

CREED's *TKO!* Rocky's Officially Back  
In the Oscar Ring

# Entertainment

WEEKLY

DEC. 11, 2015 • #1393

Fa-La-La-La Face-off

Your Ultimate  
List of the  
**15 Best  
Holiday**  
Movies, TV,  
Songs & Books

Meow

First Look!

# CAPTAIN AMERICA CIVIL WAR

THE BIGGEST  
MARVEL  
MOVIE YET  
INTRODUCES

**BLACK  
PANTHER**

HE'S TALL,  
POWERFUL—  
AND HAS CLAWS  
THAT A REAL  
HOUSEWIFE  
WOULD ENVY

FROM LEFT: CHRIS EVANS AS  
CAPTAIN AMERICA, CHADWICK  
BOSEMAN AS BLACK PANTHER, AND  
ROBERT DOWNEY JR. AS IRON MAN

8-803



**YOU'RE NOT YOU  
WHEN YOU'RE  
HUNGRY.**



**SATISFIES**

 **@SNICKERS #EatASnickers**

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THE  
TOP 10 THINGS  
WE LOVE  
THIS WEEK

# The Must List

▼ Gaby Hoffmann, Amy Landecker, Jay Duplass, Judith Light, and Jeffrey Tambor



1

## TRANSPARENT

TV

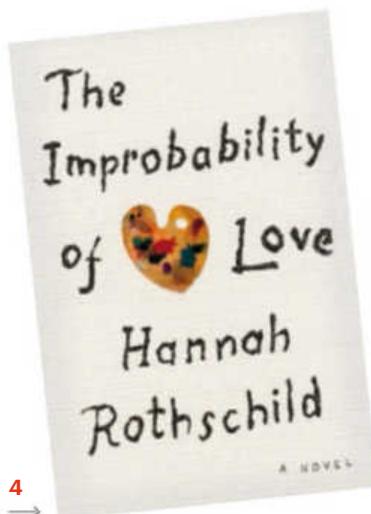
• The groundbreaking series returns as sharply funny as ever, with Maura (Emmy winner Jeffrey Tambor) and the dysfunctional Pfefferman family learning to navigate new life-changing decisions, including sex-reassignment surgery. (*Amazon*)



2 →



3 →



4 →

5 →



6 →



2

3

4

5

6

**MUSIC**  
**A HEAD FULL OF DREAMS, Coldplay**

• After 2014's melancholy *Ghost Stories*, the British rockers bounce back with some of their most joyous music in years, featuring an all-star group of collaborators including Beyoncé, Merry Clayton, Tove Lo, and others.

**TV**  
**YOU'RE THE WORST**

• The raunchy yet poignant sitcom about thirtysomethings trying to live and love has had a winning second season (available now on Hulu) thanks to nuanced storytelling that's unafraid to show characters at their, well, worst. (FX, *Wednesdays, 10:30 p.m.*)

**BOOKS**  
**THE IMPROBABILITY OF LOVE, by Hannah Rothschild**

• This wittily frothy first novel dives headfirst into the outsize greed and intrigue in today's art world—and the havoc wreaked when a lost masterpiece falls into the wrong (or maybe exactly right) hands.

**MOVIES**  
**THE LADY IN THE VAN**

• Revisiting her role from Alan Bennett's autobiographical play, Maggie Smith is crotchety, cantankerous, and ultimately charming as a homeless woman who asked to park her van in Bennett's driveway for a few weeks and stayed for 15 years. (PG-13)

**MUSIC**  
**BLUE NEIGHBOURHOOD, Troye Sivan**

• Hot 100 fans hungry for something more filling than the latest releases from Justin Bieber or One Direction should pick up this Aussie's moody full-length debut, brimming with lush synth-pop symphonies.



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Go  
Places

PLAY  
NOW



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THE ALL-NEW  
**TACOMA**

# The Must List



7  
→

## 7 MOVIES CHI-RAQ

• Spike Lee's update of *Lysistrata*—written largely in rhyme—is his most satirizing joint in 10 years. (R)

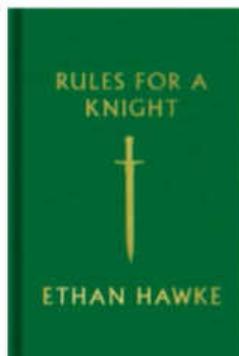
## 8 BOOKS RULES FOR A KNIGHT, by Ethan Hawke

• Told from the perspective of a 15th-century dad to his kids on the eve of battle, this collection of children's parables sweetly ruminates on life lessons.

## 9 MOVIES HITCHCOCK/ TRUFFAUT

• Fifty years after François Truffaut published his Alfred Hitchcock interviews, Martin Scorsese, Wes Anderson, and others dissect the influence of the auteurs' work. (PG-13)

8  
→



9  
→



10  
→



## 10 TV GARBAGE TIME WITH KATIE NOLAN

• The former YouTuber's comedic take on sports is witty, energetic, and, most of all, refreshing. (FS1, Wednesdays, 12 a.m.)

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THE WEEK'S  
BEST

# Sound Bites



**TWEET OF THE WEEK**  
Do you think Cate Blanchett has ever eaten stuffing? I don't. @billy\_eichner

**"Would you stop acting like Diahann Carroll, heifer? You ain't been livin' in the suburbs with that white man all your life."**

—Cookie (Taraji P. Henson), when sister Candace (Vivica A. Fox) refuses to go to a crack house to find Carol (Tasha Smith), on *Empire*

**"Look, man, I get it. My dad killed your dad. But you need to know something: Your dad was an a--hole."**

—Carl (Chandler Riggs), showing little sympathy to Ron (Austin Abrams), on *The Walking Dead*

**"Women weaken legs."**

—Rocky (Sylvester Stallone), giving training advice to Adonis (Michael B. Jordan), in *Creed*

**"She did the 30 Day Shred. Jillian Michaels changed her life."**

—Trish (Rachael Taylor), explaining Jessica's (Krysten Ritter) superstrength to a bystander, on *Marvel's Jessica Jones*

**"I saw that Prince William and Kate recently made plans for their baby daughter, Princess Charlotte, to join the Girl Scouts when she turns 5. That's how good Girl Scout cookies are. Even royalty is like, 'We need someone on the inside.'"**

—Jimmy Fallon on *The Tonight Show*

**"I'm not kissing her ring. She should be kissing my ass."**

—Queen Helena (Elizabeth Hurley), complaining about the acting prime minister, on *The Royals*

**"Yes. I've gotten over words."**

—Alicia (Julianne Margulies), responding to Eli's (Alan Cumming) description of her new love interest as a "man of few words," on *The Good Wife*

EICHNER: LAURA CAVANAU/HH/FILMMAGIC.COM; HENSON: CHUCK HOBBS/FOX; STALLONE: BARRY WETCHER; RIGGS: GENE PAGE/ABC; TAYLOR: MYLES ARON/OWITZ/NETFLIX; FALLON: DOUGLAS GORENSTEIN/NBC/UNICU PHOTO BANK; VIA GETTY IMAGES; HURLEY: JIM MARSEKEL; MARGULIES: MICHAEL PARMLEE/CBS



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Chris Evans picks up the shield again for next summer's *Captain America: Civil War*

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'Tis the season to hunker down with these Christmas and Hanukkah classics.

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### School of Rock

How the Brits behind *Cats* and *Downton Abbey* ushered the comedy to Broadway.

BY MARC SNETIKER

28 ▶

### Captain America: Civil War

With Ultron destroyed, the Avengers turn on one another in Marvel's most explosive movie yet.

BY ANTHONY BREZNICAN

34

### What If Al Pacino Played Han Solo?

And 19 other far-fetched, totally ridiculous but almost-really-happened tales from Hollywood's casting archives.

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## ON THE COVER

Chris Evans as Captain America, Chadwick Boseman as Black Panther, and Robert Downey Jr. as Iron Man. Photograph by Michael Muller.

# An Epic Behind-the-Scenes Guide to the Galaxy's Favorite Saga



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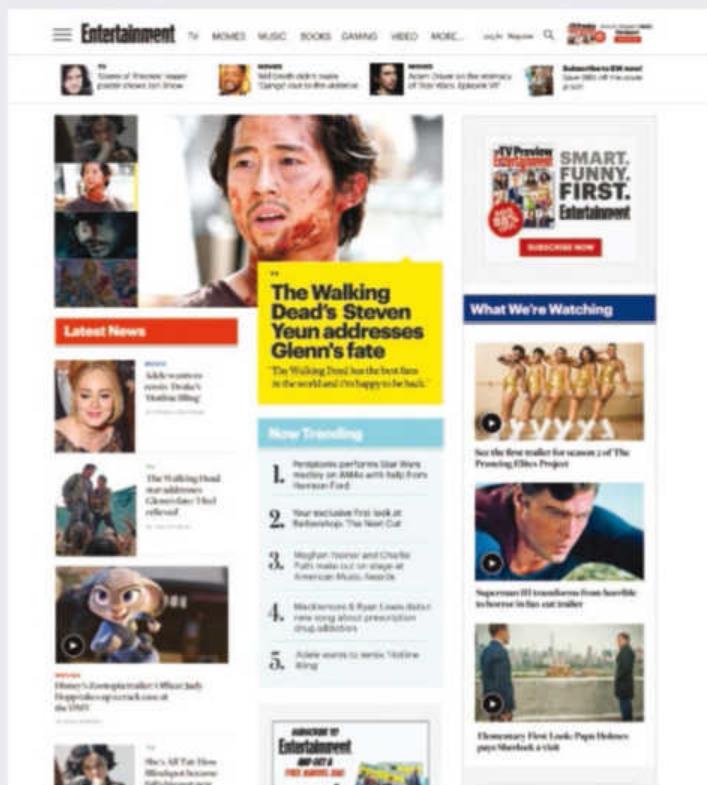
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**MY JOURNEY**

Oscar winner Patricia Arquette, *How to Get Away With Murder*'s Matt McGorry, and other celebs reflect on their careers and paths to success—and who they have to thank along the way—on EW's Web series ([ew.com/myjourney](http://ew.com/myjourney)).



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# News+Notes



## Behind Creed's Box Office Knockout

With Rocky in its corner, the film fought off skeptics to win over critics and moviegoers. Could awards-season gold be next? By Chris Lee @ChrisLee



### THE ROCKY FRANCHISE'S BOX OFFICE RECORD\*

◀ Rocky 1976	\$ 117.2M
Rocky II 1979	\$ 85.2M
Rocky III 1982	\$ 124.1M
Rocky IV 1985	\$ 127.9M
Rocky V 1990	\$ 40.9M
Rocky Balboa 2006	\$ 70.3M



▲ Michael B. Jordan and Sylvester Stallone



### CALL CREED

Thanksgiving's surprise champion.

Over the five-day holiday weekend, the *Rocky* spin-off punched above its weight, fighting off multiplex competition from *The Hunger Games: Mockingjay—Part 2* and *The Good Dinosaur* to haul in a chest-thumping \$42.1 million. What's more, the reported \$35 million sports drama—starring Michael B. Jordan as Adonis Creed, upstart boxer progeny of Rocky Balboa's late ring rival Apollo Creed—has rope-a-doped awards-season conversation (see sidebar). Costar and *Rocky* mastermind Sylvester Stallone's performance, which has already earned a best-supporting-actor prize from the National Board of Review, seems particularly primed for attention.

In the film, the Italian Stallion has basically put himself out to pasture; he must slug it out with his own mortality before helping mold the younger Creed into a champion. "I thought it would be interesting to take a character like Rocky, who's always been so physically tough, to where he never throws a punch and is dealing with being an older guy," says writer-director Ryan Coogler (*Fruitvale Station*). "Sly's been in hit movies for 40 years. People have a tendency to take his talent for granted. Because he's so good, he makes you believe he *is* these characters—Rocky Balboa, Rambo. He's totally not. It's all performance. If people are handing out awards, I think Sly definitely is deserving."

Jonathan Glickman, president of the motion-picture group for *Creed's* codistributor MGM, credits

## OSCAR'S COMEBACK KID?

**BACK IN 1977**, in fitting underdog fashion, *Rocky* upset the Oscar race with its Best Picture win, defeating such prestige titles as *Taxi Driver*, *All the President's Men*, and *Network*. It was a stunning victory, and included prizes for Best Director and Best Editing. With so much box office gold and critical love in *Creed's* corner, could it happen again?

Odds of a nod are stacked against it as the seventh film in an almost-40-year-old franchise, but that story line could drive a passion-fueled vote from Academy members—especially those charged by director Ryan Coogler's herculean efforts to get the movie made. And Sylvester Stallone? Says one consultant: "He has a terrific shot if you can tell the comeback narrative." —Nicole Sperling



▲ (From left) Director John G. Avildsen, producer Robert Chartoff, Stallone, and producer Irwin Winkler at the Academy Awards in 1977

Coogler, 29, with persuading Stallone to return to the series as a producer-writer-actor after the middling reception of 1990's *Rocky V* and 2006's *Rocky Balboa*. He wooed Stallone, in part, by his personal connection to the material: Coogler's father is a major *Rocky* fan, and the filmmaker had recently watched his dad's near-fatal battle with a degenerative neuromuscular disorder. The struggle inspired one of the film's plotlines and helped steer *Creed* in a direction that's neither retro nor reboot. "Ryan was able to make a film that paid attention to what we love about the franchise that was also a forward-looking picture of a modern hero in Adonis Creed," Glickman says. "It tells a contemporary story. But his reverence for the franchise allowed him to be respectful and give the fans of *Rocky* what they needed in a *Rocky* film."

For his part, Jordan entered into portraying Adonis—an underdog struggling to reconcile his father's legacy with his own self-worth inside the squared circle—with Stallone's explicit blessing. "He was like, 'You shouldn't compare yourself to what I did 40 years ago, because this is your movie,'" Jordan recalled during a recent conversation on SiriusXM's *Entertainment Weekly Radio*. "Just hearing him say that took that weight off my shoulders.... If he's cool with it, I'm cool with it."

In Hollywood, nothing succeeds like success—except, perhaps, for sequels. And as *Rocky* himself is apt to point out, every champion was once a contender who refused to give up. So can audiences reasonably expect a *Creed 2* anytime soon? "I'm lying if I tell you I didn't think about what would happen next for these characters," Coogler says. "But it's still way too soon to talk about it!" Just don't count it out.

*Additional reporting by Kyle Anderson*

# Angels, by the Numbers

The **Victoria's Secret Fashion Show** is an annual spectacle boasting thousands of precious gems and plenty of A-list guests. As we count down to the Dec. 8 airdate (10 p.m., CBS), we tally up the production's heavenly stats. **By Madison Vain**

**\$2 Million**

The value of **Lily Aldridge's** Fantasy Bra

**6,500**

Precious gems coating the stunner

**3**

Powerhouse musicians—**Selena Gomez**, **Ellie Goulding**, and **The Weeknd**—gracing the stage this year



**700 lbs.**  
Of Swarovski crystals appearing on the runway



**88M**

Combined Instagram followers of all the Angels



**43M**

Instagram followers of first-time Angel **Kendall Jenner**



**\$2.1M**

Raised for charities, including the American Cancer Society

**27 lbs.**

Weight of the heaviest wings, worn by **Behati Prinsloo**



## ANGIE TRIBECA'S GUEST-STAR POWER

You never know where or when you might be blessed with a Bill Murray sighting—except where/when you do. So after Netflix's *A Very Murray Christmas* on Dec. 4 (see our review on page 49), mark your calendars for Jan. 17, when the enigmatic star pops up on *Angie Tribeca*, Rashida Jones' new TBS police-procedural parody created by Steve and Nancy Carell. Murray guest-stars as a power-player financier-turned-grocery-store employee named Vic Deakins, who bonds (and flirts) with Jones' hard-edged detective. "Tribeca is at a crossroads and she's instructed to take a break," says Jones. "We hang out when I'm trying to deal with my workaholicism." What to expect? "It's impossible for Bill Murray *not* to be charismatic and mysterious," she notes. "We're slightly not sure what's up with him." TBS

## The Record to Break All Records

**Adele** shattered \*NSYNC's single-week sales record, moving 3.38 million copies of 25 in seven days. But this is Adele—she's hardly done making history. **By Kyle Anderson**

**WHAT'S ANOTHER MILLION?** The Beatles and Eminem are the only artists to sell one million copies in a nondebut week, and *no* artist has sold more than one million in back-to-back weeks. But Adele could see a 70 percent drop in week 2 and still hit six figures. **Odds: Hello, history!**

**CRUISING PAST OOPS?** 25 could have the biggest year for an album by a female artist if it tops the 7.89 million copies *Oops!...I Did It Again* sold in 2000—though Britney Spears had eight months to set her record, not six weeks. **Odds: Brit's sky could fall.**

**HAIL TO THE KING?** With bumps from the holidays and Grammy season, 25 has an outside chance of passing Carole King's *Tapestry* with the most consecutive weeks—a huge 15—at No. 1 for a female solo artist. **Odds: Long as the River Lea.**



ALDRIDGE, GOMEZ AND MCGRAW: PULERI; DIMITRIOS KAMBOURIS/GETTY IMAGES FOR VICTORIA'S SECRET (2); THE WEEKND, PRINSLOO, JENNER: THOMAS CONCORDIA (3); ABELE: DANA EDLSON/NBC; MURRAY AND JONES: JENNIFER CLASIN/TBS; KUDROW: TYLER GOLDEN/TBS; OKLEY: RAMONA ROSALES



will debut all 10 of season 1's episodes in a Jan. 17-18 marathon, and in the premiere, viewers will meet a curious character (Lisa Kudrow) who has ties to a mayor being blackmailed over his tattoos. "She's presenting herself as the saucy mistress who knows a lot," says Jones, "and then it turns out she's kind of a crazy cat lady." *Angie Tribeca*: where cool cats and cat ladies come to play. —Dan Snierson

▲ (From top) Bill Murray and Rashida Jones; Lisa Kudrow



## Tyler Oakley Is Snervous

In the past year, the massively popular YouTube personality with nearly 8 million subscribers has expanded his media empire to include the *New York Times* best-selling book *Binge* and a documentary, *Snervous* (out Dec. 11), which follows him on a national stage tour. EW spoke with the 26-year-old about the film, his insane 2015, and what's next. **By Kevin P. Sullivan**



EW ▾

**You've made a career documenting your life online. Did you have concerns going into this film?**

**That's tough when your brand is based entirely on your personality.**

**Other than video views, how do you measure your success as you move beyond YouTube?**

**What's on tap for 2016?**

**May we recommend a nap?**

TYLER OAKLEY ▾

I was intimidated by the idea of handing over control. [Director] Amy Rice did an incredible job of finding angles that I wouldn't have necessarily put out to the world. For the first time in eight years, it's me handing over the car keys and saying, "I trust you."

For any YouTuber, if you're too nervous to have somebody else document, it may be that what you're putting out there isn't authentic. There were plenty of times I was like, "Do we have to film this? I'm not in the mood." I knew there'd be unflattering moments, but I'm happy that the cameras kept going.

I'm trying to figure out what it means to take care of myself. I'm enjoying what I'm putting out there, but also making sure I'm at my healthiest so I can deliver my best self. When you have to put it all out there, if you're not taking care of yourself it shows, and people can feel that.

Since the beginning of this year, I've had my year mapped out. I knew what was coming between the tour and the book and the book tour and the doc. I don't have plans for 2016, and that feels so good. [Shortly after we spoke to Oakley, it was announced that he will appear on season 28 of *The Amazing Race*.]

A nap would be good.



### AMAZON RECOMMENDS

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# EW's GADGET GIFT GUIDE

FOR EVERYONE FROM CUTTING-EDGE GAMING GEEKS TO FRIENDS WHO ARE ALWAYS ON THE MOVE, THE TECH WORLD'S MUST-HAVE ITEMS GUARANTEE GRINS THIS HOLIDAY SEASON. *By* STEPHANIE SCHOMER *Photographs by* KEVIN SWEENEY



**1** Give their Throwback Thursday an offline update: Using the free Impossible Project app, the **Instant Lab Universal printer** transfers smartphone photos to Polaroid film to create instant (nondigital) memories. \$250, [momastore.org](http://momastore.org)  
**2** Put the world in the palm of their hand—or at least on the back of their wrist. **Apple Watch** provides easy access to apps and works

with an iPhone for a seamless experience, whether it's listening to Adele on repeat or asking Siri for directions to the cinema. *From \$350*  
**3** It's the jukebox/audiobook/personal assistant they've dreamed of. The voice-reactive **Amazon Echo** delivers music, books, and calendars from the cloud and learns from users' habits to become the smartest device in the house. \$180

**4** With a bigger screen, brighter colors, and higher contrast, **Samsung's Galaxy Tab S2** is a welcome upgrade for the on-the-go binge watcher. *From \$400*  
**5** Put the pedal to the metal with the **Logitech G920 Driving Force Racing Wheel** for Xbox One and PC, and feel every bump in the road thanks to the powerful force feedback. The only thing missing is

a tree-shaped air freshener. \$400  
**6** **Mattel's View-Master** gets a millennial makeover—and becomes an ideal toy for the tech-savvy kid. Download any Google-supported virtual-reality app to a smartphone and slide the device into the viewer to grant immersive access to worlds near and far, from the great outdoors to outer space. \$30

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▲ (Clockwise from above) *Love Actually*; Mariah Carey with Santa Claus; *A Christmas Story*

# THE BEST HOLIDAY ENTERTAINMENT EVER

'Tis the season to hunker down with **Christmas and Hanukkah classics**. We've made our list and checked it twice—now it's up to you to vote for your absolute holiday favorite on EW.com. *By EW Staff*

**1 LOVE ACTUALLY**  
2003

What other movie so perfectly encapsulates the warm-and-fuzzy-and-frazzled nature of the holidays? Emma Thompson at her most heart-breaking, Hugh Grant at his most charming, the best airport scenes since *Casablanca*, and a fantastically uplifting finale featuring the other best part about the holidays—Mariah Carey's magnum opus "All I Want for Christmas Is You."

**2 IT'S A WONDERFUL LIFE**  
1946

It really says something that a movie that hinges on one man's suicidal despair has become a Christmas tradition. Frank Capra directs a flawless Jimmy Stewart in this expertly executed masterpiece.



**3 A CHRISTMAS STORY**  
1983

Sure, it's an obvious choice, but little Ralphie's yuletide tribulations are as rewatchable as fudge. Except I didn't say *fudge*...

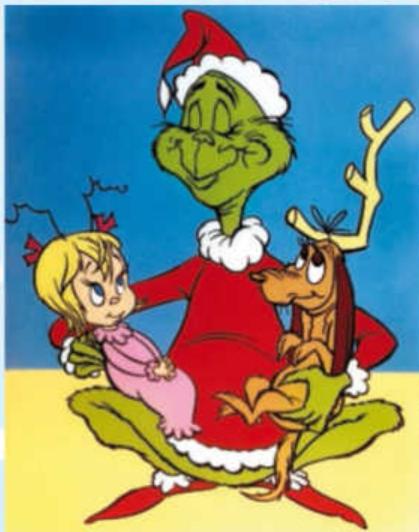
**4 "FELIZ NAVIDAD," JOSÉ FELICIANO** 1970

Everything is better with a sprinkle of *sazón*, including Christmas. Bilingual, bicultural, and awfully catchy, this Caribbean-flavored carol deserves a slot on any holiday playlist.



**5 RUDOLPH THE RED-NOSED REINDEER** 1964

Beyond providing a creation myth for America's favorite caribou, this special introduced an unforgettable coterie of stop-motion characters like Hermey the elf dentist, Yukon Cornelius, and Burl Ives' Sam the Snowman.



▲ (Clockwise from top left) *Die Hard*; *Elf*; the Chipmunks' hit album; *The Best Man Holiday*; *How the Grinch Stole Christmas!*

**6 "CHRISTMAS (BABY PLEASE COME HOME)," DARLENE LOVE 1963**

Yes, the season is about joy and togetherness, but some of the best holiday songs are blue—like this enduring soul-pop plea.

**7 DIE HARD 1988**

It's a traditional Hollywood recipe for a holiday tale: an estranged family reunited, carols, a grinchy villain, even climactic "snow." The bullets and explosions are merely ornaments.

**8 "THE HANUKKAH SONG," ADAM SANDLER 1994**

Originally performed on *SNL*'s "Weekend Update," this holiday song that Jews and non-Jews alike never knew we needed comes complete with shout-outs to David Lee Roth, the Fonz, and Goldie Hawn, among others.

**9 ELF 2003**

Will Ferrell sleighs as Santa's six-foot-tall helper Buddy, who heads from the North Pole to Manhattan to unite with his naughty-listed dad (James Caan) in Christmas' most quotable movie.

**10 A CHARLIE BROWN CHRISTMAS 1965**

Nothing inspires more heart-felt nostalgia than the opening trills of the Vince Guaraldi Trio's "Christmas Time Is Here." Charlie and the gang's search for the meaning of Christmas adds to the old-school delight.



**11 HOW THE GRINCH STOLE CHRISTMAS! 1966**

This TV special is both a welcome reminder that it's okay to feel cranky and a touching, nonpreachy tribute to what Christmas is really about. (Hint: not just roast beast.)

**12 THE BEST MAN HOLIDAY 2013**

The sequel to the 1999 comedy about a tight-knit group of friends (including Taye Diggs, Morris Chestnut, and Nia Long) delivers a surprising emotional punch that will make you wanna call your loved ones.

**13 THE O.C.'S "THE BEST CHRISMUKKAH EVER" 2003**

In the show's first season, Seth Cohen (Adam Brody) merged his parents' two faiths to create "the greatest super-holiday known to mankind,"



celebrated with "eight days of presents, followed by one day of many presents."

**14 A CHRISTMAS MEMORY, BY TRUMAN CAPOTE 1956**

Capote's short story about a 7-year-old boy and his friendship with his elderly female cousin will fill every chamber of your heart.

**15 "THE CHIPMUNK SONG," THE CHIPMUNKS 1958**

Amid the deluge of similar-sounding yuletide music, Alvin, Simon, and Theodore's vinyl debut distinguished itself by winning three Grammys and hitting No. 1 on *Billboard*. ♦

HOW THE GRINCH STOLE CHRISTMAS: MICHAEL GIBSON; A CHARLIE BROWN CHRISTMAS: 1965 UNITED FEATURE SYNDICATE

# BEHIND **THE** MUSICAL

HOW THE BRITS

## BEHIND

*CATS* & *DOWNTON ABBEY*

USHERED  
CULT COMEDY

## *SCHOOL OF ROCK*

101 BROADWAY

BY MARC SNETIKER @MARCNETIKER



Jack Black in 2003's *School of Rock*





Alex Brightman  
in Jack Black's role  
on Broadway

## EYEBROWS WERE RAISED

last winter when Sir Andrew Lloyd Webber, the composer responsible for some of Broadway's longest-running hits, like *The Phantom of the Opera* and *Cats*, announced he was bringing the 2003 film *School of Rock* to the stage. The comedy, which starred Jack Black as Dewey Finn, a schlubby musician who poses as a substitute teacher and transforms prep-school preteens into the rock band he never had, was a natural for musical adaptation. But a British theater icon taking on a beloved slice of I'm-with-the-band cinema? Turns out he hit all the right notes. Lloyd Webber, for all his felines and Technicolor dreamcoats, is the maestro of the rock musical, after all, beginning with his seminal rock opera *Jesus Christ Superstar* in 1971 and continuing with shows like 1984's *Starlight Express* and 1986's *Phantom*.

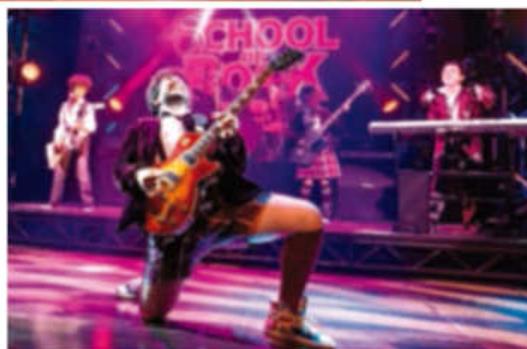
"I remember [the Who's] Pete Townshend saying to me that the guitar playing in *Phantom* is as rock as anything he'd ever heard," Lloyd Webber tells



EW during rehearsals for *School of Rock—The Musical*, set to open on Dec. 6 at Broadway’s Winter Garden Theatre. “Sometimes people have a problem with me because they like to compartmentalize, but I’ve got many sides and love all different types of music. [In writing *School of Rock*] I went back to a lot of my old roots, but I didn’t revisit all my old Zeppelin albums—because I’ve never *not* listened to them.”

Lloyd Webber and his wife and producing partner, Madeleine, had been seeking the film rights from Paramount Pictures when serendipity linked them with young director Laurence Connor (*Les Misérables*, *Miss Saigon*), who had independently suggested the idea of adapting *School of Rock* while working with Lloyd Webber on an arena tour of *Jesus Christ Superstar* in 2012.

In 2013, with rights and an experienced rock director in hand, Lloyd Webber began to double the creative team. Frequent Disney scribe Glenn Slater, who adapted movies into Broadway musicals with *The Little Mermaid* and *Sister Act*, would handle lyrics. For the book, they sought a writer who could appeal to the sensibilities of wealthy children and their parents; to wit, Lloyd Webber approached compatriot Julian Fellowes, best known to American audiences as the creator of *Downton Abbey*. Fellowes said yes on the first phone call. “I was so delighted, because I can’t think of anything further away from *Downton* if I tried,” said Fellowes, who also wrote the 2004 stage adaptation of *Mary Poppins*. “It’s fun to get out of your own straitjacket sometimes.”



Scenes from *School of Rock* on Broadway

and *Matilda*. Brightman had a small part in an early all-adult development reading of *School of Rock*—and the director took notice. “There was something about Alex’s twinkle and his energy that was totally enigmatic and juvenile,” says Connor. “This guy can call a child a complete douche bag on stage and you love him for it because he’s on their level.” Lloyd Webber agrees: “He’s God’s gift to us.”

In the ensuing months Brightman, a self-trained singer shaped by Zeppelin, AC/DC, and Aerosmith, was cast as the lead. His relation to Black’s performance relies less on imitation and more on kindred kinetics. “I could never and will never do a Jack Black impression. If I nail nuances here and there, it’s all coincidental,” says the actor, who gained 40 pounds for the role, and admits he sweats off two pounds every night. “But some of the lines—like ‘*Chell-o!*’—are just like, why would you do it any other way?”

Lloyd Webber had the same philosophy for the music: Though he wrote a new score, he kept some of the film’s iconic songs. And superfan Brightman makes sure *School*’s pint-size costars know their rock ABCs. “The kids come in wearing a Ramones T-shirt and I’ll say, ‘You aren’t allowed to wear that unless you tell me every band member, which ones are alive, and your favorite song on that album,’” he says. “They have homework.” ♦

Flash-forward a couple of years: In a nationwide search for the production’s 13 child stars, Lloyd Webber & Co. were adamant that only 10-year-olds would play 10-year-olds (rather than, say, *Matilda the Musical*, which has passed off twentysomethings as tykes). “When you see an 11-year-old boy who is still able to believe in Santa Claus, and then he picks up a guitar and shows you this amazing skill, you can’t help but be totally impressed,” says Connor.

In casting Dewey, vocal chops and frantic energy were key, but there was a secret ingredient. “The wonderful thing about Jack Black was you wouldn’t worry if you left your children with this guy,” says Lloyd Webber. “We looked at a lot of well-known people with good rock voices, but you didn’t get that feeling that they were overgrown kids themselves.”

Enter Alex Brightman, 28, a rising star on New York’s underground cabaret circuit who’s had roles in *Wicked*



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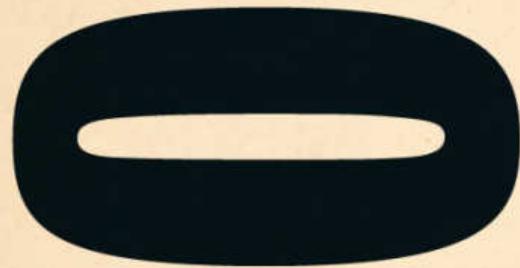
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# IT'S WARY







**ON A BROILING JULY** morning in Fayetteville, Ga., Chris Evans is sweating through his Captain America mask. The true-blue Avenger is standing at the end of a flat expanse of asphalt ringed with two-story-high green tarps that will allow special-effects artists to transform this Pinewood Studios parking lot into a tarmac at Germany's Leipzig/Halle Airport. The Winter Soldier (Sebastian Stan), Cap's long-lost friend and principal foe last time we saw him, is on his left. On his right stand a phalanx of heroes—Falcon (Anthony Mackie), Hawkeye (Jeremy Renner), Scarlet Witch (Elizabeth Olsen) and Ant-Man (Paul Rudd)—who are about to face off against their most daunting opponents yet: Iron Man (Robert Downey Jr.), War Machine (Don Cheadle), Black Widow (Scarlett Johansson) and...a new ally. Moments from now, when directors Joe and Anthony Russo yell "Action," a

universe of good guys will unleash hell on one another in the most savage beatdown in Marvel history.

The crew of *Captain America: Civil War* refer to this scene as the "splash page." That's the comic-book term for a full-spread illustration that opens an issue or marks its climax. "The story is about family, and what happens if they don't agree," says Joe Russo, who directed *Captain America: The Winter Soldier* with his brother. "We've been comparing it to a fight at a wedding. What happens when your cousin and your brother go at it, and whose side are you on?" But Cap and Iron Man aren't squabbling over who picks up the check at the shawarma place. They're fighting about who has power over the superpowered.

Based loosely on Marvel Comics' 2006-07 seven-part *Civil War* series, the movie (out May 6) explores the debate around freedom versus safety. As the film opens, the new Avengers—glimpsed assembling at the end of this summer's *Age of Ultron*—take on an old enemy: Crossbones (Frank Grillo), last seen getting a building dropped on his skull in *The Winter Soldier*. But...the takedown in *Civil War* goes wrong. A lot of people die. A lot of innocent people.

Leaders from around the globe, including the U.S. secretary of state (William Hurt), gather to enact accords that would clamp down on those with superhuman skills. The argument that began bubbling up in *Ultron* between Cap and Iron Man over whether any one person has the right to make a decision—even the "best" one—for the entire planet boils into a full-scale war.

Cap/Steve Rogers is on the side of freedom from government control. He has witnessed too much corrupt authority in his (unnaturally) long life. His trust is broken.

Iron Man/Tony Stark is on the side of safety above all else. He tries to legislate and enforce the great responsibility that comes with great power. "In most of the movies, there's no question who we should be siding with," Evans says during a break between shots. "We all agree Nazis are bad, aliens from space are bad. But this is the first time you really have two points of view. There's no wrong answer here, so it becomes a question of morality. That's hard for [Cap]. I don't think he's ever been so uncertain with what right and wrong is."

That murky morality makes for tenuous alliances, and those teams on the airport

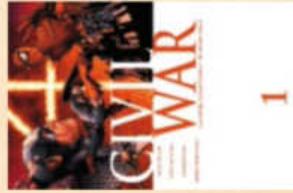
tarmac shift. Black Widow, for instance, takes a long time deciding where her loyalty lies. "She's always a bit on the perimeter," Johansson says. "So she can have a better perspective of what's really going on."

**WHAT'S REALLY GOING ON** at the moment is that she's thrashing the tar out of Ant-Man. On the Georgia airport set, combat is in full force. While others are throwing punches, Hawkeye and Scarlet Witch blast away at the sky. They're trying to knock some unseen threat out of the air. (War Machine? The Vision?)

It's definitely not Iron Man. For one thing, he's not actually on set at the moment. He'll be added in digitally later. But in the finished scene he'll be flying low and locked onto another target: Captain

## THE START OF CIVIL WAR

*The comic-book series behind next summer's blockbuster*



Brother against brother. In 2006 and 2007, Marvel gave this age-old story the superhero treatment with *Civil War*, writer Mark Millar's crossover story line that had the entire world of characters choosing sides behind either Captain America or Iron Man. At the time, Marvel Studios president Kevin Feige was assembling the interlocked Marvel Cinematic Universe that would launch in 2008. "Reading those comic books, it felt like, 'Wouldn't it be amazing to someday do something like this?'" Feige says. "The fact that that day has come is very gratifying."

In the comics Cap and Iron Man were divided over the Superhuman Registration Act, but in the film they are clashing over the Sokovia Accords, named after the city-state in *Age of Ultron* that was ripped out of the earth. Same fight, different specifics. "Both [regulations] say we need to keep better track of what superheroes are doing," Feige says.

Cap is against the regulations, and Iron Man is for them. "They both want the Avengers to be a successful force for good, but they believe there are different ways of doing it," Feige says. "And that's when you get the best form of conflict." Unfortunately, the best form of conflict doesn't mean good guys always stay at their best. —Anthony Breznican

# Black Panther

BEHIND THE  
DESIGN

By  
**ANTHONY  
BREZNICAN**



*The first black comic-book superhero will be getting his own movie in February 2018, but we'll encounter Chadwick Boseman's clawed warrior this May in Captain America: Civil War. The superhero, whose real name is T'Challa, is a prince from the fictional African nation of Wakanda, home to the world's largest natural supply of vibranium—the indestructible metal that makes up Cap's shield.*

*Panther was first introduced in Fantastic Four #52 in July 1966, and in Civil War T'Challa is aligned with the consortium of rulers trying to hammer out accords that would control the actions of the superpowered. His secret identity comes into play when the good guys aren't able to solve things by using their words. Here's a look at how Marvel and Boseman transferred the feltné from page to screen.*



## 1. METALLICAT

Panther's suit has a sheen that seems to replicate the glistening fur of the jungle cat that gives him his name. But it's actually the reflection of light off metal. His suit looks like cloth, but it's woven vibranium. "Vibranium is dynamic—it can change how it's used," Boseman says. "It has the ability to change shape and form and still have its strength."

## 2. ARMOR ALL

The vibranium cloth acts as a kind of armor. "It's not just durable—it has the ability to absorb energy," Boseman says. "It has the ability to absorb the attack of another person and repel or respond to that attack. That's part of the power."

## 3. KITTY VISION

What's it like looking through those lens-covered eyes? "Your peripheral vision is definitely skewed," Boseman says. "It's gridded, so you're seeing a tinted view of things. You could still see enough." But they'd be an impediment in a real fight.

## 4. CLAWS VS. SHIELD

So if Panther's claws are vibranium, and so is Cap's shield...who would win in a fight? "That's a great question right there," Boseman says with a laugh. "If you're talking to Mayweather about the Mayweather/Pacquiao fight, then Mayweather's gonna say he's gonna win. I have to back myself."

America. Evans raises his shield, slings an upper cut through the air, and gets in one more hit against his invisible foe before he's almost taken out in real life. The main camera is on a crane, and it swoops down—presumably following Iron Man's descent—until it's right in Evans' face. The actor has to dive out of the way at the last second to avoid being clobbered.

After a few more takes, Evans comes over to the video screens to check out the shot, laughing at the fact that each one ends with an extreme close-up of his panicked face dodging the camera. "I can't keep throwing punches when that's so close," he says. The Russos come up with a solution: Go ahead and drop back. The shot will end with Iron Man knocking Captain America to his knees.

Aiding Iron Man in that mission, at least initially, is T'Challa, a young prince from the fictional African nation of Wakanda who has a secret identity—Black Panther (see sidebar). Panther, played by Chadwick Boseman (42), has been long awaited by fans, and he becomes a key figure in the conflict. His allegiance is savagely fought for by both Cap and Iron Man, and T'Challa is doing his best to remain neutral, at least with the mask off. "He's torn between how things were done in the past and how things need to happen in this new world," Boseman says. "And I think there's perhaps a bit of a maverick there."

A peerless warrior, too. On set, Panther, armed with claws of vibranium—the same Wakandan metal used in Cap's shield—gallops forward on all fours like his namesake animal and full-on tackles his prey.

*Civil War* is the 13th film from the Marvel Cinematic Universe, which began with *Iron Man* in 2008, and it marks a major turning point. By the end of the movie, "things are left in such a state that you might need new heroes," says screenwriter Christopher Markus. And you'll get them. Over the next two years, and for the remainder of Marvel Studios' Phase Three, you won't be seeing much of the original Avengers. There'll be a Doctor Strange film with Benedict Cumberbatch in November 2016; *Guardians of the Galaxy Vol. 2* in May 2017; and then Chris Hemsworth's hammer god, who's not in *Civil War*, returning for his own part 3 in *Thor: Ragnarok* in November 2017. Black Panther will get his own movie in February 2018, and only that May will the heroes we already know and love (even if they don't love each other) return as a team in *Avengers: Infinity War Part 1*, which the Russos are also directing.

"We get to break this thing up and leave them in a weird state," says Stephen McFeely, who wrote *Civil War* with Markus and who's writing the two-part *Infinity* with him. "So when the s--- hits the fan, we've got to figure out a way to pick them all up again." Cap himself may need some serious picking up when *Civil War* is over. "Part of the fun was finding a way to put Captain America in a situation where his answer wasn't 'I sacrifice myself,'" says Anthony Russo. "He has to make some other choice—a choice for himself."

**ONE GUY WHO'S NEVER** had trouble choosing for himself is Tony Stark. Iron Man isn't necessarily the "bad guy" in *Civil War*, but he's definitely the antagonist. "It didn't



↑ Captain America and Black Panther on the chase

bother me at all," Downey says. On set, shooting a different scene, the star is sporting a silk shirt and tie, stained with blood, and a black eye. Obviously someone got ahold of him when he didn't have his metal suit handy. "In some ways Tony is the antagonist to himself in his own story. This guy understands problems because he *is* a problem. And he tends to create them." Having unleashed Ultron on the world, among other more venial indiscretions, Stark is starting to appreciate boundaries. Even while Downey himself is accidentally crossing them off camera.

Among the many mysteries to be answered in *Civil War*—Whose funeral will finally bring closure to Steve Rogers' past? Exactly how does Daniel Brühl's enigmatic

Baron Zemo factor into the narrative?—the biggest, and most central, is whether a certain agile superhero will be making an appearance. You've seen this hero on screen before, but this would be his first time in a Marvel Studios film. For all sorts of complicated legal reasons involving a license-sharing deal with Sony Pictures, no one at Marvel, or Disney, can confirm that he's in the movie. They can't even talk about him.

So it's a surprise to see Downey on the Pinewood backlot, strolling around with his arm slung around the shoulders of a young actor by the name of Tom Holland, who just happens to be wearing an iconic red-and-blue bodysuit. You may have heard of him. He's the new Spider-Man. 🕷

# *What If* **Al Pacino**

**& 19 Other Far-Fetched, Totally Ridiculous but Almost-Re**



# *Played* **Han Solo?**

**ally-Happened Tales From *Hollywood's Casting Archives***



WOULD **RAY LIOTTA** HAVE MADE A DECENT TONY SOPRANO? HOW ABOUT **MICHELLE PFEIFFER** AS CLARICE STARLING? EW TAKES A LOOK BACK AT ACTORS WHO WERE ONCE CONSIDERED FOR NOW-ICONIC ROLES, AND ANALYZES WHETHER OR NOT THEY COULDA BEEN (GOOD) CONTENDERS.

PHOTO ILLUSTRATIONS BY RICHARD ROBERTS

## ◀ **WHAT IF**

**Al Pacino** *had played Han Solo* in STAR WARS?

**THE BACKSTORY** Pacino in the mid-'70s is what all actors dream of. Fame from *The Godfather* led to three straight Best Actor nominations from 1973 to 1975. At some point a screenplay landed in his lap for a movie that at the time was still known as *The Star Wars*. The filmmakers wanted Pacino to play a swaggering smuggler...with a giant teddy-bear co-pilot, or something? During "An Evening With Pacino" in London in 2013, he told the audience of the role that made Harrison Ford the world's most successful ex-carpenter, "It was mine for the taking." There was just one problem, he added: "I didn't understand the script." A few months after *Star Wars* arrived, Pacino's hot streak ended with the flop *Bobby Deerfield*. In his long career, he's had high highs and low lows, but with Disney making a couple dozen *Star Wars* movies, maybe there's a new role in the franchise in his future?

**THE VERDICT** Probably for the best. This was still the age of Subtle Pacino, and it's hard to imagine his Method line readings chewing on George Lucas' dialogue. (A more fun counterfactual: envisioning a *Scarface*-era Pacino shooting Greedo with a laser machine gun.) —DARREN FRANICH

▼WHAT IF

**Tom Selleck** had played **Indiana Jones** in RAIDERS OF THE LOST ARK?

**THE BACKSTORY** While many folks assume George Lucas wrote *Raiders of the Lost Ark* with Harrison Ford in mind, the opposite is true. Ford had already appeared in two Lucas-penned films (*Star Wars* and *American Graffiti*), and the screenwriter urged director Steven Spielberg to consider other actors—

including Peter Coyote—before they decided on Tom Selleck, a relative unknown who had just shot a pilot for *Magnum, P.I.*

**THE VERDICT** Selleck in his prime probably would have delighted as the fearless explorer, and as he told David Letterman, he absolutely wanted to play Indy—but his commitment to *Magnum, P.I.* got in the way. He still made out okay: When the Hawaiian-shirt-and-shortshorts-sporting detective eventually made it on air, Selleck became an instant icon, the series ran for eight seasons, and the actor won his first and only Emmy. —BILL KEITH



(PREVIOUS SPREAD) STAR WARS: EPISODE IV—A NEW HOPE. © TM LUCASFILM LTD.; PACINO: EVERETT COLLECTION; (THIS SPREAD) RAIDERS OF THE LOST ARK. © TM LUCASFILM LTD.; SELLECK: UNIVERSAL/EVERETT COLLECTION; THE X-FILES: LARRY WATSON/FOX; ANDERSON: GELLAR: RON GALLELA, LTD./WIREIMAGE.COM (2); CLUELESS: ELLIOTT MARKS

▶WHAT IF

**Sarah Michelle Gellar** had played **Cher** in CLUELESS?

**THE BACKSTORY** Could Buffy have pulled off an Alaia so spectacularly? The then-little-known Sarah Michelle Gellar was reportedly offered the role of spoiled yet well-intentioned rich L.A. high schooler Cher Horowitz in Amy Heckerling's teen classic, but scheduling conflicts with her *All My Children* gig meant she had to pass. The role instead went to another up-and-comer, Alicia Silverstone.

**THE VERDICT** SMG was a way fabulous choice and totally could have pulled it off, but after rolling with the homies with Alicia Silverstone, can you imagine anyone else in the role? As if! Plus, SMG proceeded to star on the TV cult fave *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*—and wound up with the more prolific career. —GILLIAN TELLING





▼ **WHAT IF**

**Rob Lowe** had played **Derek Shepherd** on **GREY'S ANATOMY**?

**THE BACKSTORY** Fact: Rob Lowe is freakishly handsome. So it's not surprising he was considered for the role of Derek Shepherd, the most devastatingly attractive doctor in all of Seattle. "I had read it and loved it—the writing was crisp, real, and very entertaining," Lowe wrote in his 2014 memoir, *Love Life*. Yet, because many of ABC's new dramas at that time hadn't caught fire, Lowe took a chance on a different pilot: *Dr. Vegas*, where he played an in-house physician at a casino. "The odds were just too stacked," he said of turning it down. Instead, Patrick Dempsey charmed his way into viewers' hearts as McDreamy—until his untimely demise earlier this year.

**THE VERDICT** Considering that *Grey's* guru Shonda Rhimes has said the nickname McDreamy was born from watching Dempsey (and his hair), he was always the right man for the job. —SAMANTHA HIGHFILL

▼ **WHAT IF**

**John Travolta** had starred in **FORREST GUMP**?

**THE BACKSTORY** John Travolta's initial *Saturday Night Fever* heyday ended when he passed on *American Gigolo* and *An Officer and a Gentleman*. (Richard Gere sends his regards.) Years later, in the midst of the *Look Who's Talking* trilogy, he passed on another career-defining role: lovable low-IQ boomer-generation avatar Forrest (which he later said he regretted). Although it's hard to imagine anyone but Tom Hanks in the part, Travolta wasn't the craziest idea, as he later played another local-boy savant in *Phenomenon*.

**THE VERDICT** Good move: Hanks may have earned the Best Actor Oscar for *Gump*, but Travolta earned a nomination that same year as Vincent Vega in *Pulp Fiction*, a role that made him one of the great comeback stories of the '90s. Leads in comedies, dramas, and hit action movies followed. Let's just not mention *Battlefield Earth*. —DARREN FRANICH

▼ **WHAT IF**

**Ray Liotta** had played **Tony Soprano** on **THE SOPRANOS**?

**THE BACKSTORY** The *GoodFellas* star was coming off a few years that ran the gamut from good (*Cop Land*) to bad (*Operation Dumbo Drop*). But after Liotta earned solid reviews as Frank Sinatra in HBO's TV movie *The Rat Pack*, the network thought of him for the lead role on its new original drama series. "It was for a two-year commitment," Liotta later told the *Today* show, "and I didn't really want to give up that time."

**THE VERDICT** As superb as James Gandolfini was in the part, the possibilities of Liotta as Tony are tantalizing. He would have squared off with his *GoodFellas* wife, Lorraine Bracco, and probably would have been less melancholic and more unhinged. Later, in *Grand Theft Auto: Vice City*, Liotta voiced Tommy Vercetti, another gangster with problems—a small consolation prize for missing out on the best role of the new golden age of television. —DARREN FRANICH



▲ **WHAT IF**

**Pamela Anderson** had played **Dana Scully** on **THE X-FILES**?

**THE BACKSTORY** The truth is out there: Not all Andersons are alike. Yet when producers were casting the early-'90s sci-fi drama, it was *Baywatch*'s Pamela Anderson who caught their eye, according to the other Anderson. "She was someone who was more familiar to them in terms of what was on TV at the time," Gillian Anderson's been reported as saying. "They were looking for someone bustier, taller, leggier than me."

**THE VERDICT** Gillian was the one—the onscreen magic between her Scully and David Duchovny's Mulder helped keep the show on the air for nine years, garnering a total of 62 Emmy nominations and 16 awards. Fans clamored for more than a decade for the show to return: An *X-Files* miniseries is set to debut in January with its original cast. —SARA VILKOMERSON



◀ **WHAT IF**

**Bruce Willis** had played **Sam Wheat** in *GHOST*?

**THE BACKSTORY** It's been reported that after his then wife Demi Moore was cast as Molly in 1990's most memorable tearjerker, Bruce Willis was approached by director Jerry Zucker to portray film history's most famous pottery-fan-turned-poltergeist, Sam Wheat. Willis is said to have worried that playing a ghost might hurt his career; he chose to focus, presumably, on voicing Baby Mikey in the *Look Who's Talking* movies.

**THE VERDICT** Though Zucker was apparently reluctant to cast Swayze at first, his reading of the movie's final scene brought the room to tears and it was a done deal. *Ghost* was one of the highest-grossing films of 1990, won two Oscars, and solidified Swayze's spot as America's most heart-felt heartthrob. He was named *People's Sexiest Man Alive* in 1991, the same year he appeared in the cult classic *Point Break*. Oh, and Bruce Willis? He eventually did play a ghost in *The Sixth Sense*, and it didn't hurt his career one bit. —BILL KEITH

▶ **WHAT IF**

**Matthew Broderick**  
had played **Walter White** on *BREAKING BAD*?

**THE BACKSTORY** It's quite understandable that AMC didn't immediately see the potential for a terrifying villain in Bryan Cranston, known best at that point for playing a lovably doofy sitcom dad. "We all still had the image of Bryan shaving his body in *Malcolm in the Middle*," one exec was quoted as saying. "We were like, 'Really? Isn't there anybody else?'" The anybody else they reached out to was Matthew Broderick, who could have subverted his boyish charm, going from Ferris Bueller to Pablo Escobar over the course of the series. But Broderick passed, as did John Cusack, and Cranston ended up with the role of a lifetime.

**THE VERDICT** Millions of fans and four Emmys agree: No one else could have fit into those tighty-whities like Cranston. —KEITH STASKIEWICZ



▼ WHAT IF

**Leonardo DiCaprio** had played **Dirk Diggler** in **BOOGIE NIGHTS?**

**THE BACKSTORY** In 1997 Paul Thomas Anderson had yet to claim indie-auteur status. And his scant filmography—consisting of one middling reviewed feature, *Hard Eight*—wasn't enough to persuade the *Romeo + Juliet* star, 23 at the time, to portray a busboy-turned-porn star in the '70s-set drama *Boogie Nights*. DiCaprio passed and that year delivered a career-defining performance in *Titanic*. In his place, Mark Wahlberg donned a prosthetic penis to portray Diggler, and overhauled his public image from his underwear model/rapper past.

**THE VERDICT** DiCaprio has called turning down *Boogie Nights* his "biggest regret." But it's impossible to imagine him improving on the mixture of naïveté, fecklessness, and sex appeal brought by Wahlberg, who so thoroughly owns the part. —CHRIS LEE

▼ WHAT IF

**Drew Barrymore** had played **Nomi Malone** in **SHOWGIRLS?**

**THE BACKSTORY** Twenty years ago, Drew Barrymore was not the savvy actress-producer with a long Hollywood career she is now. Twenty years ago, Drew Barrymore was the proto-Lohan wild child: a teenage stint in rehab here, a *Playboy* magazine cover there. So of course the makers of *Showgirls* wanted to cast her as unclad American dreamer Nomi Malone, but she said no. (The filmmakers also wanted to cast Madonna as nemesis showgirl Cristal Connors.) It's impossible to review unmade movies, but without hyperbole, the Drew/Madonna *Showgirls* may have been the single most important accomplishment in film history.

**THE VERDICT** Barrymore instead opted for a cameo in *Scream* before segueing into rom-coms, opening the doors for *Saved by the Bell*'s Elizabeth Berkley to become Nomi Malone. For that, Drew Barrymore, we salute you. —DARREN FRANICH

▼ WHAT IF

**Jack Nicholson** had played **Michael Corleone** in **THE GODFATHER?**

**THE BACKSTORY** It might be hard to imagine Michael Corleone's serious calm being played with an arched eyebrow by Nicholson, but the *Easy Rider* star was originally considered—along with Warren Beatty and Robert Redford—for the role of the mobster. Nicholson eventually decided not to pursue it, later claiming, "I knew *The Godfather* was going to be a great film, but at that time I believed Indians and Italians should do the same." Director Francis Ford Coppola eventually went with Al Pacino, an actor who was both far less known and far more Italian.

**THE VERDICT** We can't imagine anyone playing Corleone with even a quarter of Pacino's steely resolve. Plus, being obligated for the sequel might have knocked Nicholson out of *Chinatown*, and we certainly couldn't have that. —KEITH STASKIEWICZ



▲ WHAT IF

**Bridget Fonda** had played **Ally McBeal** on **ALLY McBEAL?**

**THE BACKSTORY** The '90s were a great time to be Bridget Fonda—the actress starred in some of the era's most rewatchable classics, like *Single White Female*, *Singles*, and *It Could Happen to You*. But what might have been? Fonda was offered the title role on David E. Kelley's *Ally McBeal* but turned it down because she didn't want to do television. Calista Flockhart scored the part instead and danced

(with a CGI baby) into TV history. "I'm not kicking myself for having passed on *Ally McBeal*, even though it's a huge hit," Fonda told the *Calgary Sun* in 1999. "I've been acting long enough to know it could have been a complete dud with me in it. It may work as well as it does because of Calista."

**THE VERDICT** Fonda could have been amazing as the outspoken young lawyer, but considering her then star power, it's not surprising she wanted to stick with film. She's worked less of late, last appearing on screen in 2002, the same year *Ally McBeal* went off the air. (Flockhart is back in prime time with CBS' *Supergirl*.) —CHRISTOPHER ROSEN

PHOTO: JEMAL COUNTNESS/WIREIMAGE.COM; GHOST: PARAMOUNT/EVERETT COLLECTION; WILLIS: RON GALELLA, LTD./WIREIMAGE.COM; BREAKING BAD: DOUG HYUN/AMG; BRODERICK: JEMAL COUNTNESS/WIREIMAGE.COM; ALLY McBEAL: 20TH CENTURY FOX/EVERETT COLLECTION; FONDA: STEVE GRANITZ/WIREIMAGE.COM



◀ **WHAT IF**

**Matt Damon** and **Joaquin Phoenix** had played **Ennis** and **Jack** in **BROKEBACK MOUNTAIN**?

**THE BACKSTORY**

Before Ang Lee helmed the film that would win him his first directing Oscar, *Brokeback Mountain* was a Gus Van Sant project. In this iteration, Damon and Phoenix (who'd worked with Van Sant previously on *Good Will Hunting* and *To Die For*, respectively) would play long-term clandestine lovers Ennis Del Mar and Jack Twist—the roles eventually taken by Heath Ledger and Jake Gyllenhaal. Damon thought the job would have felt repetitive for him. “Gus, I did a gay movie [*The Talented Mr. Ripley*], then a cowboy movie [*All the Pretty Horses*],” Damon recalled telling the director. “I can’t follow it up with a gay-cowboy movie!”

**THE VERDICT** Hard to tell. Van Sant is a top-tier director and Damon and Phoenix talented actors, so who knows if this version would have beaten *Crash* at the Oscars? But it’s hard to argue with the quietly heartrending film we actually got. —KEITH STASKIEWICZ

BROKEBACK MOUNTAIN: KIMBERLY FRENCH; PHOENIX: JEFF KRAVITZ/FILM MAGIC/GETTY IMAGES; DAMON: J. VESPA/WIREIMAGE.COM; THE MATRIX: JASIN BOLAND; SMITH: MARK CUTHBERT/UK PRESS/GETTY IMAGES; PRETTY WOMAN: TOUCHSTONE/ROBAL COLLECTION; RINGWALD: THE LIFE PICTURE COLLECTION/GETTY IMAGES

▼ **WHAT IF**

**Angela Bassett** had played **Leticia Musgrove** in **MONSTER’S BALL**?

**THE BACKSTORY** When *Monster’s Ball* arrived in theaters in 2001, Halle Berry wowed audiences with her gutsy performance as a struggling waitress, but Angela Bassett, who’d turned down the role, had reservations about the character’s nude scenes. “I wasn’t going to be a prostitute on film,” said Bassett in a *Newsweek* interview. “I couldn’t do that because it’s such a stereotype about black women and sexuality. I mean, Meryl Streep won Oscars without all that.” (To be fair to Berry, she stripped down emotionally for the role, too!)

**THE VERDICT** Berry became the first African-American to receive the Academy Award for Best Actress, and Bassett has earned several Emmy nominations. Everyone’s a winner. —SAMANTHA HIGHFILL

▼ **WHAT IF**

**Paul Giamatti** had played **Michael Scott** on **THE OFFICE**?

**THE BACKSTORY** Coming off the success of 2004’s *Sideways*, Paul Giamatti was suggested for the starring role of bumbling boss Michael Scott on the American remake of *The Office*—meaning no merlot at any work functions. (Fun fact! Bob Odenkirk also almost got the part.) Enter Steve Carell, who transformed Michael’s trademark off-color comment “That’s what she said” into a pop culture catchphrase even as he was moonlighting as an increasingly high-profile movie star.

**THE VERDICT** There’s almost nothing Giamatti can’t do, so his take on Michael Scott would have been memorable. But Carell’s ability to deftly blend earnestness and idiocy helped propel *The Office* to great comedic heights, and real longevity. —SAMANTHA HIGHFILL



◀ **WHAT IF**

**Will Smith** had played **Neo** in **THE MATRIX**?

**THE BACKSTORY** With Smith hot off his back-to-back blockbusters *Independence Day* and *Men in Black*, the Wachowskis dangled a role unlike anything the actor had done before: a kung-fu-fighting cyber-punk/would-be revolutionary in 1999's opening installment of the sci-fi *Matrix* trilogy. But somewhat dubious about the filmmaking siblings (who were still untested as action-movie directors) and skeptical of the "bullet time" special

effects (that wound up reshaping the industry), Smith passed up the part and instead went on to claim a starring role in *Wild Wild West*—one of the biggest flops of his career. Keanu Reeves, of course, became the one to swallow the red pill.

**THE VERDICT** The stoic role was made for the stoic Keanu Reeves, and even Will Smith has to agree. In a recent interview with *Wired*, Smith admitted he would have "absolutely messed up *The Matrix*" had he accepted, saying, "I wasn't smart enough of an actor to let the movie be, whereas Keanu was." Like, *whoa*. —CHRIS LEE



▶ **WHAT IF**

**Molly Ringwald** had played **Vivian Ward** in **PRETTY WOMAN**?

**THE BACKSTORY** The '80s star and John Hughes muse admitted during a 2012 Reddit interview that she had read an early script for the romance, back when it was still called \$3,000 and had a superdark story line—Vivian had a drug habit, and she did not end up with her wealthy john. "That script was okay, but I gotta say, Julia Roberts is what makes that movie," Ringwald said. "It was her part. Every actor hopes for a part that lets them shine like that." Don't worry, Molly, you

were perfect in plenty of iconic films. And kissing Jake Ryan? Huge.

**THE VERDICT** Ringwald is right: Even though it's rumored half of Hollywood was offered and turned down the role of Vivian, now we also can't see anyone but the then-21-year-old Roberts playing the hooker with a heart of gold (and sporting those thigh-high pleather boots). —GILLIAN TELLING

▼ **WHAT IF**

**Michelle Pfeiffer** had played **Clarice Starling** in **THE SILENCE OF THE LAMBS**?

**THE BACKSTORY** It's hard to believe Jodie Foster wasn't director Jonathan Demme's first choice for the FBI trainee in the 1991 Oscar winner for Best Picture—that honor went to Michelle Pfeiffer, his leading lady from 1988's *Married to the Mob*. "I went to Michelle because we'd had such a great experience on *Mob*, and I felt she could do anything," Demme has said. "But it was way, way too dark for her, so Michelle ran away from that part."

**THE VERDICT** Foster fought for the part and won over audiences—and her director. "I fell madly in love with her," said Demme. "I named our production company Strong Heart Productions after Jodie's sense of character." —SARA VILKOMERSON

▼ **WHAT IF**

**Jim Carrey** had starred in **EDWARD SCISSORHANDS**?

**THE BACKSTORY** In 1990, Jim Carrey was making a name for himself on the sketch-comedy show *In Living Color* and had been expanding his film résumé with small parts in *Peggy Sue Got Married*, *Finders Keepers*, and *Earth Girls Are Easy*. He was at one point considered for the lead in Tim Burton's dark romance, which ultimately went to Johnny Depp, launching one of the greatest actor/director collaborations of all time.

**THE VERDICT** Who knows what impact *Edward* might have had on Carrey's career? (Would *Dumb and Dumber* ever have existed?) But just imagine Edward Scissorhands making exaggerated facial expressions, not to mention the number of people he would've injured with his aggressive gesturing. Depp was the right call. —SAMANTHA HIGHFILL

# Movies

## REEL NEWS

**Star Bucks** *Star Wars: The Force Awakens* has amassed a record \$50 million-plus in advance ticket sales. **Worth Every Century** John Malkovich and Robert Rodriguez have made a movie, *100 Years*, that will be locked away until 2115.

EDITED BY **STEPHAN LEE** @stephanmlee



▲ Michael Fassbender and Marion Cotillard

## Macbeth

<b>STARRING</b> Michael Fassbender, Marion Cotillard, David Thewlis, Sean Harris		<b>DIRECTED BY</b> Justin Kurzel
<b>RATING</b> NR	<b>LENGTH</b> 1 hr., 50 mins.	<b>REVIEW BY</b> Chris Nashawaty @ChrisNashawaty



**THE ROLE OF MACBETH** is a lot like one of those test-your-strength contraptions at a carnival. It calls out to actors eager to assess their mettle as well as the ones who just can't pass up a juicy dare. Over the years, leading men as varied as Orson Welles, Peter O'Toole, Toshiro Mifune, Liev Schreiber, Ethan Hawke, and Alan Cumming have all picked up the Shakespearean sledgehammer and given the alluring part a mighty swing. Some have managed to ring the bell; others have narrowly avoided getting theirs rung. But the sheer high-

wire challenge of playing the Bard's half-mad Man Who Would Be King never goes out of style. Like *Hamlet* and *Richard III*, *Macbeth* beckons to each new generation's bravest and brightest lights like a carny barker's come-on, urging them to step right up and show us what they've got.

In the seven short years since he first grabbed moviegoers' attention by playing IRA prisoner Bobby Sands in Steve McQueen's *Hunger*, Michael Fassbender has proved himself to be a major talent who won't—or maybe can't—shrink from a challenge. Just look at his résumé since the beginning of 2014, in which time he's played an ambiguous Marvel villain, a rock star with an enormous papier-mâché head, and Steve Jobs. When you consider that schizophrenic roll call, his decision to take on the Scottish play makes a perfect kind of sense.

SWORD: GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO; MACBETH: JONATHAN OLLEY



**She's No Lady**  
Macbeth's power-mad queen has had many incarnations. Here are the best of the worst.



**MRS. ISELIN**  
Angela Lansbury  
*The Manchurian Candidate* (1962)  
She pulls the puppet strings of a political family.



**LADY ASAJI**  
Isuzu Yamada  
*Throne of Blood* (1957)  
Akira Kurosawa gave us a Lady for the ages.



**MISTRESS EPPS**  
Sarah Paulson  
*12 Years a Slave* (2013)  
She never holds a whip, but all feel her wrath.



**SARAH**  
Bridget Fonda  
*A Simple Plan* (1998)  
This pregnant mama will kill to protect a \$4 million windfall.



**ANNABETH MARKUM**  
Laura Linney  
*Mystic River* (2003)  
She uses tragedy to push her hubby back into crime.

The good news is he's a soulful Macbeth—every bit as intense and electric as you'd expect. The not-so-good news is that the rest of the movie isn't nearly as interested in playing as many nuanced notes as its star.

Directed by Australian Justin Kurzel (2011's *The Snowtown Murders*), the latest big-screen *Macbeth* manages to be faithful to Shakespeare's gloriously evocative language while taking the play in a new visual direction, toward deep-red fire, brimstone, and Grand Guignol gore and savagery. It looks like a Ronnie James Dio music video conceived by George R.R. Martin. Kurzel's *Game of Thrones*-ification of *Macbeth* isn't necessarily the worst or most unnatural creative impulse. After all, the play is a witches' brew of grief, intrigue, bloodlust, paranoia, and insatiable hunger for power. And Fassbender conveys all of these bruise-black emotions with a seething ferocity, as does his costar Marion Cotillard as his scheming and no-less-tragic wife, Lady Macbeth. But the film's raw performances get upstaged by Kurzel's medieval shock-and-awe palette. The text has been streamlined to make room for more brutal mud-and-blood battle sequences, hauntingly shot by Adam Arkapaw. David Thewlis as King Duncan, Paddy Considine as Banquo, and Sean Harris as the ripsnorting Macduff all tap into the play's visceral sound and fury. But Kurzel's epic pageant of art-directed violence doesn't signify as much as I suspect he thinks it does. **B**

**THIS FILM CONTAINS THE FOLLOWING:**

- IAMBIC PENTAMETER
- MIDCOURTUS SOLILOQUY
- WEIRD SISTERS
- DAMNED SPOTS



Michael Caine and Harvey Keitel

## Youth

**STARRING** Michael Caine, Harvey Keitel, Paul Dano, Rachel Weisz

**DIRECTED BY** Paolo Sorrentino | **RATING** R | **LENGTH** 2 hrs., 4 mins.

**REVIEW BY** Chris Nashawaty @ChrisNashawaty

**WITH 2008'S *IL DIVO*** and 2013's *The Great Beauty*, playful Italian director Paolo Sorrentino made his homeland's politics and passions dance to life by mixing pop philosophy and louche sensuality. His latest film, ironically titled *Youth*, is a meditation on aging set at a luxury spa in the Swiss Alps (not too far, one suspects, from Wes Anderson's Grand Budapest Hotel—or at least the latest Ricola commercial). The guests are a menagerie of the superrich, the supremely washed-up, and the spiritually questing, including Michael Caine's retired British composer and his old pal, a fading American movie director played by Harvey Keitel. It's hard to imagine a universe in which Caine and Keitel are best friends, yet they have a frisky, undeniable chemistry. Their scenes are magic. But for every touching moment, there's another featuring some broad fringe character that seems to waltz in from an entirely different movie (like Jane Fonda's cameo, which lands with a campy thud). As it is, *Youth* is hit-and-miss, beautiful and frustrating. **B-**

## CRITICAL MASS

For **10 current releases**, we compare EW's grade with scores averaged from IMDb, Metacritic, and Rotten Tomatoes

EW		IMDb	META-CRITIC	ROTTEN TOMATOES	AVG.
<b>A</b>	SPOTLIGHT	83	93	97	<b>91</b>
<b>A-</b>	CAROL	73	95	96	<b>88</b>
<b>B-</b>	THE HUNGER GAMES...	74	64	71	<b>70</b>
<b>B</b>	THE DANISH GIRL	54	65	82	<b>67</b>
<b>B</b>	THE NIGHT BEFORE	76	58	67	<b>67</b>
<b>B-</b>	SPECTRE	72	60	63	<b>65</b>
<b>B</b>	LEGEND	74	56	59	<b>63</b>
<b>B-</b>	THE 33	71	55	42	<b>56</b>
<b>B-</b>	SECRET IN THEIR EYES	59	45	40	<b>48</b>
<b>C+</b>	BY THE SEA	55	44	29	<b>43</b>



# NEW VOICES VS. OLD FACES

More than any other category this year, the Best Supporting Actor race is wide open. **By Nicole Sperling**



**THIS TIME LAST** year, one of the few things we could count on was J.K. Simmons winning an Oscar for his turn as the maniacal jazz-band conductor in the beloved indie *Whiplash*. Neither Robert Duvall's gravitas in *The Judge* nor Ethan Hawke's humanity in *Boyhood* could lure voters away from Simmons' irresistible narrative of a long-working character actor getting his due. But turn to this year's race and anything can happen: Actors as disparate as 9-year-old Jacob Tremblay (*Room*) and 69-year-old Sylvester Stallone (*Creed*) could be vying for the same prize. Add Kurt Russell (*The Hateful Eight*) and Idris Elba (*Beasts of No Nation*) to the mix, and the race is anyone's to win.

One thing we do know to be true: Michael Keaton should score his second Oscar nomination in two consecutive years for his role as the head of the investigative team in *Spotlight*—a fact that won't be lost on voters who last year opted for Eddie Redmayne in *The Theory of Everything* over Keaton's career-revitalizing turn in *Birdman*. Also destined to make the cut is Tom Hardy for his fierce and feral turn in *The Revenant*. Bigger questions abound over whether Mark Ruffalo finds himself in the running, joining Keaton as another entry from *Spotlight*, which boasts a crop of worthy supporting performances. And does *Sicario* have enough momentum to carry Benicio Del Toro into the winner's circle? In the end, maybe it does come down to new blood vs. veterans. Tremblay is astonishing in *Room* and gives the movie its soul. But then there is Stallone, revisiting the character that made him famous close to 40 years ago and doing it better than he ever has. That's almost impossible to resist.

## THE CONTENDERS

HOW THE BEST SUPPORTING ACTOR RACE LOOKS RIGHT NOW

Sure Things



1 **MICHAEL KEATON**  
*Spotlight*

Missing out last year for *Birdman* puts Keaton out front for his rock-solid turn as a journalist on the hunt.



2 **TOM HARDY**  
*The Revenant*

Hardy's always good. Now, as wild fur trapper John Fitzgerald, he's in a film that's good enough to reward.

Serious Threats



3 **MARK RUFFALO**  
*Spotlight*

In a film with so many eligible candidates for Supporting Actor, Ruffalo stands out as a principled, unrelenting reporter.



4 **BENICIO DEL TORO**  
*Sicario*

Del Toro's tour de force performance is undeniable. The challenge will be to get voters to remember this September movie.



5 **IDRIS ELBA**  
*Beasts of No Nation*

At once monstrous and charismatic, Elba supercharges this horrifying epic about child soldiers.



6 **MARK RYLANCE**  
*Bridge of Spies*

The enigmatic Rylance seemed to come from nowhere—yet holds his own amid the swirl of the Spielberg/Hanks machine.

Potential Spoilers



7 **SYLVESTER STALLONE**  
*Creed*

In fighting form as Rocky Balboa, Stallone poignantly reprises the iconic role and passes the boxing gloves to a new generation.



8 **KURT RUSSELL**  
*The Hateful Eight*

It's hard to highlight just one actor in this bloody ensemble piece, but Russell is at his grizzled best.



9 **JACOB TREMBLAY**  
*Room*

How a then 7-year-old could balance wit, courage, and terror is mind-boggling. Tremblay makes the film sing.



10 **CHRISTIAN BALE**  
*The Big Short*

Glassy-eyed and shoeless, Bale is unrecognizable as the genius doctor who bet against the housing market just before the crash.

OSCAR STATUETTE: OSCAR; STATUETTE: AMPAS; KEATON: J.B. LACROIX/WIREIMAGE.COM; HARDY: JEREMY HANPHOTOGRAPHY/WIREIMAGE.COM; RUFFALO: STEVE GRANITZ/WIREIMAGE.COM; DEL TORO: ARANA DIAZ/WIREIMAGE.COM; ELBA: JOHN LAMPARSKI/WIREIMAGE.COM; RUSSELL: STEVE GRANITZ/WIREIMAGE.COM; TREMBLAY: TAYLOR HILL/GETTY IMAGES; BALE: JASON MERRITT/GETTY IMAGES

# Janis: Little Girl Blue

**STARRING** Janis Joplin, Clive Davis, Dick Cavett, D.A. Pennebaker, Kris Kristofferson

**DIRECTED BY** Amy Berg

**RATING** NR | **LENGTH** 1 hr., 45 mins.

**REVIEW BY** Leah Greenblatt @Leahbats

▶ **DEATH IS EXCELLENT** at turning artists into icons, but it tends to calcify them, too—recasting messy, complicated humans as the familiar demigods of dorm-room posters and greatest-hits collections. *Janis: Little Girl Blue* is the latest documentary this year, after memorable takes on Kurt Cobain, Amy Winehouse, and Nina Simone, to restore some of what gets lost in the process of mythmaking.

Of course, even a life as brief as Joplin's (like Cobain and Winehouse, she was gone at 27) can't be fully explored in just over 100 minutes. Instead, writer-director Amy Berg aims to tell the most personal story she can by giving the narrative over to the family, friends, and bandmates who knew her best. (She's also lucky to have access to a trove of letters, voiced here by singer and kindred spirit Chan Marshall, a.k.a. Cat Power.) The portrait that emerges is one of a brash, talented girl who grew up an outcast in her small Texas town—fraternities at a nearby college cruelly dubbed her Ugliest Man in an annual poll—and developed her gale-force voice and gypsy-queen mien as armor against a world that would have dismissed her otherwise. Her romances, studio sessions, and struggles with addiction are portrayed in a style that can best be described as *Behind the Music* deluxe, but the true draw here is really just Janis: Sweet and wild and vividly alive, she takes a little piece of your heart when she goes. **A-**



◀ Janis Joplin

SNEAK PEEK



## ICE CUBE GETS COMMON IN NEW BARBERSHOP



When nearly 12 years transpire between franchise installments, even the stars begin to wonder whether a sequel is worth making. "When I got the initial call, I was like, 'Really? *Barbershop 3*?' " says actress-rapper **Eve**. "Do we need this?"

Luckily, although *Barbershop: The Next Cut* (out April 15, 2016) could seem like a memory of the early 2000s, this third movie about the crew at Calvin's Barbershop will be straight outta 2015: Calvin (Ice

Cube) has to step up when gangs on Chicago's South Side try to recruit his son.

Along with the updated story line, *The Next Cut* will feature new cast members **Common** and **Nicki Minaj**, in addition to returning actors such as **Cedric the Entertainer** and **Anthony Anderson**.

Common's role will hold special significance for hip-hop fans who remember his public dis-track exchange with Ice Cube in the mid-'90s. But



according to director **Malcolm D. Lee**, all of that is in the past. "There was a lot of mutual respect between Cube and Common," Lee says. "I know there was a rap-battle beef, but you would never know that on set." —Kevin P. Sullivan

▶ (From top) Ice Cube and Common; Cedric the Entertainer and Nicki Minaj



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# Streaming

THE STANDOUT TITLES COMING (AND GOING) IN DECEMBER. BY SHIRLEY LI @shirklesxp



2/



1/



3/



4/

**1** **NETFLIX**  
**BLACK MIRROR: WHITE CHRISTMAS**  
Celebrate the holidays with Jon Hamm, who stars in the paranoid drama's riveting Christmas special, which is more menacing than merry.  
**TV** | DEC. 25

**2** **AMAZON**  
**SELMA**  
Ava DuVernay's masterful and poignant Martin Luther King Jr. biopic traces the leader's historic, defiant march from Selma to Montgomery, Ala.  
**MOVIE** | DEC. 19

**3** **NETFLIX**  
**NURSE JACKIE**  
COMPLETE SERIES  
Visiting hours are open for all seven bracing

seasons of the dramedy featuring Edie Falco's Emmy-winning turn as a nurse struggling with addiction.  
**BEST EPISODE > "Sidecars and Spermicide" (SEASON 6, EP. 10) Jackie goes too far to cover up her behavior when she betrays her sponsor.**  
**TV** | DEC. 31

**4** **NETFLIX**  
**FRESH DRESSED**  
This illuminating doc on hip-hop style not only delves into the evolution of risk-taking fashion but also features insights from boldfaced names like Kanye West.  
**MOVIE** | DEC. 16

**5** **NETFLIX**  
**BROADCHURCH**  
SEASON 2  
In the acclaimed crime series' second season, the close-knit community must deal with the fallout of the child-murder case that stunned in season 1.  
**TV** | AVAILABLE NOW

**6** **NETFLIX**  
**PARENTHOOD**  
SEASON 6  
Get those Kleenexes ready: The farewell season of the earnest family drama sees the



Bravermans face their toughest decisions yet—including a heart-breaking goodbye.  
**TV** | DEC. 30

**7** **HULU**  
**DEUTSCHLAND 83**  
The subtitles are worth it for this gripping German-language saga about a young East German soldier (Jonas Nay) forced to spy on the West at the height of the Cold War.  
**TV** | DEC. 18

**8** **CRACKLE**  
**INSIDIOUS**  
The tale of a couple in a haunted house attempting to save the soul of their comatose son was a box office surprise in 2011 thanks to a creepily inventive, twisted plot.  
**MOVIE** | AVAILABLE NOW

**LAST CALL TO WATCH...** *The Hour*, full series (Acorn TV) 12.6 | *Rescue Me*, full series (Netflix) 12.11 | *Bridget Jones: The Edge of Reason* (Netflix) 12.15



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# TV

## ▶ LOGLINES

**Supergirl Flies for a Full Season** CBS ordered seven more episodes of the Melissa Benoist-starring series.

**Matthew Weiner Is the New Black** The *Mad Men* creator will direct a season 4 ep of Netflix's prison dramedy *OITNB*.

EDITED BY AMY WILKINSON @amymwilk



▲ George Clooney, Bill Murray, and Miley Cyrus

## A Very Murray Christmas

**DATE**  
Dec. 4

**TIME**  
Streaming

**NETWORK**  
Netflix

**REVIEW BY**  
Jeff Jensen @EWDocJensen



**BILL MURRAY WELCOMES** you to his Christmas special with the look of a sad misfit toy. He gazes into the camera with his weary eyes and naked sad-clown face, a deeply grooved relief map of age and history. Over the years the former Not Ready for Prime Time Player has used that ragged deadpan mug for hard laughs in classics like *Stripes* and *Ghostbusters*, or to generate pathos for the offbeat, emotionally reserved directors he favors, including Jim Jarmusch and Wes Anderson. So we're not sure whether to laugh or sigh (or both) at

Murray's quiet hangdog hello—and we're even less sure when he starts to croon "The Christmas Blues." You get a glimmer of Nick the Lounge Singer, his exuberantly warbly *Saturday Night Live* creation, but mostly we get the sincere if strained soulfulness of a Blues Brother. Dammit, Bill, this is Christmas! Get with the merry and bright already!

The funniest thing about *A Very Murray Christmas* is the very idea of it. The acerbic star of *Groundhog Day* hosting a Christmas special? This is wildly unexpected, even from the guy who brought you *Scrooged*. His latest seasonal opus runs far in the opposite direction of that bloated, hollow comedy. It's a bittersweet *Charlie Brown Christmas* for micro-feeling, irony-wired hipsters. And yet, Murray has surprising resonance. It may not be the yuletide cheer you want in a season darkened by terrorism and fear, but it does have a message that meets the moment.

The hour-long Netflix offering blends the conventions of the celebrity-hosted

“*A VERY MURRAY CHRISTMAS IS NO INSTANT CLASSIC, BUT IT CAPTURES THE BLUE-CHRISTMAS ZEITGEIST WITH QUIRKY, HONEST GOOD CHEER.*”

Christmas variety show—carols, guest stars, a loose plot—with spins on Christmas-movie clichés. Murray also winks at what we know about Murray, a famously prickly personality with a tortured relationship to fame and a heart for ordinary folks. He plays himself, in a spoof of grandiose ego. The wannabe Bing Crosby is putting on a live, nationally televised, celeb-studded holiday special from the Carlyle in New York. It's a pure vanity project: Murray actually expects the Pope to attend.

Frightful weather scares everyone away, and the power goes out, pulling the plug on the show. Murray decides to improvise a boozy party for stranded hotel guests and workers. It's here, after a sputtery start,

that the irony thaws and a warm, lovely spirit takes hold. Rashida Jones and Jason Schwartzman play a bride and groom rocked by a ruined wedding. They are a problem for Murray to solve. Songs are sung; many drinks get drunk. Miley Cyrus pops in. But will George Clooney? O, brother, where art thou? Helmed by Murray's *Lost in Translation* director, Sofia Coppola, with an eye toward gorgeously lit casualness, the special eschews cheesy chortles and earnest cheer and chases something more honest. There are no miracles in this holiday inn, but there is a credible, melancholy parable about nurturing love in the face of darkness—a small, precious gift for a blue Christmas season. **B**

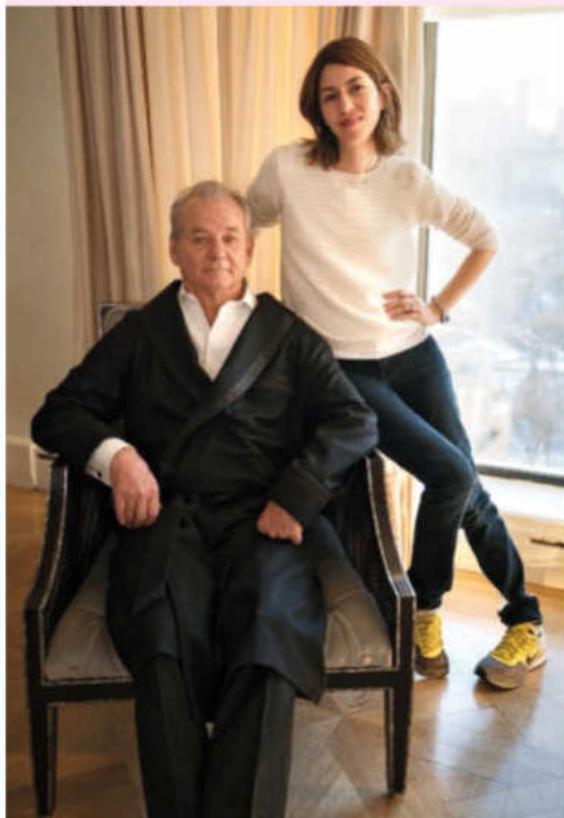
#### THIS SPECIAL CONTAINS THE FOLLOWING:



AP AMY POEHLER



SCW SINGING CATERWAITERS



▲ Murray and Sofia Coppola



## Sofia Coppola

The *Very Murray Christmas* director on the return of the holiday special and working with her hard-to-find friend. **By Gillian Telling**

- It's been more than 12 years since you and Bill Murray teamed up for *Lost in Translation*—what was it like reuniting?

It's funny, because I never wanted to do a movie with him again. I thought it was too much pressure. But I felt like this was its own thing—not really a TV show, not really a movie. But I love working with him. It's always inspiring to see what he comes up with.
- Why a holiday special?

I love hearing Bill sing. I remember him [when I was] a kid, singing on *SNL*, so any excuse to watch him sing. But it really came from
- [executive producer] Mitch [Glazer] and me talking about how people don't do those traditional specials anymore.
- How did you land all of those celebrity cameos?

It was because of Bill. We were putting it all together, and I was talking about Chris Rock—Bill knows I love him—and so he just called him up and said, "Hey, I'm doing this show!" and Chris said, "I'll be there."
- Any last-minute adds?

Miley came very last-minute. She was a great sport, very gung ho. And George Clooney is a buddy of Bill's and was in
- town doing a movie, so he came by. We shot over four or five days at the Carlyle, and it was actually snowing while we were filming.
- The big snowstorm was real?

It was! It was just a coincidence, though—the idea came before that.
- Do you have Bill on speed dial now?

I don't want to brag, but...I went through such lengths to track him down for *Lost in Translation*, so it's very fun to have him as a friend now. He's still elusive, but I know he's there when I need him.

## LUTHER REPORTS FOR DUTY

The grizzled investigator played by Idris Elba returns in a BBC America special (Dec. 17, 9 p.m.). Creator Neil Cross takes us behind the police tape. **By Amy Wilkinson**

**It's a new chapter**  
The special picks up a year after the season 3 finale—in which Luther tossed his signature tweed coat into the Thames and walked away with sociopathic sweet-heart Alice (Ruth Wilson)—and finds our hero “outside his natural environment.” And sans Wilson, who isn't returning, though her presence will be felt. “[Alice] will always be important,” says Cross.

**Fresh faces around**  
“The world of *Luther* has been somewhat depopulated by violent deaths,” Cross concedes.

**Enter a slew of new players, including *Game of Thrones*' Rose Leslie as a detective.**

**The big bad is among the series' scariest**  
He's a cannibal who strikes fear in the heart (and hearth). “The idea that your home is not a safe place is pretty much the most terrifying thing there is,” Cross says, alluding to the murderer's MO.

**This is just the beginning**  
Cross wants many more installments: “I would [write] *Luther* until Idris is a stooped, gray-haired old man.”



Mark Gatiss and Benedict Cumberbatch on *Sherlock*

TV MVP

# Mark Gatiss: Man of Many Secrets

The multitasking Brit cautiously previews *Sherlock*'s upcoming stand-alone episode (PBS, Jan. 1, 9 p.m.). But don't expect him to spill anything about *Game of Thrones*—much like Jon Snow, he knows nothing. **By Clark Collis**



Idris Elba

**MARK GATISS IS** a co-creator of *Sherlock*, a writer on *Doctor Who*, and an actor on *Game of Thrones*. So the 49-year-old has learned to be careful about what he says for fear of spoiling these secrets-heavy series. But Gatiss also recently discovered the perils of staying mum. “I did an interview and they said, ‘We've got to ask you about *Sherlock*,’” he says. “I told them nothing, and it became six different bits of clickbait.”

On Jan. 1, PBS will air a one-off episode of *Sherlock* that finds Benedict Cumberbatch's titular sleuth and Martin Freeman's Dr. Watson transplanted to a Victorian setting familiar to fans of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's tales. Titled “The Abominable Bride,” it's the first new *Sherlock* adventure since early 2014, when season 3 ended with Andrew Scott's villainous Moriarty seemingly back from the dead. Gatiss, who also plays *Sherlock*'s brother, Mycroft, describes the special as “a Christmas ghost story” that's also “about how Victorian society treats women,” but

declines to elaborate. He does, however, let on that he has just finished the first script for season 4 of *Sherlock*, which will shoot next year. What happens in that? (We promise not to turn your answer into more than five different bits of clickbait.) “This is a life-changing series for the regulars,” teases Gatiss. “The repercussions of Moriarty's apparent return are far-reaching.”

Something else Gatiss has learned? On occasion, He Who Keeps the Secrets becomes He From Whom Secrets Are Kept. In the past two *Game of Thrones* seasons, Gatiss played Tycho Nestoris, a representative of the Iron Bank of Braavos. But he does not appear in the forthcoming season and has no idea what plans, if any, EPs David Benioff and D.B. Weiss have for his character. “I had dinner with Dan and David, and I made a very cogent pitch to be the last character alive in the whole saga,” he says. “They smiled knowingly and probably made a note to organize my imminent death.”

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## ROLE CALL

# Judith Light

When it comes to juggling the worlds of TV and theater, Judith Light is the boss. Busier than ever with roles on Amazon's **Transparent** (season 2 premieres Dec. 11) and in a revival of **Thérèse Raquin** with Keira Knightley (now on Broadway), Light slowed down just long enough to share the memories behind some of her favorite career moments. **By Nina Terrero**

## 1 **Kojak** 1977

After graduating from Carnegie Mellon University with a drama degree, Light began her career in regional theater—and the intimate stage experience couldn't have been more different from the glaring scrutiny she would face during an audition for her first TV role. "I was terrified," the actress confesses. Though she had only a small part in a single episode of the CBS procedural, star Telly Savalas set her at ease. "He was so kind and sweet to me," says Light. "I remember thinking, 'If I ever get into a position like he is, I want to be like that too.'"

## 2 **One Life to Live** 1977–83

Despite a dry spell between acting jobs, Light was hesitant to take on the sudsy trappings of a daytime drama. "The two things I swore I'd never do were a sitcom and a soap opera," she says. "I had a real prejudice." But the promise of a \$350 check for a day's work playing duplicitous diva Karen Wolek changed her mind—and eventually, the course of her career. "My life and who I was as a human being needed to transform," says Light, who earned two Daytime Emmys for the role. "All of that reframing definitely colored my choices and has actually made for a much fuller, richer life."

## 3 **The Ryan White Story** 1989

In the made-for-TV biopic, Light played the mother of teenage AIDS patient Ryan White (Lukas Haas). White's visit to set would prove life-changing for Light. "I heard him say to this interviewer, 'People would spit at me and call me a fag,'" Light says. "I just stopped in my tracks and I thought, 'My gay friends are dying and they are not being helped or supported. I have got to do something.'" Light has been an LGBTQ advocate ever since.

## 4 **Who's the Boss?** 1984–92

"It was very cutting-edge for that time," Light says of playing a razor-sharp breadwinner on the popular ABC sitcom. "I have young women come up to me saying, 'Angela Bower was my role model.'" As it turns out, the show provided her with a role model of her own: costar Tony Danza. "Tony taught me so much about comedy, more than I had learned even in all my years in repertory theater doing comedies."

## 5 **Lombardi** 2010–11

About 35 years after she made her Broadway debut in the Henrik Ibsen drama *A Doll's House*, Light returned to the Great White Way as Marie Lombardi, the witty, complex





Ugly Betty



Law & Order: Special Victims Unit



Transparent

wife of legendary football coach Vince Lombardi. "Talk about generosity," says Light of Lombardi director Thomas Kail. "He really took the chance and brought me back to Broadway." The result? Her very first Tony nomination. (She would go on to win Tonys for *Other Desert Cities* and *The Assembled Parties*.)

**6 Ugly Betty**  
2006-10

Series creator Silvio Horta wrote the role of alcoholic alpha mom Claire Meade specifically for Light. "I had done a pilot for him that didn't get picked up, and he said, 'Someday I'm going to write another part for you,'" Light says. The actress still fondly remembers the cast and crew of the Emmy-winning series. "We were such a family," shares Light. "But we're all still very connected."

**7 Law & Order: Special Victims Unit**  
2002-10

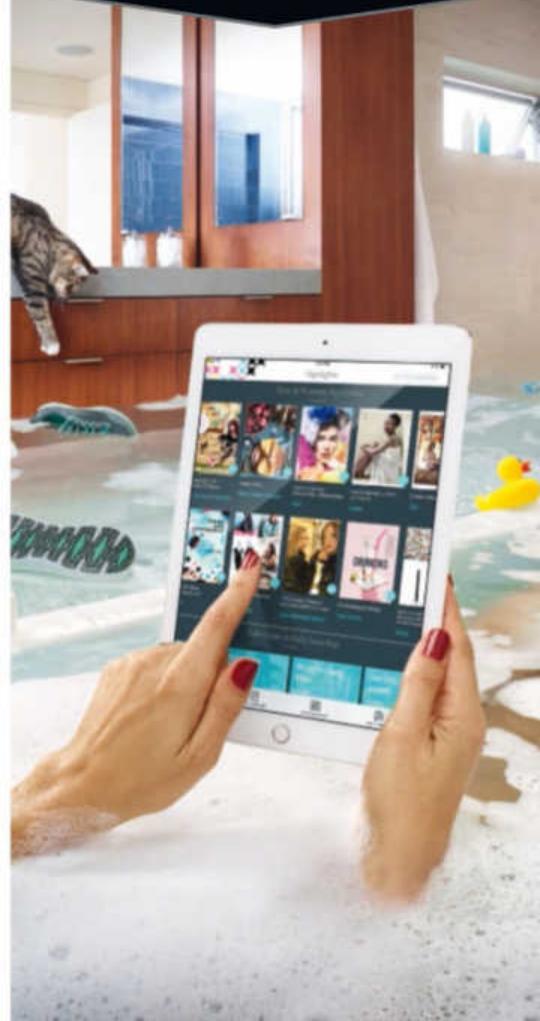
SVU executive producers Neal Baer and Ted Kotcheff were among the fans awed by Light's performance as a cancer patient in an Off Broadway production of *Wit*. And for Light, the opportunity to play another girl boss proved irresistible. "I went from being the head of the Special Victims Unit to becoming a judge," Light says of her role as steely lawyer-turned-magistrate Elizabeth Donnelly. "They gave me really terrific stuff to do."

**8 Transparent**  
2014-PRESENT

A 45-minute Skype call with creator Jill Soloway about their mutual "devotion and appreciation" for the transgender community stoked Light's interest in the role of sarcastic matriarch Shelly Pfefferman. "The excitement of it, the desire of it, and the combination with my advocacy for so many years just seemed like the most perfect fit," Light explains. Reuniting with Jeffrey Tambor—both former members of the Milwaukee Repertory Theater—was an added bonus. Says Light, "I couldn't wait to work with my friend again."

LIGHT: JOE PUGLIESE/AUGUST; UGLY BETTY: ABC/EVERETT; ONE LIFE TO LIVE: NBC/PHOTOFEST; LAW & ORDER: SPECIAL VICTIMS UNIT: NBC/PHOTOFEST; TRANSPARENT: AMAZON STUDIOS

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# What to Watch

A DAY-TO-DAY GUIDE TO NOTABLE PROGRAMS\* BY RAY RAHMAN @RayRahman

MONDAY DECEMBER 7

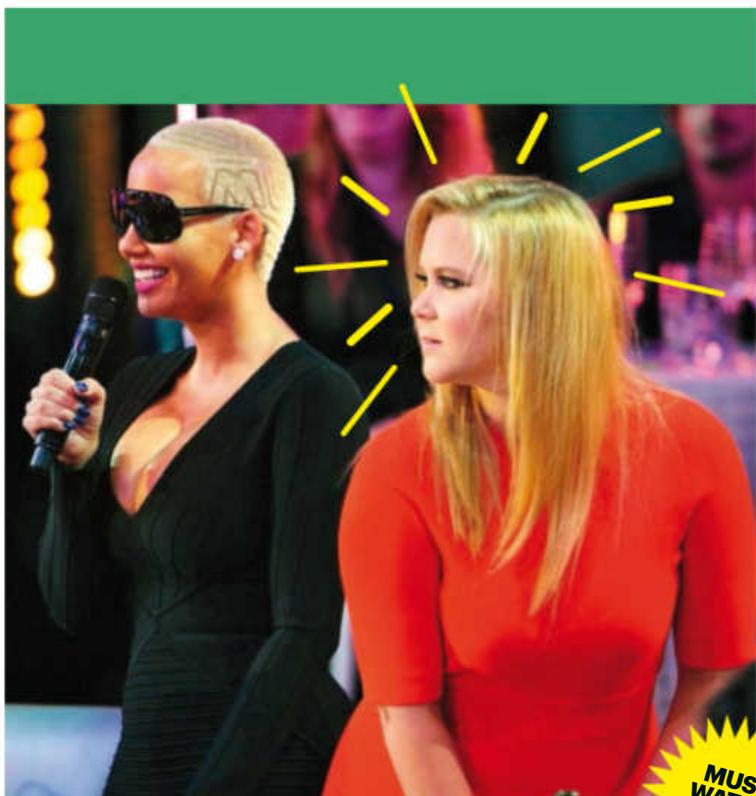


Series Debut

► **Telenovela**

10-11PM | NBC

This new sitcom starring Eva Longoria officially starts Jan. 4, but the series has a two-episode sneak peek tonight. Consider it an early Christmas present: Judging by these eps, *Telenovela* might be the Peacock's funniest new show in a while. No, it's not an actual telenovela—it's a showbiz workplace comedy that unfolds on a soap opera set. (Think a less nerdy *30 Rock*.) The charming pilot kicks off with soap star Ana Sofia Calderon (Longoria) threatened by a new costar—her ex-husband—while the second half hour hilariously sends up the genre's evil-twin tropes (as well as showmances and stunt doubles). With fast and witty lines, strong physical comedy, and old-fashioned fun, *Telenovela* could be NBC's guiding light. **B+**



MUST WATCH OF THE WEEK

## VH1 BIG IN 2015 WITH ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY

MONDAY, DEC. 7 | 9-11PM | VH1

You simply can't talk about the past year without mentioning certain standout names, many of whom are recognized in EW's *Big in 2015* special. The event, hosted by T.I. at L.A.'s Pacific Design Center, celebrated the talented artists who made our annual Entertainers of the Year list, including Aziz Ansari, Elizabeth Banks, Taraji P. Henson, Nicki Minaj, Amy Schumer (above right, with Amber Rose), the cast of *Straight Outta Compton*, and more. The show is full of candid, memorable honoree speeches—including Henson's, in which she speaks to the progress her Fox series has made within the industry. "I'm so proud that [*Empire*] is breaking down color lines," she says. "The more I do press, the less I'm hearing 'It's black' or 'It's a black family.' People are seeing material worthy of watching." Another highlight: seeing Banks and presenter Miss Piggy share an intimate kiss. Who doesn't like some holiday ham? —C. Molly Smith

TUESDAY DECEMBER 8

Midseason Finale

► **The Flash**

8-9PM | THE CW

It's the Flash versus the Force: Guest star Mark Hamill returns as villain James Jesse, a.k.a. the Trickster.

► **Victoria's Secret Fashion Show**

10-11PM | CBS

Ellie Goulding, the Weeknd, and Selena Gomez are all performing—and if anyone asks, that's why I'm DVR'ing this.

► **Chopped Junior**

8-9PM | FOOD

The children must prepare a leg of lamb, forever tainting the "Mary Had a Little Lamb" song for them.

Season Finale

► **Scream Queens**

8-10PM | FOX

The Red Devil will be unmasked, and the killer finally revealed, so call your bookie now!



WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 9



► **The Goldbergs**

8:30-9PM | ABC

You could probably count on one hand the number of major TV Hanukkah episodes, but *The Goldbergs* is helping get that number closer to a full menorah with the introduction of Beverly Goldberg's (Wendi McLendon-Covey) newest creation, Super Hanukkah. "My mom was always trying to figure out ways to make Hanukkah exciting and compete with [our neighbors] the Kremps, who always had these amazing blowout Christmas parties," creator Adam F. Goldberg says of the autobiographical episode. But stranger than Beverly's attempts to outcheer her neighbors is the episode's other, not-quite-Hanukkah-y through-line. "I've talked about how *The Wonder Years* defined the show, but the truth is that *A Christmas Story* was first," says Goldberg, citing the classic 1983 holiday film. "We're doing a really nice *A Christmas Story* homage: Adam dares Barry to stick his tongue to the flagpole." —*Marc Snetiker*



THURSDAY DECEMBER 10

► **Dolly Parton's Coat of Many Colors**

9-11PM | NBC

Every superhero needs an origin story, and now Dolly Parton is getting hers in this TV-movie musical based on her famous autobiographical song. "It tells such an important tale at such a pivotal time in her life," says executive producer Sam Haskell. "Dolly was 9 years old in 1955 when this movie takes place. The very next year, she was discovered." Parton herself provides narration for the movie, and on one song even duets via voice-over with 8-year-old Alyvia Alyn Lind (playing Parton's younger self). "You feel Dolly's presence from start to finish," says Haskell, "and I think that's what her audience is going to really respond to." —*Christian Holub*



FRIDAY DEC 11



Season Premiere

► **Transparent**

STREAMING | AMAZON

Things kick off with Sarah and Tammy's wedding. I guess it's safe to assume the brides are registered at Amazon?

► **Truth Be Told**

8:30-9PM | NBC

Sadie is kept up at night by the new neighbors' barking dog. Either that or the new neighbors are into some really weird sex stuff.

SAT DEC 12

► **Becoming Santa**

8-10PM | LIFETIME

A man is surprised to learn that his girlfriend is actually Santa Claus' daughter. So *that's* why she never wants to go to the mall.

► **Tiny House World**

10-11PM | FYI

Couples look for small living spaces in international locales. They should start their search in Little Italy.

► **Saturday Night Live**

11:30PM-1AM | NBC

Hosted by what's left of Chris Hemsworth, the suddenly svelte star of *In the Heart of the Sea*.

SUNDAY DECEMBER 13

► **The Simpsons**

8-8:30PM | FOX

In an episode titled "Barthood," we see Bart's adolescence unfold in the style of the movie *Boyhood*. Aww, can't wait to see him go through his emo phase!

► **Flesh and Bone**

8-9PM | STARZ

Paul's neuroses have the dancers struggling to stay on *pointe*. Ballet humor!

Series Debut

► **Married by Mom and Dad**

9:30-11PM | TLC

Four singles let their parents select their mates. They all pick "not Shia LaBeouf."

Miniseries Debut

► **Then and Now With Andy Cohen**

10-11PM | BRAVO

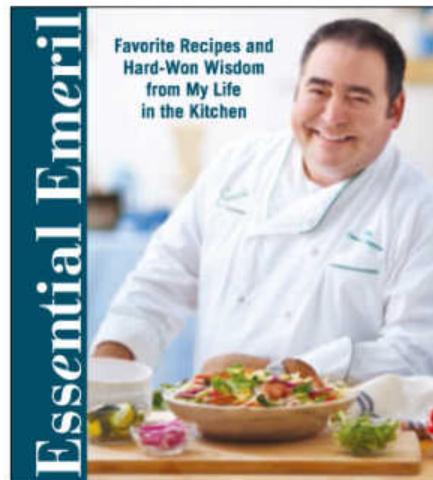
Bravo maven Andy Cohen is taking a break from herding *Housewives* to produce this newy three-part series examining major moments in history and pop culture from three specific years: 1989, 1994, and 2000. "We wanted to pick three different years that had a lot of juicy stuff," says Cohen, a former CBS producer. Exploring topics like Y2K and the O.J. Simpson trial, he'll interview guests such as former White House social secretary Jeremy Bernard and journalist Connie Chung. But Cohen promises this isn't just some stuffy docuseries. "Bethenny Frankel, Heather Dubrow, and Kyle Richards are in the mix too," he says. "Yeah, there are a couple of *Housewives*. It is a Bravo show." —*Nina Terrero*



# Essential Emeril

“ Thinking back on all of the wonderful people I have learned from and the dishes I have made over the years, I knew that I had to get them all down in one place. *This book is it.*”

— Emeril Lagasse



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## blueberry beignets

This is basically a sweet fritter batter. You can substitute raspberries or cut-up strawberries, but there is something about blueberries that makes these awesome. Yield: about 18

1 cup fresh blueberries, picked over for stems  
¼ cup granulated sugar  
2 large eggs, lightly beaten  
1 cup half-and-half  
1¾ cups bleached all-purpose flour  
1 teaspoon baking powder  
½ teaspoon salt  
Vegetable oil for frying  
1½ cups confectioners' sugar, plus more for dusting as needed

1. In a medium bowl, combine the blueberries and granulated sugar and lightly mash together with a fork. Stir in the eggs and half-and-half.

2. In a large bowl, combine the flour, baking powder, and salt. Make a well in the center, pour in the blueberry mixture, and whisk until combined. Allow the mixture to rest 10 minutes before frying.

3. Pour enough oil to come to the maximum line in an electric fryer or halfway up the side of a deep, large, heavy-bottomed pot. Heat the oil to 360° F.

4. Using a 2-tablespoon scoop, carefully drop the batter into the hot oil, cooking 4 to 6 beignets at a time; don't crowd them. If using a deep fryer, shake the basket to loosen the beignets from the bottom

if they're sticking. Cook the beignets until golden, about 6 minutes. If you're frying them in a pot, the beignets will sink to the bottom, then float up to the top, where you can turn them for even coloring.

5. Using a slotted spoon, tongs, or a spider, transfer the fried beignets to paper towels to drain briefly, then add to a large bowl along with the confectioners' sugar, and toss to coat. Set the beignets on a serving platter. Repeat the process with the remaining batter.

6. To serve, dust the beignets a final time with confectioners' sugar, and serve hot.

# Music

## ▶ NOTEWORTHY

**Rihanna** will launch the *Anti* world tour, with more than 70 dates, next February in San Diego. **The Avett**

**Brothers** will release the concert album *Live, Vol. Four*, featuring two previously unreleased tracks, on Dec. 18.

EDITED BY KEVIN O'DONNELL @ODtron



▲ Will Champion, Chris Martin, Guy Berryman, and Jonny Buckland

## Coldplay's Final Frontier

After releasing 2014's understated *Ghost Stories*, the British group is back with *A Head Full of Dreams*—their most uplifting collection of songs in years. Frontman **Chris Martin**, 38, opens up about working with pop hit-makers Stargate, collaborating with everyone from Beyoncé to Gwyneth to Blue Ivy, and why this album is “a bit like a finale.” **By Kevin O'Donnell**

**It's been just one year since Coldplay's last album. How does it feel to share a new record so soon?**

Normally I would get more panicked [about a release], but for this album and the last album we were so clear with what we were being guided to do. I think this time we followed our hearts so closely, if you know what I mean. I've decided to enjoy the ride rather than stress about it.

## Music

### This record is way more jubilant than *Ghost Stories*.

When we decided to go down that road of making a really small, intimate album like *Ghost Stories*, the idea for *A Head Full of Dreams* came at the same time. We thought: "After making this restrained, intimate album, maybe we'll feel like playing with a bit more jubilation." It was really fun to make, which is not what we've felt before.

### You teamed up with Rihanna and Katy Perry producers Stargate. Why them?

I met them because I was trying to write songs for Rihanna—it's my favorite hobby, even though she never really likes them. [Laughs] And we were supposed to do a song for Angelina Jolie's movie *Unbroken*. Then I wondered if it would ever work bringing these two worlds together: Coldplay and these guys who make pop music.

### They asked you to prepare demos for each song. Were you insulted by that?

Not at all! It's already hard enough to get a song through the rest of the band. Having Tor [Hermansen] and Mikkel [Eriksen]—it means [each song] survived a lot of tests. I'm sure some people will not be into it, but for people that like what we do, the quality control has been set really high.

### The album opener, "A Head Full of Dreams," might be



Chris Martin

### one of your most epic songs.

It's my favorite Coldplay song ever. It's what I always dreamed of singing.

### "Up&Up"—featuring a chorus of your children, Beyoncé, her daughter Blue Ivy, and others—is also pretty uplifting.

With what's going on in the world, I feel very grateful to be alive and in a band with my best friends. There's also a track that contains Rumi's "The Guest House." It's about appreciating every day and not getting too overwhelmed by some of the heavier things in life.

### What's the story behind your collaboration with Beyoncé on "Hymn for the Weekend"?

This album is about celebrating. And this angel figure kept popping up. I thought, "Beyoncé would be perfect, but she'd never do it." One day we were talking and I was trying to drop the hint,

but I didn't want to be imprudent. And she said, "I'll do it."

### Is it intimidating to sing with her?

She's all goodness. And when she sings, she really puts you into her place.

### You duet with your ex Gwyneth Paltrow on "Everglow." How'd that song happen?

A long time ago she had said, "Isn't it strange that when someone dies the world keeps on moving?" She made me think about that idea.

### You two are still very much in each other's lives, right?

I'm not entirely comfortable speaking about this, but everything you read is basically true. We're great friends, and that's kind of it.

### It's the 15th anniversary of your debut album, *Parachutes*.

### What's it like to hear it now?

It makes me feel at peace with our albums. X&Y, I'd love to edit that a bit. But it feels like, what a great journey we've been on.

### How does this album stand against Coldplay's other LPs?

It's a bit like a finale, or a final scene. Not that we're splitting up. We've been trying to get here for a long time. I don't know if it's commercial, but I'm so grateful that we got to make it. I understand Coldplay isn't for everybody, but once I understood that, it was liberating.

### Where do you go from here?

Right now we want to live in this world for a while, this musical world. We're really excited to go on tour; we've been locked away for three years.

### Any thoughts about doing a solo record?

If I ever do that, text me and say, "Chris, you've officially lost it." That would just be awful. [Laughs]

### Is going on the road still fun after all these years?

Taking a break from touring was an amazing move. I mean, look at what One Direction is doing. I bet for them taking a break and going away for a bit means that when they come back, they'll be so hungry for it. It's the same in life, I think. If you take something for granted, and then you don't have it, you suddenly remember, "Oh, yeah, I love this!"

## AN ALBUM FULL OF STARS

*A Head Full of Dreams* features everyone from Martin's ex-wife to the President of the United States. Here's a guide to the guest appearances.

### MERRY CLAYTON

The legendary backup singer, who belted on the Rolling Stones' 1969 classic "Gimme Shelter," had her legs amputated after a car accident in 2014. Martin says, "It was such a joy to be around her. She had such life!"

### A CHILDREN'S CHOIR

The band members' kids (and Blue Ivy Carter)

sing in a choir on "Up&Up." Martin jokes that one tasty treat in particular got them to focus: "Pizza with children is the equivalent of cocaine in the '70s." Oasis' Noel Gallagher and Martin's actress girlfriend Annabelle Wallis are also on the track.

### BEYONCÉ

Martin says Queen B, who duets on "Hymn

for the Weekend" and "Up&Up," is "all goodness."

### TOVE LO

The Swedish pop singer teams with Martin on the atmospheric ballad "Fun."

### BARACK OBAMA

For "Kaleidoscope," a spoken-word track by poet Coleman Barks, the band also sampled

the president singing "Amazing Grace," from his eulogy for Rev. Clementa Pinckney, who was killed in the Charleston, S.C., church shootings in June.

### GWYNETH PALTROW

Martin's ex-wife inspired their gorgeous duet "Everglow." "[It's] about the joy someone leaves you with after they've gone."



▲ (Clockwise from top left) Beyoncé, Tove Lo, Merry Clayton, and Gwyneth Paltrow



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# Elle King: Rock's New Badass

The fearless heartbreaker turned the throwaway tune "Ex's & Oh's" into the year's sleeper hit—and brought rock & roll edge back to the charts.

By Madison Vain

**TWO AND A HALF** years ago, Elle King and her songwriting partner Dave Bassett were deep into the creative process for the tracks that would make up her debut, *Love Stuff*. But the song that would eventually become her breakout—the hot, rockabilly-inflected "Ex's & Oh's"—happened as a lark. "We wrote it as kind of a joke," says the 26-year-old. "He was like, 'Hey, Elle, who you been dating?' And I was like, 'Well, this guy's mad at me, and I was really mean to this guy, and this guy's a loser but he still calls me.' And we just started laughing and writing this song." King's label, RCA, however, took the tune seriously right away and selected it as the album's single, which slowly snowballed into a hit.

Despite releasing the track in 2014, King has become a sleeper star this year. In November, the platinum-certified tune finally cracked the top 10 of *Billboard's* Hot 100, where she's bringing a bad-girl, '50s-style rock & roll flair to a field dominated by Drake, Justin Bieber, and Taylor Swift. "I am literally having the time of my life," King says. "And

I feel sorry for people who can't say the same. They get inside their head or they over-think things. It's like, 'Chill out! Oh my God! Please, please have fun!'"

Having a blast has always been one of King's guiding principles—and she's proud to admit it. As a teen, the L.A.-born, Ohio-raised singer-songwriter got her start playing in New York City clubs, where the biggest perk wasn't a paycheck. "I learned at a pretty young age that you got free beer if you were on stage," King recalls. "So I started playing at clubs in New York and I was like, 'Oh, they won't card me if I'm playing? Awesome!'" But that's not to say King lacks a work ethic. She credits her parents—her mother is a model-turned-doula, her stepfather is a musician and painter, and her biological



## KING'S KEY INFLUENCES



**Elvis Presley**  
"He was the first love of my life. I blame him for my love of sequins and glitter."



**Otis Redding**  
"The first record I bought was Otis Redding's *Greatest Hits*, and I used to listen to it on repeat. His voice!"



**Wanda Jackson**  
"I sang with Wanda recently, and I've never been more f---ing terrified in my life. I messed up when we were singing and she was so cool."

father is comedian Rob Schneider—with inspiring her to follow her creative impulses. "I watched all three of them work really hard to get where they are now," she says. "That was a big driving force for me as a young girl to want to do it on my own. Nothing was handed to [my parents], that was really important to me. And I know that I can come off like a big, dumb idiot, but I busted my ass."

With "Ex's & Oh's" showing no signs of slowing (and earning Grammy buzz), King is ready to hit the road in February, opening for Vance Joy. But one of the best parts is hearing from the dudes who inspired her smash. "The song is about four guys, and I've spoken to three—and everyone is mad at me," she says with a laugh. "But I don't care! I'm not a terrible person, but it went platinum!"

# Babyface

**Kenny “Babyface” Edmonds** has been crafting hits for himself and others for nearly 30 years. With the release of his new solo album, *Return of the Tender Lover*—his first since 2007 and a throw-back to his breakout 1989 release, *Tender Lover*—the artist, 57, tells the tales of tunes both old and new. **By Kyle Anderson**



**“Whip Appeal” 1989**

- I heard that phrase and I said, “Oh, I need to write that!” Sometimes you can hear words but there’s no way you can sing it or make it feel good. People were like, “What is ‘whip appeal?’” Fortunately the song explained it. I didn’t know it was going to turn into what it turned into. It feels like an even more special record now.

**“When Can I See You” 1993**

- That song was essentially a beat and an acoustic guitar. There were very few R&B artists who would use acoustic guitar in that way. It wasn’t like I had this cool idea where I thought I would change the game,

but it was just what the song required. Fortunately it worked. I wrote it on the guitar, and I just wanted it to stay simple. It felt more heartfelt that way.

**“Another Sad Love Song”**

**Toni Braxton, 1993**  
**Love, Marriage & Divorce**

**Toni Braxton and Babyface, 2014**

- Toni was like a little me when she walked in. She knew what she wanted, and I knew exactly what to give her to sound great. I could hang with her then. In making the *Love, Marriage & Divorce* album, I sung around her. I couldn’t do it because it was too high. But that didn’t matter, because the album was for Toni.

**“Take a Bow”**

**Madonna, 1994**

- She was a big fan of “When Can I See You.” I had these ideas that I had already started putting down—which was “Take a Bow”—and that’s the first one we started to do. I was singing behind her on the demo, and she said, “I want you to sing on the background, too.” We did the American Music Awards together [in 1995],



and I remember never being as nervous in my life. I had on some wide pants, so you couldn’t tell, but my leg was shaking like crazy. And then after I told her, she said she was so nervous too, which was amazing to me because it’s Madonna.

**“Exhale (Shoop Shoop)”**

**Whitney Houston, 1995**

- Whitney was like a sister to me. It’s funny to see those words “Shoop Shoop” written down. Honestly, I couldn’t think of any words to say. It just needed a release,

and for some reason “Shoop Shoop” seemed to be able to do that. Sometimes you can’t read the words, you just have to sing it. She was in question initially about the “Shoop Shoop” part, and I said, “Just trust me. Wait and see what happens.”

**“We’ve Got Love” 2015**

- The groove is a really important thing. Just being able to get into a song that you don’t even have to sing, you can just groove with it for a while. I didn’t want to make a sad album of love songs and broken

“ [MADONNA AND I] DID THE AMERICAN MUSIC AWARDS TOGETHER, AND I REMEMBER NEVER BEING AS NERVOUS IN MY LIFE.... MY LEG WAS SHAKING LIKE CRAZY.”  
—BABYFACE



hearts because I’m really good at that. That’s not the space I’m in, and I don’t think anybody wants to be sad right now.

**“Solid”**

**Ty Dolla \$ign, 2015**

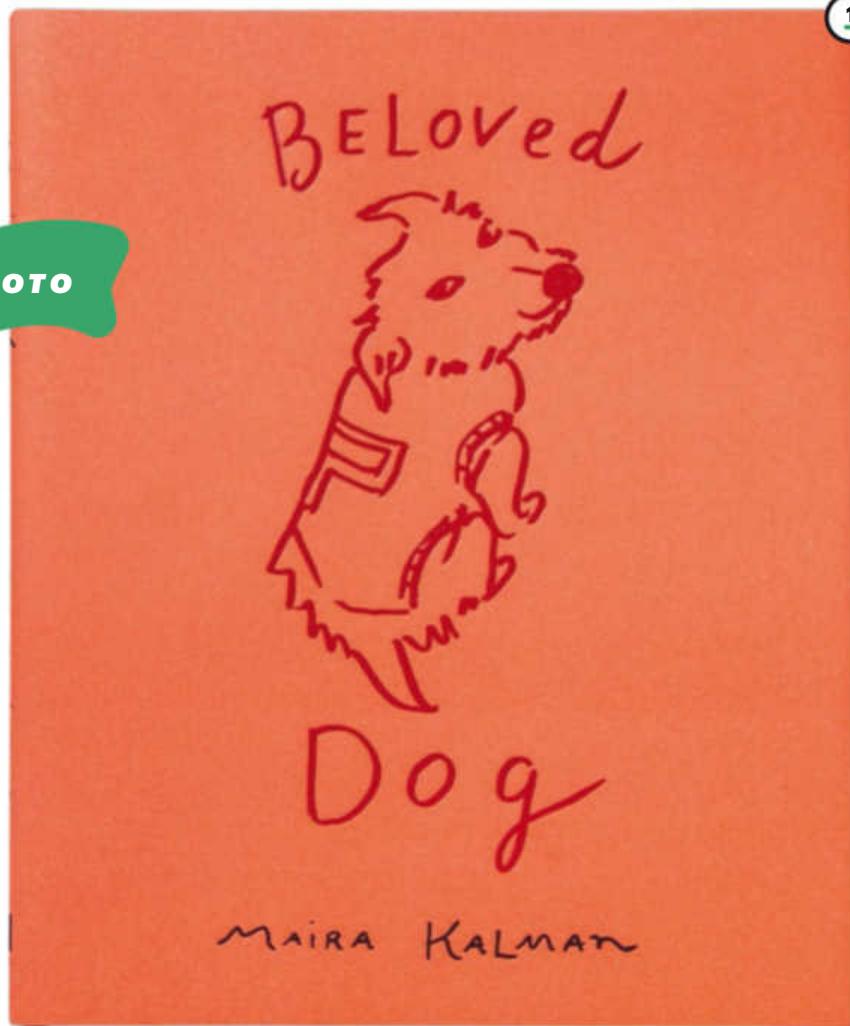
- That’s a fun record. I think it was because of “When Can I See You” that he came to me and said, “Can we write something? Pull out your acoustic guitar!” It is true that the things you’ve done in your past bring new artists to you. They get inspired. That’s the trick: doing something that feels like it’s today—but it’s as good as yesterday.

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BABYFACE AND MADONNA: VINCE BUCCIA/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

# Books

EDITED BY TINA JORDAN @EWTinaJordan



ART AND PHOTO

## Season's Readings

We've rounded up the year's most luscious reads—stunning art books, whimsical kids' tales, and engrossing paeans to pop culture. There's bound to be something for everyone.

By Isabella Biedenharn

### 1 **BELOVED DOG**

**Maira Kalman**  
For the artistically inclined dog lover, Kalman's quirky paintings of canines that have touched her heart will surely warm yours.

### 2 **NEXTINCTION**

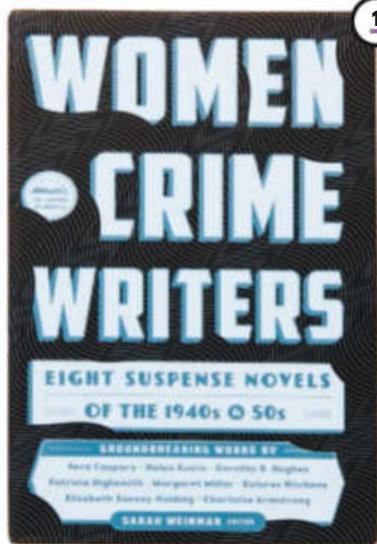
**Ralph Steadman**  
The brilliantly bizarre cartoonist follows up 2012's *Extinct Birds* with this compendium of the world's critically endangered birds.

### 3 **FLORENCE: THE PAINTINGS & FRESCOS**

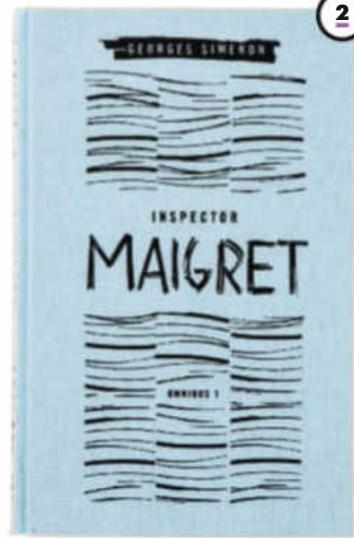
**Ross King, Anja Grebe**  
Spanning nearly 500 years and 2,000 artworks, this hefty book is a 2-D trip to Italy.



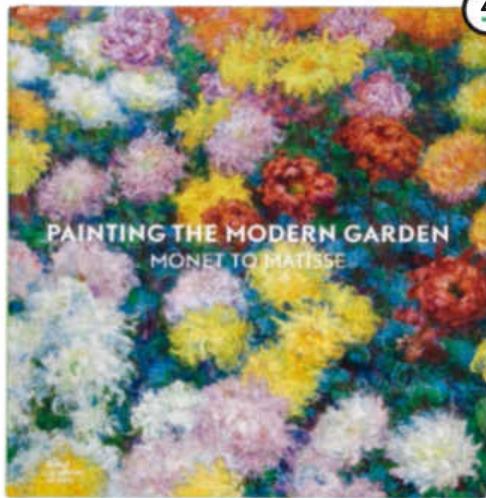
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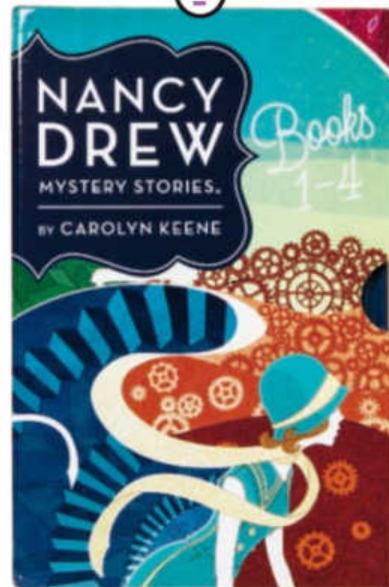
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## MYSTERIES

### 1 WOMEN CRIME WRITERS

**Ed. Sarah Weinman**  
This compilation celebrates female midcentury crime writers like Patricia Highsmith.

### 2 INSPECTOR MAIGRET OMNIBUS: VOL. 1

**Georges Simenon**  
Not only is this hardcover a shelf stunner, it also features four of the Belgian writer's famous stories.

### 3 NANCY DREW

**Carolyn Keene**  
Our favorite blue-roadster-driving teenage sleuth gets a modern makeover, perfect for a new generation of precocious detective wannabes.

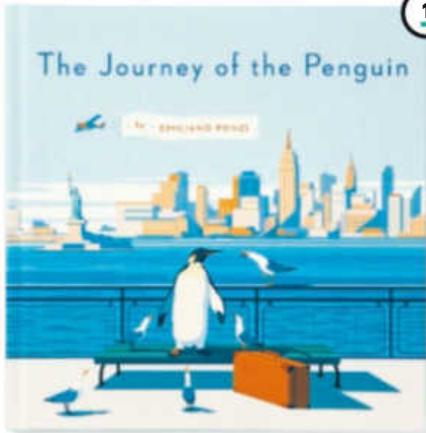
### 4 PAINTING THE MODERN GARDEN: MONET TO MATISSE

**Monty Don**  
A lush, gorgeous collection of the Impressionists' flower-focused work.

### 5 BEATON PHOTOGRAPHS

**Mark Holborn, Annie Leibovitz**  
In this study of the legendary lensman's portraits, you'll find the likes of Picasso, Garbo, and Jagger.

**FOR KIDS**



1



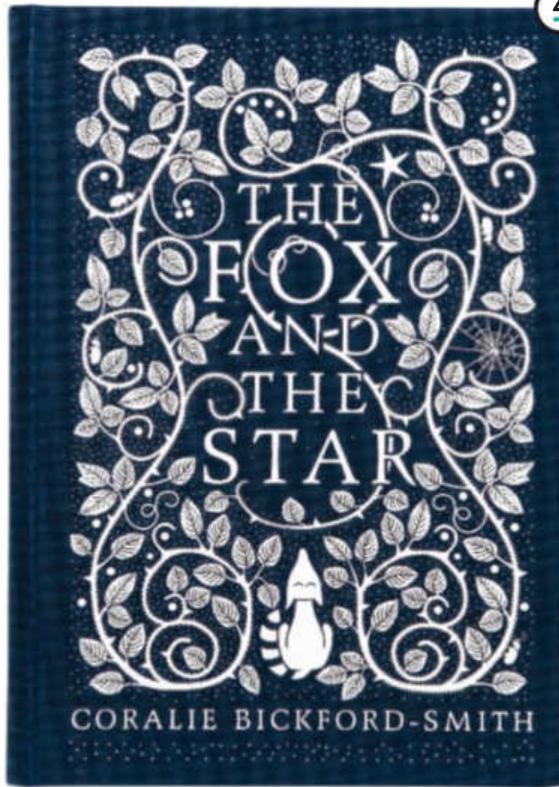
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**1 THE JOURNEY OF THE PENGUIN**

**Emiliano Ponzi**  
Join a penguin on his globe-spanning quest to become a publisher's mascot.

**2 PAPER ZOO**

**Oscar Sabini**  
This book is begging to be folded and ripped—in fact, that's the whole point! Tear out the critters, play with them, and tuck them into pockets.

**3 THE DOG THAT NINO DIDN'T HAVE**

**Edward van de Vendel, Anton Van Hertbruggen**  
Vintage-looking drawings illustrate this tale of a lonely boy and his imaginary pup.

**4 THE FOX AND THE STAR**

**Coralie Bickford-Smith**  
In this beautifully designed book, a fox searches for the missing star that used to light his way.

**5 LEGO AWESOME IDEAS**

**Daniel Lipkowitz**  
For the builder in your life, photos and step-by-step guides to cool LEGO creations, from cookies to space plants, fill this book.

**1 WILD WORLD**

**Lonely Planet**  
These majestic photos and creatures are the stuff of globe-trotters' dreams.

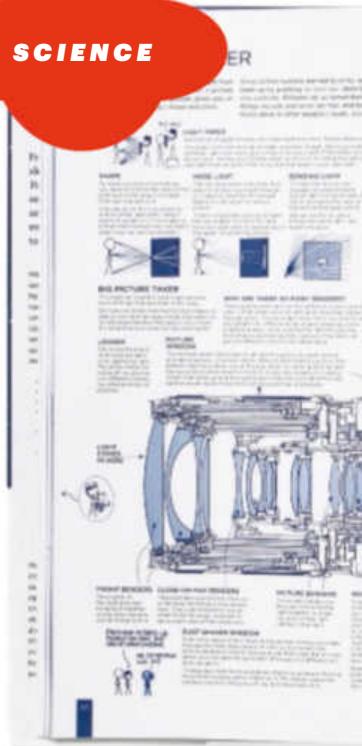
**2 ATLAS OF CURSED PLACES**

**Olivier Le Carrer**  
Intrigued by danger but don't have a death wish? Explore scary locales here.

**3 RARELY SEEN: PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE EXTRAORDINARY**

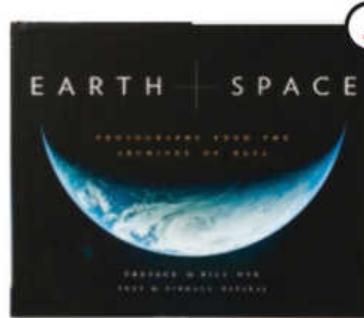
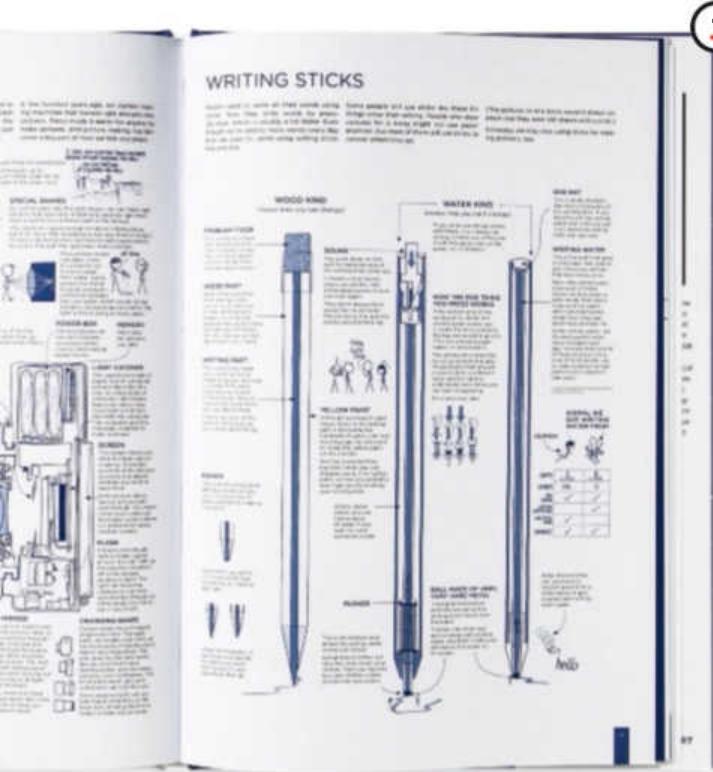
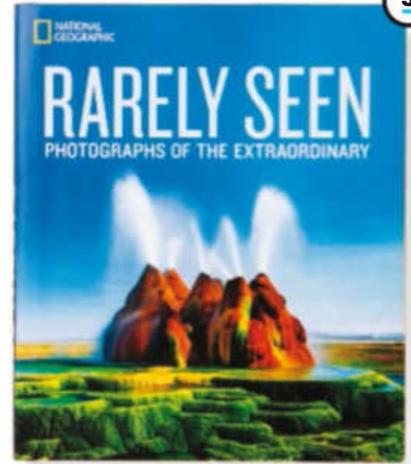
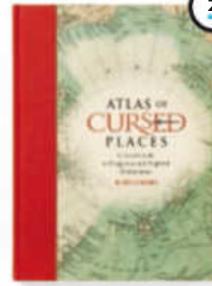
**National Geographic**  
The legendary society assembles a collection of once-in-a-lifetime shots.

**SCIENCE**



PLACES

Books



**1**  
**THING EXPLAINER**

**Randall Munroe**  
The creator of *xkcd* clarifies complex stuff using only the 1,000 most common words.

**2**  
**EARTH + SPACE**

**Nirmala Nataraj**  
Delve into the great beyond with these awe-inspiring photos from NASA's archive. Plus, Bill Nye wrote the preface!

**3**  
**LIGHT**

**Kimberly Arcand, Megan Watzke**  
Through photos and essays, Arcand and Watzke explore light in all its forms, including X-rays and radio waves.



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## Books

### POP CULTURE

#### 1 THEY DREW AS THEY PLEASD

**Didier Ghez**  
Feast your eyes on the fantastic lost art of Disney's 1930s concept artists.

#### 3 DUST & GROOVES

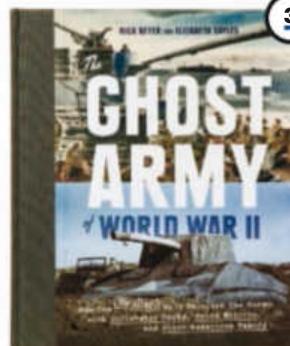
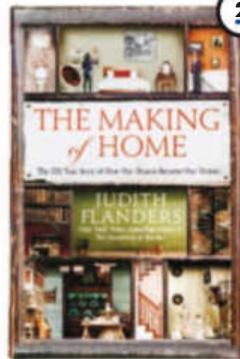
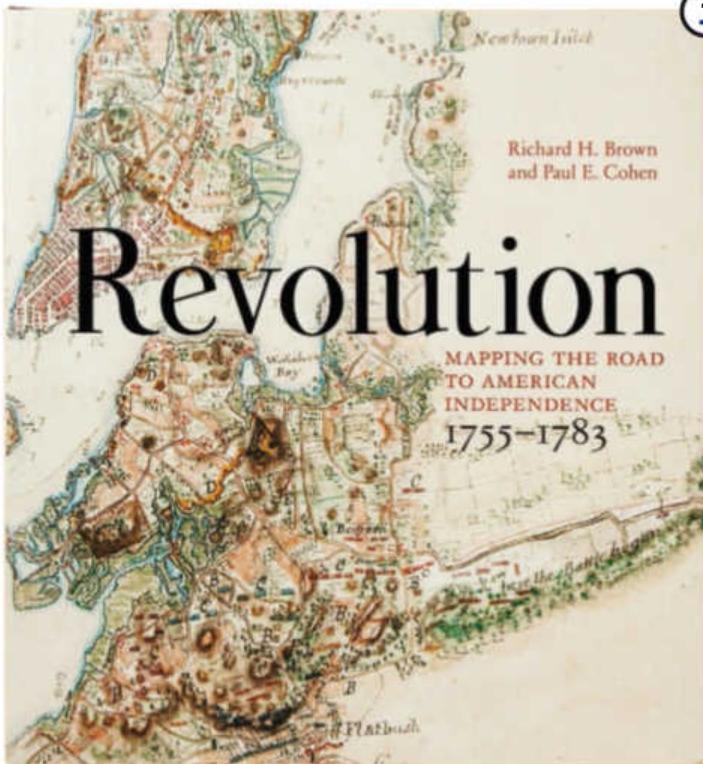
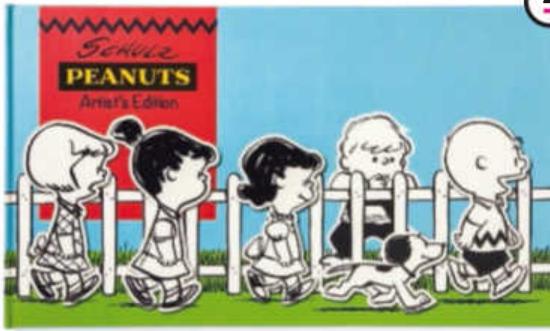
**Eilon Paz**  
Pairing photographic essays and interviews, Paz takes us into the worlds of vinyl collectors, as we learn what motivates and inspires them.

#### 2 BOND BY DESIGN

**DK**  
From storyboards to gadget sketches, this behind-the-scenes look will satiate every James Bond cinephile.

#### 4 PEANUTS: ARTIST'S EDITION

**Charles M. Schulz**  
It's like you're sitting in Schulz's studio: These larger-than-life images show textual notes and art corrections.



## HISTORY

#### 1 REVOLUTION

**Richard H. Brown, Paul E. Cohen**  
Early U.S. history unfolds through a series of fascinating maps.

#### 2 THE MAKING OF HOME

**Judith Flanders**  
An exploration of the ways that houses changed from just shelters to homes.

#### 3 THE GHOST ARMY OF WWII

**Rick Beyer, Elizabeth Sayles**  
How the U.S. used inflatable tanks and sound effects to fool the German army.

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# The Bullseye



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Tom Cruise in talks to reboot the *Mummy* franchise. Because Brendan Fraser wasn't completely available...?



C-3PO's voice now available to navigate during drives on Waze; R2-D2's now available to *beep-boop* during games of Taboo.



Katy Perry releases holiday-themed music video with dancing gingerbread men, sexy reindeer, and the sad, looming, noticeable void left by Left Shark.



Can someone get this kid a Lexapro?



*Gods of Egypt* director prematurely apologizes for whitewashing casting. Now if only Scotland would apologize for Gerard Butler.



E! schedules Jillian Michaels docuseries, tentatively titled *I Am Yelling*.



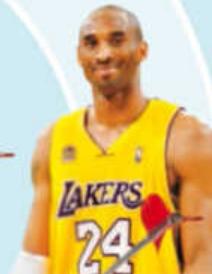
Time to remake *The Bodyguard*!



**Creed is the reason to get back to the gym and the movie theater.**



Engaged! Our happiest congratulations to C and Peele.



Kobe Bryant announces retirement from the NBA, which Bullseye can exclusively reveal stands for "National Basketball Association."



*Quantico*'s Alex Parrish is such a hot prisoner, she could do shampoo ads from jail.



British baby trends internationally, giggles at own feet.

Anne Hathaway is pregnant, and we know who the Oscar host in 2038 won't be.



That movie your mom keeps saying Eddie Redmayne looks beautiful in



Former child star Mary-Kate Olsen marries former French president's brother Olivier Sarkozy, in a mystery not even direct-to-video twin child detectives can solve.



Mariah Carey, 46, and Lacey Chabert, 33, are playing former high school rivals in Hallmark's *A Christmas Melody*. Obviously, ages don't matter in this alternate dimension.



Kevin Bacon to star in *Tremors* TV revival, a.k.a. the best industry news for Graboids since *Star Wars* held an open call for the Sarlacc.

FRASER: KEITH HANSHIRE; CHARLIE BROWN: 1965 UNITED FEATURE SPINDRICE; JORDAN PEELE AND CHELSEA PERETTI: MICHAEL KOVAIC/WIREIMAGE.COM; CREED: BARRY WITCHER; BRANT: LISA BUJNIEWICZ/GETTY IMAGES; QUANTICO: PHILIPPE BOSSER/ABC; BACON: PHOTOFEST; TREMORS: THE KOBAL COLLECTION; SARKOZY AND OLSEN: KEVIN MAZUR/WIREIMAGE.COM; HATHAWAY, KARRAWI, TANG/WIREIMAGE.COM; BABY: CHARLOTTE PHOTO BY HHH/THE DUNHESSEY/COMBINED/GETTY IMAGES; ADELE: PAUL HODGSON/GETTY IMAGES; MICHAEL: PAUL DRINKWATER/NBC; WAZE: CHARACTERS; WAZE: TELGEN; BIRDIE: THOMPSON/DIVIDUAL CRISIS



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