

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

Famous

september 2002 | volume 3 | number 9

ABANDON'S **BENJAMIN BRATT** MOVES ON * SPOTLIGHT ON: **JAMES FRANCO**
& **KATE HUDSON** * **FALL FASHION** WITH JEANNE BEKER

REESE'S RISE

Sweet Home Alabama's Reese Witherspoon talks about finding success on and off the screen

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Newlywed Benjamin Bratt opens up about why he left the police drama *Law & Order*, having to answer questions about his famous ex and how he broke a promise to himself by playing another cop in *Abandon*

By Earl Dittman

COVER STORY

30 REESE'S SWEET RELEASE

She's cute. She's smart. She's young. She knows how to pick great roles. She's got a beautiful baby girl. And she's married to one of the hottest young actors in Hollywood. What else could Reese Witherspoon possibly want? A hit with *Sweet Home Alabama* would be nice | By Earl Dittman

ON THE COVER: Reese Witherspoon on the set of *Sweet Home Alabama*

Photo by Mitch Gerber/ Star Max Photos

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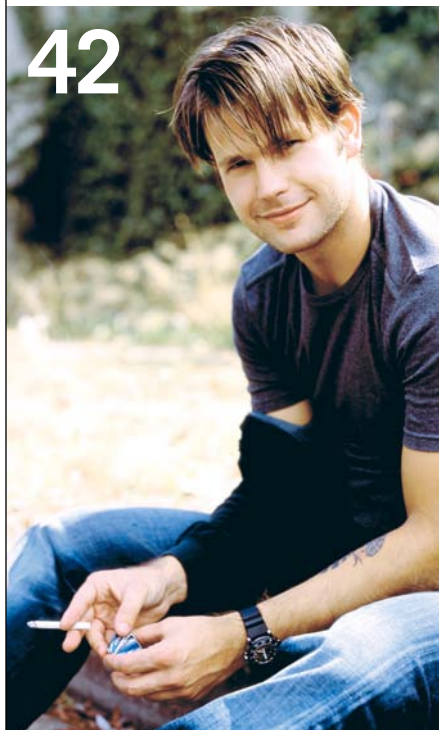
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THIS PHOTO BY BRIE CHILDERS. TOP RIGHT PHOTO BY JOHN BENTHAM

global mind



the  Bay

new-look famous



Witherspoon

By now you've probably noticed the exciting changes we've made to this month's issue of *Famous*. First, our shape has changed from a wide-format to a sleeker, slimmed-down size. Over the past few months the *Famous* family has tripled with the launch of our fun and colourful *Famous Kids* last spring, and the all-French *Famous Quebec* in August, both with the trimmer design. And, although we loved our wider format, we felt it was important to unify the look of our rapidly growing group of publications. In part, because starting next month you'll be grabbing our magazines out of larger,

more visible racks redesigned specifically for the new size.

We've also improved the quality of our paper, resulting in a cleaner appearance and brighter, sharper pictures. Of course, the content remains the same — which means substantial features based on exclusive interviews...like this month's cover story on **Reese Witherspoon**.

A couple of years ago it seemed as though every other film starred a young, blonde ingénue. There was Alicia Silverstone, Kirsten Dunst, Leelee Sobieski, Julia Stiles, Erika Christensen and Witherspoon. You had to wonder if the industry could sustain them all, or if one would rise to the top. Most would agree the one standing on the peak of Mt. Hollywood these days is Witherspoon.

Despite her bubblegum good looks, the 26-year-old has a talent for picking edgy roles in quality scripts. Even as a flighty rich girl in last year's surprise hit *Legally Blonde*, Witherspoon's depth and intuitive sense of irony shone through. Parts in *Pleasantville*, *Election*, *Best Laid Plans*, *American Psycho* and even this past spring's *The Importance of Being Earnest* also proved she's no teen-flick chick.

Now with a starring role in the romantic comedy *Sweet Home Alabama*, the Tennessee native returns to her southern roots as a small-town girl who builds a new life in the Big Apple. In "Southern Mama," page 30, Witherspoon talks about the movie, her hubby Ryan Phillippe and their two-year-old girl.

When **Benjamin Bratt** left TV's *Law & Order* he promised himself he wasn't going to play another cop for a while. So why are we going to see him as a police detective in next month's thriller *Abandon*? Read "Looking Ahead," page 26, to find out. Bratt also tells you about his close-knit family and dealing with the media while he was Julia Roberts' beau.

And don't go to the mall until you've read **Jeanne Beker's** guide to fall fashion. Pea coats are back. Then again, so are '30s-inspired, full-length gowns. Confused? Read "All Mixed Up," page 24.

—Marni Weisz

Famous

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Famous™ magazine is published 12 times a year by 1371327 Ontario Ltd. Subscriptions are \$32.10 (\$30 + GST) a year in Canada, \$45 a year in the U.S. and \$55 a year overseas. Single copies are \$3. Back issues are \$6.

All subscription inquiries, back issue requests and letters to the editor should be directed to *Famous* magazine at 102 Atlantic Ave., Ste. 100, Toronto, Ontario, M6K 1X9; or 416.539.8800; or editor@fpmedia.ca

Canada Post Publication Agreement: No. 40708019

500,000 copies of *Famous* magazine are distributed through Famous Players, Alliance Atlantis and Galaxy cinemas, and other outlets. *Famous* magazine is not responsible for the return of unsolicited manuscripts, artwork or other materials.

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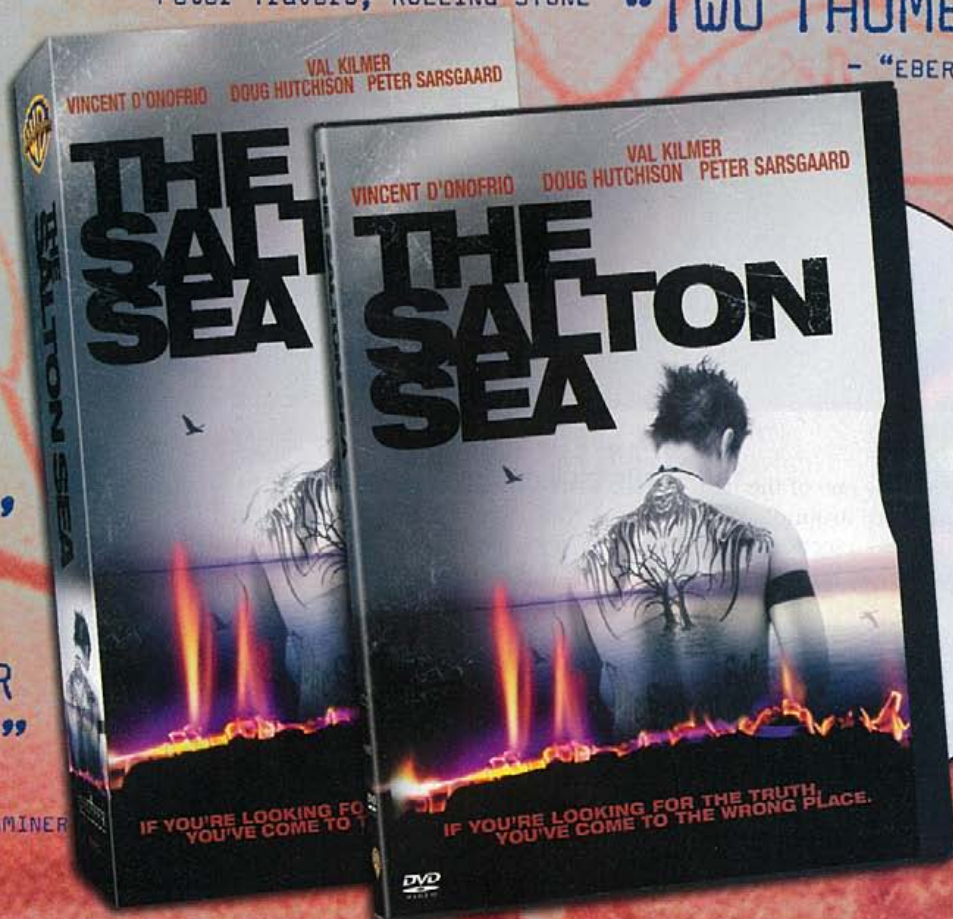
TAKE A TRIP YOU WON'T FORGET

"A COOL GROOVE OF A MOVIE"

- Peter Travers, ROLLING STONE

"TWO THUMBS UP"

- "EBERT & ROEPER"



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- Joe Leydon,
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- "EMBRACING THE CHAOS: A Conversation with the Cast of 'The Salton Sea'."
- "METH AND METHOD: Production Design for 'The Salton Sea'."

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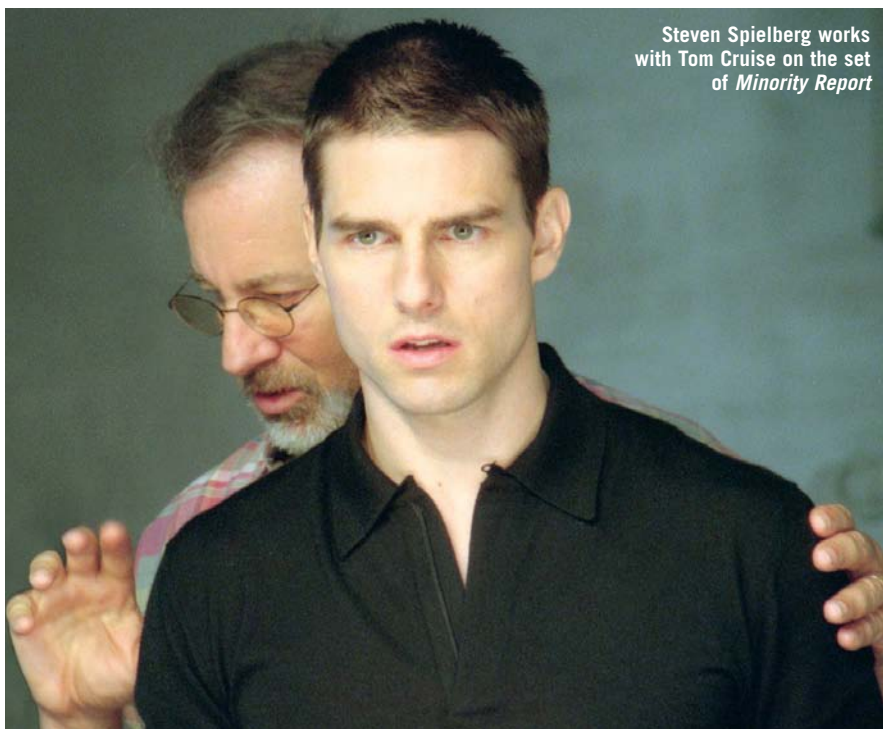
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Steven Spielberg works with Tom Cruise on the set of *Minority Report*

movie starts, and I'll read it 10 times over after that.

I also love Steven Spielberg! He is my hero! He's my inspiration! He's the man that got me into movies! I recently saw his latest flick, *Minority Report*, and all I've got to say is: That was the greatest piece of cinematic production I've ever witnessed! And it really makes me sick to the stomach a film like that didn't gross \$115-million its opening weekend. No offense to *Spider-Man* or anything, I like that movie, but I really do think the public has no taste when it comes to seeing the truly great films.... So, after all of this, I'd like your help in contacting Mr. Spielberg because I'd like to congratulate him on his amazing film.

Brandon Di Luca — Stoney Creek, Ont.

The best way to get in touch with the master of the sci-fi tearjerker is c/o DreamWorks, P.O. Box 8520, Universal City, Calif., 91608, U.S.A.

PEGGING MEG

I think your magazine is one of the best entertainment insights around! Your June 2002 issue features a section called "10 Stars Tell You What Makes Them Miserable" and Meg Ryan comments, "my sugary sweet persona." While working on the set of her new movie *Against the Ropes*, I talked to her during filming breaks. Although she's very friendly, polite and incredibly hard working, she is nothing like the "sugary sweet persona" she is so often labeled with. She's just a normal person who just happens to be very down to earth! People should stop assuming actors are the same character in person as they act out on screen. One of the nice things about acting is getting to become someone you're not! Keep up the great work *Famous!*

Christopher Wallis — Niagara Falls, Ont.

KIDMAN'S KID

What a beautiful photo of Nicole Kidman and her son Connor [July 2002]! I just wonder why you chose to remind your readership in that short caption that Connor is Ms. Kidman's adopted son? Do you also write captions that identify a celebrity's birth child? Where was the relevance in your article? Our adopted children are ours, and no less ours because they were not born to us.

Anne Pollard — Hamilton, Ont.

CAN, CAN, CAN YOU DO THE CAN-CON?

Thank you for frequently including a section on what movies are currently shooting in Canada. With all the fears of terrorists, tax incentives for productions to stay in their country and the tax credits that our government has taken away from incoming shows, it is encouraging to read about who is here. While it is great to read about the U.S. productions, we also need to celebrate the great Canadian productions that do not get enough press, to keep them flourishing. Looking forward to reading next month's issue.

Danielle Christopher — Surrey, B.C.

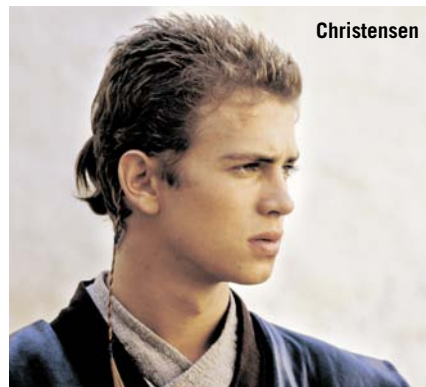
NATIONAL DEFENSE

In your April 2002 edition, on page 35, in an article referring to Renée Zellweger you describe Ewan McGregor as a "Brit." He is, in fact, a native of Scotland. Perhaps next time you should research an actor before placing an adjective before his name.

Chelsy Thériault — Saint John, N.B.

SPIEL ABOUT SPIELBERG

I love your magazine! I'm a huge movie buff, and every time I walk into a Famous Players theatre, I first get my ticket, and then run to the magazine rack to get my hands on your magazine. I read it in the theatre before the



Christensen

WRITE TO HAYDEN

Hayden Christensen is one of my new favourite actors and I was wondering where I could write to him.

Leah Lawrence — Maple Ridge, B.C.

There's something to be said for brevity — and you, Leah, have it down. You can reach Hayden via Delio Talent Agency, 1357 Bathurst St., Toronto, Ont., M5R 3H8.

FAMOUS WELCOMES YOUR COMMENTS

Address them to: **Letters to the Editor, Famous magazine, 102 Atlantic Ave., Suite 100, Toronto, Ontario, M6K 1X9; or fax us at 416.539.8511; or drop us an email at editor@fpmedia.ca.**

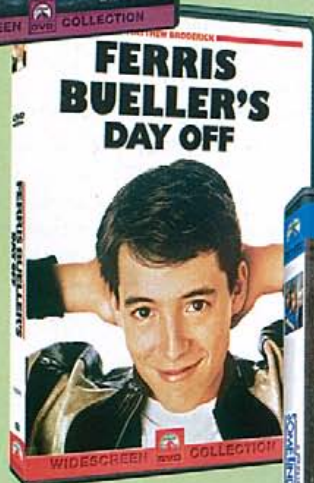
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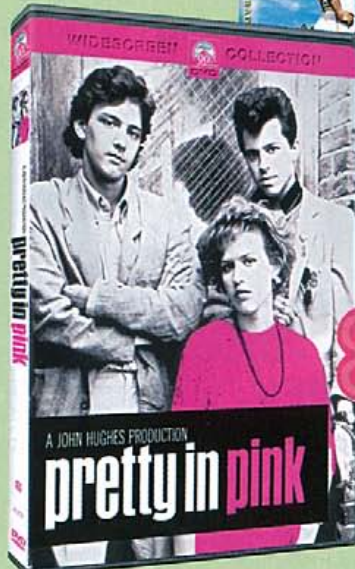


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BIG SCREEN MAN on campus

David Alpay may blend in with the thousands of students roaming the grounds of the University of Toronto this month, but he's really one of a kind. The 20-year-old human biology major is the only student on campus starring in the opening-night film of the Toronto International Film Festival — Atom Egoyan's *Ararat*.

"It's strange because all my best friends kneel before me," quips Alpay. "No, that's not true." He pauses. "I wish they did."

Perhaps the adulation will come in November when *Ararat* opens in theatres across the country. Alpay plays Raffi, a young man working on the production of an epic film about the Armenian genocide that took place in the early 1900s. While working on the project, his character is forced to confront memories of his father, his mother's denial of her past and his relationship

with his step-sister. The film also stars Christopher Plummer, Charles Aznavour, Arsinée Khanjian and Eric Bogosian.

Last year, Alpay was taking a break from writing an essay when he came across a casting call for extras to appear in Egoyan's new movie. A week after auditioning he was asked to come in and meet with the director. "I thought it would be neat to be in the background somewhere in the film," explains Alpay. "So this was completely unexpected."

Except for a couple of roles in university theatre productions, Alpay had no acting experience going into *Ararat*. "My training happened on the spot. They throw you into hot water and expect you to cool it somehow," he says, crediting co-stars like Plummer with giving him pointers. "He made my job very simple."

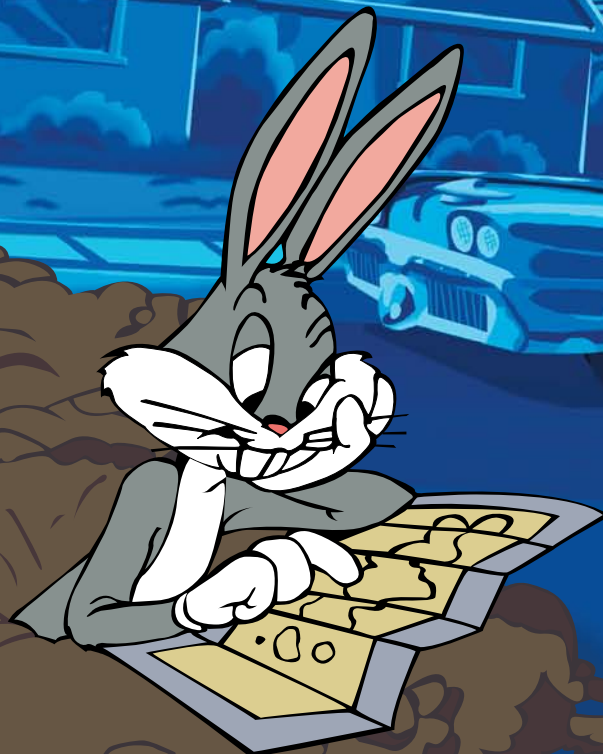
The budding thespian found himself

in the glare of the global spotlight last May when *Ararat* had its world premiere at the Cannes film festival, but it wasn't the first time Alpay had been under pressure. In 1999 he represented Earl Haig Secondary School at the National Brain Bee Championships in Maryland and won both a scholarship and the title of Best Brain by correctly answering the question: "Neurons containing what neurotransmitter preferentially die in Alzheimer's patients?" (The answer is acetylcholine — but you knew that, right?)

Alpay has applied to pursue his PhD at several Canadian universities but is also considering studying at the University of California at Irvine. Does he plan to balance academics with acting? "I wish I could say 'yes' for sure but I really don't know because I know there's stuff to do in medical school even during the summers," he admits. "Ideally, the best situation would be school, school, school and then during the summer maybe do a small project. That would be kind of neat. That would be rewarding." —JK

Don't miss another left turn at Albuquerque.

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SIMPLY ANSWER THESE QUESTIONS CORRECTLY AND YOU'RE ELIGIBLE TO WIN. YOU'LL FIND THE ANSWERS SOMEWHERE IN THIS ISSUE OF **FAMOUS**:

1. Name the female lead in the Benjamin Bratt film *The Next Best Thing*.

2. In which state was *Sweet Home Alabama*'s Reese Witherspoon born?

3. Which screen legend did James Franco play in a TV movie?

Send this entry form to: "Bring the Movies Home," c/o Famous magazine, 102 Atlantic Ave., Suite 100, Toronto, Ont., M6K 1X9.

All entries must be postmarked no later than October 15, 2002.

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John Kricfalusi's work will be honoured in Ottawa

FESTIVAL FRENZY



FILM FESTIVAL SEASON IS IN HIGH GEAR WITH FOUR MAJOR EVENTS TAKING PLACE ACROSS CANADA THIS MONTH AND EARLY NEXT

■ It's salt water and celluloid from **September 13 to 21** at the 22nd **Atlantic Film Festival** in Halifax. And although the lineup had yet to be announced at press time, festival director Lia Rinaldo says audiences can expect about 200 features and shorts.

The event divides films into several different programs including Atlantic Focus, Canadian Perspectives and International Perspectives.

Rinaldo says last year's festival attracted about 16,000 people — an impressive number considering the terrorist attacks in the U.S. just days before. And that growing popularity has made acquiring films much easier. "A lot has changed," says Rinaldo. "The film industry

in Nova Scotia has grown up and we've grown with it." For more information call **902.422.3456** or go to www.atlanticfilm.com

■ Montreal's **image+nation** festival has been a forum for gay and lesbian films and videos for 15 years, showcasing Quebec filmmakers like Rodrigue Jean, Denis Langlois, Manon Briand and Lea Pool, and hosting world premieres of acclaimed films like *Ma vie en rose* and *Gods and Monsters*.

This year, **image+nation** — **September 19 to 29** — will showcase more than 250 works including *Guardian of the Frontier*, the first Solvanian feature film directed by a woman.

For more information call **514.285.4467** or go to www.image-nation.org

■ Filmgoers on Canada's west coast are looking forward to the 21st annual **Vancouver International Film Festival**, which opens **September 26** and runs to **October 11**.

Last year, the event enjoyed its best year ever, selling nearly 140,000 tickets and showcasing 217 features and 78 shorts, including Nunavut director Zacharias Kunuk's *Atanarjuat (The Fast Runner)* and *Amélie* from French director Jean-Pierre Jeunet. You should be able to find this year's lineup at www.viff.org, or call **604.685.0260**.

■ Nearly 1,000 animation enthusiasts from all over the world are drawn to the **Ottawa International Animation Festival** each year, the largest of its kind in North America. This year, from **October 2 to 6**, about 100 shorts and features will be screened at three venues around the capital including the National Arts Centre.

Though primarily an industry event since it began in 1976, managing director Kelly Neall insists the festival is open to everyone. "It's very accessible and a festival pass gets you into all the screenings as well as the parties and picnic," she says. "You can mingle with Oscar winners."

There will be a spotlight on Korean animation and retrospectives honouring animators like Ottawa's own John Kricfalusi, creator of *Ren & Stimpy*. For more information call **613.232.8769** or www.awn.com/ottawa —JK



FILMS SHOOTING ACROSS THE COUNTRY THIS MONTH

THE DEVIL'S THROAT

Location: Cambridge, Ontario

Director: Mike Figgis (*Hotel*)

Cast: Dennis Quaid, Sharon Stone

Shooting in the countryside near Toronto until November, this one's about an urban family that moves to a small town and opens a bed-and-breakfast. All's peachy, until the home's former owner, a just-released convict, returns.

HOW TO LOSE A GUY IN 10 DAYS

Location: Toronto

Director: Donald Petrie (*Miss Congeniality*)

Cast: Kate Hudson, Matthew McConaughey

A ladies man (McConaughey) makes a bet with his friends that he can stay with a woman for more than 10 days — but then picks one (Hudson) who tries to shake him off as quickly as she can. Hilarity, no doubt, ensues. Filming, which has been going on in T.O. all summer, should wrap this month.

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CAUGHT ON FILM

THE STARS WORK, PLAY AND PROMOTE THEIR MOVIES



PHOTO BY GREGG DEGUIRE/WIREIMAGE

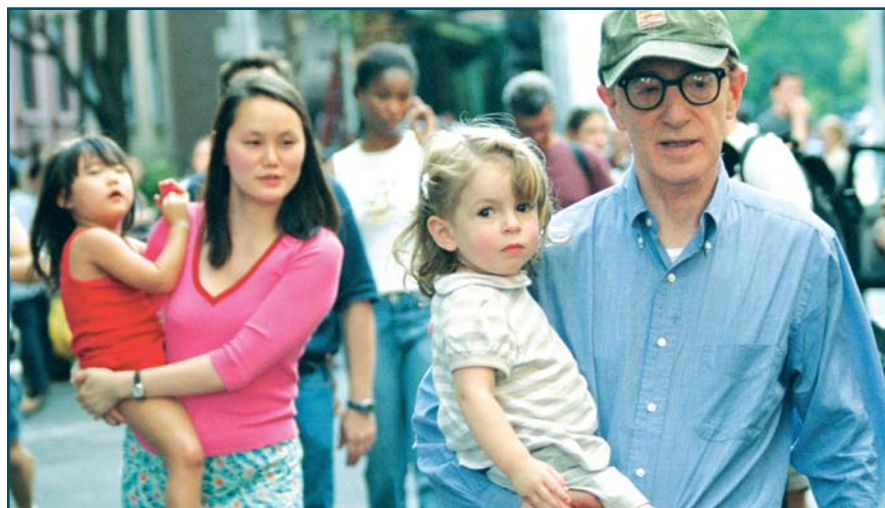


PHOTO BY ALEGSEY BOLDESKUL/PHOTO PRESS

Brad Pitt (that rat's nest of a beard is for his upcoming sci-fi flick *The Fountain*) and Jennifer Aniston at the Beverly Hills premiere of *Full Frontal*. Pitt had a cameo in the Steven Soderbergh pic.

Soon-Yi Previn drops by the New York set of husband Woody Allen's new movie, *Anything Else*, with their two daughters Manzie Tio and Bechet Dumaine.



PHOTO BY THEO WARGOWIREIMAGE

The New York premiere of *K-11: The Widowmaker* gave lovebirds Harrison Ford and Calista Flockhart a chance to put an end to the rumours and make their first public appearance.



PHOTO BY BRIAN SNYDER/REUTERS

Beantown boy Matt Damon (right) and Boston Red Sox shortstop Nomar Garciaparra share a laugh in the dugout. Damon was at Fenway Park to throw out the ceremonial first pitch.

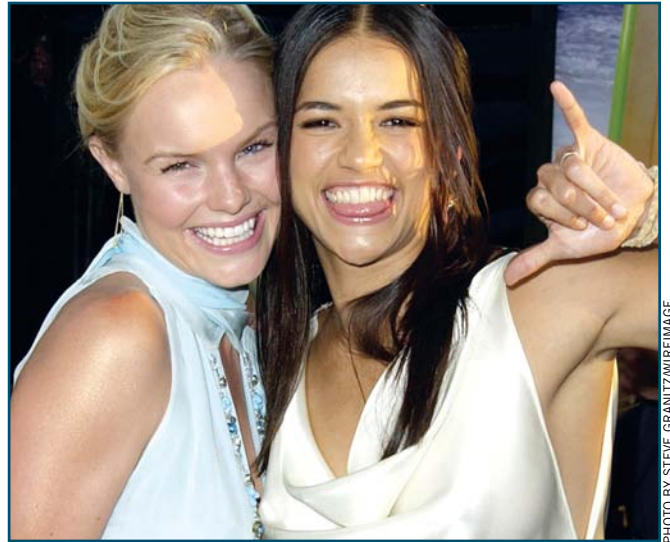


PHOTO BY STEVE GRANITZ/WIREIMAGE

Surfer chicks Kate Bosworth, left, and Michelle Rodriguez hang ten at the L.A. premiere of *Blue Crush*.

Jennifer Lopez looking like she'd rather be anywhere but getting a touch-up on the Manhattan set of *Uptown Girl*.



PHOTO BY SARA JAYE/IMAGE DIRECT

now in theatres

SPEND TIME WITH THE BANGER SISTERS, CHECK OUT FEAR DOT COM OR GET LOST IN CITY BY THE SEA



Stephen Rea gets spooky in *fear dot com*

AUGUST 30

FEAR DOT COM

Who's In It? Stephen Dorff, Stephen Rea

Who Directed? William Malone (*House on Haunted Hill*)

What's It About? A police detective (Dorff) and a medical examiner (Natascha McElhone) investigating a series of deaths realize that the victims had one thing in common — each one visited the same website before dying. Rea plays the sadist at the heart of it all.

SLAP HER, SHE'S FRENCH

Who's In It? Piper Perabo, Jane McGregor

Who Directed? Melanie Mayron (*The Baby-Sitters Club*)

What's It About? A foreign exchange student from France (Perabo) shakes up a small Texas town's high school when she tries to become the most popular girl. Which doesn't sit well with the existing most popular girl, *bien sur*.

SEPTEMBER 6

SWIMFAN

Who's In It? Erika Christensen, Jesse Bradford

Who Directed? John Polson (*Siam Sunset*)

What's It About? A championship swimmer (Bradford) gets in over his head when he rebuffs the advances of the new girl at his high school (Christensen). She dives into a fatal attraction and pools her efforts into making his life miserable. Sounds pretty deep.

CITY BY THE SEA

Who's In It? Robert De Niro, James Franco

Who Directed? Michael Caton-Jones (*The Jackal*)

What's It About? Did evil skip a generation? De Niro plays real-life NYPD detective Vincent Lamarca, whose father was imprisoned in the 1950s for kidnapping and murdering a child, and whose son (Franco) is now the prime suspect in the murder of a surfer.

SEPTEMBER 13

BARBER SHOP

Who's In It? Ice Cube, Eve

Who Directed? Tim Story (debut)

What's It About? A group of barbers on the South Side of Chicago try to earn a \$50,000 reward by collecting clues to a crime as they cut hair. Wonder who got the best part.

STEALING HARVARD

Who's In It? Jason Lee, Tom Green

Who Directed? Bruce McCulloch (*Superstar*)

What's It About? *Kids in the Hall* alumnus Bruce McCulloch directs this wacky tale of a man (Lee) who finds out that crime does pay — at least enough for his niece's first-year tuition at Harvard. Ottawa's Tom Green plays Lee's bad-influence best friend.

MOONLIGHT MILE

Who's In It? Jake Gyllenhaal, Dustin Hoffman

Who Directed? Brad Silberling (*City of Angels*)

What's It About? It's the early '70s and a young man (Gyllenhaal) is taken in by the parents of his fiancée (Hoffman and Susan Sarandon) after she dies. While they all grieve, he falls in love with a woman (Ellen Pompeo) who works at a bar owned by her boyfriend, who is missing.

THE TRANSPORTER

Who's In It? Jason Statham, Shu Qi

Who Directed? Louis Leterrier (debut)

What's It About? Statham (*Lock, Stock and Two Smoking Barrels* and *Snatch*) plays a professional courier who gets in trouble for breaking the golden rule: Never ask what you're delivering.

SEPTEMBER 20

FOUR FEATHERS

Who's In It? Heath Ledger, Kate Hudson

Who Directed? Shekhar Kapur (*Elizabeth*)

What's It About? This is the sixth film adaptation of the A.E.W. Mason novel of the same name (like you've read it). Set in the Sudan in 1898, it's the story of a British officer (Ledger) who receives four white feathers from his fiancée (Kate Hudson) and three friends as a sign of cowardice for resigning from his post

right before a battle against rebels. But then he goes undercover to save them — which makes the fact that his pal (Wes Bentley) moved in on his girlfriend rather inconsiderate.

TRAPPED

Who's In It? Stuart Townsend, Charlize Theron

Who Directed? Luis Mandoki (*Angel Eyes*)

What's It About? A Mississippi couple (Townsend and Theron) race against time to save their daughter (Dakota Fanning) from the hands of kidnappers (Kevin Bacon and Courtney Love) because she's diabetic and needs her insulin.

THE BANGER SISTERS

Who's In It? Susan Sarandon, Goldie Hawn

Who Directed? Bob Dolman (debut)

What's It About? No, the title does not refer to British sausages (well, not literally at least). It's the nickname for a pair of groupies who reunite after 10 years, only to discover they couldn't be any more different — one is a freaked out waitress (Hawn) who can't stop talking about the old days and the other is a wealthy socialite (Sarandon) who wants to put the past behind her. Sarandon's real-life daughter Eva Amurri makes her movie debut as one of her daughters.

SEPTEMBER 27

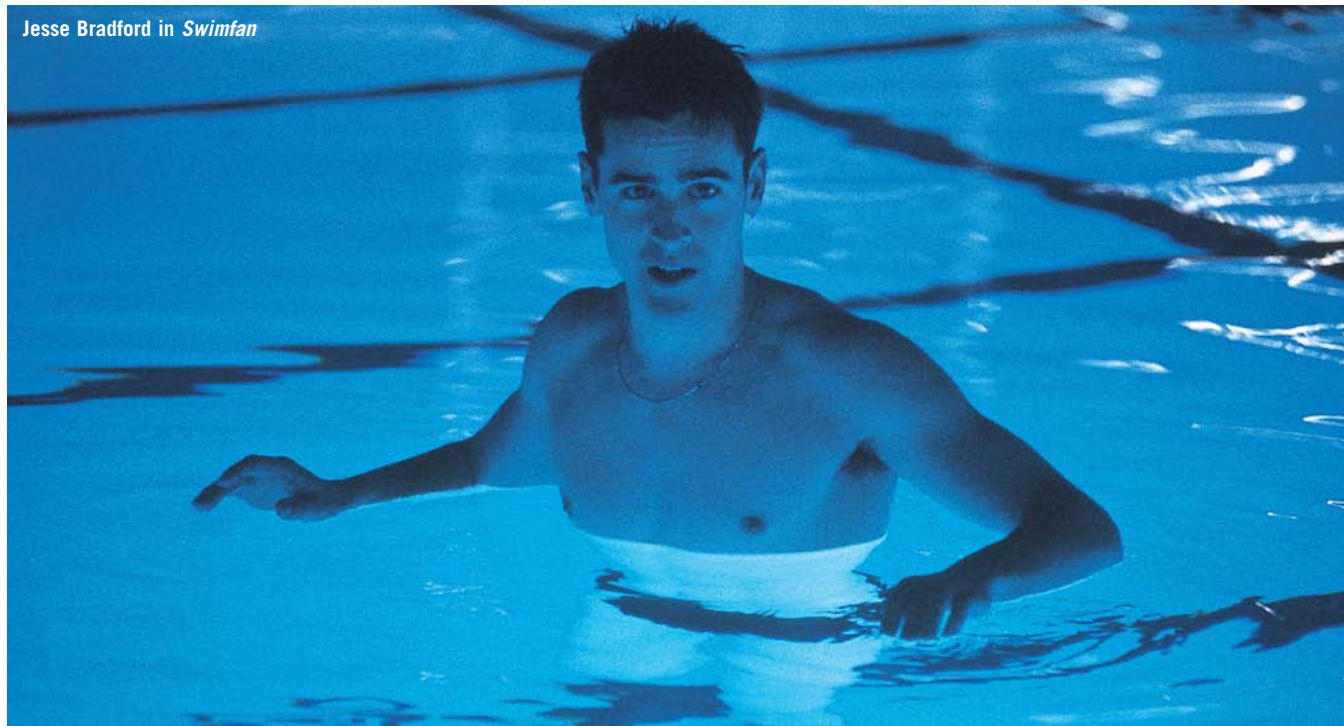
SWEET HOME ALABAMA

Who's In It? Reese Witherspoon, Patrick Dempsey

Who Directed? Andy Tennant (*Anna and the King*)

What's It About? Witherspoon plays Melanie, a poor young Alabama woman who runs away from her husband and becomes a top New York fashion designer. Things get complicated when the mayor's son (Dempsey) proposes marriage, forcing Melanie to seek a divorce. But once she's back in sweet home Alabama she becomes torn between her husband and her boyfriend. Exactly ▶▶

Jesse Bradford in *Swimfan*





Jackie Chan in *The Tuxedo*

▶ what Lynyrd Skynyrd had in mind when they wrote the song, no doubt. **See Reese Witherspoon interview, page 30.**

THE TUXEDO

Who's In It? Jackie Chan, Jennifer Love Hewitt

Who Directed? Kevin Donovan (debut)

What's It About? A lowly NYC cab driver (Chan) is thrust into the world of espionage after an "accident" injures his mysterious millionaire client Clark Devlin (Jason Isaacs). Dressed in Devlin's computerized tuxedo, and partnered with a rookie agent (Hewitt), the cabbie takes on a covert mission for the U.S. government.

PAID IN FULL

Who's In It? Wood Harris, Mekhi Phifer

Who Directed? Charles Stone III (debut)

What's It About? Based upon real events, this feature debut from



Lucy Liu in *Ballistic: Ecks Vs. Sever*

the director of those annoying "Whassup" beer commercials tells the story of a young Harlem man during the '80s drug boom.

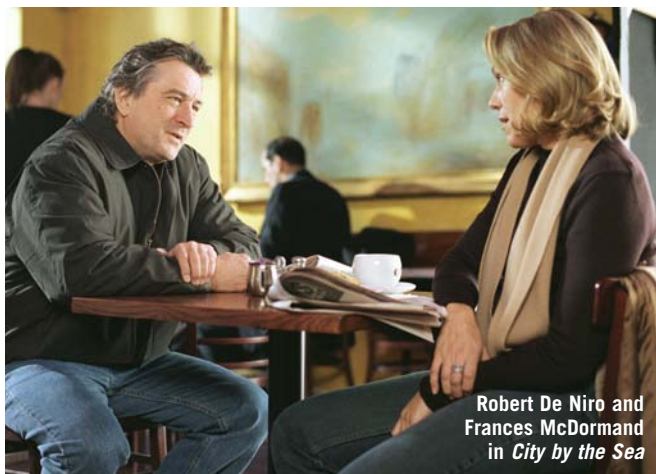
BALLISTIC: ECKS VS. SEVER

Who's In It? Antonio Banderas, Lucy Liu

Who Directed? Wych Kaosayananda (English debut)

What's It About? Banderas plays FBI agent Ecks, who's on the hunt for his longtime nemesis, rogue NSA agent Sever (Liu). But while trying to kill each other they discover that they may, in fact, be on the same side and facing the same threat.

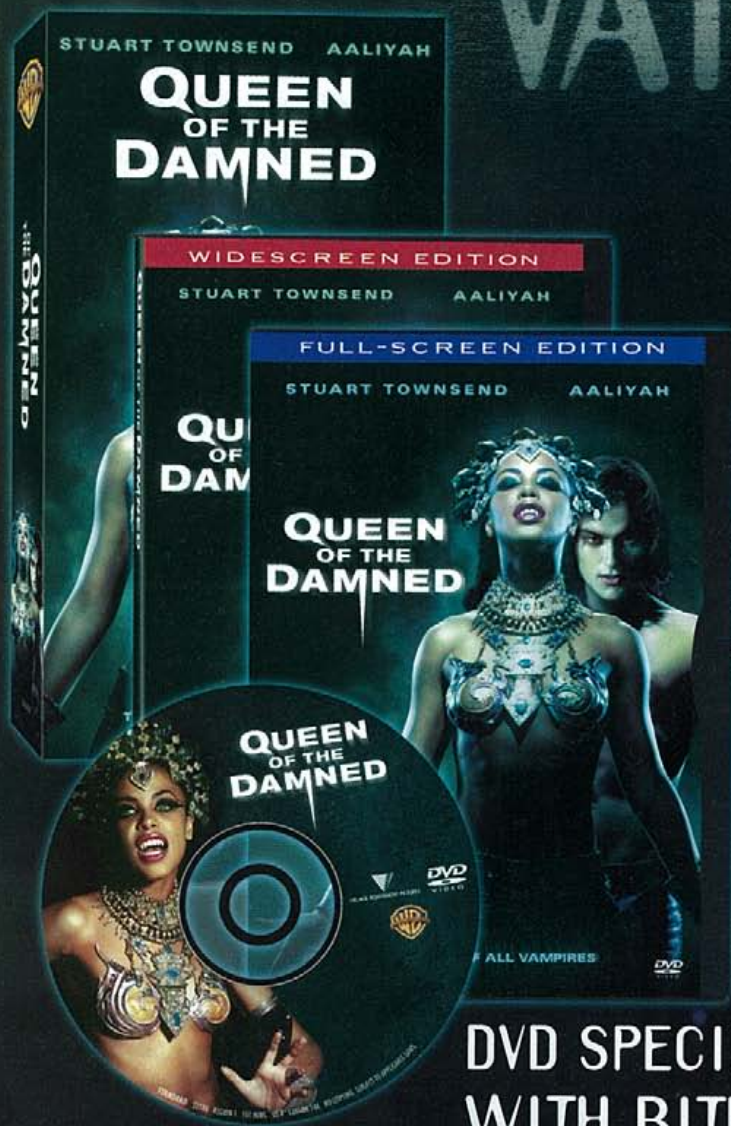
All release dates are subject to change. Some films play only in major markets.



Robert De Niro and Frances McDormand in *City by the Sea*

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Kate Hudson parties in Toronto

PHOTO BY JOHN WHITE

Kate HUDSON

Now appearing in... *Four Feathers* as the fiancée of a British officer (Heath Ledger) branded a coward after resigning from his post during a 1898 conflict in the Sudan.

Bio bits: On the surface, it seems like Kate Hudson was destined to be a star. Her mom is actor Goldie Hawn, who raised her alongside celebrity step-dad Kurt Russell in the glittery confines of upscale L.A. But, truth is, if not for a regrettable choice by a well-known Canadian actor, Hudson might have missed her big break as a free-spirited groupie in Cameron Crowe's *Almost Famous* — a role that had already been handed to Sarah Polley.

Depending on your source, Polley either pulled out of the project to do another film, or didn't think she could do the role justice. And that's when Hudson, who had already signed on for a small part as the lead character's sister, was bumped up to play Penny Lane. The then-21-year-old earned an Oscar nomination for her performance.

Hudson with Heath Ledger in *Four Feathers*



Born April 19, 1979 in L.A., Hudson was just 18 months old when her mother and father, singer/comedian Bill Hudson, divorced, and just three when her mom hooked up with actor Kurt Russell on the set of the World War Two pic *Swing Shift*. Since then, Kate has thought of Russell as her real dad, although she reportedly has no ill feelings toward her biological father.

Perhaps Kate was destined to be a star — *Almost Famous*, or not. As a child, she would sing and dance whenever someone sat still long enough to watch, and with her extended family, there were many. There was her brother Oliver, half-brother Wyatt (Hawn and Russell's offspring), step-brother Boston (Russell's son from a previous marriage), and step-siblings Emily and Zachary on Hudson's side.

As a little girl, Kate was also indoctrinated into showbiz by spending long hours on her parents' film sets, where she preferred hanging out with the camera crew, makeup and wardrobe people, to spending time with the stars.

When she graduated from the Crossroads performing arts school in Santa Monica, Goldie and Kurt hoped she'd further her studies at New York University. But Kate opted to jump right into acting, making her debut with an appearance on TV's *Party of Five* as the girl who came between Justin and Julia in the 1996 season finale.

Following *Four Feathers*, Hudson will appear in the Merchant-Ivory comedy *Le Divorce* as a film school dropout who moves to Paris to help her abandoned pregnant sister, only to fall in love with a 70-year-old Parisian.

Sample roles: Chrissy in *The Cutting Room* (2001), Dee Dee in *Dr. T & the Women* (2000), Penny in *Almost Famous* (2000), Naomi in *Gossip* (2000), Lucy in *About Adam* (2000), Cindy in *200 Cigarettes* (2000), Lorna in *Ricochet River* (1998), Skye in *Desert Blue* (1998)

Love life: Dated actor Elijah Craig (Sally Field's son), and hockey star Eric Lindros before marrying Black Crowes frontman Chris Robinson on New Year's Eve 2000. He's 11 years her senior.

Trivia: She smokes. • Is good friends with Ronnie Wood's son, Jessie. • Has two Persian cats, Mac and Cheese. • Worked in an L.A. dress boutique. • Liv Tyler was one of her classmates at Crossroads — they later worked together in *Dr. T & the Women*. • Her first audition was

for the Kurt Russell film *Escape from L.A.* She didn't get it. • Loves candy and chocolate. • Has been trying to improve her relationship with her biological father for the past couple of years.

On looking like her mom: "As I get older the resemblance gets spookier. There are times when we look so much alike that it freaks us both out. I definitely came from that womb." [*Calgary Sun*, September 2000] —MW

Jason LEE



PHOTO BY AVIK GILBOA / WIREIMAGE

Now appearing in... *Stealing Harvard* as a young man who, along with his best friend (Tom Green), sets out on a crime spree to pay for his niece's Harvard tuition.

Bio bits: Jason Lee — no relation to fellow actor Jason Scott Lee — was born April 25, 1970, in Orange, California and grew up in Huntington Beach. Early on, all signs pointed to a future on the half-pipe, not the big screen. Lee started skateboarding at age 5 and was part of the pro-skateboard circuit by the time he was 18. He and a friend tapped into the booming skateboard market by creating two companies, Stereo Skateboards and Stereo Sounds Clothing.

Lee's interest in being in front of cameras began after he moved to Los Angeles in the early 90s, when he was asked to show off his skateboarding talents in several music videos, including Sonic Youth's *100%*, directed by Spike Jonze. In 1993, Lee landed a small part opposite Jonze as a teenaged drug buyer in *Mi vida loca* — and he was hooked on acting.

His first audition for director Kevin Smith earned Lee a leading role as Jeremy London's cynical sidekick Brodie Bruce in *Mallrats* (1995). Smith was so impressed, he later cast Lee in *Chasing Amy* (1997) as Ben Affleck's cranky roommate, Banky Edwards. The part earned Lee an Independent Spirit Award. (Smith used Lee again in 1999's *Dogma* and brought him back as both Brodie Bruce and Banky Lee in last year's *Jay and Silent Bob Strike Back*.)

Several small roles in small projects followed before Lee scored parts in 1998 opposite *Friends* star David Schwimmer in *Kissing a Fool* and with Will Smith in *Enemy of the State*. The following year — in addition to *Dogma* — Lee had a role in *Mumford* as an eccentric young billionaire. Next was a high-profile part in Cameron Crowe's *Almost Famous*, wherein he played the lead singer of fictional 70s rock band Stillwater. Like Smith, Crowe wanted to use Lee again, and cast him alongside Tom Cruise in *Vanilla Sky*.

Lee's acting career shows no signs of slowing down. After *Stealing Harvard*, he will be seen with Julia Stiles and Selma Blair in *A Guy Thing*, followed by parts in *Dreamcatcher* with Morgan Freeman and in *Jersey Girl*. He is also working with Kevin Smith again on *Fletcher Won*.



Lee (above) with Tom Green in *Stealing Harvard* and with Selma Blair in *A Guy Thing*

Sample roles: Brian Shelby in *Vanilla Sky* (2001), Jeff Bebe in *Almost Famous* (2000), Azrael in *Dogma* (1999), Jay Murphy in *Kissing a Fool* (1998), Banky Edwards in *Chasing Amy* (1997), Brodie Bruce in *Mallrats* (1995).

Love life: Recently divorced from wife Carmen Lee, whom he married in 1995.

Trivia: Turned down a role in *Boogie Nights*. • Was originally cast in Matt Damon's role in *Dogma*. • As a pro-skateboarder he endorsed Airwalk shoes. • Ex-wife was the woman Joey Lauren Adams kissed in *Chasing Amy*. • He once did skateboarding stunt work for a British Petroleum commercial filmed in Malaysia. • His manager is Gay Ribisi, mother of actor Giovanni Ribisi.

On being low-key: "I'm at the world premiere of *Almost Famous* at the Toronto International Film Festival ... and all of the limos had been taken up, so I go in a Town Car, not a limo. Big f'in deal, right? Then we get taken home in a van with a bunch of people. There are actors out there who would flip over that — they would absolutely have a goddamn heart attack." [*FilmForce*, October 2000]

—JK

James FRANCO

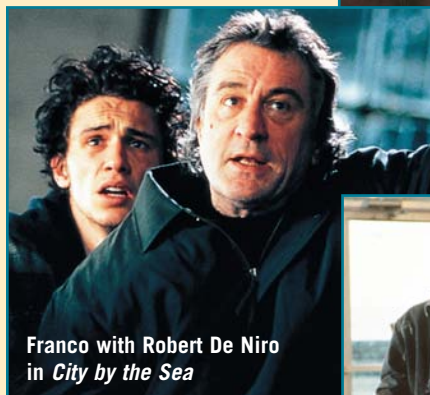
Now appearing in... *City by the Sea* as Joey LaMarca, the suspect in a murder case investigated by his cop father (Robert De Niro).

Bio bits: James Edward Franco might be the only person to go from the Golden Arches to the Golden Globes in just four years. The young actor who, at 18, paid for acting courses by working at McDonald's, won a Golden Globe this year for his portrayal of screen legend James Dean in a TV bio-pic.

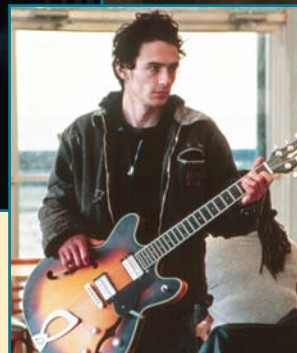
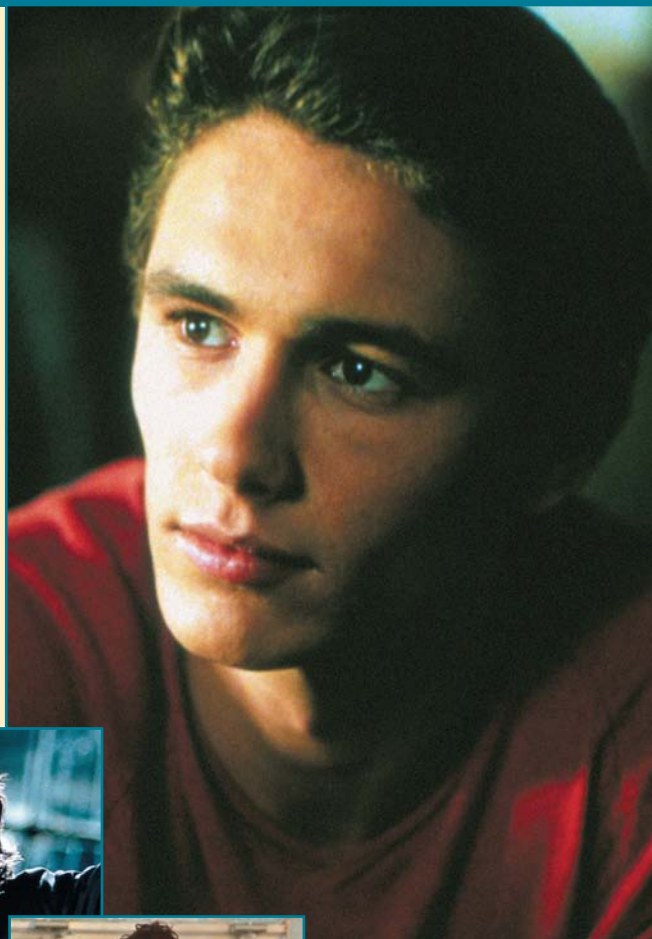
Franco was born into a family of artists on April 19, 1978. Both his mother Betsy and his uncle Michael Verne are authors, his late grandfather was a cartoonist and his grandmother runs an art gallery in Cleveland. The eldest of three boys, Franco grew up a bit of a loner in Palo Alto, California, and endured taunts and teasing throughout high school. After classes he rushed to the Palo Alto Art League where he pursued his passion for painting, often staying until late at night. A jealous Franco also joined his school's drama department after finding out that his girlfriend had a kissing scene with another boy. It wasn't his first taste of acting, though — in Grade 7 he co-wrote and starred in a play about golf for a drama competition.

After high school he enrolled at UCLA to study English Literature but, frustrated that first- and second-year students couldn't take acting classes, he dropped out and signed up for acting lessons at Robert Carnegie's Playhouse West. Cut off financially by his family, Franco lived with friends and supported himself by working at a McDonald's drive-through. Upon signing with an agent, he left the fast food business and landed a part in a Pizza Hut commercial, followed by small parts on TV series like *The X-Files* and *Pacific Blue*, and opposite Drew Barrymore in the feature film *Never Been Kissed*. His first real break may have been as nihilistic burn-out Daniel Desario in the critically acclaimed, but short-lived, NBC series *Freaks and Geeks*, which he followed with the decidedly less-acclaimed teen comedy *Whatever it Takes*. In one scene Franco was stripped down to a thong, blindfolded and tied to a bed. That may have got audiences' attention, but it wasn't until he took on the title role in the 2001 TV movie *James Dean* that Hollywood really took notice.

To bring Dean to life, Franco studied the actor's work, started chain smoking and isolated himself from his family and friends for six months. His performance earned him a Golden Globe and a nomination for a Screen Actors Guild Award, and led to high-profile parts in the summer blockbuster *Spider-Man* (as Harry Osborn) and this season's *City by the Sea* with Robert DeNiro.



Franco with Robert De Niro in *City by the Sea*



Franco appears next in Nicolas Cage's directorial debut, *Sonny*, playing a high-priced New Orleans male prostitute who is picked up by a Bourbon Street lowlife (Cage) while trying to break away from his pimp mother (Brenda Blethyn).

Sample roles: Harry Osborn in *Spider-Man* (2002), Tino in *Deuces Wild* (2002), James Dean in *James Dean* (2001), Chris in *Whatever it Takes* (2000), Jason Way in *Never Been Kissed* (1999)

Love life: Living with his *Whatever it Takes* co-star Marla Sokoloff, who also plays Lucy on TV's *The Practice*.

Trivia: His nickname is Teddy. • Has co-written several scripts, one of which is set to be made into a feature film. • Speaks French. • Auditioned for the role of Peter Parker in *Spider-Man*. • All 30 pieces were sold at a showing of his paintings in West Hollywood.

On high school: "It was rough...I was very awkward with girls. There was this rumour that [I] was gay. In my high school no kids were coming out and there was a huge stigma. There was a lot of isolation. To deal with that I painted a lot. It was hard." [*TV Guide Online*, March 2000]

—JK

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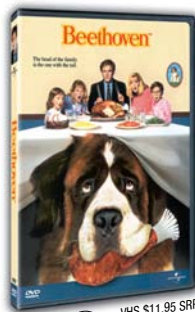
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A LITTLE OF
THIS, AND A

LITTLE OF THAT WILL
PUT YOU ON FASHION'S
FOREFRONT THIS FALL

Variety is the spice for fall, so mix things up and don't get locked into one predictable style. And the good news is that we've finally earned our right to relax. Even when it comes to elegant evening dressing, comfort is key. Add some healthy doses of nostalgia and romance and you've got this season's look down.

It's familiarity that designers are drawing on during these uncertain economic times, with shades of '30s glamour creeping into several collections — from sexy little flowered pieces, like the ones from Betsey Johnson, to lamé, satin and chiffon cocktail numbers, to luxurious old movie-star gowns. Vintage shopping, here we come! Ralph Lauren suggests sleek black beaded gowns with a subtle deco theme, and the hot young Zac Posen has given us an array of enchanting retro frocks to twirl around in.

Nostalgia is important for daywear too, with crumpled vintage looks to remind us of all the well-worn clothes we've ever loved: velveteen coats and



Chunky sweaters and mukluks get an ethnic twist from John Galiano. Photo by Petre Buzoianu, Keystone Press

Military style marches on at Marc Jacobs. Photo by Jeff Vespa/WireImage



little militaristic jackets, like those from Marc Jacobs; pea jackets from Donna Karan (and just about every other designer); pillared cashmere sweatpants and distressed leather from hot Californian Rick Owens; and shades of Woodstock, in the form of flower-power dresses and Mongolian lamb-trimmed

coats, from Anna Sui. It's all meant to be layered to the hilt, resulting in a mélange of pieces that will conjure memories of great flea market finds.

If exotica is more your speed, you'll find inspiration in the ethnic tones from the brilliant John Galiano. His trend-setting collection for Dior is chock full of folkloric references, and makes a trek into the wilds of Tibet or Siberia look like a fashionista's fantasy.

Then there's the no-nonsense, comfy stuff — most of which is still luxurious, of course. There are chunky knit sweaters and utility pants, like the cozy ones from Michael Kors; slouchy flat boots and mukluks for those long, chilly walks; relaxed fits in dresses, pants and tops; and vests are everywhere — from Balenciaga's wooly, sculptural numbers to fitted little vests to be worn over and under all those intriguing pieces.

Layering and mixing are the biggest messages for fall/winter, which, coupled with the season's mantra, "To thine own self be true," should make for great personal style now...and any time of year. **F**

Jeanne Beker is host and segment producer of FT and the Fashion Television Channel, and author of Jeanne Unbottled: Adventures in High Style.

fall must haves

PEA JACKET OR COAT

Countless versions — mostly in black, charcoal or navy — are an homage to Yves St. Laurent, who first popularized the look in 1962. These double-breasted jackets or coats can be basic, or more fashion forward, with great big buttons, epaulets and exaggerated collars.

RELAXED PANT

The flat-front, wide-legged and cuffed variety will be especially popular, great for most body types.

CHUNKY SWEATER

From classic fisherman sweaters to big, cozy cardigans, sweater-dressing is always a welcome way to keep warm. Anything hand-knit looks especially cool.

TWEED COAT

Knee-length, mid-calf or full-length, a great tweed coat is a sound and stylish investment piece. The ones for fall are beautifully tailored with lots of variations.

THIRTIES GLAM DRESS

Think old Hollywood cocktail soirée because there are some beautiful retro looks in silk, satin and chiffon coming back. Especially pretty are those with low, draped backs. Even for daytime, a flirty little flowered retro-dress provides just the right dose of femininity.

RUFFLED SHIRT/SKIRT

Perhaps thanks to all the attention Yves St. Laurent got this past season, ruffles will continue to be big on shirts and skirts.

SHEARLING

Few things are warmer and hipper than a great shearling jacket or coat. A few shearling dresses have even surfaced...a hot look, but definitely not meant for dancing!

MUKLUKS

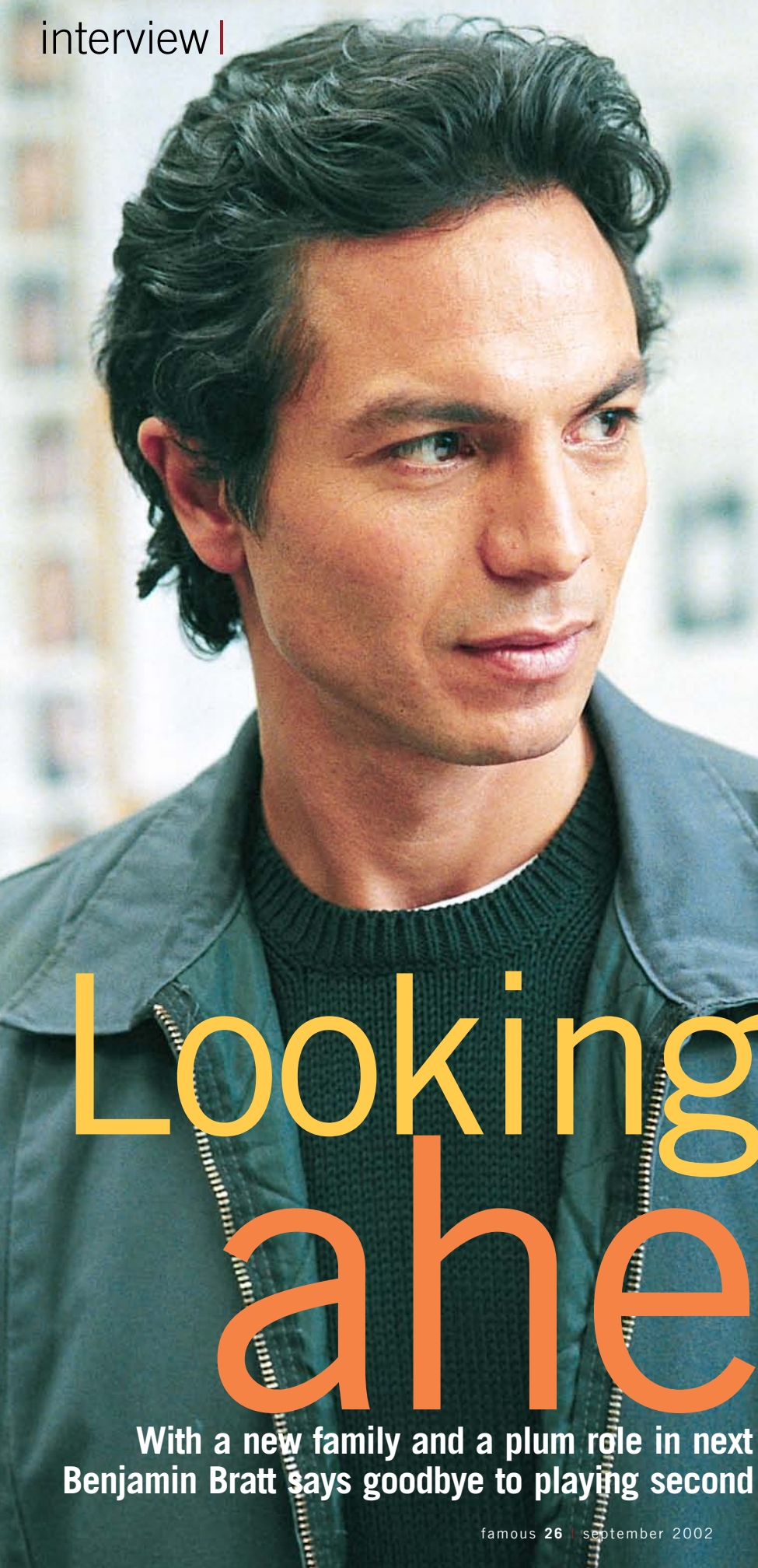
Always a fun après-ski accessory, a pair of mukluks could be the perfect complement to your collection of high-heeled boots. It's all about keeping warm and cozy.

METALLICA

While most designers have toned down the glitz quotient, some are still having fun with sparkle and sheen. Carolina Herrera and Helmut Lang give us lamé suits, coats and dresses that glimmer.

Flower power from Anna Sui. Photo by Doug Kanter/Agence France Presse





Looking ahead

With a new family and a plum role in next month's *Abandon*, Benjamin Bratt says goodbye to playing second fiddle | BY EARL DITTMAN

After years of being thought of as either the boyfriend of the most famous actress on the planet or as the partner of the veteran cop on one of television's longest-running, highest-rated police dramas, Benjamin Bratt has finally moved out of the shadows. And, while he has no regrets about dating Julia Roberts for three years or starring as a homicide detective on *Law & Order* for four seasons, the 38-year-old admits it feels good to be standing front and center for a change.

"It's not like I've been craving attention or thinking, 'Why doesn't anybody notice me,'" jokes the handsome, six-foot-two actor. "I've just been working hard for the ability to choose the type of projects I respect and have people judge my work in them based on my performances — not because of who I'm with or what I've been in before."

If his vivid portrayal of the late Latin poet, playwright and actor Miguel Piñero in last year's *Piñero* didn't convince moviegoers, his co-starring role in next month's nail-biter *Abandon* just might.

The film centres on Katie Burke (*Dawson's Creek*'s Katie Holmes), a college senior attempting to complete her thesis, ace her exams and prepare for the endless interviews that will, with hope, land her a prestigious, high-paying job. But, just when she doesn't think she can handle much more, her problems are compounded by the arrival of Alvin Handler (Bratt), a police detective who wants to question her about the mysterious, two-year-old disappearance of her former boyfriend (Charlie Hunnam). Recounting her relationship with the missing beau, Katie is pushed to her breaking point. But Detective Handler is determined to find out what happened. As he presses

her to recall the disturbing memories, they both discover surprising secrets about her former love. And, before long, Katie comes to the terrifying realization that she knows more about his disappearance than she thought.

"It's a really intense psychological drama, unlike any you've seen before," Bratt says, opening the balcony doors of his Beverly Hills hotel room to let in a cool Southern California breeze. "That's what made it so attractive. We've all seen hundreds of the typical 'girl in distress from unknown forces' films. I didn't want to do another one of those. *Abandon* brings a whole new twist to the genre. Also, my character was interesting on paper. You never really know who he is or what his motives really are. I wanted to take this cop in a whole different direction and, luckily, [writer/director Stephen Gaghan's] script allowed for that. To be honest, I kind of promised myself I'd never play another cop role. After four years of being a detective it's the last role on your list of possible parts you want to play."

Bratt arrived in Hollywood in the late-'80s and started racking up both TV and film roles — from guest spots on such television shows as *Nasty Boys*, *Knightwatch* and *Police Story: Gladiator School* to supporting parts in films like *The River Wild*, *Clear and Present Danger* and *Demolition Man*.

In 1994, he moved to New York to replace Chris Noth on *Law & Order* and became an instant hit with TV critics and fans, boosting ratings and helping the program maintain its Top Ten status. But when his contract was up for renewal four years later, he decided to leave. It was an unexpected and, many thought, risky move. Bratt, though, had his reasons.

"I just knew that after being on the show for four years that, creatively, it was time to move on," the actor recalls, removing his black leather jacket. "I mean, I had an awareness that it was the best job that I had ever had, and the decision to leave would be tough. But there was a combination of things involved in that decision. One, I was born and raised in California and my family is still in Northern California. Much of the day-to-day interaction that I had become used to before the show was missing from my life. I really wanted to spend more time with my family. Also, from a creative point of view — as good of a job as *Law & Order* was — I

felt a little artistically handcuffed. I mean, there are only so many ways you can remain creative by asking questions like 'Do you recall the license plate?' or 'Do you know any reasons why someone would want to hurt your husband?'"

Even though he missed being with his mother (a Peruvian Indian from Lima) and father (an American of English and German ancestry), filming in New York also cut down on the time he was able to spend with his then-girlfriend, Roberts. While he's never admitted she played a role in his decision to leave the show, many close to Bratt have said their bi-coastal relationship was putting a strain on their union.

Once he relocated to Los Angeles, the pair was inseparable. By the end of the millennium, you couldn't pass a newsstand without seeing Bratt and Roberts, arm in arm, on the cover of some magazine, and they did little to discourage rumours that they would soon be wed. Bratt's first post-*Law & Order* project, *The Next Best Thing*, offered the actor a welcome change of pace. "I wasn't allowed to smile much as Detective Curtis, so it was a relief to do a

comedy," he remembers. "And doing a film with Madonna and Rupert Everett seemed like a no-brainer to me."

But *The Next Best Thing* was a box-office disappointment and, to make things worse, practically every reporter Bratt spoke with about the film asked the same question: "What's it like to be the boyfriend of Hollywood's biggest female star?" Even when his comedy with Sandra Bullock, *Miss Congeniality*, became a hit, interviewers focused on his relationship with Roberts instead of his contribution to the film.

"You can never control what the media does, it's all out of your hands, especially if you are a celebrity," Bratt explains, "It's like one big circus or free-for-all. And it's a business. They are trying to sell papers or magazines."

In June 2001, Bratt and Roberts announced — through their representatives — that they were no longer a couple and the tabloids wondered, "Was Bratt tired of being thought of as 'Mr. Roberts?'" Bratt will only offer, "She's a wonderful person and a great actress. I will always fondly remember the time we had together." ▶▶

CHARLIE SHINES

He was voted one of *F.M.* magazine's Top 50 sexiest Brit Actors of 2001, and he was in the running for the coveted role of Anakin Skywalker in *Star Wars: Attack of the Clones*. But it's likely you've never heard of Charlie Hunnam.

And yet the 22-year-old is being described by insiders as "the one to watch." Audiences can do just that when he shows up in *Abandon* as Katie Holmes' ex who mysteriously reappears on the campus of her university.

So who is Charlie Hunnam? Fans of the British series *Queer as Folk* already know him as Nathan Maloney, a 15-year-old who comes out into Manchester's gay scene. It was a controversial role that required plenty of nudity and steamy sex scenes, but it earned him a large and loyal following. It also led to his first big-screen role in the British comedy *Whatever Happened to Harold Smith?*

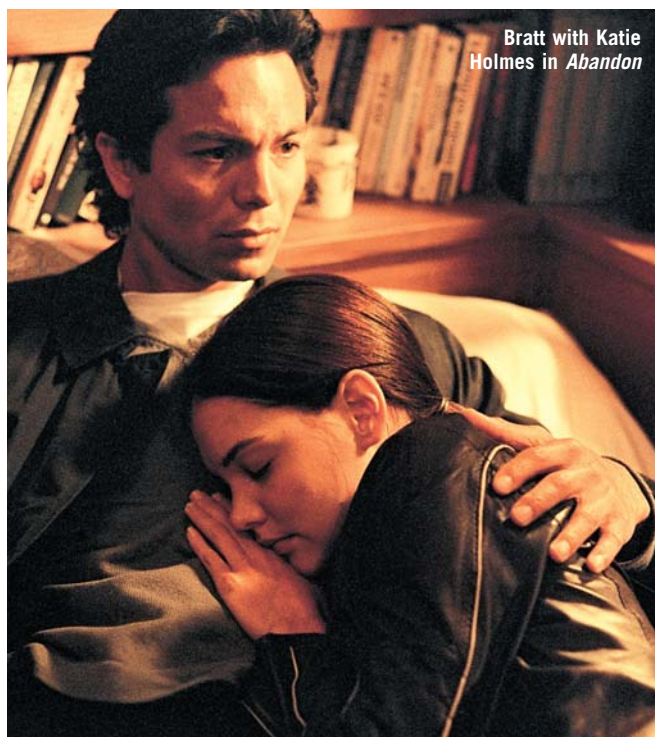
Hunnam then moved to L.A., where he landed roles in two short-lived TV series, Fox's *Undeclared* and the WB's *Young Americans*. *Abandon* is his first Hollywood flick, but he will play the title character in an adaptation of Dickens' *Nicholas Nickleby*,



due out this Christmas, and will appear in next year's Civil War drama *Cold Mountain* with Nicole Kidman and Jude Law.

Born in Newcastle, England, Hunnam owes his acting career to a pair of sneakers. He was in a shoe store when he asked another customer what she thought of his cross-trainers. That customer turned out to be a production manager for *Byker Grove*, a British TV series for teens, who took Hunnam to meet the director. A part on the show, and then two more series, followed before his big break on *Queer as Folk*.

Sorry girls — and some of you guys — Hunnam is married to actress Katherine Towne, daughter of screenwriter Robert Towne (*Chinatown*, *Mission Impossible*). —JK



Bratt with Katie Holmes in *Abandon*

▶▶ However, as one door closed, others began to open — like the role in *Piñero*. He threw himself into the part, even altering his appearance to look more like the late drug-addicted, Tony-winning playwright. “I wanted to approximate the physical nature of being a heroin addict and his emaciation at the time of his death,” he explains. “So I lost a significant amount of weight, let the hair grow and grew a beard and mustache. But, contrary to what was reported, I did continue to shower. I’m not that much of a Method Actor.”

Many predicted he would score a Best Actor Oscar nomination for his work in *Piñero*, and when he didn’t, they blamed it on the indie film’s inability to mount a costly Academy Award campaign. Regardless, he had gained the industry’s respect.

Piñero also improved another part of Bratt’s life. During its filming, he met his future wife, Talisa Soto, who co-starred as *Piñero*’s prostitute girlfriend. (You may remember Soto as Antonio Banderas’ doomed love Maria in 1992’s *The Mambo Kings* or Bond Girl Lupe Lamora in 1989’s *Licence to Kill*.) They married this past spring and are expecting their first child any time now.

“No matter how hard you try to control your life, it’s going to take you where you belong,” Bratt muses. “I think I’ve always known that, deep down. That’s why I haven’t been afraid to take chances. Sure, I could still be on *Law & Order*, but would I have done *Piñero* or *Abandon* or formed my own production company [Chacras FilmWorks]? Probably not. I know my personal life would certainly be different. All you can do is be a good person, work hard, love those close to you and have faith. The rest is up to destiny. It’ll put you where you need to be. And, right now, it’s landed me in the best place I’ve ever been in my life.” 📍

Earl Dittman is an entertainment journalist based in Houston, Texas. He also interviewed Reese Witherspoon for this issue of Famous.

RED DRAGON >> OCTOBER

Stars: Anthony Hopkins, Edward Norton

Director: Brett Ratner (*The Family Man*)

Story: Anthony Hopkins returns for his third Hannibal Lecter film, and second since announcing his retirement from acting in 1998. But if you’re hoping to find out whether Clarice and Hannibal hooked up after the last film, you’re out of luck. This one’s actually based on Thomas Harris’s first novel about the high-class cannibal — which also happened to be the source material for 1994’s *Manhunter*. In a plot that’s strangely similar to *Silence of the Lambs*, Norton plays an FBI agent seeking help from Lecter in tracking down a serial killer.

WHITE OLEANDER >> OCTOBER

Stars: Alison Lohman, Michelle Pfeiffer

Director: Peter Kosminsky (*Wuthering Heights*)

Story: This tale of a teen girl’s journey through a series of foster homes debuts at the Toronto International Film Festival this month, before opening wide next. Alison Lohman (really in her early 20s) plays that girl, who is uprooted when her mom (Pfeiffer) is thrown in jail for poisoning an ex-boyfriend.

8 MILE >> NOVEMBER

Stars: Eminem, Kim Basinger

Director: Curtis Hanson (*L.A. Confidential*)

Story: Although it was first announced as a bio-pic of leading man Eminem, somewhere along the way *8 Mile* transformed into the story of a generic young man who struggles to overcome the limitations of growing up poor in a rough part of Detroit. Before you dismiss this one as yet another cliché *Boyz n the Hood* wannabe, know that director Hanson’s last two flicks — *L.A. Confidential* and *Wonder Boys* — were both multiple-Oscar nominees. Plus, you get to see Eminem’s natural hair colour.

HARRY POTTER AND THE CHAMBER OF SECRETS >> NOVEMBER

Stars: Daniel Radcliffe, Rupert Grint

Director: Chris Columbus (*Harry Potter and the Philosopher’s Stone*)

Story: It’s Harry’s second year at Hogwarts and all is not well. People are being turned to stone and no one knows why. It could have something to do with the voices Harry’s hearing from within the academy’s walls. It could have something to do with the reopening of the Chamber of Secrets. But when people start to think Harry’s behind it, he has to prove them wrong.

STAR TREK: NEMESIS >> DECEMBER

Stars: Patrick Stewart, Brent Spiner

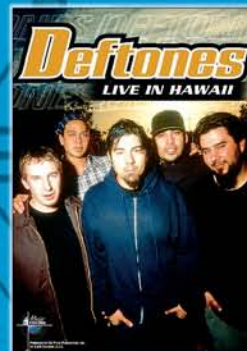
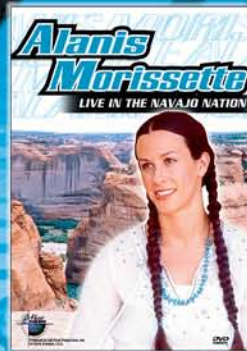
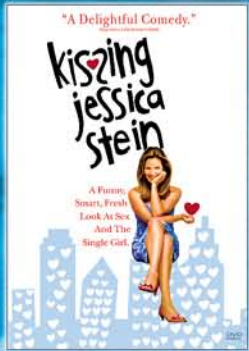
Director: Stuart Baird (*U.S. Marshals*)

Story: While we know Romulus and Remus as the mythological founders of Rome, in the *Star Trek* universe they are the two Romulan home worlds. How can the names refer to both an Earth-bound legend, and planets inhabited by pointy-eared people 2 million years ago? We have no idea, but presumably the film will explain. In this 10th *Star Trek* pic, the Romulans are finally trying to forge a lasting peace with the Federation. Of course, that plot wouldn’t be worth a movie unless someone was trying to foil the plan, leaving only the crew of the Enterprise to save the day.

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From left: *Sweet Home Alabama*'s love triangle — Patrick Dempsey, Reese Witherspoon and Josh Lucas

SOUTHERN mama

REESE WITHERSPOON ON MARRIAGE, MOTHERHOOD AND RETURNING TO HER SOUTHERN ROOTS FOR **SWEET HOME ALABAMA** | BY EARL DITTMAN

If there's an actress in Hollywood who has her cake and can eat it, too, it's Reese Witherspoon. The 26-year-old Tinsel Town vet (she made her film debut at 16 in 1991's touching *Man in the Moon*) has not only become a critically lauded and highly-paid performer (taking home \$5-million [U.S.] for *Sweet Home Alabama*), but she also has a seemingly happy marriage and a two-year-old daughter with screen hunk Ryan Phillippe. And what's most surprising is that it doesn't seem like many of her ultra-competitive contemporaries begrudge the star of last year's surprise hit *Legally Blonde* her ability to maintain a flop-free career and a fairy tale personal life.

"You can't help but love Reese, because she's the absolute real deal in this jaded town filled with fakes and egomaniacs," says Rupert Everett, her co-star from this past spring's adaptation of the Oscar Wilde classic *The Importance of Being Earnest*. "Most actors are jealous of others who have a run of good luck. But Reese is one Cinderella everyone is rooting for. It's almost sickening."

The Tennessee-born actress, decked out in a simple pair of jeans, Givenchy top and Moschino shoes, blushes when offered Everett's assessment. "Rupert's just trying to make sure he stays on my Christmas list, that's why he says such nice things," jokes the 5' 2" blonde as she plops herself down on a big chair in her New York hotel suite.

Having just wrapped the romantic comedy *Sweet Home Alabama* — about a woman with white trash roots who leaves the south only to fall in love with a Big Apple socialite — Witherspoon was in New York to meet with writers and directors concerning an upcoming project for her production company Type A Films. "It's important for me to have my own production company because I'm not the kind of person who sits on her hands very well and just waits for things to come to me," Witherspoon explains. "It's really exciting being a part of a project from the very beginning, getting to know the writer and being able to pick an appropriate director for the material."

[Q] Producer, actor, wife and mom. Is there anything you can't do?

[A] "Well, I'm not as good at changing diapers as Ryan is. I started out as a neophyte in that situation. Ryan's mom had a daycare centre, so he can do a diaper like you wouldn't believe. I mean, like five seconds flat. I have definitely learned a few things from him."

[Q] What can you tell us about *Sweet Home Alabama*?

[A] "It's about a woman who is a New York fashion designer who is about to marry the greatest New York socialite guy [Patrick Dempsey]. But it turns out that she has a little dark secret — she's a white trash girl already married to the guy that she grew up with [Josh Lucas] in Alabama. She married him when she was a teenager. So she has to sort of go down and extract herself from the marriage, but it's not that easy. It's really funny and it's really romantic. I'm really proud of the movie."

[Q] Could you relate to your character?

[A] "In a way. I'm from Tennessee, from the sticks, and I've

had to adapt to an environment where money and proper etiquette are expected, even if it's meaningless. I think all women can relate to hiding little things to impress the people they are dating. It's a universal feeling, and it's treated with heart and a real sense of humour in the film."

[Q] Do you prefer doing comedies to dramas?

[A] "I like doing both, but I really love doing comedies."

[Q] Are you going to do a *Legally Blonde 2*?

[A] "Yeah. I don't know much about it right now. I haven't read it. We'll see."

[Q] Are you surprised at how well *Legally Blonde* did at the box office?

[A] "I'm still waiting for them to tell me it was all a joke and that it really went straight to video [laughs]."

“I'm not as good at changing diapers as Ryan is.... Ryan's mom had a daycare centre, so he can do a diaper like you wouldn't believe”

[Q] Do you feel like a role model for other young, successful twentysomethings who are getting married earlier in life?

[A] "I don't think I'm influencing a lot of young women to go out and get married. It's not like all those new brides don't love their husbands. I'm sure they didn't want to be married really young so that they could be like me. I hope not, because I don't feel like I'm a big influence on people. I just happen to have a good career, a great husband and a wonderful child. That's all."

[Q] Does it worry you that most marriages between actors and actresses don't last?

[A] "Listen, other people's business is their business, and I can't really be concerned just because other people are breaking up. It doesn't mean I'm going to go break up. You have to sort of exist in your own reality and not be too worried about other people's business."

[Q] How do you improve your chances?

[A] "I think you always have to focus on your family — that's my first priority. And Ryan and I were both raised in very strong family structures. Both of our parents are still together. So we feel very strongly about that."


[Q] Can you have a normal life when both of you are stars and being hounded by the paparazzi?

[A] "Sure, you can have a normal life. But you can't control the paparazzi. So, if they want to chase me down and watch me change dirty diapers, that's their prerogative. I can't imagine that being that exciting."

[Q] How did your parents feel about you going into acting?

[A] "I think that my parents always expected the unconventional with me. I mean, being a seven-year-old and turning to them and saying, 'Mommy, I want to be an actress,' completely confused them, since they were both physicians. But I'm just glad that my parents were really supportive with what I chose to do. However, I still think that they're a little disappointed that I didn't turn out to be a surgeon."

[Q] You dropped out of Stanford after one year. Will you ever go back?

[A] "Maybe, but it's not a real priority." 



From left: Witherspoon, Dempsey and Candice Bergen in *Sweet Home Alabama*

▶▶ [Q] Any regrets about quitting?

[A] “No, because Robert Benton [who directed her in 1998’s *Twilight*] called me and asked if I wanted to do a movie with Paul Newman, Susan Sarandon and Gene Hackman, and I said, ‘Hmm, do I want to continue with *Psyche 101* or do a movie with Paul Newman?’ It wasn’t a hard decision. I was like, ‘Pack me up, I’ll see you girls later.’”

[Q] How has motherhood changed you?

[A] “It’s sort of indescribable. I mean, so much of your life changes that it definitely puts your life into perspective. Changing dirty diapers every day and cleaning the peanut butter and jelly sandwiches off of your face makes it’s hard to see yourself as a glamorous movie star.”

[Q] How do you stay in shape?

[A] “Well, right now I play tennis because I’m working on a movie about tennis with my production company. I play a couple of times a week. Then I lift weights with a trainer.”

[Q] Who wins when you and Ryan play tennis?

[A] “Definitely me! But I’m training three times a week. So he’s going to have to get out there and start working on it if he wants to beat me.”

[Q] Have fans ever mistaken you for someone else?

[A] “Sure, all the time. They always

think that I’m Claire Danes, Christina Ricci or Alicia Silverstone. But if you tell Christina that, she’ll be like, ‘I don’t get it. I just don’t get it.’ I had someone make a U-turn in the street last week and say, ‘Oh my God, you’re that girl from *Clueless!*’ I said, ‘I’m so sorry that you had to make that illegal turn, but I’m not.’ He was so disappointed.”

[Q] Do you feel lucky?

[A] “I feel very lucky, and I feel very blessed. But I just constantly remind myself that I’m just a little girl from Tennessee. When Ryan and I were at the Oscars, we walked up at rehearsal and were blown away when we saw our faces on those little placards and we were sitting right up front. I nearly started to cry. I was like, ‘I can’t believe that I’ve made it this far. I never even dreamt that it was possible.’”

[Q] Do you have a favourite dumb blonde joke?

[A] “Yeah, here’s the short one: Okay, two blondes are on their way to Disneyland and they see a sign on the side of the road that says, ‘Disneyland left.’ So they turn around and go home [laughs]. I think it’s funny, don’t you?” **F**

Earl Dittman is an entertainment writer based in Houston, Texas. He also interviewed Benjamin Bratt for this issue of Famous.

famous trivia

1 *City by the Sea* marks the second time Robert De Niro and Eliza Dushku have appeared on screen together. What was the first? (Clue: It was De Niro’s directorial debut.)

2 Which role did Kate Hudson turn down to star in this month’s 19th-century war pic *Four Feathers* — Mary Jane Watson in *Spider-Man*, Pam Dawson in *Mr. Deeds*, Foxy Cleopatra in *Austin Powers in Goldmember* or Sara Moore in *Serving Sara*?

3 In which country was *Trapped* star Charlize Theron born?

4 Name the Toronto-based TV show on which *Dark Blue*’s Scott Speedman was discovered. (Clue: The low-budget program also launched the Barenaked Ladies’ career.)

5 *The Banger Sisters*’ Susan Sarandon has one Emmy nomination to her credit. Name the sitcom that earned her the small-screen honour.

6 Name the chilly 1997 flick that first brought *Abandon*’s Katie Holmes to the big screen.

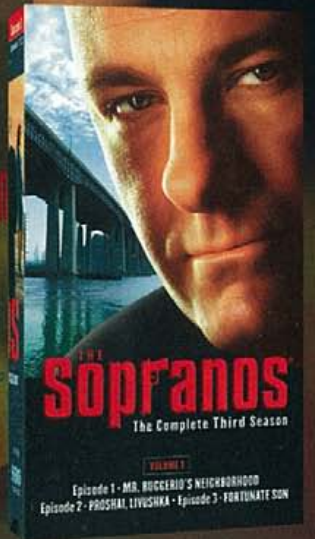
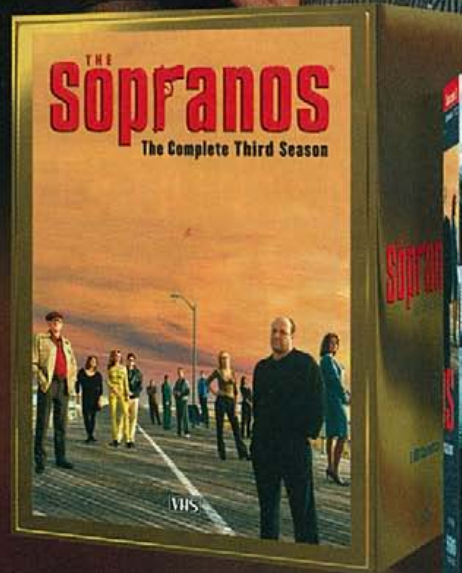
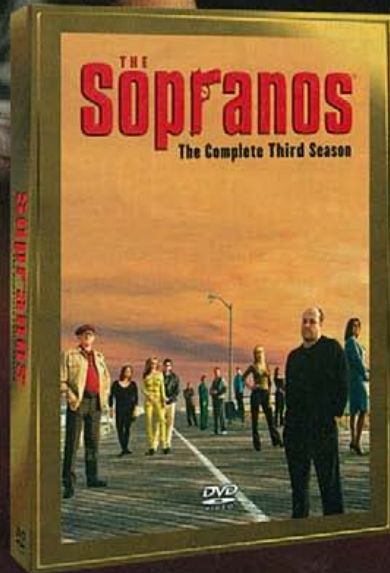
7 Which beefy actor/singer who appears in *Formula 51* once turned down the lead role in a stage production of *Phantom of the Opera*?

8 Of the following, who has never dated *Old School* star Luke Wilson — Gwyneth Paltrow, Drew Barrymore or Neve Campbell?

ANSWERS

- 1 This Boy’s Life 2 Mary Jane Watson
3 South Africa 4 Speaker’s Corner
5 Friends 6 The Ice Storm
7 Meat Loaf 8 Neve Campbell

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FARRELL ENTERS THE BIG LEAGUES, STONE JOINS THE CLUB AND ZETA-JONES MAKES THE TEAM | BY JOHN KENNEDY



Zeta-Jones

KEEPING UP WITH ZETA-JONES

Catherine Zeta-Jones obviously has no intention of staying home and changing diapers (insert your own Michael Douglas joke here). The Welsh beauty has wrapped at least three movies that are coming soon to a theatre near you. Following the Christmas release of *Chicago: The Musical*, Zeta-Jones will show up as a magician's wife in director **Mimi Leder's** *Smoke & Mirrors* and then as a vengeful divorcée opposite **George Clooney** in *Intolerable Cruelty*. She also lends her voice to the animated feature *Sinbad: Legend of the Seven Seas*. In the meantime, she'll star in and produce *Coming Out*, a comedy based on a story by her brother **Lyndon Jones**, about a gay man who takes over the coaching duties of a Welsh rugby team following his father's death. She's also prepping to reteam with **Antonio Banderas** and director **Martin Campbell** for *Zorro Unmasked*, the sequel to 1998's *The Mask of Zorro*.

STONE GATHERS NO MOSS

One-time box-office starlet Sharon Stone has been so busy disinfecting the komodo dragon teeth marks on her husband's toes that she's been absent from the big screen for a couple of years. But the blond bomb now has two projects in the works — *A Different Loyalty* with **Rupert Everett**, directed by **Marek Kaniévski** (*Less Than Zero*) and *The Liar's Club* for director **Nadia Tass** (*Amy*). In the former, Stone will play real-life Eleanor Philby, whose spy husband (Everett)

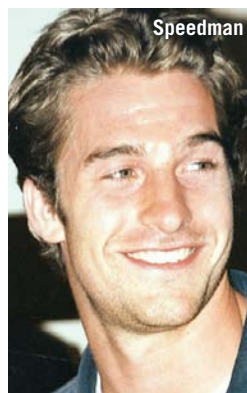


Stone

infiltrated British intelligence for the Russians before defecting in 1963, while *The Liar's Club* is the story of a dysfunctional Texas family going through a series of separations and reunions.

S.W.A.T. FLIES INTO THEATRES

Irish actor **Colin Farrell**, whose movie career in North America kicked off just two years ago with **Joel Schumacher's** *Tigerland*, will earn a reported \$8-million (U.S.) to suit up for *S.W.A.T.* opposite **Samuel L. Jackson**. The pic is based on the 1970s TV series of the same name and will be directed by **Clark Johnson**, who makes his feature debut. Farrell, 26, has watched his paycheques grow steadily — he earned \$2.5-million for *Minority Report* and about \$5-million for next year's *The Recruit*. He'll also appear in another Schumacher project, *Phone Booth*, followed by *Daredevil* with Ben Affleck.



SCOTTY THE VAMPIRE SLAYER

Former *Felicity* hunk **Scott Speedman** probably spent his summer avoiding razor blades and waxing salons. The Canadian actor has signed on to play a werewolf in *Underworld*, an action film from first-time director **Len Wiseman**. The feature is described as a Romeo and Juliet story set in the darkness of a raging war between vampires and werewolves under the city streets. Speedman will star opposite **Kate Beckinsale** (*Pearl Harbor*), who'll play a powerful vampire named Selene who

sets out to destroy all werewolves — except Speedman's hirsute character, of course, because he's just so darn cute. The two fall in love and work together to end the ancient war. The fur starts flying early this month when *Underworld* begins shooting in Hungary.

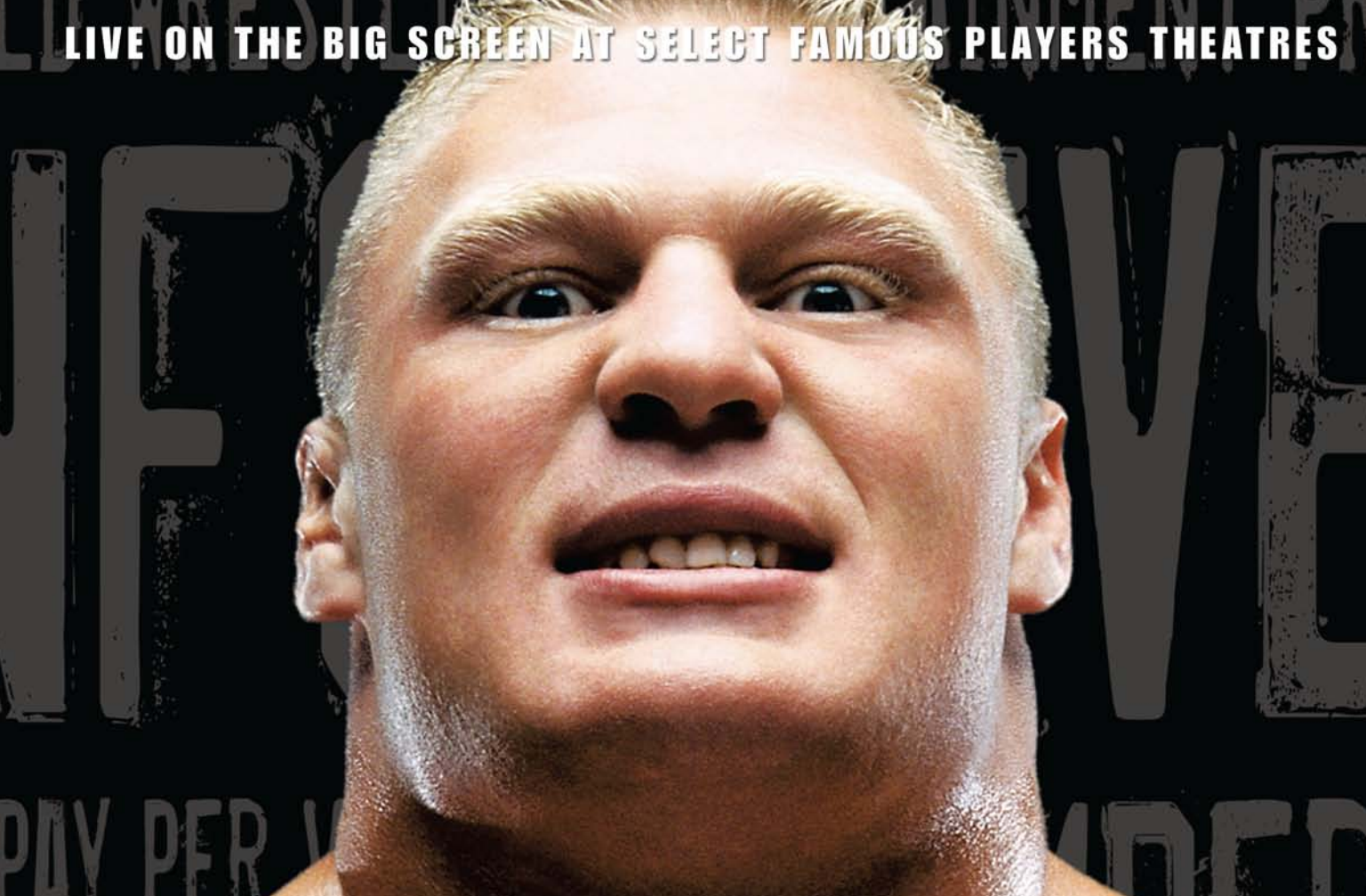
A BARE ROLE FOR MONKEYS

Adorable little monkeys all over Hollywood are shaving their bellies in hopes of landing parts in *Crisis in the Hot Zone*, about the real-life Ebola virus outbreak in a Washington animal test lab, and the government's efforts to contain it. No primate or human cast members have been named, but filmmakers **David Siegel** and **Scott McGehee** (*The Deep End*) will direct, using a screenplay by **Eric Jandresen** based on **Richard Preston's** novel *The Hot Zone*.

BRIEFLY

■ **Jim Carrey** and **Garry Shandling** will provide the voices of R.J. the raccoon and Verne the turtle, respectively, in the computer-animated feature *Over the Hedge*. ■ **Sir Ian McKellen** will portray Rodrigo de Borgia, the patriarch of Italy's first crime family who, in 1492, bought his way into becoming Pope Alexander VI. *Borgia*, also starring **Christina Ricci** as Borgia's daughter and **Ewan McGregor** as his illegitimate son, will be directed by **Neil Jordan** (*The Crying Game*). ■ **David Zucker** (*The Naked Gun*) will direct **Rob Schneider** in *Harv the Barbarian*, a comedy about a simple barbarian on a voyage of self-discovery. ■ Disney is bringing its Shaggy Dog concept back to the big screen. No star has been picked for the flick, which is based on the studio's 1959 feature *Shaggy*.

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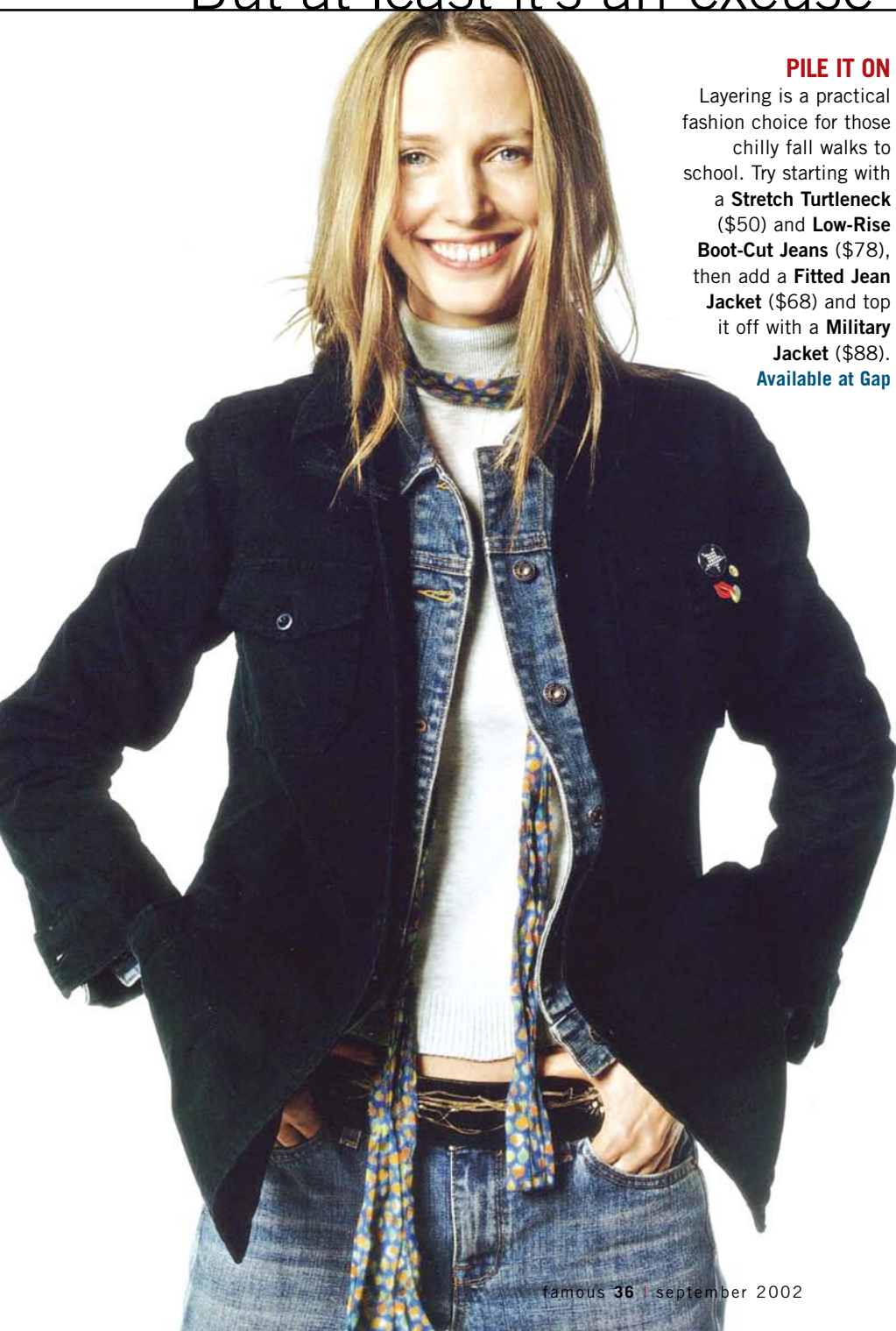
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BACK AND BLUE

BLUE RODEO RETURNS WITH THE R&B-HEAVY ALBUM

PALACE OF GOLD | BY MICHAEL WHITE



Cuddy, third from left, with Blue Rodeo

PHOTO BY JOHN BENTHAM

“I always think that people will be all for change,” says Jim Cuddy, who co-founded Blue Rodeo with fellow singer-guitarist Greg Keelor 17 years ago. His faith in the band’s extensive fan base will be put to the test when the Toronto quintet’s ninth studio album, *Palace of Gold*, hits streets on September 24.

Throughout a career that has netted them nine platinum albums and domestic sales of more than two-million units, a great deal of Blue Rodeo’s enduring appeal has been thanks to the reliability of their sound: a melodic and accessible merging of vintage country and rock styles that recalls artists such as The Byrds, The Everly Brothers and Bob Dylan.

But every musician knows there’s a perilously thin line between a reliable trademark and a tired formula. So, when Cuddy read *Soulsville U.S.A.*, an exhaustive biography of legendary Memphis ‘Southern soul’ label Stax Records (home to Isaac Hayes, Booker T. & the MG’s and Otis Redding), he immediately had a vision of the band’s future. Blue Rodeo had long been fans of R&B — its influence often providing a subtle undercurrent to their records. For *Palace of Gold*, however, the band went a little further. Like Stax, whose in-house studio was based out of a disused movie theatre, Blue Rodeo bought an old storefront on Toronto’s Danforth Avenue, gutting the interior and turning it into a studio of their own. Then, in the tradition of the classic soul sounds of the ‘60s and ‘70s, they incorporated a four-piece horn section, and hired local string players to

add lush orchestration to several new songs.

“I think that one of the characteristics that Greg and I both share is that we just pursue things blindly,” says Cuddy, chuckling. “It never occurred to us that it would be bad at all. We just sort of plowed ahead.”

Fortunately, *Palace of Gold* is the freshest and most inspired Blue Rodeo album since 1993’s sextuple-platinum *Five Days in July*. Its embellished instrumentation elevates ballads like “Bulletproof” and “Glad to be Alive” to a level of grandeur that today’s pop rarely possesses, while the rollicking “Walk Like You Don’t Mind” arguably rocks harder than any Blue Rodeo song in a decade.

Palace of Gold arrives more than two years after its predecessor, *The Days in Between* — the longest gap ever between Blue Rodeo albums. Cuddy explains that the extra time was essential if the band’s new direction was to be a success, and for the costly acquisition of their own studio to be justified.

“It was a great opportunity we provided ourselves with, to be able to go slowly and to figure out how to work the horns and strings into the songs, to think about things overnight,” he says. “More often than not — 99 percent of the time — when we’ve recorded, we’re under the gun either financially or time-wise, and you have to make decisions really quickly. Obviously, music done in a rush still has great value, but you’re often left with this very unsatisfied feeling by the things you’ve had to leave in. This time, of course, we ran the risk of being so indulgent that we never finished.”

Freed at last from the confines of the studio, Blue Rodeo will bring their horn players with them on the upcoming *Palace of Gold* cross-Canada tour, as well as a string section in selected cities. The band workshopped this expanded lineup at a handful of concerts over the past year, and Cuddy is thrilled to report that audience feedback was among the best in their history.

“You know, that’s an exciting time in a band’s career,” he marvels, “when you’ve been going 17 years, and all of a sudden you enter into a phase where you’re as excited as you’ve been in at least 10 years.”

Michael White is a freelance writer based in Vancouver.

out THIS MONTH

Artist: Aaron Carter
Title: Another Earthquake!
Label: Zomba/BMG

Artist: The Chieftans
Title: Down the Old Plank - The Nashville Sessions
Label: RCA/BMG

Artist: Disturbed
Title: Believe
Label: Warner Bros.

Artist: Peter Gabriel
Title: Up
Label: Geffen/Universal

Artist: Haven
Title: Between the Senses
Label: Virgin UK

Artist: Jennifer Love Hewitt
Title: BareNaked
Label: Zomba/BMG

Artist: Miguel Migs
Title: Colorful You
Label: Astralwerks/Virgin

Artist: Rhett Miller
Title: The Instigator
Label: Elektra/Warner Bros.

Artist: Monica
Title: All Eyez on Me
Label: J Records/BMG

Artist: Nas
Title: The Lost Tapes
Label: Columbia/Sony

Artist: The Roots
Title: Phrenology
Label: MCA/Universal

Artist: Joe Satriani
Title: Strange Beautiful Music
Label: Epic/Sony

Artist: Scapegoat Wax
Title: Swax
Label: Hollywood/Universal

Artist: Seether
Title: Disclaimer
Label: Epic/Sony

Artist: The Shining
Title: True Skies
Label: Epic/Sony

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SEX, DRUGS AND NASTY ROLES

PARENTS AND TEENS FIND CONTENT REVIEW SITES USEFUL — FOR DIFFERENT REASONS

BY JOHN KENNEDY

Sex, nudity, violence and profanity — even in today's rather liberal society, many parents are trying to protect their children from some or all of these things. That's why a number of websites have popped up to offer detailed content reviews of movies and videos. For concerned parents, these sites provide valuable information about the movies their children might be going to see. But for teenagers with raging hormones, these sites are handy guides to finding sex, nudity and violence in movies. What 15-year-old boy



Y Tu Mama También

wouldn't want to see the Mexican film *Y Tu Mama También*, for example, after reading the details of its sexual content at *Screen It!* [www.screenit.com] — the tamest section of which reads, "We see Tenoch and Ana having sex (missionary position) with graphic movement, sounds and nudity (his bare butt, her bare breasts, part of her bare butt)."

"To each his own," concedes *Screen It!* founder Jim Judy. "There will always be those who use/abuse most any service in ways it was not originally intended."

Judy's site reviews new movies and videos for more than just sex and violence, though. Categories include: alcohol/drugs, disrespectful/bad attitude, frightening/tense scenes, imitative behaviour, profanity and smoking.

An aspiring screenwriter and movie

buff, Judy created *Screen It!* in March 1996 because friends and co-workers were always asking him if certain movies were okay for their kids to watch. The service became so popular (in *Yahoo Internet Life* magazine, film critic Roger Ebert described it as one of the five most useful sites in the world) that Judy quit his government job in August 1997 to work on the site full-time. It takes him roughly 10 hours to see and then write about each movie, so he focuses mostly on mainstream films in wide release.

But if *Screen It!* is intended to help parents decide which movies their minor children can see, why does the site include reviews of R-rated and unrated films? "Because many teenagers still want to see R-rated and unrated films, and both could have either just a few f-words or nonstop profanity, sex and violence that earned them the R rating," Judy explains. "And many adults with no kids, or those who have already grown up, are concerned for themselves."

Some other review sites, like *Grading the Movies* [www.gradingthemovies.com] rate only G and PG movies.

Judy, who lives in Washington, D.C., insists he is not imposing his morality on anyone. "I keep all religious, social and political agendas out of the reviews," he says, comparing *Screen It!* to a food package that lists the ingredients but doesn't tell consumers if it's good or bad for them. Aris Christofides, editor and publisher of *Kids-in-Mind* [www.kids-in-mind.com] uses the same analogy to describe his Cincinnati-based site. He explains his staff of eight uses the "prevailing cultural norms in North America and Western Europe" to determine what is potentially objectionable.

Christofides says he's aware that some

PROTECT US

Movie Mom

www.moviemom.com

This site by syndicated radio host Nell Minow gives information on movies and videos most suitable for kids under 18. She even tries to explain the appeal of Pokémon.

Child Care Action Project

www.capalert.com

Unabashedly religious, this site rates movies in biblical terms using complicated graphs, summaries and listings in several categories (including "sex/homosexuality" and "impudence/hate").

Grading the Movies

www.gradingthemovies.com

Sticking to family-friendly films, Rod Gustafson, his wife Donna and a small staff offer information about movie content for parents. Includes a whole site for Canadians [www.gtm.ca].

people are using the information on the site to specifically seek out movies with sex or violence. "There's nothing we can do about that, but we don't want the site to be titillating," he explains. "Personally, I find reading our reviews boring. It's not something anyone would read for pleasure." Christofides claims he has received feedback from teenagers who use the site to convince their parents that a certain R-rated movie is alright for them to see.

Screen It!'s creator says it's up to parents to choose films that are suitable for their children. "There are plenty of religious-based reviews that say that certain films are 'evil,'" says Judy. "We'll leave that up to the parents to decide based on the information we provide."

He's referring to sites run by the Christian organizations Crosswalk [www.movies.crosswalk.com] and the Child Care Action Project [www.capalert.com], which uses a complicated rating system and has reviews that are based on "the teachings and expectations of Jesus Christ...never changing with the slippery tides of modern morality." Look out, Tom Green.

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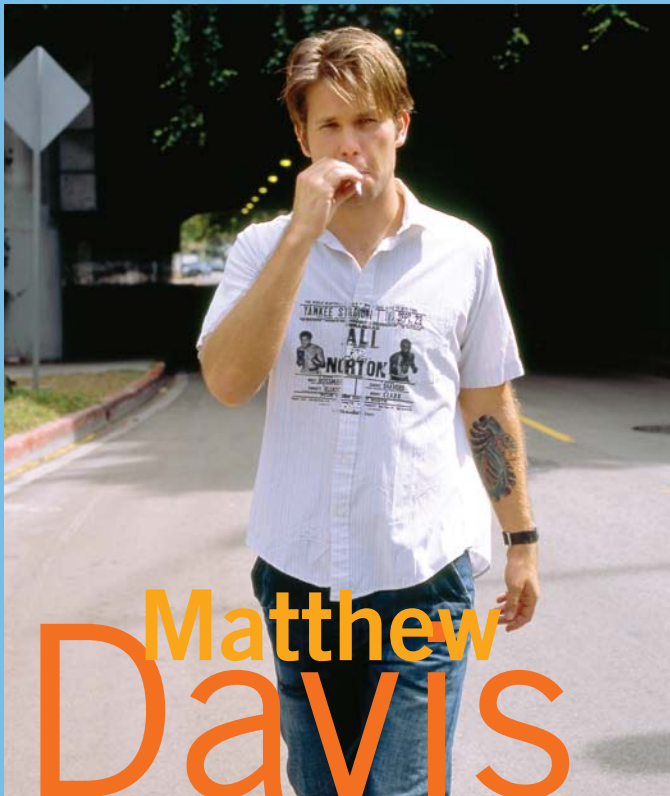


PHOTO BY BRIE CHILDERS

Matthew Davis

MAKES HIS PICKS

He may be an All-American hunk, but 24-year-old Matthew Davis actually kicked off his movie career right here in Canada, playing twins in the forgettable made-in-Toronto feature *Urban Legends: Final Cut*. He avoided being typecast in teen slasher flicks only to sign on for a string of war films — *Tigerland*, *Pearl Harbor* and the forthcoming submarine pic *Below*. But audiences never really paid much attention to the handsome Salt Lake City native until he played Reese Witherspoon's ex-boyfriend, Warner Huntington III, in last year's comedy hit *Legally Blonde*. Davis most recently showed up in this summer's *Blue Crush* as the object of Kate Bosworth's affection. Currently working on some screenplay ideas of his own, he spoke with *Famous* from his home in Los Angeles.

WHAT ARE YOUR FIVE FAVOURITE FILMS?

"Number one is **Chinatown** [1974]. I'm a huge fan of [screenwriter] Robert Towne and I thought it captured the essence of what I would imagine Los Angeles to be at the time. I think the performances in it are absolutely amazing and Roman Polanski's direction was great. • Number two is **The Godfather** [1972]. That's just kind of a given. • Number three is **Jaws** [1975]. I think it was the first movie I remember seeing, actually. I was like five, maybe even younger, and it's just tortured me ever since. I have nightmares of sharks and I have a phobia of the ocean. • Number four is **The Hustler** [1961]. I'm a huge pool fan and I saw *The Color of Money* when I was younger, not realizing that it was the later years of Fast Eddie. I checked out *The Hustler* and, not being smart enough to understand that they were connected, I was like, 'Wait a minute!' • And number five is **Fight Club** [1999]. I love it because I think it has a real spiritual message to it. It really pisses me off when people say, 'I can't

watch it, it's too violent,' because it's not about the violence, you know? It's about a whole generation of disenfranchised men who can't find their way in society."

SOUNDS LIKE YOUR IDOLS ARE THE ICONS LIKE BRANDO AND NEWMAN.

"Yeah, definitely. I started acting in high school and my dad rented *On the Waterfront* and *East of Eden* for me and those movies changed my life, just in terms of the way I viewed acting.... You can have a great story and special effects and all that stuff but great acting is something in and of itself. So you have Robert Shaw in *Jaws*, and Paul Newman, George C. Scott, definitely Marlon Brando and James Dean...and Jack Nicholson can just blow me away."

DO YOU THINK WE HAVE ACTORS OF THAT CALIBER TODAY?

"I think Sean Penn is certainly the closest. I think he and Al Pacino are carrying that torch. And Benicio Del Toro, who I'm a huge fan of. But other than that I don't see much hope in the younger generation right now."

YOU CO-STARRED WITH COLIN FARRELL IN *TIGERLAND* — DID YOU KNOW THEN THAT HE WAS GOING TO BREAK OUT THE WAY HE HAS?

"No, no. We were all thinking that what happened to Colin was going to happen to us because [director] Joel Schumacher has this ability to pluck young actors out of nowhere and all of a sudden they're working all over the place.... So we were way too self-involved to think about it happening to Colin."

BELOW IS YOUR THIRD WAR FLICK. WHAT'S WITH THE WAR FETISH?

"(Laughs.) I'm certainly trying to stay away from that. *Pearl Harbor* didn't really count because I'm in the movie for about two seconds. It's hard to say, because if you find a really great script and there are actors who are working on it who you love...if they were to make a *Thin Red Line* tomorrow and someone said 'Jim Caviezel, Sean Penn and Terry Malick are in this movie, would you be a part of it?' I would definitely say yes."

WHAT MAKES *BELOW* DIFFERENT FROM ALL THE SUBMARINE MOVIES WE'VE SEEN?

"I think it defies the submarine genre because the acting in it is great. We've got a really great ensemble cast, the set design is phenomenal and our director David Twohy really captured a strong element of fear that goes along with the story."

BLUE CRUSH MUST HAVE BEEN FUN TO DO.

"It came at a perfect time because after September 11th everything just slowed down. It just seemed like such a fun movie to be a part of. I got to work in Hawaii, I got to learn how to surf and I got paid. It was a perfect experience and a needed experience given the time in the world."

WHO WOULD WIN A FIST FIGHT — YOU OR BEN AFFLECK?

"Oooh... that's a tough one. I'd bet on me but he is bigger than I am so it's hard to say."

IN YOUR FIRST TWO MOVIES YOU SHOWED YOUR BARE BUTT, YET YOU HAVEN'T SINCE. DISCUSS.

"(Laughs.) I haven't had the opportunity." —John Kennedy

new RELEASES

GET INTO **PANIC ROOM** OR BE BLOWN AWAY BY **MONSOON WEDDING**

SEPTEMBER 10

CHANGING LANES

Stars: Ben Affleck, Samuel L. Jackson

Director: Roger Michell (*Notting Hill*)

Story: A chance fender-bender and some misplaced paperwork lead two men into an increasingly intense battle of wits in this surprisingly insightful film about the way seemingly minor moral lapses can result in majorly unpleasant consequences.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO

Stars: James Caviezel, Guy Pearce

Director: Kevin Reynolds (*Waterworld*)

Story: Alexander Dumas' classic tale of sweet revenge returns to the silver screen for the 13th time. Set during the Napoleonic era, the story follows the trials and tribulations of an innocent man who must break out of prison in order to seek vengeance on the friend who framed him.

SEPTEMBER 17

40 DAYS AND 40 NIGHTS

Stars: Josh Hartnett, Shannyn Sossamon

Director: Michael Lehmann (*My Giant*)

Story: After a string of shallow relationships, Matt (Hartnett) decides to abstain from all forms of sex for Lent. But wouldn't you know it? Mere days after swearing off the dirty deed, meets the girl of his dreams! And now she's wondering why he's keeping her at arm's length.

DEATH TO SMOOCHY

Stars: Robin Williams, Edward Norton

Director: Danny DeVito (*Matilda*)

Story: Smoochy (Norton) is a giant purple rhino who just happens to be the most popular kiddy-show host in town. Which is precisely why Rainbow Randolph (Williams), his disgraced, unemployed predecessor, wants him dead. Comedies don't come much blacker than this.

HOLLYWOOD ENDING

Stars: Woody Allen, Téa Leoni

Director: Woody Allen (*Sweet and Lowdown*)

Story: The Woodman stars as a once-great director who has been reduced to making commercials. But a major studio decides to take a chance on the has-been and let him helm a big-budget flick. Only problem is, he's so nervous about being back on the set, he goes blind from stress.

KISSING JESSICA STEIN

Stars: Jennifer Westfeldt, Heather Juergensen

Director: Charles Herman-Wurmfeld (*Fanci's Persuasion*)

Story: The unlucky-in-love Jessica (Westfeldt) decides that she needs to expand her dating horizons, so she takes the plunge and answers a "woman seeking woman" personal ad. And thus begins her uncertain journey into the sometimes confusing world of lesbian relationships.

MONSTERS, INC.

Stars: Billy Crystal, John Goodman

Directors: Peter Docter, David Silverman, Lee Unkrich

Story: Sulley (voiced by Goodman) may be the top kid-scarrer at his factory in Monstropolis, but that won't stop him from getting fired if anyone discovers that he and his pal Mike (voiced by Crystal) accidentally let a human child into the monster world. A charming screwball comedy brought to you by the folks at Pixar (*Toy Story*, *A Bug's Life*).



PANIC ROOM

Stars: Jodie Foster, Kristen Stewart

Director: David Fincher (*Fight Club*)

Story: When three thieves break into the new home of a recent divorcee (Foster) and her daughter (Stewart), the two women head for the house's "panic room," a well-defended steel and concrete sanctuary. Unfortunately, what the crooks are looking for is hidden in that very room.

SEPTEMBER 24

MONSOON WEDDING

Stars: Naseeruddin Shah, Lilette Dubey

Director: Mira Nair (*Kama Sutra: A Tale of Love*)

Story: Love triangles and secret relationships blossom in the days leading up to an arranged marriage between a woman from a wealthy Punjabi family and a computer programmer from Houston. A very funny and joyous Indian film that manages to avoid the worst of Bollywood's song-and-dance excesses.

MURDER BY NUMBERS

Stars: Sandra Bullock, Ryan Gosling

Director: Barbet Schroeder (*Desperate Measures*)

Story: Two high school students in a small California town decide to kill a young woman just to see if they're smart enough to get away with it. Standing in their way is Cassie (Bullock), a seasoned homicide detective who has a gut feeling that there's more to this case than meets the eye.

With files from *Premiere Video Magazine*. All release dates subject to change.

september

HOROSCOPE | BY DAN LIEBMAN



KATIA SMIRNOVA

virgo

August 23 >>> September 22

Expect some changes in your living arrangements. Long-term guests and short-term relocations are among the possibilities. Watch out for a gullible streak that surfaces toward month's end.

libra

September 23 >>> October 22

Although your influence and encouragement can help a partner out of an emotional slump, you play far more than a supporting role this month. You'll excel as a host and shine as a team leader. Mid-month finds you working on a family tree or related project.

scorpio

October 23 >>> November 21

While a casual acquaintance reveals a whole lot more than you need to know, your closest friends clam up. That's par for the course in a month that accents contrasts and contradictions: slowdowns at work one week, overtime another.

sagittarius

November 22 >>> December 22

The month looks good for a makeover — new hairstyle, new perfume, new wardrobe. Just opt for subtlety over razzle dazzle. You need to make some tough budget decisions, especially in the area of shared expenses.

capricorn

December 23 >>> January 20

Decisions you make throughout September should be from the heart as well as the head. An old flame may be trying to get in touch, but the communications channels are temporarily blocked.

aquarius

January 21 >>> February 19

Here's what's on tap this September: soirées, a boss or co-worker with an attitude, a wonderful new soul mate and a friend who wants to be indulged. But remember to take time out for yourself, or you'll be overwhelmed by it all.

pisces

February 20 >>> March 20

This month, your key to romance lies in balancing the passive yin with the active yang. Confirming appointments is all-important from the 11th through the 19th.

aries

March 21 >>> April 20

It's a month of misunderstandings. For instance, flirtations may not be all that innocent, and financial offers may be less firm than you believe. But the first two weeks are outstanding for setting up a health and fitness plan. And the last 12 days see you enjoying good times — at long last — with a very special friend.

taurus

April 21 >>> May 22

You're inclined to talk yourself into things — especially from the 2nd through the 14th. So why not go for the really interesting stuff? A romance partner is extra supportive and friends are giving you more space.

gemini

May 23 >>> June 21

Romantic dry spells end and September develops into a month of sweet sentiments. It's also an unexpectedly creative time, even if you're merely doodling. Health needs, job conflicts, and household repairs all require prompt attention.

cancer

June 22 >>> July 22

You're unusually focused following a period of diversions. The first two weeks of September are outstanding for trouble shooting at work. Sorting out relationships is ideal for weeks three and four.

leo

July 23 >>> August 22

Your knack for bringing adversaries together works wonders through the Labour Day weekend. You and your partner may be swapping your typical roles near the 15th. The last week of September is ripe for adding flare to your wardrobe and zing to your romantic life.

SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS



1st Lily Tomlin
2nd Keanu Reeves
3rd Charlie Sheen

4th Neil Simon
5th Raquel Welch
6th Rosie Perez
7th Corbin Bernsen
8th Billy Crudup
9th Adam Sandler
10th Chris Columbus
11th Harry Connick, Jr.
12th Ian Holm
13th Jacqueline Bisset
14th Sam Neill
15th Oliver Stone

16th Lauren Bacall
17th Anne Bancroft
18th Frankie Avalon
19th Jeremy Irons
20th Sophia Loren
21st Stephen King
22nd Andrea Bocelli
23rd Jason Alexander
24th Pedro Almodóvar
25th Heather Locklear
26th Linda Hamilton
27th Meat Loaf
28th Gwyneth Paltrow



29th Anita Ekberg
30th Fran Drescher

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10 STARS REVEAL THEIR IDEAL SCREEN PARTNER

By Susan Granger

STEVEN SEAGAL “I think I would have made beautiful movies with Audrey Hepburn. No one thinks of me as a romantic leading man, but I really am quite gallant. Above any other woman, Hepburn would have been a good match for me.”

JULIA ROBERTS “Sam Shepard. He was my love interest in *The Pelican Brief*. He’s a poetic think tank, that guy, which I think is incredibly appealing. Sam’s terribly handsome with a very expansive, well-rounded appeal.”

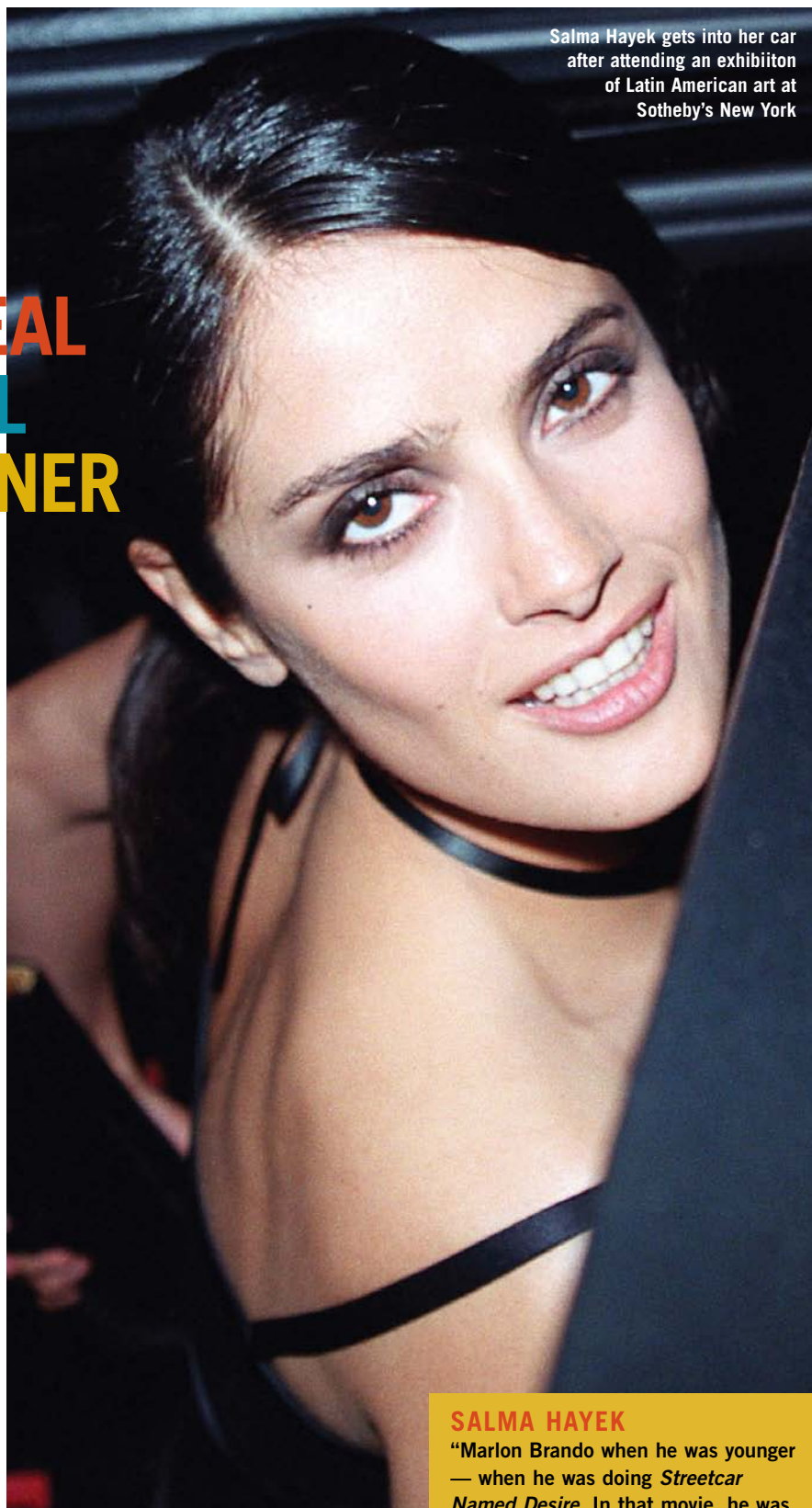
GEORGE CLOONEY “Mark Wahlberg. We’ve done enough movies together to be Tracy and Hepburn.”

LAUREN HOLLY “Harrison Ford, because he’s a total gentleman but you know there’s something raging underneath.”

KATE CAPSHAW “Probably Tom Cruise. He makes my knees go weak.”

PAUL NEWMAN “Robert Redford is probably my ideal screen partner. We’ve been looking for something for 20 years. We don’t want to do anything of lesser caliber than those two we did [*The Sting*, *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid*].

GILLIAN ANDERSON “Johnny Depp — because he’s so damn good at what he does. Anybody who is really talented at what they do is sexy to me.”



Salma Hayek gets into her car after attending an exhibiton of Latin American art at Sotheby's New York

PHOTO BY ALECSEY BOLDESKUL'NYI PHOTOPRESS

SALMA HAYEK “Marlon Brando when he was younger — when he was doing *Streetcar Named Desire*. In that movie, he was just steaming. *Muy caliente*.”

ANGIE DICKINSON “Antonio Banderas. He’s great-looking and has that wonderful thing called humour. And he’s mature. He’s dazzling.”

PAM GRIER “Robert De Niro. He’s got a sparkle in his eyes, and that smile.”

GUARANTEED

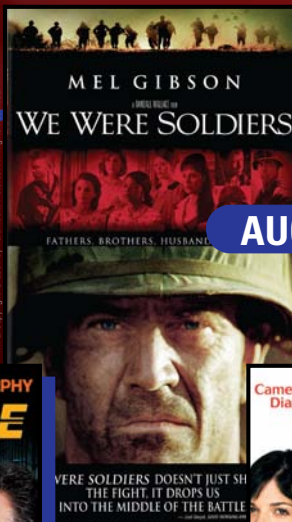
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AUGUST 13



AUGUST 20



AUGUST 20



AUGUST 27



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