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May '17

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PASSING THE TORCH

Dakota Johnson is a big fan of *9½ Weeks*, so was then delighted to get the chance to work with Kim Basinger on *Fifty Shades Darker*.

In the second instalment in E.L. James' bonkbuster series, the new relationship between Anastasia (Dakota Johnson) and Christian (Jamie Dornan) is threatened by the arrival of shadowy figures from the past, who include his business partner and former lover Elena Lincoln (Kim Basinger).

The latter made her name with an equally steamy erotic drama *9 ½ Weeks,* and it turns out that Johnson is a big a fan of the 1986 film."My world was really turned on its head the first time I saw *9 ½ Weeks,* and I've been an admirer of her and her work ever since," she enthuses. "It felt semi-kismet to have Kim in the film given the respective natures of *9 ½ Weeks* and this series. She is just so talented and idiosyncratic and absolutely stunning. In my narcissistic dream world this coincidence exists as some sort of initiation ceremony, like a "knighting", or a passing of the torch, if you will. I am very much aware that neither I nor anyone on the planet is as sexy, sparkly and beautifully unguarded as Kim Basinger in *9 ½ Weeks*, and I am fully okay with that. I probably prefer living in the shadow of that great film, but let a girl dream!"

Although the subject matter of *Fifty Shades Darker* made it a challenging shoot, Johnson felt there was less pressure this time around. "The first time, the pressure to deliver a story beloved by so many people was immense," she explains. "The scale of it was daunting. I am not going to say that this second time was easy, but it was definitely more familiar. This time around, these were not uncharted waters and Jamie and I knew how to navigate the characters and content. It was an educational and enjoyable experience to follow the arch of a character so far."

Nevertheless, she admits that shooting the requisite sex scenes wasn't easy. "The number of sex scenes we had to film was daunting, so we tried to make light of it all as much as possible, while still making a conscious effort to have them be realistic and not thankless or repetitive. Filming those scenes can be emotionally and physically challenging, so we definitely had to handle them with care."

Fortunately, Johnson gets on well with her leading man Dornan and because of the intimacy factor, they were able to build on the safe and protective environment they fostered on the first movie *Fifty Shades Of Grey*.

"We just became really good friends, thank goodness," she adds. "We are truly lucky we get along so well, because it would have been a real nightmare if we didn't!"

Adam Colby

Fifty Shades Darker is out DVD and Blu-ray on May 24

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ALL SHE WANTS TO DO

Sheryl Crow talks rollerskating and reconnecting with her earlier recordings. **Words** Zoë Radas

"I can safely say I never listen to my records – that would be torture," the US singer-songwriter smiles. "But I wanted to remind myself of what the spirit of the records was, particularly the second and third. The second one was really the result of the first being so huge, and feeling like, man, I just want to make music for fun without the pressure… you feel that brattiness on that record. The third was the result of a super painful breakup. This record, it feels like it's right on the surface… there [are] so many things weighing on everybody's minds here [in America]."

Utilising the talents of Jeff Trott – Crow's producer, whom she's known for 23 years and describes as her "musical husband" – the musician's latest album does engage with current socio-political issues (just check out the video for the Gary Clark Jr.-featuring single *Halfway There*). *Woo Woo* is a cheeky feminist anthem; the awesome knocking cowbell and sweet glock of *Grow Up* make it sound like a Sky Ferreira hit; and *Roller Skate* questions whether the lack of human connection in kids' lives might affect them badly in the long run.

"[Technology] may keep us connected but it also creates a massive chasm," Crow explains. "If I had a crystal ball… I don't know how long humanity is going to be able to sustain this way of living, or if it's going to have to get a lot worse before it ultimately changes."

Incidentally the person hollering "Roller skaters!" on that track is Jeff Trott. "I'm from a really small town, so we used to roller skate a lot," adds Crow. "It's where you went and hooked up with people – they'd get on the mic, 'Roller skaters, let's dance.'"

Love Will Save The Day is the most moving ballad you'll have heard in ages, and features the breathy chords of a harmonium.

"That song was the result of a really tragic situation with this young boy – he was 14 – who committed suicide," Crow explains. "His parents, they're a couple that I've met. It was one of those things that really made me stop and think how difficult it must be growing up in this day and age. It's already hard to grow up, but to have the pressures that these kids have now… that song was inspired by this idea that you're never alone – even when you're so convinced that you're alone, you're never really alone. It just takes someone reminding you of that."

➔ ***Be Myself*** is out now.

WASHINGTON REBUILDS FENCES

Although Denzel Washington starred in the award-winning Broadway revival, he was still a little nervous about bringing *Fences* to the screen.

The movie version of August Wilson's *Fences* reunites most of the cast of the acclaimed 2010 stage production, with Viola Davis adding a best supporting actress Oscar to the Tony Award she won for her Broadway performance.

However, this time around Washington – who, like Davis, won a Tony for the stage revival – also had the extra responsibility of directing. "It's a tremendous undertaking, trying to act in it and direct it," he admits. "In fact, I know that I would've never directed it had I not done the play [on Broadway]. It was a six year process – it took that long for me to get up the confidence, or nerve, or whatever it took, to come to the place where I felt comfortable."

Set in Pittsburgh in the '50s, Washington plays Troy Maxton, a former star baseball player who never got the chance to play in the big leagues and now earns a living as a garbage man. Conseqently, he is vehemently opposed to his youngest son Corey (Jovan Adepo) pursuing his dream of playing college football.

Although most of the action is restricted to a few sets, Washington is in no doubt that the play works just as well on the screen as it does on stage.

"One of the things we have the luxury of now is seeing up close how people think and how they feel without it being as presentational as Broadway has to be. What is proven to me is how brilliant August Wilson is and how much it does translate to film and how universal the story is."
Adam Colby

➔ ***Fences*** is out on DVD and Blu-ray May 10

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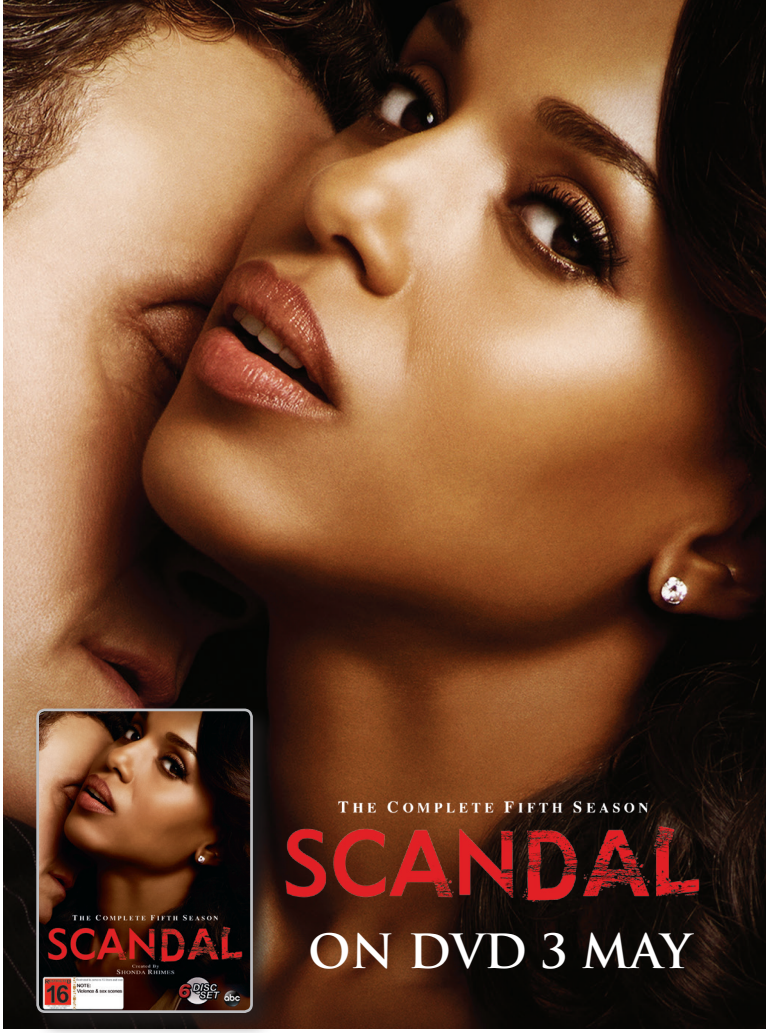

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Top Post

Joke of the day:

Imagine if Emma Watson's middle name was 'mentrymydear'.

Happy Birthday, DANNY TREJO

born May 16, 1944 **#STACKBirthday**

Did you know: While serving time in prison for armed robbery and drug offences, Danny Trejo won the lightweight and welterweight boxing titles.

***STACK*'s Fave Movie Quote:**

"Well he don't know talkin' good like me and you, so his vocabulistics is limited to "I" and "am" and "Groot," exclusively in that order."

–Rocket Raccoon, *Guardians of the Galaxy* (2014)

COMPETITIONS

For details on how to enter all our competitions, head to stack.net.nz

GET YOUR JANDALS ON WITH THIS *PORK PIE* PRIZE-PACK

True to its roots, the reboot of *Pork Pie* is very much a family affair. One lucky *STACK* reader will be taking home this awesome prize-pack to celebrate the May 24 release.

Thanks to **Sony**

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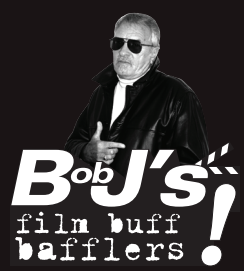
QUIZ



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Q1 In which movie can you glimpse Samuel L. Jackson playing an organ during a wedding scene flashback?
Q2 What's the unique acting role played by both Dolores Del Rio and Angela Lansbury?
Q3 Who directed a WWII movie about a Flying Fortress nicknamed Mary Ann?
Q4 Which lightweight drama involves a male stripper who yearns to set up a business that allows him to keep his clothes on?
Q5 The origins of this totally inept British secret agent was a series of TV credit card advertisements. Name the character.
Q6 In which movie does Dorothy Lamour own a gold mine?
Q7 The mission for these cinematic astronauts is to blow up planets with unsuitable life forms. Title please.
Q8 Which actor in 1959 portrayed a character who is determined to climb a mountain called The Citadel?
Q9 Name the title of the 1950 drama in which "God" speaks over the radio?
Q10 Ryan Reynolds and Eddie Murphy – what's the movie connection?

Quiz Answers April 2017 (Issue 83) - A1. Laurence Olivier and Vivien Leigh **A2.** Alan Alda **A3.** *A Fish Called Wanda*-Michael Palin **A4.** *Botany Bay* (1952) starring Alan Ladd **A5.** The character, Walter E. Kurtz in *Apocalypse Now* (1979) **A6.** *Falling Down* starring Michael Douglas **A7.** *The Charge of the Light Brigade* (1968) delivered by John Gielgud's character Lord Raglan **A8.** Mark Ruffalo, Dr. Doom in the unreleased *Fantastic Four* (1994) **A9.** Sydney Pollack featured Geena Davis in *Tootsie* **A10.** *Rise of the Planet of the Apes*

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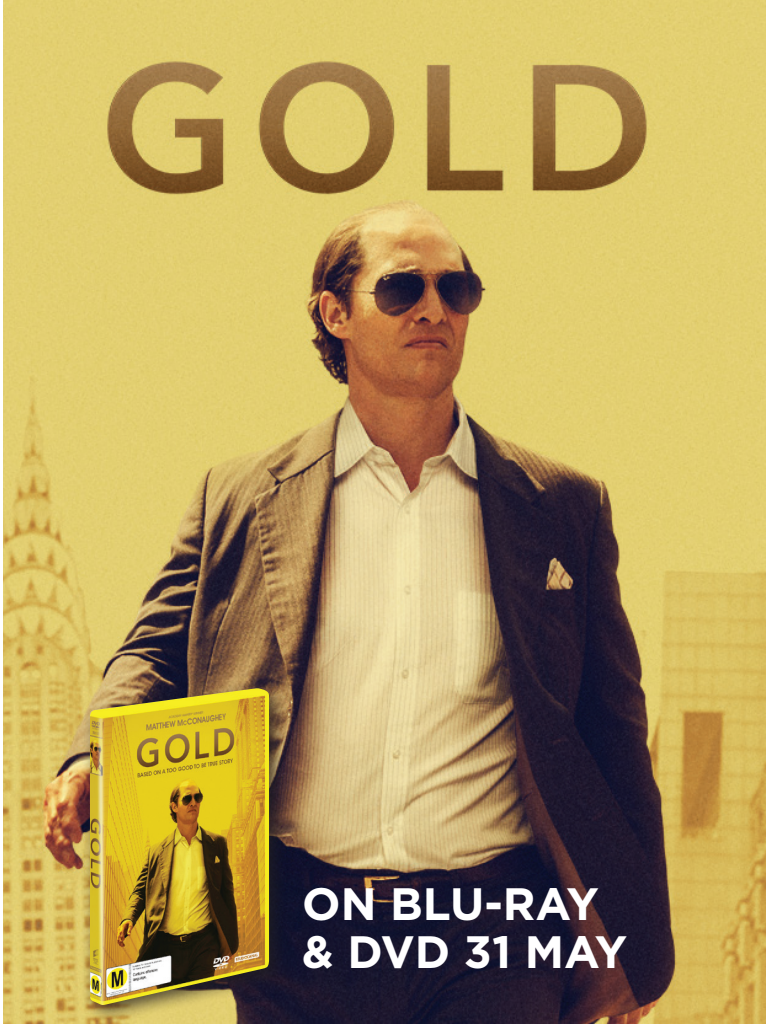
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DOWN AMONG THE DEAD MEN

Aussie rising star Brenton Thwaites joins the crew of Disney's *Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Men Tell No Tales*. Words Gill Pringle

Australia's Brenton Thwaites has an ongoing gag about his thwarted Hollywood dream. "I've been doing this for seven years and every time I move to Hollywood, I get a movie back in Australia," grins the Cairns native who turns up as Orlando Bloom's son in the fifth installment of the Pirates of the Caribbean franchise, *Dead Men Tell No Tales*.

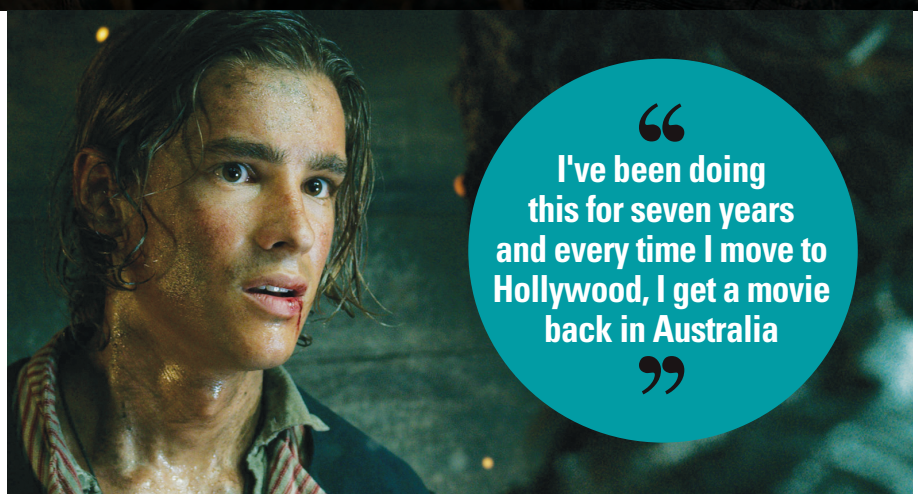
"The last time I moved to Los Angeles was just before Pirates was about to shoot, and I found out the studio was 20 minutes from my house, so I moved back home again for six months," he says, referring to Village Roadshow Studios in Oxenford, Queensland; although, Pirates also shot in locations in Moreton Bay, Helensvale, Maudsland, Southport, Tamborine Mountain, and the Whitsunday Islands.

"One of these days I will move to Hollywood. Right now, it's a work in progress," laughs Thwaites, 27, whose other recent films *Gods of Egypt, Son of a Gun,* and *Ruben Guthrie* all necessitated a move back home.

Today, Thwaites's Henry Turner is introduced to the Pirates franchise alongside fellow newcomer Javier Bardem, opposite Pirate veterans Johnny Depp, Orlando Bloom and Geoffrey Rush.

Turner is a former officer with the Royal Navy, although his insistence on seeking out a mythological treasure – which can bring the dead back to life – lands him in jail.

"I hope the movie will help connect young men with their fathers, but talking about my own father and our relationship is a little touchy, certainly more touchy than I would care to share," says the former *Home and Away* star, who has a 14-month-old daughter with girlfriend Chloe Pacey.



> "I've been doing this for seven years and every time I move to Hollywood, I get a movie back in Australia"

Many of Thwaites' fans have remarked on his resemblance to a young Brad Pitt, and the Aussie doesn't deny the similarity.

"It's funny that people should say that. I was looking forward to playing Brad Pitt's son in a movie which recently fell apart," he told *STACK* at CinemaCon in Las Vegas, where he was honoured with Breakthrough Performer of the Year, before catching a flight back to Europe where he's filming World War II thriller *Ghosts of War*.

"To be honest, I'm not ready for fame. I don't think anyone is ready for it. I think it's just one of those things that, if I'm lucky enough, it could be a part of my life and hopefully I will tell great stories which will inspire the world," says the actor, whose other films include *Maleficent, Oculus* and *The Giver*.

"Personal life aside, the safety and security of my family – that's a different story, and it gets scary when you think about that stuff. My goal is to continue to work and have a great team around me. My dream is to play Hamlet on stage."

Growing up, Thwaites says it was his movie-loving mother Fiona who really helped develop his passion for film. "As a teenager, we watched hundreds of films together. I was inspired by *Good Will Hunting, Dante's Peak, Romeo + Juliet* and *Titanic*. Heath Ledger was my idol.

"Cairns is a diving and tourist town, between the mountains, the tropics, and the reef, so I was exposed to people from all over the world from different cultures, which intrigued me and gave me a desire to travel from a very young age, long before I thought to pursue acting. When I was 16 I was messing around with plays, and I joined the theatre company, and then went to acting school. It made sense that I would travel for the rest of my life."

→ ***Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Men Tell No Tales*** is in cinemas on May 25

Brenton Thwaites with *STACK*'s Gill Pringle

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BLONDINI GANG RIDES AGAIN

First-time director Matt Murphy is confident *Pork Pie* will appeal to both fans of his father Geoff's original Kiwi classic and a whole new generation of movie-goers. Words Adam Colby

Released on February 6, 1981, Geoff Murphy's *Goodbye Pork Pie* was arguably our first homegrown blockbuster, taking $1.4 million dollars at the box office, which, with inflation, would equate to around $10 million today.

His son Matt worked as a lighting tech on that movie, and 35 years later he is following in his father's footsteps with *Pork Pie*, a reimagining of the first film. The challenge for the first-time director was to honour the legacy of his father's movie while making the story relevant to a new generation of Kiwi film fans.

"Having worked on the original *Goodbye Pork Pie*, I cherish those memories and that time and place," Murphy explains. "But I'm also excited about bringing a good whiff of that to a new generation of kiwis and the old fans alike. I couldn't see the point in doing a straight re-do of the original, but when I considered the possibility of a 'reimagining' of it, I got pretty excited."

Pork Pie tells the story of three accidental outlaws – failing novelist Jon (Dean O'Gorman), cheeky boy racer Luke (James Rolleston) and vegan activist Keira (rising Australian star Ashleigh Cummings) – who find themselves on the run in a Mini Cooper S with a contingent of police and media in hot pursuit.

Murphy is full of praise for his leads and the chemistry between them.

"The script was a bit of a genre-bender and it felt important to cast someone who could navigate the transitions in comedic, dramatic and romantic tone as facets of the same character," he says. "Dean O'Gorman sauntered in for a test as Jon…and nailed it. We secured the overall tone of the movie when we cast Dean - that's how good a fit he was."

"When [Rolleston] came in for a screen test I was blown away by how much the camera

loved him. It was also clear his calm and charismatic demeanor would play brilliantly against Dean's often calamitous Jon, so the chemistry had great potential. I wanted a Luke with heart, who was reluctantly navigating some rough circumstances, not a reckless poster boy for the underprivileged."

Although the story differs a little from the original, fans of Geoff Murphy's 1981 movie will be pleased to know that his son has recreated some of the first film's best loved set-pieces. In fact, a new version of the iconic railway chase scene ended up being one of the first scenes to be shot.

"As in the original film, the Wellington Railway station sequence delivers the climax of a car chase and is pivotal to their escape south," says Matt Murphy.

"Kiwirail came aboard and the best shoot window for them happened to be just prior to our intended shoot dates. The opportunity had to be taken so we took on some of the biggest stunt sequences in the movie before principal photography. It's fair to say that really set the tone of the shoot!"

Despite the nods to his father's original, Murphy ultimately hopes *Pork Pie* will be judged on its own merits.

"*Goodbye Pork Pie* was an extremely bold and entertaining piece of Kiwi film making. It defined a time and place for many Kiwis. I'm not trying to replace or erase that. But it's not the same movie updated. The times are not the same. It's a new film, borrowing from and adapting that legend for a 2017 audience. I've gone to huge lengths to honour Dad's original film, but I've pushed as much, if not more, to make a movie that appeals and stands on its own."

> **"I couldn't see the point in doing a straight re-do of the original..."**

• ***Pork Pie*** *is out on May 24*

HOMEGROWN REMAKES

What other early Kiwi classics would be candidates for a reboot?

Sleeping Dogs (1977)

It might seem sacrilegious to remake a film that kickstarted our modern film industry, but given the current political climate, it would be timely to revisit this dystopian thriller that depicts NZ in the grip of a US-backed right wing dictatorship. And the film's original star, Sam Neill, would be great as the dictator.

The Lost Tribe (1983)

Although flawed, John Laing's chilling psychological thriller is a cult favourite ripe for rebooting. In the original, John Bach played a man who goes searching for his twin anthropologist brother on a spooky island off the coast of Fiordland; Antony Starr's *Outrageous Fortune* experience would make him the perfect choice to play the twins.

Utu (1984)

Geoff Murphy's follow-up to *Goodbye Pork Pie* remains one of the few New Zealand films to tackle the subject of the Maori Land Wars and for that reason alone it would be worth remaking. Both Cliff Curtis and Temuera Morrison have the gravitas to take on Anzac Wallace's role.

Death Warmed Up (1984)

Although Peter Jackson's debut *Bad Taste* would be the obvious candidate for a horror remake, we think David Blyth's bonkers gore fest would be a more interesting choice. This time around, maybe the film's original star Michael Hurst could play the baddie?

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BUILDING A CITY OF STARS

Winner of six Academy Awards, *La La Land* is a modern-day musical steeped in the genre traditions of Hollywood's golden age and the French New Wave. Writer-director Damien Chazelle talks about the challenges in reviving an old-fashioned genre for a contemporary audience.

What initially inspired you to make this movie?

DAMIEN CHAZELLE: I love old Hollywood musicals and also the musicals of Jacques Demy, like *The Umbrellas of Cherbourg* (1964). I just felt like there hadn't been a movie like that in a really long time. Even though there are musicals today, there aren't musicals in that kind of tradition where the music comes out of the emotion of the characters and the romanticism of the story. Where love is expressed through dance and through a certain kind of whimsy. I wanted to do something in that tradition, but also use that genre to tell a contemporary story about everyday life; about relatable people struggling to make it in today's world. The idea was to combine the spectacle of the old movies with a nuanced look at reality.

What's the history of the project?

I originally wrote this before *Whiplash*. But it was hard to get it off the ground. It is a very personal story to me, just the same way *Whiplash* was. It's about people in L.A., artists trying to pursue their dreams, not always with success. That's the position I was in when I was writing it. So I was writing myself into this full-blown musical. No one wanted to touch it because… Well, A, it was a musical and, B, who the hell was I? It just was not the kind of movie that Hollywood makes anymore.

> **"No one wanted to make *La La Land*. And so I wrote *Whiplash* out of frustration..."**

So *Whiplash* made *La La Land* possible?

Yes. No one wanted to make *La La Land*. And so I wrote *Whiplash* out of frustration, almost. I poured all my rage into *Whiplash* (laughs)… So you can see where that came from (laughs)... *Whiplash* was a smaller project, so I was actually able to get that off the ground pretty quickly. After making *Whiplash,* in typical Hollywood fashion, suddenly the musical nobody wanted now seemed more appealing. That said, even after *Whiplash,* it was *still* hard to get it off the ground.

> **“...there’s a lot of what you would consider musicals out there and people seem very eager and willing to embrace that kind of language.”**

Why do you think contemporary audiences are ready for a musical?

Umbrellas of Cherbourg was a huge success when it came out. But the problem was that as you got into the ‘60s and ‘70s, the trend in cinema worldwide was gearing towards verisimilitude and realism. There was no place for that kind of pure expression of fantasy. I think today things are actually a little different. I think that in many ways the musical in certain hybrid forms is as strong as ever today. From Broadway to TV to the big screen, there’s a lot of what you would consider musicals out there and people seem very eager and willing to embrace that kind of language. What there isn’t, though, is any musical that, to me, is in the tradition of those earlier movies. Yes, they have the big spectacle. But if you look back at a lot of those old MGM movies or the Jacques Demy movies, they’re actually pretty intimate stories about relatable people. Even the singing styles, the numbers, feel more quotidian. Something like *Meet Me in St. Louis* or *Singin’ in the Rain*, or the Fred Astaire/Ginger Rogers movies… To me, I watch them and I really feel like, “Ah, there’s magic in the everyday.”

Tell us about the casting of Ryan Gosling and Emma Stone…

They combine the two things that I really needed to make this gambit work, which is old school charisma – they feel like old school movie stars – and yet at the same time they’re also very real and relatable. They have a way of performing that can be very subtle, very nuanced. Ryan can say so much with just a single look, and Emma is so expressive – the camera trains on her eyes and you just want to go where she’s going. They have this immediate connection with the audience that great movie stars have, but they also happen to be really good actors, which is not always the same thing. And they were also willing to take the plunge. It was a big challenge for both of them to do this.

How did you know if your two leads would be able to pull it off?

You *never* know. I didn’t know if Miles [Teller] would be able to do the drumming in *Whiplash* either. You never know for sure. You just set a challenge for people and you hope they rise to the occasion. Still, in a way, it’s a self-selecting process. Ryan and Emma came onboard knowing that there was going to be a huge workload. And I was open to them right at the beginning about how we were going to shoot it. I told them: “We’re not going to be doing lots of cuts. We’re going to be letting these things unfold. We’re going to be doing everything for real. There’s no CG-trickery.” Ryan also had to learn to play the piano... And even with the piano playing, there’s not a single shot, even close-ups of the hands, that’s a double. He did everything. To me it was part of them embracing their characters. It was all as much of their preparation as learning their lines.

You mentioned previously that you weren’t able to realise this film years ago, when you were first starting out as a filmmaker. What was it about this project that made you stick with it?

It’s a good question… There were many moments with this movie where I thought it would never get made. Or where we’d get close and suddenly, in typical Hollywood fashion, things change and suddenly it’s shelved… But then you look back and you realise, maybe it wasn’t meant to be made at that point, because it wouldn’t be the film that it now is. What I’m really happy about with this movie, what’s so exciting to me about it is I really feel that I was able to make the movie that I envisioned, the movie that I dreamed of. There is something about finally getting to do it… You’re very cognisant of: ‘I’m not going to waste this opportunity… If I never get to make another movie again, at least I’ll put everything into this one.’ That was the hope.

• ***La La Land*** is out May 3

THE LION KING

Garth Davis's directing credits include the acclaimed TV series *Top of the Lake*, but the remarkable true story *Lion* is the first big cat he has tamed. **Words** Savannah Douglas

It's quite an achievement to have your first feature film nominated for five Academy Awards including the coveted Best Picture – an accolade that hasn't been lost on *Lion* director Garth Davis.

"It's pretty surreal, it's totally surreal, man it's amazing," he chuckles. "It's absolutely amazing that the film is getting this recognition and this much love. I just feel really proud of everybody who's worked so hard on it. I don't know what to say."

The Australian filmmaker certainly didn't take on the Cowardly Lion's traits when helming his first feature film, which tackles some pretty devastating themes.

"I suppose I'm not afraid of going to those places if you know what I mean," Davis says. "I think really, as a director and an artist, anything you work on, you put yourself into or you explore things that you're interested in. I like exploring honesty and obviously in line [with that] we had to go to some dark places and circumnavigate that in an interesting way."

To embark on the colossal story that is *Lion*, Davis didn't turn to anyone for help, instead looking at the work of filmmakers he admires. "I'm a bit of a loner," he laughs. "One of my heroes would be Peter Weir. I love his films, especially his early films and just how an Australian film kept telling international stories very powerfully – I loved that. And I love obviously Jane Campion's work as well."

Nicole Kidman, David Wenham and Sunny Pawar

Moving into feature films from television and short documentaries is a big leap for a director, but Davis recognised *Lion* as the perfect project to make that transition. "It was just such an incredible story," he notes. "It was epic in scope, it was deeply emotional and I thought it was a story that the world needed – I had to make it."

Lion is based on the true story of Saroo Brierley, an Indian boy adopted by Australian parents who, as an adult, attempts to find his biological family using Google Earth. In adapting Brierley's book *A Long Way Home*, Davis had to carefully tread the line between his own creativity and the facts.

"I just basically focused on the bits that I was excited to expose and tell," he explains. "And one of the things I loved about the story was its spiritualism. And having a *great* story and so much momentum underpinned with the spirituality, I thought that was really exciting, and something I really love to explore."

Knowing the story was only the start – Davis

Rooney Mara and Dev Patel

devoted a considerable amount of time to engage with Saroo's world prior to bringing it to the screen. "I did a lot of pre-pre-production on this," he recalls. "I spent a lot of time on the ground in India, I spent time in Hobart, meeting as many real people and going to as many real places as possible. It was totally immersive."

Davis's research uncovered finer details that weren't apparent through studying the book. "Just lots of little things, like the way that Kamla was very tactile with people," he notes. "The way she just held faces and patted people. And also the locations do that as well, like sitting at Saroo's village, sitting on the dam wall for an afternoon watching the new generation of kids playing and just understanding what it must have been like for Saroo. All of that detail is in the film."

Shooting in the actual locations added authenticity and emotional weight to *Lion*, but it also raised more challenges than anticipated for the filmmaker. "India is hard enough but obviously the story is set on trains, train stations, riverbanks," explains Davis. "[It's] really super-complicated anyway and doing that in India, it was really ambitious."

His ambitious nature got Davis through some difficult moments when setting up the train scenes. "You had to choose a platform, you had to choose a train and hopefully that was that train that arrived at that time," he scoffs. "Sometimes you're given three hours, sometimes you're given five or one, and then anything could go wrong."

> **"It was epic in scope, it was deeply emotional, and I thought it was a story that the world needed – I had to make it."**

On top of those difficulties, Davis also took on the massive task of directing children, in particular the superb Sunny Pawar, who plays young Saroo. "I think kids are very sensitive," Davis ponders. "They'll let you in if they trust you and they feel safe around you and if you come to their level. So I think energetically, you have to align yourself with children, it's very important."

All of the hard work paid off in the end for Davis when the moment came to show Saroo and his family the finished product. "We showed them the film in Sydney and when the credits were rolling, I went up to the projection box, looked through the glass to see how they were going, and when I looked through they were all basically just hugging each other, all three of them. It was very emotional, and very emotional for them."

• ***Lion*** is out May 3

MOTHER INDIA

India's exotic landscape is a character in itself, so it comes as no surprise that despite the hardships, many filmmakers choose to shoot on the subcontinent.

Slumdog Millionaire (2008)

The Danny Boyle film that shot Dev Patel to international fame pens him in India's slums until his character, Jamal, becomes an unlikely contestant on *Who Wants to be a Millionaire?*

Location: Mumbai

The Waiting City (2009)

Another Australian director (Claire McMarthy) takes to the streets of India to tell the tale of a couple who have travelled to Kolkata to adopt a young girl, but find marital turmoil instead.

Locations: Kolkata and Barrackpore

Gandhi (1982)

Sir Ben Kingsley portrays Mahatma Gandhi's life in this Oscar-winning biopic – from his humble beginnings to leader of the Indian independence movement.

Locations: New Delhi, Kolkata, Mumbai and more (Pune, Patna)

The Darjeeling Limited (2007)

Who better to bring out the vibrancy of India than the master of colour himself, Wes Anderson, who chronicles the train journey of three clinically depressed brothers attempting to rekindle lost bonds in India.

Location: Rajasthan

PREY ON YU

If being stuck on a space station overrun by alien lifeforms sounds appealing, you might want to check out Arkane Studios' *Prey*.

Words Alesha Kolbe

From the studio that brought us the critically lauded Dishonored series comes new IP *Prey* – a first-person action adventure game that puts players in the body of Morgan Yu (your choice of gender) on board space station Talos I.

Your initial impression aboard Talos I might be an environment of solitude, but you aren't the only living soul on the space station; aside from other (both dead and alive) human inhabitants, Talos I is also playing host to the Typhons. Taking many forms, you'll encounter a number of different alien incarnations while fighting your way through the game. We found that out the hard way when we went hands-on, and we aren't kidding when we say it's high-intensity, fear-driven action all the way through. The atmosphere is extremely tense and you'll find yourself frequently (and cautiously) leaning around corners.

While you may come across some friendly humans in your time on the station, most of your encounters will be with enemy Typhons. Mimics are the smallest of this alien race and the simplest to dispense, but also some of the most tricky; they get their name from their ability to imitate any loose item in the room – you could walk past one and not even know. Best to have your wits about you – and your fists up. Phantoms are larger and more menacing, and consequently more difficult to kill. Don't be surprised if you fall victim to a few (or the same one repeatedly) as you're starting out – we certainly did.

> **"Arkane games are all about saying 'yes' to the player"**

As anyone who has played *Dishonored* will know, Arkane games are all about saying 'yes' to the player. In most cases, if you can see somewhere, you can get there. *Prey*'s manouevrability is made that much more interesting with the addition of the GLOO Gun. For all intents and purposes, this is a weapon that you can use to immobilise your enemies and render environmental threats harmless, i.e. plugging flaming holes in gas pipes. However, you can also use it as a means of traversal. If you fire your GLOO at the wall, you end up with an impromptu platform sturdy enough →

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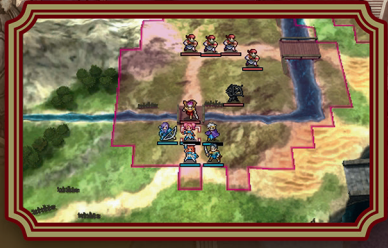

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PREY ON YU

continued

• *Prey* is out May 5

to climb upon, opening up a plethora of ways to get around – and once again, the fear you've overlooked something or gone the wrong way.

Of course, this handy new weapon isn't your only one. Quite early on in the game you get access to a wrench, and that's just the beginning. Traditional firearms like pistols and shotguns are at your disposal, as well as weapons like lures and stuns. What is essentially a NERF bow can deliver distractions that allow you to play stealthily or shoot on sight – as we've mentioned, the choice is yours. Although for some, it may be more fun to play in the shadows – taking a more full frontal approach is not discouraged.

Aside from instilling the fear that any object in a room could attack you at any given moment, these Typhons do serve a greater purpose aboard the station. Humanity has been conducting tests on the aliens in an experiment that aims to change the future of mankind forever. But of course, something has gone awry, and it's up to you to find out what's gone wrong and destroy the Typhon infestation before it can make its way to Earth.

These 'experiments' involve manipulating the Typhons and using them to create Neuromods; modifications that allow you to possess certain abilities, alien or otherwise. Your human Neuromods will give you things like better stealth or increased HP, but your Typhon Neuromods are more interesting. Depending on which Typhon you siphon your ability from, the Neuromods you gain access to can be anything from telekinetic forcefields to the mimics' ability to transform into a nearby loose object for a short period of time. The mimic ability is useful not only for stealth, but can be used to gain access to otherwise inaccessible areas – small openings is just one example. Once again, it's all about how you choose to play the game.

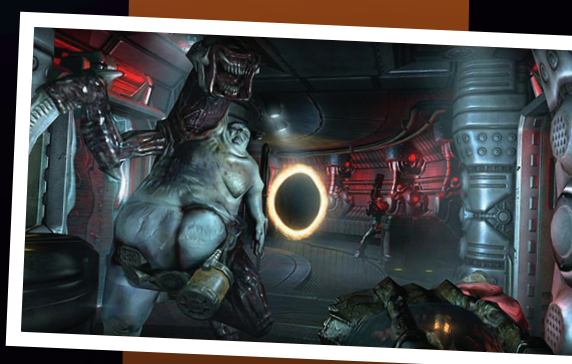
> "It's all about how you choose to play the game"

Combat aside, *Prey*'s crafting system will give you a means of keeping yourself alive, through the use of the glorified 3D printers known as Fabricators that allow you to craft from materials found around the station.

Most of your time, though, will be spent tentatively leaning around corridor corners, shooting at harmless trashcans, for Arkane will prey on your fear that anything – and everything – is a mimic. Use your wits and your weaponry to dispose of the Typhons as you see fit. After all – in space, no one can hear you scheme.

Origins of Prey

As you may or may not know, *Prey* was originally a title released by Human Head Studios back in 2006. It was received particularly well, and the studio were commissioned to develop a sequel to the title. However, after deadlines changed, Human Head's version of the game was essentially cancelled, and development shifted to Arkane. Instead of making a direct sequel to the 2006 title, Arkane have opted to create a 'reimagining of the IP', with Human Head's planned sequel seemingly never seeing the light of day.



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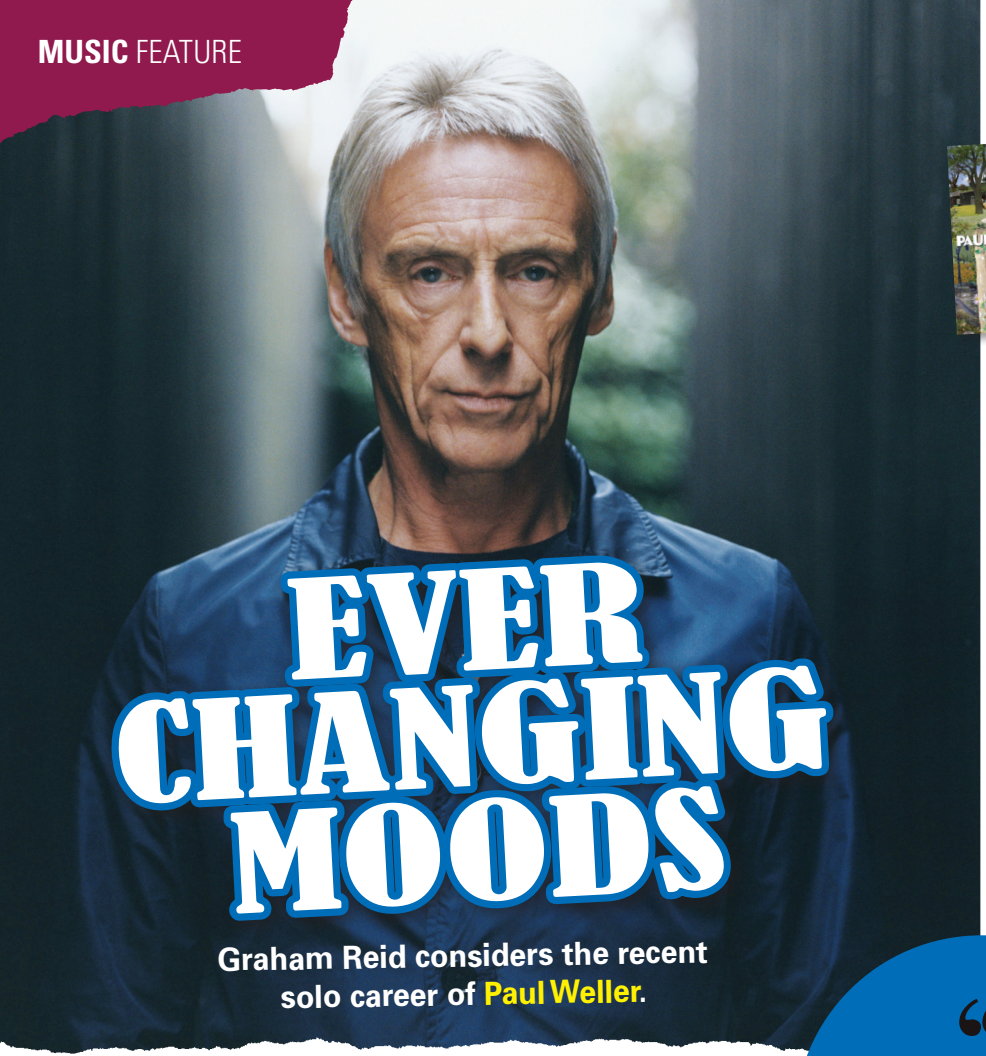


EVER CHANGING MOODS

Graham Reid considers the recent solo career of Paul Weller.

It may have been "fake views", but internet gossip said that when Paul McCartney recently collaborated with Kanye West, some of Kanye's fans asked online who that other guy was. And to big-up their man for helping the Old Fellah's career.

Teenagers – especially if their interest is in another genre – are allowed not to know what someone has done before their lifetime.

For example, 59-year old Paul Weller had two careers with the Jam and the Style Council so long ago that older fans forget just how far back. The Style Council broke up in 1989. That's perilously close to 30 years ago.

So why would any young person know about him/them? Or care?

Most couldn't give a damn about grey-haired Weller: he's just a man respected by his peers and fans like Noel Gallagher from Oasis. (FYI kids, Oasis were a British band big in the 90s.)

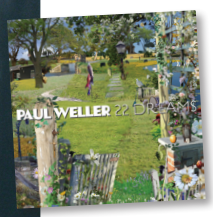
But Weller always had something interesting to say, so, with his new album *A Kind Revolution*, let's focus on his last decade… and the happy coincidence that 10 years ago there was the deluxe reissue of his excellent second solo album *Wild Wood* which originally came out in 1993.

Wild Wood found Weller retreating from the frontline after the Jam/Style Council mania/expectation and quite literally heading into the country to reconsider his life.

So across that album he posed questions ("Has my fire gone out?") but also tapped into musical styles he'd previously explored, such as bristling Kinks-like 60's rock, thoughtful soul, and pastoral reflection (the title track). But, also delivering many songs with his accumulated firepower of soul-funk and post-punk guitars.

The expanded edition a decade ago reminded many just how exceptional the original album had been, pitched somewhere between The Beatles' *Rubber Soul/Revolver* in its diversity and honesty (without a *Yellow Submarine* or *Tomorrow Never Knows*). It was personal and important, and cleared the decks for him.

Thereafter followed terrific Weller albums (notable *Stanley Road* in 1995 and *Heavy Soul* two years later) but his last decade kicked in with the ambitious *22 Dreams*, his ninth solo album.



Shortly after it came out I spoke to Auckland Uni songwriting students about a contemporary artist whose work was worth paying attention to. You can guess who I chose. Only a few had heard his name, so I presented *22 Dreams*, asking who else could offer soul, rock'n'roll, folk, psychedelic rock, a classical piece, some jazz-influenced stuff, and a spoken word piece called *God*?

And pull it off?

By then, Weller was also challenging his loyal older audience. There'd always be pop songs and pop-rock hits — most often with an angry edge — but he didn't make life easy for old fans.

And why should he? In his 40s, he'd done the hard work and knew what he knew. No turning back.

That's why he entered the 21st century as an accomplished, wide-view artist who'd grown up in the post-punk Thatcher Britain for whom politics and social comment were just part of the job description. When Paul was pissed off, you knew it. He put into his angry songs. And when Paul glimpsed contentment you got that too. Postcards from his edge.

> **"…he entered the 21st century as an accomplished, wide-view artist…"**

But with *Wake Up the Nation* in 2010, he entered the second decade of the new century ticking past his 50th birthday with an album – nominated for a Mercury Prize, losing to The xx – which was exceptional if sometimes unfocused, bristling with aural fury and a personal connection with contemporary Britain in a way few others of that period could. Since then he's never resiled from confrontational rock, soul, psyched-out Brit-rock, reflective folk-pop, etc.

No, you'd be unwise to think of Paul Weller as that Old Fellah.

In the expanded edition of his last album *Saturn's Pattern* there's a handwritten note from him reading: "Like any roller-coaster, I've gone up and down through the years. It keeps it interesting…"

And it does.

Pull down the safety bar, hold the rail and hang on. Paul Weller has got a ride for you.

And, as the title of a song on *Wake Up the Nation* said, "*Up the Dosage*".

For more interviews, overviews and reviews by Graham Reid see: www.elsewhere.co.nz

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LA LA LAND

Chasing dreams in a city of stars

DVD of the MONTH

It's no secret that Hollywood loves itself, so it's no surprise that this filmic paean to Tinseltown was all over the Golden Globes and Oscars like a rash (don't worry though, there was cream for it in the swag bags)... It may also be because this sparkling contemporary ode to the musicals of Hollywood's past from *Whiplash* writer-director Damien Chazelle makes for mighty fine entertainment. At its heart it's a simple love story. Mia (Emma Stone) is the aspiring actress who can't get a script, while Sebastian (Ryan Gosling) is a jazz-loving pianist who won't stick to the (musical notation) script. They have a couple of run-ins which suggest a hate/hate relationship. As is the Hollywood way, however, events keep conspiring to bring them together, and enmity makes way for intensity. Ah, but naturally the path to true love has more than its fair share of bumps – and is punctuated by outbreaks of song and dance, with Justin Hurwitz's lavish score expertly hanging to the right side of the line between mawkish and magnificent. Pure joyous escapism, *La La Land* is the sort of musical that even those who don't care much for the genre will enjoy, despite themselves. **Amy Flower**

RELEASE DATE: 03/05/17
FORMAT: DVD Blu-ray 3D 4K

EXTRAS

BD ONLY

- Audio Commentary with writer/director Damien Chazelle and composer Justin Hurwitz
- Featurettes
  - Another Day of Sun: They Closed Down a Freeway
  - La La Land's Great Party
  - Ryan Gosling: Piano Student
  - Before Whiplash: Damien Chazelle's Passion Project
  - La La Land's Love Letter to Los Angeles
  - The Music of La La Land
  - John Legend's Acting Debut
  - The Music of La La Land
  - The Look Of Love: Designing La La Land
  - Ryan and Emma: Third Time's the Charm

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FURTHER VIEWING

- ***Singin' in the Rain***

LION

The true story of a life lost and found

New technology has made the world a smaller place, giving people a means to find those that they may otherwise never have found. Such is the case for Saroo (Dev Patel, delivering an almost bang-on Aussie accent) in this entrancing biographical tale. As a five-year-old, Saroo lived with his older brother, sister and mum in India. The two brothers, who filched coal to exchange for staples such as milk, were separated one day, with poor Saroo left at a station all alone. He ended up in Calcutta, from where – lost and frightened – he couldn't find his way home. Eventually adopted by a Hobart couple, Sue and John Brierley (Nicole Kidman and David Wenham), Saroo was raised in a loving, supportive environment. But as an adult, Saroo felt the call of home – especially after an Indian meal triggered lost memories. With mere snippets of his past and the power of Google Earth, he sets out to find his long lost family back in India. *Lion* may be a relatively simple tale but it runs the emotional gamut from heartbreaking to uplifting, with more stops in-between than the Indian railway system. **AF**

RELEASE DATE: 03/05/17
FORMAT: DVD Blu-ray 3D 4K

EXTRAS

DVD & BD

- Commentary by Saroo and Sue Brierley and director Garth Davis
- From Page to Screen
- Finding Home: Garth Davis and the Making of Lion
- A Pride of Lions: Casting the Film
- Dev Patel is Saroo Brierley
- Saroo's Story

DID YOU KNOW...

- Google assisted the production by allowing the crew access to their satellite imagery to use in the film, and providing them with versions of Google Earth from the correct time period, along with a lot of technical support in order to shoot scenes featuring Google in-camera, which saved the production a VFX budget.

FURTHER VIEWING

- ***Slumdog Millionaire***

PATRIOTS DAY

The inside story of the world's greatest manhunt

RELEASE DATE: 10/05/17 **FORMAT:** DVD Blu-ray 3D UV 4K

Mark Wahlberg as a Boston cop might instill a sense of security, but not when the subject of the film is the fateful 2013 Boston Marathon, where two homemade bombs were detonated at the finishing line in an act of terrorism. *Patriots Day* details the immediate aftermath of the tragedy, as the FBI and Boston PD swiftly mobilise to identify those responsible and conduct a city-wide manhunt. Having recently dramatised another real-life American tragedy in *Deepwater Horizon*, director Peter Berg condenses and consolidates this massive operation into a taut and tense two hours. Although we already know the outcome, this is still a gripping procedural that's acutely sensitive to its subject matter. *Patriots Day* is a respectful and engrossing account – and a sobering reminder – of the events of 15 April 2013, but perhaps not the film America needs right now given the political climate. **Scott Hocking**

PORK PIE

They're taking this car to Invercargill!

RELEASE DATE: 24/05/17 **FORMAT:** DVD Blu-ray 3D UV 4K

There haven't been many remakes of Kiwi favourites over the years, so it was inevitable some critics would not take kindly to a reboot of such an iconic movie as *Goodbye Pork Pie*, our first true blockbuster. However, there will be a lot of people out there who have not seen the original movie and they are in for treat: *Pork Pie* is a zippy action comedy that delivers plenty of the requisite vehicular mayhem and also gets to showcase the wonders of our landscape. Dean O'Gorman and James Rolleston make for an engaging double act as the mismatched duo who end up on the run from the cops in a stolen mini as the former seeks to get to Invercargill to win back the love of his life (Antonia Prebble). Young Aussie star Ashleigh Cummings is equally good as the feisty young activist they hook up with, while winning cameos from a host of familiar New Zealand faces add to the fun. **Adam Colby**

LIVE BY NIGHT

Witness the price of the American Dream

RELEASE DATE: 10/05/17 **FORMAT:** DVD Blu-ray 3D UV 4K

Who doesn't love a good gangster flick? Ben Affleck is obviously a fan of the genre (in particular *Miller's Crossing*), bringing his adaptation of Dennis Lehane's (*Mystic River*, *Gone Baby Gone*, *Shutter Island*) novel to our screens in all its Prohibition era glory. Convening a top cast including Brendan Gleeson, Sienna Miller, Elle Fanning, Zoe Saldana, Chris Cooper and Titus Welliver, Affleck stars as Joe Coughlin. He's a WWI vet and the son of the Boston police captain who falls for the mistress of a local gangster, and gets drawn ever deeper into a life that his father certainly doesn't approve of. Love, lust, blackmail, betrayal, racism, revenge and a whole lot of guns – everything you could want from a classic gangster tale is present and accounted for in this throwback to classically-styled moviemaking. **AF**

SPLIT

Multiple McAvoys

RELEASE DATE: 03/05/17 **FORMAT:** DVD Blu-ray 3D UV 4K

I see teen people... In a twist (damn, we've dropped the word already), M. Night Shyamalan delves into a variation on the superhuman themes of *Unbreakable*, as "Dennis" – one of some two dozen personalities inside the one bonce – kidnaps and imprisons three teenaged girls. Their Dissociative Identity Disorder-stricken host veers between personas ranging from a nine-year-old kid named Hedwig to a grown woman called Patricia. One thing they all have in common is a belief in a mysterious character known only as "The Beast". Is it real? Is it imaginary? Is "Dennis" (actually Kevin Wendell Crumb, played with gusto by James McAvoy) real, or a figment of one of the girls' imagination? Is up actually up? Hey, it's a Shyamalan flick, so we can't say too much without getting spoilerific, but if you've liked his better past works (like *The Visit*) then you'll dig *Split*. **AF**

FENCES

From stage to screen

RELEASE DATE: 10/05/17 **FORMAT:** DVD Blu-ray Blu-ray 3D UV 4K

In an age where a movie's worth is often judged on the action that's crammed in, *Fences* is quite the renegade. Its reliance upon relentless dialogue rather than a full-on senses assault gives away its stage roots, but don't think that this means it's lacking in emotional wallop. A trip back to 1950s inner city America, Denzel Washington is Troy Maxson, a garbo who once harboured dreams of becoming a professional baseball player, but was too old when the big league eventually saw the light and let African-American athletes in. He's bitter, and it shows in an outward cynicism, put to great use as this flawed man juggles family and neighbourhood politics. Viola Davis as Troy's wife Rose is marvellous (when isn't she?), and those up for some seriously talky drama will find that *Fences* really raises the bar. **AF**

MANCHESTER BY THE SEA

Affleck goes for gold, and wins

RELEASE DATE: 03/05/17 **FORMAT:** DVD Blu-ray Blu-ray 3D UV 4K

Casey Affleck received the Oscar for Best Actor this year for his performance as a discontented working class guy, whose mundane existence as an apartment block handyman is gradually revealed to be a self-imposed penance for a tortured soul. It's an incredibly tough role but Affleck rises to the challenge and triumphs, aided by a carefully layered screenplay by writer-director Kenneth Lonergan that weaves past with present. When the sudden death of his older brother sees Affleck become the reluctant guardian to his teenaged nephew, the return to his New England hometown opens emotional wounds sustained in a past family tragedy. A powerful exploration of grief and the search for redemption, it goes without saying that *Manchester by the Sea* isn't a cheery film, but neither is it a mawkish one. **SH**

xXx: RETURN OF XANDER CAGE

Action to the maxxx

RELEASE DATE: 24/05/17 **FORMAT:** DVD Blu-ray Blu-ray 3D UV 4K

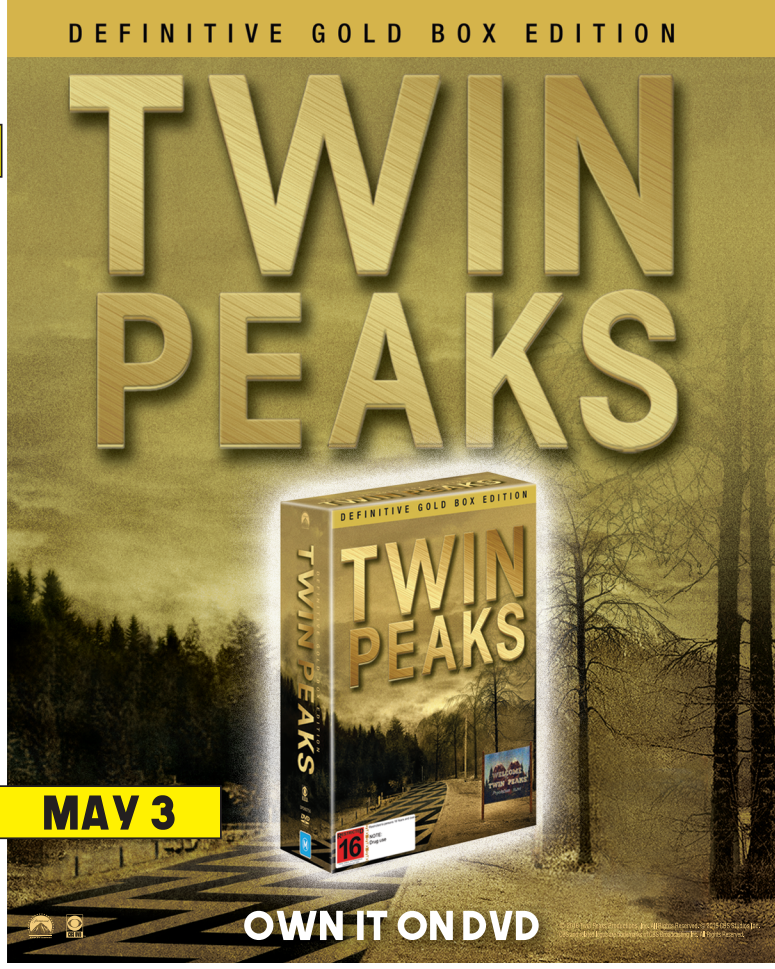
If it's action you want then it's action you're in for, as Xander Cage (Vin Diesel) returns from the dead to save the world from a device that can send satellites hurtling from space with deadly accuracy, strike missile-style. Hey, wanna take out a foe? Say it with space junk! It's an all-out senses' assault that teeters somewhere between 007 and Austin Powers – Diesel just draws the line at fourth wall-shattering winks – and plays out like a comic book on steroids (complete with X-Men references). Sammy L. and Ice Cube return, while the Ip Man himself, Donnie Yen, and Aussies Ruby Rose and Toni Collette join up. If you crave plausibility then you're in the wrong place. But if you want a sensational BDAF that keeps the extreme coming from go to whoa, then get on (skate) board. **AF**

FIFTY SHADES DARKER

Will she or won't she?

RELEASE DATE: 24/05/17 **FORMAT:** DVD Blu-ray Blu-ray 3D UV 4K

Just when you thought it was safe to leave the naughty corner, Christian Grey (Jamie Dornan) is back with a smack. Or not, actually, as Ana (Dakota Johnson) gave his kinkiness the heave-ho. But like all dominating blokes who don't get their own way he wants her back, which he duly tells her at a chance art gallery run-in. A justifiably cautious Ana reluctantly agrees to have dinner – after all, she is rather peckish. But all that slap and tickle (well, mostly slap)? She wants none of it, and Christian agrees to her terms. Can such a man really be tamed though? If you're only in it for wall-to-wall (to floor, to shower...) nookie then you may be disappointed, as things do get darker as the title suggests when certain parties from Christian's past threaten the couple's future. **AF**



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MASTERS OF SEX: SEASON 4

Summer of love

RELEASE DATE: 03/05/17 **FORMAT:** DVD Blu-ray 3D 4K

The Sixties really start swinging in the latest season of this steamy series about sex research pioneers Masters and Johnson. Bill (Michael Sheen) has hit rock bottom and has been ordered to attend AA after a drunken car smash. Virginia (Lizzie Caplan) seems to be doing better, but we soon learn her new marriage is over and while Playboy magnate Hugh Hefner (John Gleeson Connolly) is keen to work with her, he wants Masters on board as well. Elsewhere, the recruitment of two new doctors add extra tensions in the workplace, while Bill's estranged wife Libby (Caitlin FitzGerald) continues her transformation into a truly liberated woman. Taking in the fledgling feminist movement, Woodstock, and swingers' parties, the latest season of *Masters Of Sex* is a retro delight, but the complex relationship between Bill and Virginia remains at the heart of this stylish show. **John Ferguson**

DAREDEVIL: THE COMPLETE SECOND SEASON

Introducing The Punisher

RELEASE DATE: 03/05/17 **FORMAT:** DVD Blu-ray 3D 4K

The blind superhero – aka Matt Murdock (Charlie Cox) – may get top-billing, but this time he is almost upstaged by another iconic Marvel character - The Punisher. Played with brutish charm and menace by former *Walking Dead* stalwart Jon Bernthal, his one-man mission to wipe out New York's criminal underworld puts him on a collision course with Daredevil and provides one of the central themes of the new series: just how far should vigilantes take the law into their own hands? And the Punisher isn't the only Marvel icon introduced in season 2; Murdock's old flame Elektra (Elodie Yung) arrives to investigate a sinister corporation, but is also keen to rekindle their relationship. Meanwhile, Wilson Fisk (Vincent D'Onofrio) – the villain from the first series – may be behind bars, but is still determined to get his revenge on his masked nemesis. Even better than the first series, this marks a new highpoint for Marvel TV. **JF**

PATERSON

RELEASE DATE: 11/05/17

FORMAT: DVD Blu-ray 3D 4K

After his highly-stylised takes on vampires (*Only Lovers Left Alive*) and assassins (*The Limits Of Control*), Jim Jarmusch's latest *Paterson* marks a welcome return to the real world. There's not much in the way of plot – Adam Driver is the titular bus driver with a secret passion for writing poetry – but it's the sheer ordinariness of *Paterson* that makes this one of Jarmusch's warmest works to date. The quirks and eccentricities of his characters – in particular Paterson's ditzy wife Golshifteh Farahani – are affectionately sketched rather than mocked, making this a winningly understated celebration of everyday life – and the creativity it can inspire. **JF**

THE KETTERING INCIDENT

RELEASE DATE: 11/05/17

FORMAT: DVD Blu-ray 3D 4K

If Jane Campion's *Top Of The Lake* had been scripted by *X Files*' Chris Carter, the show might have ended up something like this brooding drama set in Tasmania. Elizabeth Debicki plays a doctor who returns to the small town she was forced to leave as a teenager following the mysterious disappearance of her best friend. When another young woman vanishes in similar circumstances, she becomes obsessed with solving the mystery and begins to suspect both disappearances may be connected to a sinister scientific facility. *The Kettering Incident* sustains an unsettling air of dread throughout its eight episodes and the enigmatic finale leaves the door open for a second series. **JF**

RUPTURE

RELEASE DATE: 24/05/17

FORMAT: DVD Blu-ray 3D 4K

The first law of horror movies? If you're scared to death of spiders then don't tell the weirdo cult that's just kidnapped you... But that's just what single mother Renee (Noomi Rapace) does in this cross between sci-fi horror flick and torture porn – the latter coming as no surprise with *Secretary* writer/director Steven Shainberg at the helm. But back to Renee's captor cult. They reckon that exposing people to extreme terror causes them to 'rupture' and become a higher being. Luckily our heroine has some pluck – and saw *Alien*! If you've ever allocated thoughts to what the future of humanity may entail, then *Rupture* just may add some bullet points to your list. **AF**

THE LIBRARIANS: SEASON 3

RELEASE DATE: 03/05/17

FORMAT: DVD Blu-ray 3D 4K

As the movie-trilogy-turned-TV-series hits its third season, we've learned a lot. Most importantly, we've observed that being a librarian isn't necessarily as boring – or as safe – as we may have suspected. There's no respite for artefact looker-afterer Eve (Rebecca Romijn) and her team, either, having dealt with Prospero's techno-fear at the end of season 2. Their adventures amidst these 10 episodes include preventing Egyptian god of chaos Apep letting loose a colossal can of evil on the world, attending a demon convention, facing a shonky magician, and a spot of Bermuda Triangle research. **AF**

PREY

GENRE: ACT/ADV **PLATFORM:** PS4 | XBO | PC **RELEASE:** 05/05/17 **MULTIPLAYER:** NO

Have you ever felt like you're being watched? You may dismiss it as paranoia, but then it may actually be real... Pop forward to the 2030s and Morgan Yu has discovered this. The blackness out there is alive, specifically with a collective of shadowy alien ooze creatures known as the Typhon. They're contained on the very same shuttered moon-orbiting space station where Morgan, as an employee of the TranStar Corporation, has lobbed, and should any break containment then... well, you don't want to know. Imagine the *Alien* movies crossed with *Doom* and you'll be part way to getting what this loose reboot of the 2006 FPS of the same name is all about.

From the people who brought you...
Arx Fatalis, Dishonored

FARPOINT VR

GENRE: FPS **PLATFORM:** PSVR **RELEASE:** 17/05/17 **MULTIPLAYER:** NO

"Go into space." they said. "Discover new worlds," they said. "Be a hero," they said. But there wasn't any mention of getting stranded on some crappy uncharted planet full of killer aliens, armed with only basic weaponry for protection! Still, if you opt for the Aim Controller bundle of this PSVR exclusive, then at least you'll feel like you're really blasting some serious extra-terrestrial butt, *Starship Troopers*-style. Looking much like somebody made a balloon animal out of a walking crutch and a clown's face, it notches the already scary VR realism of being lost in space up several notches. Never surrender. Never retreat. Never give up.

From the people who brought you...
Here They Lie, RIGS: Mechanized Combat League

INJUSTICE 2

GENRE: FIGHTER **PLATFORM:** PS4 | XBO **RELEASE:** 17/05/17 **MULTIPLAYER:** YES

Ever wondered who the greatest DC superhero of all is? It's Batman. But if you'd like to play pretendsies that any others are better, here's your chance to try proving it, as the *Injustice* collision of superheroics and *Mortal Kombat*-styled battling goes up a gear from *Gods Among Us*. Speaking of gear, one of the big new features is loot drops, whereby you get stuff with which to customise your chosen character (including any of 16 newbies), RPG-style. The story? Batman must assemble (we don't think Marvel copyrighted the word) a new team to thwart the dual assault of Gorilla Grodd's villain ensemble The Society and dastardly android Brainiac.

From the people who brought you...
Injustice: Gods Among Us, Mortal Kombat X

FIRE EMBLEM ECHOES: SHADOWS OF VALENTIA

GENRE: RPG **PLATFORM:** 3DS **RELEASE:** 20/05/17 **MULTIPLAYER:** NO

It may not be in western non-gamers' vocabularies like Mario and Zelda, yet Nintendo's "RPG simulation" Fire Emblem series – which dates back to 1990 – has a huge fan base outside of its native Japan. But many in the series have never been available to us. A remake of 1992's second Famicom release, *Fire Emblem Gaiden*, *Shadows of Valentia* finally brings the adventure – with all its inherent toughness – to us, totally remade for 2017. A captivating dungeon crawler, you'll battle soldiers, monsters and more to stop a war and unify your continent, which is busy getting all fighty about warring gods. Stupid gods.

From the people who brought you...
Paper Mario: Sticker Star, Code Name: STEAM

Nick Cave and the Bad Seeds
Lovely Creatures

For those who couldn't afford the Nick Cave reissue series, this three CD set (covering 1985-2013) plus a 38-clip DVD of interviews and videos is as good as it gets. Presented as a slim hardback book with an essay, photos, recording and interview details, it scoops up 35 seminal tracks – yes, uber-fans will note omissions – but the scope here is exceptional. From the scouring title track to *From Her to Eternity* through harrowing visions (*Mercy Seat, Red Right Hand, Stagger Lee*) and gorgeous ballads (*Straight To You*) and on to the almost holy closer *Push the Sky Away*. The non-chronological interviews down the decades peppered between the clips of variable quality show the growth of an artist from the shades-wearing and damaged songwriter to the thoughtful and witty poet of today. And yet the consistency of his vision over three decades is what you are left with. Impressive.
Graham Reid

The Beatles
Sgt Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band

Yes, it's been half a century since this game-changing album of psychedelic whimsy, charm, poetry and studio innovation was released. It now gets multiple re-presentations from single CD and vinyl to the must-have box of discs with never bootlegged outtakes, memorabilia, Mr Kite circus poster and more. Although this comes from a very different time – the British "summer of love" – it remains an extraordinary synergy of diverse songs, characters, effects, arrangements, production and packaging.
Graham Reid

Aldous Harding Party

There's a particular range of emotions that arrive before the party. At the party. After the party. Excitement, anxiety, vulnerability. Ordinary moments are elevated and by contrast our everyday lives are brought into focus. So too with *Party*, the new album from Aldous Harding. It's a rare artistic achievement to evoke these heightened feelings, and capture with poetry and precision something of our interior lives. But Aldous makes it appear effortless with her finger-picked guitar melodies, slow deliberate piano chords, commanding, uniquely phrased vocals, strings, and subtle saxophone interludes. In this space the usual rules don't apply, and songs such as *Imagining Your Man* are punctuated with unexpected moments that thrill with playful boldness. Deep feelings and details that usually hide in the silence are amplified. And like the best parties, it's a completely transporting experience. **Simon Winkler**

HOW TO BUY

BLONDIE

More than four decades after their self-titled debut album, Blondie return with *Pollinator*, with songs written by TV On The Radio's David Sitek, Sia, Johnny Marr and others, including original members Debbie Harry and Chris Stein. But let's cherry-pick their back catalogue… Words Graham Reid

Plastic Letters (1978)

As with their promising debut two years previous, here Blondie married their love of the '60s (The Beatles, girl groups) and '50s pop ballads with power pop. The hits *Denis* and *(I'm Always Touched By Your) Presence Dear* – the former a souped-up doo-wop cover – shamelessly borrowed from Buddy Holly and the British Invasion, respectively. At a time of punk, Blondie were in the vanguard of New Wave.

Parallel Lines (1978)

Just seven months after *Plastic Letters* they returned with this hit-packed outing: Harry and Stein's disco-influenced *Heart Of Glass*, the poppy *One Way Or Another*, astute covers with the bratty *Hanging On The Telephone* and Buddy Holly's *I'm Gonna Love You Too*, and Stein's pure pop on *Sunday Girl*. In Stein's *Fade Away And Radiate* – which featured guitarist Robert Fripp – they were also pushing into more challenging areas.

Autoamerican (1980)

Recorded in LA with a swag of session players, *Autoamerican* divided critics. It opened with a cinematic instrumental by Stein, but did tap again into disco (*Live It Up*), reggae (the cover of *Tide Is High*) and hip hop dance (*Rapture*, with Harry's idiotic but ironic rap). There's also melodramatic cabaret and faux-showtunes (*Here's Looking at You*). Two-thirds of a good album, although not for the New Wave fans.

No Exit (1999)

Almost 20 years after their previous album, some of the band reformed for this release, which, as always given their magpie tendencies, drew from numerous sources such as reggae, cabaret, hip hop, straight ahead pop and girl groups (the Shangri-La's *Out In The Streets* gets covered). Still smart enough to ping a hit (*Maria* by keyboard player Jimmy Destri).

And also… Because Blondie were a singles band, a best of/greatest hits is the way to go. *The Greatest Hits* CD/DVD set of '06 is recommended because it also presents their sassy visual image. Check out Debbie Harry's 1989 *Def, Dumb & Blonde* too, where she covers Thompson Twins' *I Want That Man*. A commercial failure but a decent Blondie album, just one under her own name.

For more overviews, interviews and reviews by Graham Reid see:
www.elsewhere.co.nz

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Music That We Think You Should Check Out

GORILLAZ

Humanz

The latest album from Damon Albarn's virtual supergroup is an expansive concoction – thought-provoking, abrasive, provocative and very catchy. **Out Now**

CHRIS STAPLETON

From A Room: Volume 1

The eagerly awaited sophomore set from the Nashville superstar features eight originals plus a take on the Willie Nelson hit *Last Thing I Needed, First Thing This Morning.* **May 5**

DIANA KRALL

Turn Up The Quiet

The renowned singer and jazz pianist returns to her roots with her take on standards like *Night and Day, I'll See You In My Dreams* and *Blue Skies.* **May 5**

GRAHAM BRAZIER

Left Turn At Midnight: Graham Brazier

Stacked with raw emotion and brutal honesty, this posthumous release is the last piece of work from the Kiwi music legend and was produced by Alan Jansson. **May 5**

FEIST

Pleasure

On her fifth studio album, Leslie Feist expands upon her well-honed baroque pop, making daring leaps into previously uncharted territory. **May 5**

MACHINE GUN KELLY

Bloom

The third studio LP from the hip hop superstar features the hit single *At My Best* – featuring Hailee Steinfeld – plus collaborations with the likes of Ty Dolla $ign and James Arthur. **May 12**

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