falling from the sky, and that weird little girl (Robb) running around the bayou.

Spotlight

SPIDER-MAN 3 OCTOBER 30

If you've already accepted that a bite from a radioactive spider can turn a boy into a web-slinging superhero, then you shouldn't have too much trouble believing that some mysterious black ooze from another planet can turn that superhero into an arrogant jerk.

In one of the many plotlines running through this third film featuring Tobey Maguire as Marvel Comics' arachnid crimefighter, a meteorite carrying the alien entity crashes to Earth and attaches itself to Peter Parker's Spidey suit giving him immense strength, but also turning the mensch into an ornery s.o.b.

This personality change puts Peter's relationship with Mary Jane (Kirsten Dunst) in jeopardy, but that's the least of his problems. The alien ooze has also bestowed extreme power upon a new villain, a weaselly photographer named Eddie Brock (Topher Grace) who tried to cheat Peter out of a promotion at the *Daily Bugle*. Once bonded with the ooze, Eddie transforms into the superstrong Venom. Plus, Peter has to contend with the shape-shifting escaped convict Sandman (Thomas Haden Church), who may



be responsible for his Uncle Ben's death.

A single-disc version of the movie (\$40) features bloopers, photo galleries and a music video, as well as commentary by director Sam Raimi and all of the major cast members. A two-disc Special Edition DVD (\$48) comes with all of that, plus an extra disc boasting about a dozen featurettes like "Grains of Sand - Building Sandman," "Hanging On...Gwen Stacy and the Collapsing Floor," "Tangled Web: The Love Triangles of *Spider-Man 3*" and "Inside the Editing Room."



OCTOBER 23

MEET THE ROBINSONS

VOICES: Daniel Hansen, Wesley Singerman

DIRECTOR: Stephen J. Anderson (debut)

STORY: Disney taps into its "World of Tomorrow" iconography for this animated feature about Lewis, a spunky young orphan inventor who just wants to be reunited with his birth mother. But then Wilbur Robinson, a boy from the future, appears and tells Lewis that he absolutely must accompany him to the year 2037 — the fate of the world depends on it.

DVD EXTRAS: deleted scenes, "Arriving in the Future," "Meeting Carl," "Bowler Hat Guy's Redemption," director commentary

HOSTEL: PART II

STARS: Lauren German, Heather Matarazzo

DIRECTOR: Eli Roth (*Hostel*)

STORY: Three American girls (German, Matarazzo, Bijou Phillips) travelling Europe on the cheap are lured to a budget hostel where their inexpensive room rates are subsidized by the rich businessmen who pay big bucks for the chance to hunt and kill them.

DVD EXTRAS: "Blood and Guts Montage"

MR. BROOKS

STARS: Kevin Costner, Dane Cook

DIRECTOR: Bruce A. Evans (*Kuffs*)

STORY: It's been two years since respectable, mild-mannered businessman Earl Brooks (Costner) has killed anyone. So he's long overdue. Or at least his bloodthirsty alter ego Marshall (William Hurt) is overdue. Cook steps in as a creepy photographer who witnesses Brooks' latest indiscretion and then asks to be taken on as an apprentice serial killer.

DVD EXTRAS: deleted scenes, director commentary, "On the Set of *Mr. Brooks*"

OCTOBER 2007

HOROSCOPE | BY DAN LIEBMAN



Virgo

August 23 ☆ **September 22**

Experiment with new ideas — as long as they don't involve your bank account. If travelling or arranging a social function this month, it's good to have plans B and C in place. You're an astute judge of character, as someone you work with definitely learns.

Libra

September 23 ☆ **October 22**

Continue to perfect a skill, especially one that puts you in touch with new people. Pressure lessens at work but intensifies, briefly, over a family matter. A last-minute announcement throws you off. But, in fact, the timing could not be better.

Scorpio

October 23 ☆ **November 21**

You may be a little too eager to take on causes. Do some research before getting in over your head. Around the 15th, be alert to clients and colleagues with ulterior motives. You take on a late-month managerial assignment — and more than rise to the occasion.

Sagittarius

November 22 ☆ **December 22**

Family remains supportive. If you've been waiting to pop a question or drop a bombshell, this could prove the best month of the year. Watch out for an occasional tendency to overspend. You finally discover the reasons behind someone's odd behaviour.

Capricorn

December 23 ☆ **January 20**

Someone takes an interest in your creative skills and is willing to mentor you. You're less critical, and it's no coincidence that an old friendship is back on track. Upgrading surroundings improves everyone's mood. A new friend brings out your quirky side.

Aquarius

January 21 ☆ **February 19**

Whether your short-term goal is romantic or professional, you can achieve it by the 31st. A competitive colleague may get out of control. Watch for a tendency to postpone money-related decisions. You establish intellectual rapport with an older relative.

Pisces

February 20 ☆ **March 20**

If you missed the "perfect opportunity" to express feelings, apply for a job or grab a bargain, you get a second chance this month. Late October sees you taking a stand on an ethical issue, and you gain support from a one-time adversary.

Aries

March 21 ☆ **April 20**

You're finally able to fulfill an old promise. Don't look for excuses to postpone anything that involves health or fitness. False information arrives around the 15th. It's a good month to show off your sense of design, with the accent on flashy touches.

Taurus

April 21 ☆ **May 22**

Good financial news arrives early in October. Just be cautious about sharing the news...or the cash. Apologizing is not something that comes easily to you, but the longer you wait, the more difficult it gets. Make long-range plans rather than seeking instant results.

Gemini

May 23 ☆ **June 21**

October sees you and a friend switching roles — taking on each other's responsibilities and attitudes. As a result, you finally realize how much pressure you've been putting on yourself. Relatives take you into their confidence, and loosen their purse strings.

Cancer

June 22 ☆ **July 22**

Balance is the key as you mediate a family dispute. It's time to make a decision about an on-again, off-again friendship. Give movies and books a second chance. Things that once overwhelmed you can suddenly touch your heart and inspire you.

Leo

July 23 ☆ **August 22**

Stay informed about investments, proposals and suggestions made over the past months. Be more willing to see someone else's point of view, especially after the 15th. A neighbour's advice is more valuable than you realize, both from a practical and a financial perspective.

OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS

1st: Julie Andrews
2nd: Lorraine Bracco
3rd: Neve Campbell
4th: Susan Sarandon
5th: Kate Winslet
6th: Elisabeth Shue
7th: Rachel McAdams
8th: Matt Damon
9th: Tony Shaloub
10th: Ben Vereen
11th: Luke Perry

12th: Hugh Jackman
13th: Kelly Preston
14th: Roger Moore
15th: Penny Marshall
16th: Tim Robbins
17th: Margot Kidder
18th: Jean-Claude Van Damme
19th: John Lithgow
20th: Viggo Mortensen
21st: Carrie Fisher
22nd: Jeff Goldblum

23rd: Ryan Reynolds
24th: Kevin Kline
25th: Ed Robertson
26th: Bob Hoskins
27th: John Cleese
28th: Julia Roberts
29th: Richard Dreyfuss
30th: Ivanka Trump
31st: Peter Jackson



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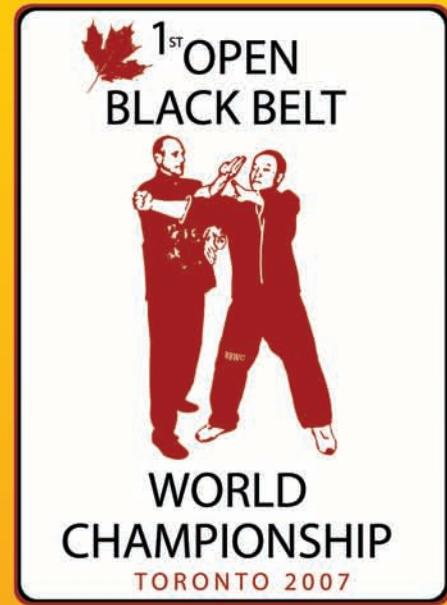
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- Chad Netherland
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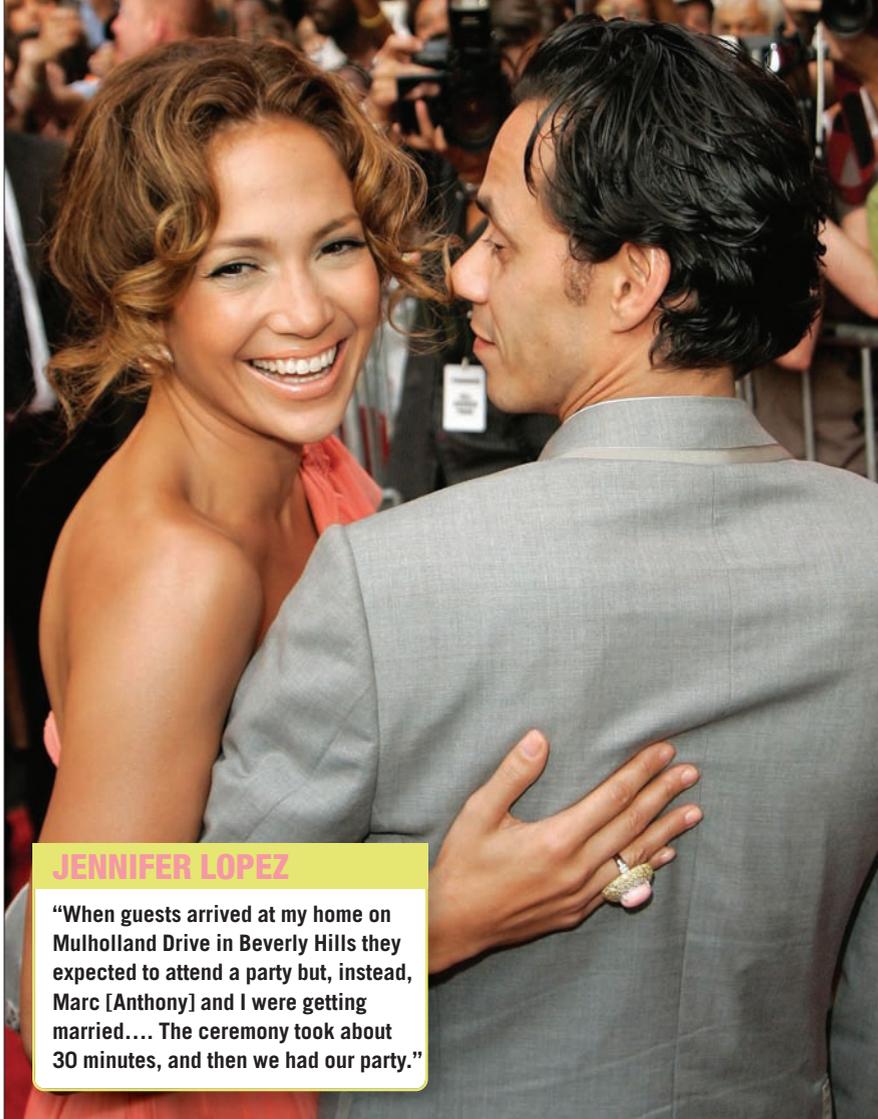
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STARS WHO CHOSE SURPRISE WEDDINGS

BY SUSAN GRANGER



JENNIFER LOPEZ

"When guests arrived at my home on Mulholland Drive in Beverly Hills they expected to attend a party but, instead, Marc [Anthony] and I were getting married.... The ceremony took about 30 minutes, and then we had our party."

SANDRA BULLOCK "We really wanted to keep it quiet, so our guests thought they were invited to a barbecue at the Folded Hills Ranch, near Solvang [California], in honour of my 41st birthday."

JENNIFER GARNER "Ben [Affleck] and I were married on Parrot Cay, an island in the British territory of Turks & Caicos.... The ceremony was on the beach of Bruce Willis' villa. Bruce was able to help us get through the red-tape formalities."

JULIA ROBERTS "Danny [Moder] and I were married, secretly, in a non-traditional midnight ceremony at my ranch outside Taos, New Mexico. We wanted to fly under the radar and be with close family and friends. Everyone came, thinking it was my annual Fourth of July barbecue."

SEAL "We did it on a private beach in Costa Careyes, Mexico, under a white canopy strewn with white rose petals. There was only one guest, our daughter Leni."

JOHN TRAVOLTA "Kelly [Preston] and I had wanted a big, elaborate ceremony, including friends and family, but then plans somehow spun out of control.... So we cancelled everything and flew to the Caribbean and sailed for a week, trying to sort things out. Then we discovered Kelly was pregnant with Jett, so we flew to Paris with a few close friends and eloped."

LIV TYLER "Royston [Langdon] and I were married quietly in a private, low-key Caribbean ceremony in Barbados with only a few friends and no parents."

SYLVESTER STALLONE "I told Jennifer [Flavin] she wouldn't know the time of the wedding until 12 hours beforehand. She toted her Armani wedding gown to Europe without knowing the date, time or place of our wedding."

JON BON JOVI "We went to Las Vegas. We won some money and ended up at the Graceland Chapel, for Elvis."

BROOKE SHIELDS "We invited friends and family to dinner at the Ritz-Carlton Hotel in Marina del Rey, but we never said anything about getting married. We got on a yacht...for a 22-mile sunset cruise to Catalina. We were married on board."

PHOTO BY STARMAX-KEYSTONE

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Blood
Language
Suggestive Themes
Violence

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