

# FILM CENTRAL

NOVEMBER 2020

THE VERDICT ON  
UNHINGED



TENET REVIEW

The verdict on Tenet: Is it  
actually worth your time or money?

RIISING ACTORS

Find out more about three exciting  
and emerging actors who  
have wowed us this year and  
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## GET TO KNOW YOLANDI FRANKEN

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# FILM CENTRAL

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# FILM CENTRAL



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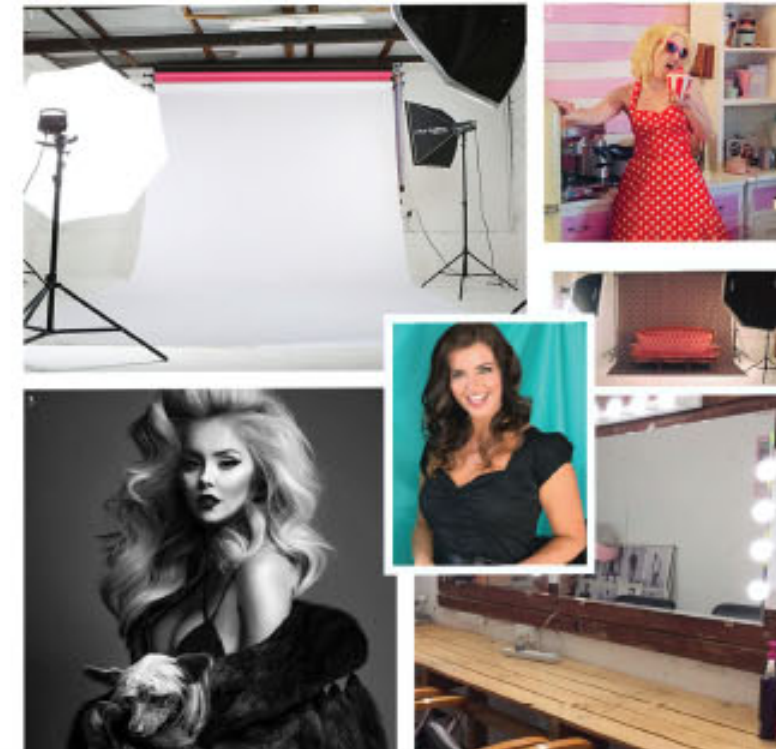
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## PRICING TABLE

HRS	STUDIO	EQUIPMENT	TOTAL PRICE
4	\$125.00	\$50.00	\$175.00
5	\$156.25	\$62.50	\$218.75
6	\$187.50	\$75.00	\$262.50
7	\$218.75	\$87.50	\$306.25
8	\$250.00	\$100.00	\$350.00
9	\$281.25	\$112.50	\$393.75
10	\$312.50	\$125.00	\$437.50
11	\$343.75	\$137.50	\$481.25
12	\$375.00	\$150.00	\$525.00

The studio can be booked with or without equipment.

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## INFORMATION



### THE STUDIO SPACE

Mullens St. Studio consists of two spaces, the main 50m2 shooting area and a makeup room at the back. We have completely refurbished the space in to a fun and enjoyable studio using reclaimed recycled vintage materials mainly from the 1950's.



### LOCATION & ACCESS

Located in Balmain, the studio is only 2 stops from the QVB. If you are coming by car there is ample FREE unrestricted, on-street parking. The Studio has side lane car access for unloading through a large 2m sliding door.



### BACK DROPS & EQUIPMENT

We have 5 backdrops: white paper (free), black paper (\$20 per metre), Grey paper (\$20 per metre) Pink paper (\$20 per metre) & patterned BG & 10x3m Chromakey (green). Elinchrom flash lights, Soft boxes, 5 umbrellas, snoot etc.





ERIC FONACIER  
PHOTOGRAPHY



## OZ Comic-Con

Oz Comic-Con has once again come and gone, leaving us with a thesaurus of emotions. FilmCentral Magazine was there to experience everything, giving you coverage on the ground and reporting on panels.

Last year fans of film and television got an opportunity to rub shoulders with some of their favourite celebrities. Sydney welcomed stars such as Avengers star Hayley Atwell, Riverdale star KJ Apa, Luke Baines, GQ's Breakthrough Actor of The Year in 2016 Keiynan Lonsdale, award-winning director, actor, comedian, bestselling author, podcaster and activist Aisha Tyler, Veronica Mars star Jason Doherty, Dominique Provost-Chalkley, and Michael Eklund.

The event also played host to a variety of authors of books and comic illustrators such as Bosslogic, Nicola Scott, Tom Taylor, Wayne Nichols, Stewart McKenny, Isabelle Carmody, and Queenie Chan among others.

Fans were able to get autographs and photos with their favourite celebrity and they were also able to ask questions during the celebrity Q&A panels which were included as part of the entry ticket. All in all, it was definitely an awesome day especially for comic book fans.





FIND OUT MORE ABOUT

SASHA SANDER

"I would advise models who want to grow their social media accounts to create their own luck. Don't expect opportunities to fall into your lap. You need to email, message and ask different brands/photographers/organisations to work with you."

Sasha Sander is a stunning Instagram model and a news producer for a station in St. Louis, Missouri. She started her Instagram account (sasha\_emiri) two years ago and now she has over 85,000 followers. Her personal mission in life is to live it to the fullest and help people along the way. FilmCentral Magazine recently caught up with Sasha to talk about her journey in the modeling and TV industry and here's what went down:

**Could you please provide a background about yourself and how were you actually 'discovered'?**

My name is Sasha Sander and I am a news producer for a station in St. Louis, Missouri. My Instagram account is sasha\_emiri and I started it two years ago. It gained popularity through the use of hashtags and collaborating with different creative photographers.

**What does it mean to you to be a model?**

Being a model means having the ability to showcase your creativity by using your body as a canvas.

**What's the biggest challenge to modeling?**

The biggest challenge for me when it comes to modeling is being able to be creative while also holding a job as a public news figure. There is a fine line between art and being too suggestive in images. I want to keep things classy while also being able to express different art forms through modeling.

**Have you always wanted to be in the modeling industry?**

I never thought I could be in the modeling industry because of my height. I'm 5'2 and a half. I am also curvy. I didn't ever imagine having a modeling career because of those things. But it just kind of fell into my lap due to my quick growth on Instagram and I am so so thankful. I really do love it.

**What's your personal mission in life?**

My mission in life is to live it to the fullest and help people along the way. Life is short, so you need to do what you want while you're still alive.

**What has been the most memorable experience of your career so far?**

I can't think of just one specific experience but what I have loved the most about modeling and growing popularity on Instagram is being able to meet so many talented and great individuals. Everyone is so kind and has so much to bring to the table.

**Who have been the most interesting people you've met so far?**

I really can't pick one person over another. But the most famous person I have met out of my modeling journey was the founder of NARS cosmetics / the creator of Victoria's Secret angels.

**How active are you on social media?**

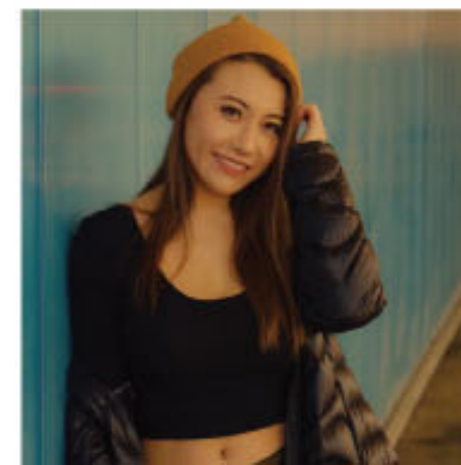
I am very active on social media. I post every other day on Instagram. I also do a lot of social media work for my news station.

**What will you advise other models who may wish to follow your footsteps?**

I would advise models who want to grow their social media accounts to create their own luck. Don't expect opportunities to fall into your lap. You need to email, message and ask different brands/photographers/organisations to work with you. The more you put yourself out there, the better. Hard work always pays off.

**What are your future plans? Inside your career or out of it.**

My future plan is to take what I've learned from my own Instagram growth and put that knowledge towards starting a social media campaign for the company I'm working for. My goal is to get the campaign to go viral and help all the communities in and around St. Louis. I would also love to win an Emmy for the projects I've worked on and move towards a career in modeling full-time.





ONE ON ONE WITH THE NARCOS: MEXICO STAR

# ALBERTO

## ZENI

Mexican-born actor Alberto Zeni has just made his way to the small screen in the second season of Netflix's crime drama "Narcos: Mexico." He's starring alongside Diego Luna (Gallardo), Scoot McNairy (the narrator) and Teresa Ruiz (Bautista).

Born in Monterrey, Mexico, Alberto first caught the acting bug when he was 14 years old while working for Parque Plaza Sesame in his hometown of Monterrey, Mexico; a family-friendly destination with a Sesame Street theme featuring rides, games and a water park. Singing, dancing and playing characters at the park wasn't his only direction as he had goals of becoming an inventor and even received a degree in Engineering. After completing his studies, Alberto continued working in the entertainment industry starting in telenovelas such as "Hoy Soy Nadie," "Trillizas de Flores," "Bajo el Alma," "XY, La Revista" and the web series "Vidas Cruzadas" starring Kate del Castillo.

It wasn't until his mid-twenties, where he decided to make a drastic change, pack up his bags and move to Los Angeles, CA to continue his acting journey. While in LA, Alberto immersed himself in the craft – training in the Meisner Technique and teaching himself English. FilmCentral Magazine recently caught up with Alberto courtesy of the Anderson Group to talk about his journey in the entertainment industry so far and here's what went down:

### How were you actually 'discovered'?

To be honest, I don't know anyone that has been discovered, ever. It's a very romantic idea, though. For me, it's been a process of a couple of decades now of hard work, training, preparation, travel, moving, leaving people and places behind, going back to them, leaving them again and a constant belief that what I love to do will transform into something bigger and more diverse. I can say the hard work, dedication and discipline have paid off many times fold.

### What do you like most about acting?

I get to have different experiences. Through the eyes of different personalities, characters and stories, I get to be a doctor one week, a policeman the next, a bounty hunter, an astronaut, the owner of a conglomerate and so many others. The possibilities are endless, and I get a taste of what existence is in a more personal way, as well as a broader, way.

### Can you tell us about your role in Narcos: Mexico?

I play a former Mexican Judicial, which is like a federal agent, that gets integrated into the DEA team that infiltrates Mexico's territory to find out who killed Kiki Camarena (Michael Pena's

character) and destabilize the criminal organization involved in that, Amat Palacios, which is my name on the show, is a very cunning, very charming man who is savvy about how things run on both sides of the border and that makes him an invaluable asset to the team.

### What sort of person is going to love your character?

Anybody that has a light heart and anybody who loves their family. This is a character that does things because he wants to do them and because they bring a benefit to his own. That said, he is always looking out for his team and himself.

### How do you relate to your character? How are you different from Amat?

I believe every character I portray has some of my essences, to a degree. In the end, I am the one feeling what he is going through and thinking his thoughts. For Amat, the idea of being present with his team, joking around and protecting them, is where I can say we are very much alike. The part where he may look the other way or get involved in unsavory things is where we are very different. Nevertheless, it was a lot of fun playing him.

### What's the biggest challenge to taking on this role?

Fortunately, Amat was not based on any historical figure so I had the freedom to create a new persona, which in itself is a challenge. I thought to myself, 'how am I going to create a man that has qualities I don't necessarily have myself.' So, I began to think of the qualities I DO have and from then on, I built upon the idea of Amat until the entire persona was created – I got to live through him. Added to that, other small traits and nuances were incorporated by reading on history from that era and watching documentaries. It was a lot of information that went into creating him. I hope you get to see a human being on screen.

### What are your future plans? Within your career or aside from it.

There are many projects in motion as we speak, with both my US and Mexico agencies. We are talking to different people about different projects and soon we will have more news on the acting side of my career. I own a production company in Mexico City that offers services to international productions and we are also developing content for the international market. We are also developing a crowdfunding social media platform that will enable people to capitalize on their ideas, projects, content and funding campaigns. The name of this platform is MeThere.





ONE ON ONE WITH "THIS IS US" STAR

# BAHARA

## GOLESTANI

Multi-faceted actor Bahara Golestani is definitely the new fresh face to watch on the new season of NBC's smash hit series "This Is Us." A graduate of the world-renowned Stella Adler Academy of Acting & Theatre, Golestani is best known for her roles in TNT's "Animal Kingdom," Jason Koch-directed indie film *Beneath The Black Veil* and Michael Bay's blockbuster film *6 Underground*.

StarCentral Magazine recently caught up with Bahara Golestani courtesy of Anderson Group PR to talk about her journey to Hollywood and here's what went down:

**How were you actually 'discovered'?**

I started on the stage at Stella Adler in Los Angeles doing theater and absolutely fell in love with American and foreign playwrights. After graduating, I proceeded to get a manager and an agent. I went through the traditional auditioning process and recognition did not happen overnight. I'm extremely grateful to have been a part of projects that I've worked on and I am looking forward to growing my career.

**What do you like most about acting?**

I love being able to put myself in other people's shoes. I love the fact that I can take a script and, through my words and character work, bring it to life. I love being able to touch the audience through my work.

**Can you tell us about your role in *This Is Us*?**

I play Dr. Asmaan, a mother who is risking her own life to save others. She is an informant for the U.S. military and she meets with Cassidy (Jennifer Morrison) in a village in Afghanistan. She is anything but a stereotypical Afghan woman. She's strong, courageous and inspiring.

**What sort of person is going to love this character?**

I think, in a way, all of us will love her. Based on her story and what she's facing, any viewer could easily have compassion and understanding of the difficult decision that she has to make and the sacrifices she has made and is continuing to do to fight for change, not only for herself and her child but also for her entire village.

**How is this character like you? Different?**

I can relate to her in some ways like being from Afghanistan

myself and having an understanding of our cultural history and the circumstances of our country. But I would also like to say that I did an extensive amount of research before portraying this character. It was very important to me to tell the story in the most authentic way possible.

**What's the biggest challenge to taking on this role?**

For me, I would say I always like to challenge myself with any character that I'm portraying. Coming from a very strong theatrical background, research and finding the truth of the character is the most important aspect for me. It was a very emotional scene but I love the fact that I was able to challenge myself.

**Besides yourself, what celebrity would you like to see tackle this character?**

A key factor for this role was being able to speak Pashto in a native dialect. With that being said, I don't think we have as many actors in the industry who speak my language. I'm looking forward to that changing and having more women from our country portraying these characters. I'm extremely grateful for the "This Is Us" casting department for casting this character in the most authentic way.

**What has been the most memorable experience of your career so far?**

I would say being on "This Is Us" and portraying such an empowering Afghan woman on screen has been one of the biggest highlights for me.

**Who have been the most interesting people you've met so far?**

I love Los Angeles for the fact that it's such a melting pot and you are always meeting interesting people from all walks of life. I've met so many entrancing people from attending various acting classes. I love the actors. I find them fascinating.

**What are your future plans? Inside your career or out of it.**

I'd like to continue playing strong, fascinating female characters on screen, and empowering other women through my work. Definitely taking care of my health, staying active, happy, humble and surrounding myself with my family and friends and not taking a single day for granted.



# FIND OUT MORE ABOUT BRETT WHITTINGHAM

Brett Whittingham is definitely an actor to watch out for in 2020! He recently won the best actor award at the 2019 Cause Film Festival where he played a man who's trying to cope with the loss of a child – and we were all in awe of his performance. FilmCentral Magazine recently caught up with Brett to talk about his career and his future plans and here's what went down:

**How were you actually 'discovered'? A chance encounter on the street? Audition?**

Well, if we're talking about the role for the short film, Dan Walls, the writer/director is one of my oldest and best mates and we've worked together many times before. If we're talking bigger picture, I'm not sure I've been "discovered"... I'm more the acting equivalency of a deep Amazonian tribe.

**What do you like most about acting?**

It sounds totally cliché but the ability to move people or make them think. It also allows you to express emotions that aren't necessarily suitable in a regular workplace.

**Can you please tell us the name of the short film you won an award from and about your role?**

The name of the short film is "Last Seen Alive", where I play a man who is trying to cope with the loss of a child and finds a grief soul-mate in the form of an empathetic gas station attendant played by Neelam Choudhary.

**What's the biggest challenge to taking on this role?**

Not being a dad, it's impossible to imagine this level of grief. Again without giving anything away, it's was more about balancing that grief with the sense of resoluteness this character possesses. The main challenge was doing the role justice. Our writer/director Dan, had written the story as part of an outlet from his own experience with a family member. When you're dealing with something created from such raw emotion, you really want to do it justice.

**What has been the most memorable experience of your career so far?**

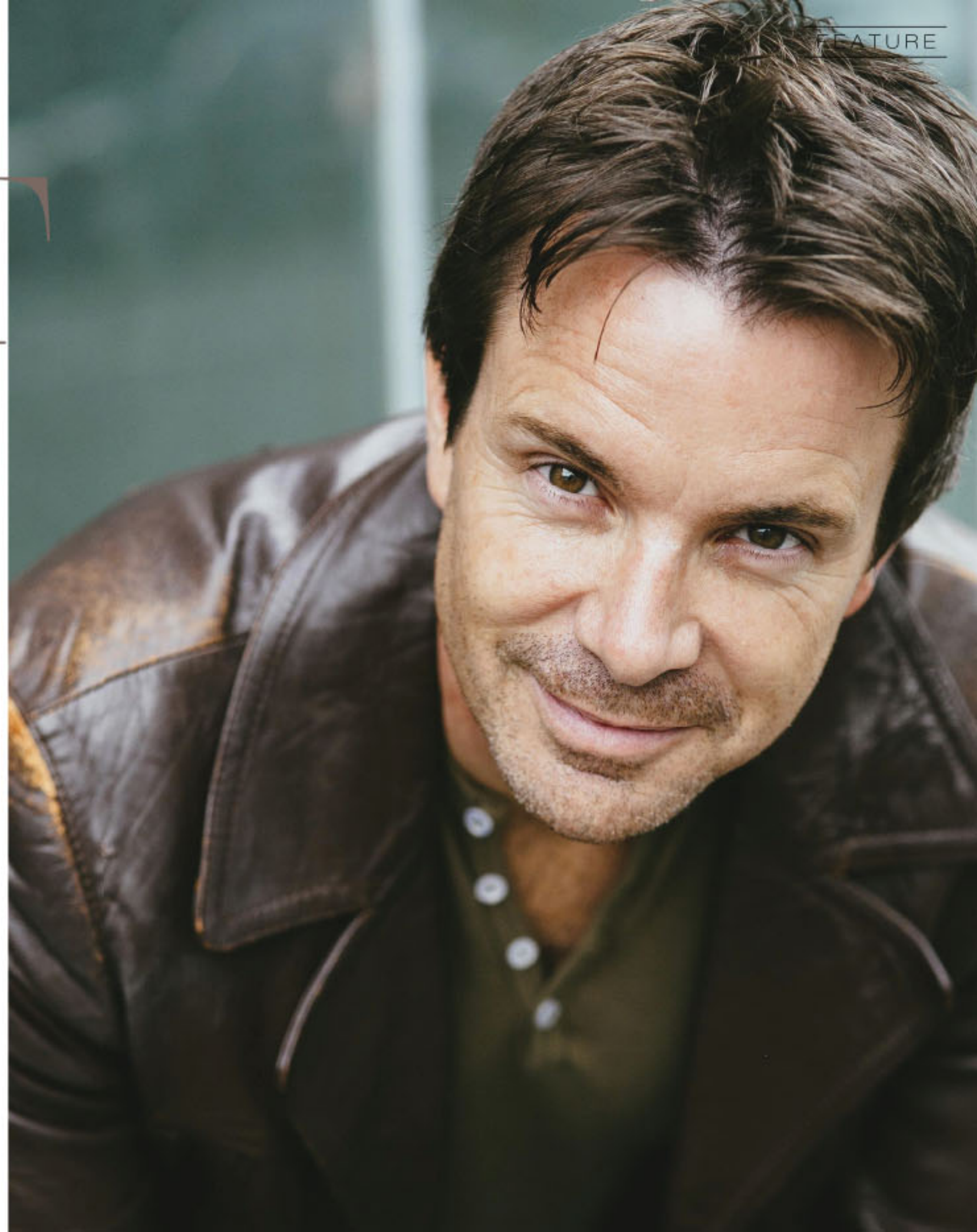
I did a stage tour with the late Ann Phelan. Given we lost her recently, I'm privileged I got the chance to work with her. But there have been many other highlights, such as performing in the Green Room Award-winning production of The Laramie Project with some of my closest mates.

**I'm guessing you've been in the entertainment industry for a few years now, what has been the most valuable lesson you've learned.**

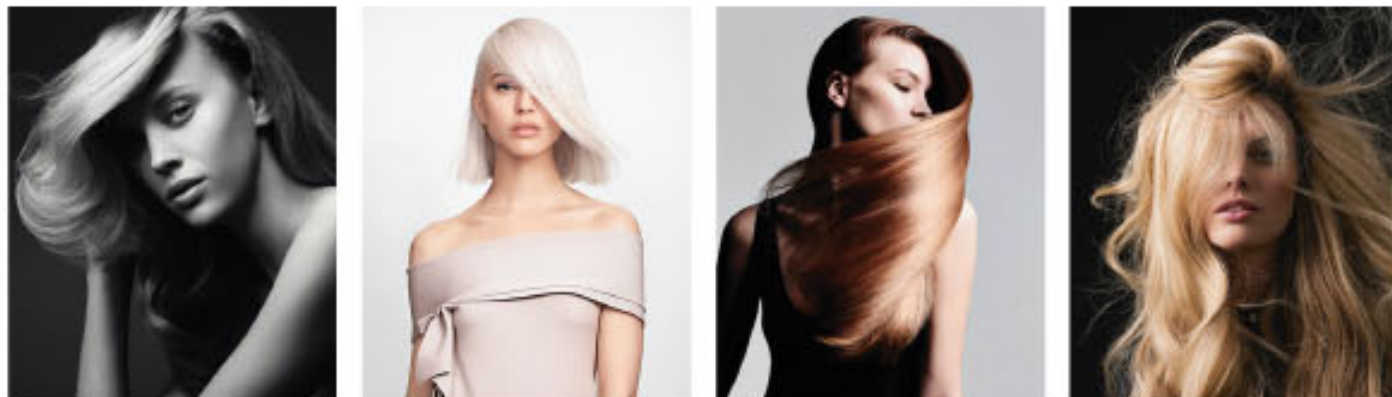
I've been acting in various capacities for over 25 years and I think the one takeaway is never taking yourself too seriously and never overthink!

**What are your future plans? Inside your career or out of it.**

I work on many of my own passion projects these days. 9 to 5 job gets pretty busy. I do an on-again-off-again series called "Project Management – A Comedy Web series" on YouTube with a wonderfully gorgeous creative woman by the name of Olivia Hogan. Currently, I'm working on a couple of animated projects which I'm hoping to get up on YouTube early next year.







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# ONE ON ONE WITH MICHAEL GRECCO

Photographer MICHAEL GRECCO

"Michael Grecco is an award-winning and internationally renowned celebrity photographer and TV personality. His high-profile clients included renowned celebrities such as Steven Spielberg, Will Smith, Johnny Depp, Martin Scorsese, Morgan Freeman, Jet Li, Will Ferrell, Joaquin Phoenix, and many more."

Michael Grecco is an award-winning and internationally renowned celebrity photographer and TV personality. He has been regularly shooting magazine covers for various national magazines such as Time, Wired, Entertainment Weekly, ESPN, People, and others. His high-profile clients included renowned celebrities such as Steven Spielberg, Patrick Dempsey, Will Smith, Johnny Depp, Robert Duvall, Martin Scorsese, Janet Jackson, Mel Brooks, Lucy Liu, Ben Stiller, Penélope Cruz, Morgan Freeman, Jet Li, Will Ferrell, Joaquin Phoenix, and many more.

Michael is also the Executive Producer and appears in the TV Show "Punk." FilmCentral Magazine recently caught up with Michael to discuss his journey to entrepreneurship and here's what went down:

**Could you please tell our readers a brief background about yourself and how you started your business?**

It all started in summer camp when I was a kid. The mystery of a black and white image coming up in the tray of a developer was mystifying. I fell in love right away. I shot all the sexy camp counselors at the free swim. I thought, what a life! At that point, I was hooked and went on to study art photography at the local college programs in Westchester, NY while in high school and photojournalism while at Boston University.

Before graduating, I started working for the Associated Press. I shot politicians during the day. And at night, I was a club kid shooting the Punk and New Wave scene in Boston.

When People Magazine then offered me a job, I made the leap from Boston to Los Angeles and switched from photojournalism to celebrity portrait photography, shooting magazine covers instead of for the pages inside.

**Can you describe your journey to success? When did you start? Did you ever imagine you would become this successful?**

I think my journey to success started when I was asked to travel the world shooting the "Entrepreneurs that Matter" for a special issue of Business Week. I had shot an artsy jewelry story for the Los Angeles Times Sunday magazine and Business Week saw that and asked me to replicate its artful approach for the businesspeople they wanted to shoot. That opened the door to all sorts of new opportunities in the magazine and the commercial world.

**What is your main source of income?**

My income is varied. It's from assignment fees from directing and shooting still imagery. It's from licensing imagery, infringement enforcement, a book in the works, etc. I'm also working on two businesses related to photography where I would be building technology platforms to help the industry.

**What are you currently doing to maintain/grow your business?**

I always look for weaknesses in the market and try to turn them into opportunities where a new brand can be created. Both platforms I'm working on now are businesses where there's a hole in the market that can be filled.

**What is your main tactic when it comes to making more people aware of your brand and engaging your customers? How did your business stand out?**

I like organic search. I think that's when people are looking for someone like myself. And if they're searching, they can understand the difference in visions and service.

**What form of marketing has worked well for your business throughout the years?**

I think all forms of marketing have worked at one time or another. When direct physical mail was popular, that



worked if you did it well. Early on, when email marketing was effective, it worked when done well. At this point, you have to engage in all of them at once. You cut the things that have no ROI and continue to do the ones that work.

**How did your brand stand out from the rest of the other brands out there that is similar to your niche?**

I like to think my brand is known for smart imagery and a well-designed website. It sends the message that everything we do is well designed and thoughtful. The goal is to engage the viewer harmonically and from an intelligence standpoint.

**What is the toughest decision you had to make in the last few months?**

Every time I have to cut a marketing program because it has no ROI is always tough. You really have to be thoughtful in what you're cutting. There's also the psychological effect that you might be missing out on something in the future that you don't know about, which makes it even harder.

**What money mistakes have you made along the way that others can learn from (or something you'd do differently)?**

Oh, it's always all the little business sayings you've heard in the past. Use other people's money when starting a business...or, Early to Fire, Late to Hire. That's an ad agency saying to be flexible and cautious. You can always look back at the mistakes and see them as investments you shouldn't have made. But you didn't know that at the time. So hopefully, you learn and you don't make the same mistake twice.

**What have you learned in the process of becoming wealthy that others can learn from?**

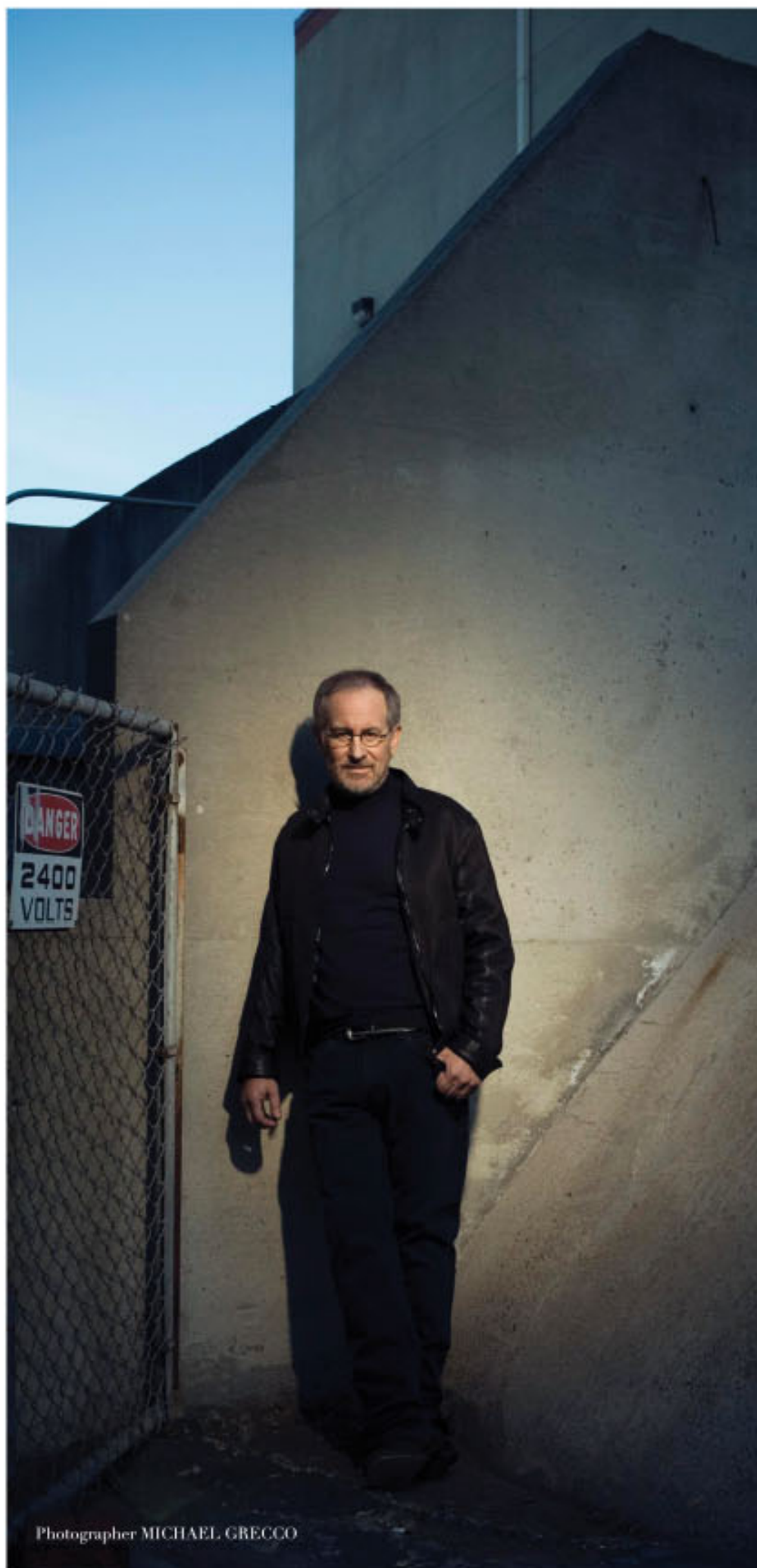
That your mistakes are your greatest learning opportunity. If you don't learn from them, they're wasted. But if you use them to your advantage as you move forward, they're not mistakes. Appreciate them for what they are, simply something that didn't work.

**If you could go back in a time machine to the time when you were just getting started, what would you do differently?**

Not piss off the people I pissed off with hubris. Be a better listener. I would have wished for all the skills I've had to learn as an adult. But the whole concept of a time machine is like fixing your mistakes. You need them to grow and to learn. They're how you become a better business leader and a better human being.

**What advice would you give to a newbie Entrepreneur setting up their first business?**

Want it bad enough! If you want it bad enough, you will succeed.



Photographer MICHAEL GRECCO

Photographer MICHAEL GRECCO









# MAKE WAY FOR YOLANDI FRANKEN

Yolandi Franken is a film and TV producer, TV-host, and an industry all-rounder. She started studying and working in the film industry almost exactly 21-years ago now and although it's a difficult industry to be in love with due to its inconsistent nature, she still wouldn't change it for the world. Her job has enabled her to meet some amazing people and travel the world. She has worked in China, Hong Kong, South Africa, India, Dominican Republic, and the USA and she will forever be thankful for the opportunities that were presented to her and the people who helped her grow.

She was a producer of three feature films: *Turbines*, *Tabernacle 101* and *Streets of Colour*, a two-part documentary series called *Yols Discover*, two TV series: *The Fast Lane* and *Miss Multiverse Australia*, and hundreds of shorter format stories (music videos, short films, TV Ads, Corporate videos, etc.) Many of these got accepted into countless prestigious film festivals, some even winning some awards. These productions are available worldwide on streaming platforms such as Amazon Prime, Tubi, Google Play, Apple TV, and many more. *Tabernacle 101* also had a US cinema release and *The Fast Lane* was aired on television sets throughout South-East Asia.

She's currently a part of WIFT (Women in Film & Television) Australia and is Co-Chair of their NSW Committee and Chair of their National Virtual Arm where she's involved in organising face-to-face and virtual events and workshops with industry leaders, educators, suppliers, funding bodies and guilds. She personally had the privilege to work with Disney, Niki Caro, Mandy Walker ASC ACS, Steph Power, Jill Bilcock, Bonnie Elliott, Arri, all the amazing people on the WIFT Australia Board, and many more.

As a secondary passion, she also works in front of the cameras. She hosted *Teal Wings*, *Indie Film World*, *Yols Discover*, *The Fast Lane*, *Miss Multiverse Australia*, and *Miss Multiverse International*. Some of these are available on Amazon Prime, Tubi, and some aired on Television. As far as acting goes, she's had a number of smaller roles in Australian TV-series and Films and even a tiny role in the Hollywood Blockbuster, *Kingsmen – The Secret Service*. In her younger years, she was also a model but she ended her modelling career after representing Australia three times on a world level in *Mrs. Globe*, *Mrs. World*, and *Miss Multiverse*.

In 2014 she started a charitable film festival called *Cause Film Festival* which she ran for three years before passing on her role as Festival Director to Suki Foster. The festival is still running and has housed some of Australia's most talented filmmakers and actors. Furthermore, she was actually nominated as "Australian of the Year" in 2015 for the work she does in the community and for various charities.

FilmCentral magazine recently caught up with Yolandi to discuss her journey in the entertainment industry and here's what went down:

## What is your motivation as a filmmaker?

In short, giving audiences an escape from the real world. I just want to give the world more stories to love. But I also love the process of creating films, both creatively and the generally considered "boring side" of producing. I don't have a creative mind that can create something from scratch, but I have an absolute passion for creativity and the creative industries.







Photographed by Tony Palliser

So being a producer allows me to apply what I am good at in order to bring the creative works that I love to life.

#### What generally inspires your interest?

I believe in being true to yourself, and for society to be true to itself. For me, if there is a story that I connect with, I feel passionate about bringing that story to the world. If it is something I believe in, something I feel will make a difference in the world, or just simply make people laugh and have fun, I want everyone to share in it.

I have to come clean here, I am a workaholic. But I also have an intense love for life and want to live it to the fullest and experience everything. Shows that I host and produce, such as the Yols Discover series is something I create so that I can not only entertain others, but it also gives me an opportunity to do the things I love and want to explore. Because trust me, being a workaholic, I will never otherwise get an opportunity to do the things I love.

#### What is the most difficult part of your artistic process?

Well, Producing is really the non-creative part of the process, but it also doesn't mean that I don't WANT to be creative. This only applies to scripted content, but one thing that frustrates me is that I am not naturally creative. I have so many great ideas for films, but I do not have the ability to flesh out the details of the story. I am therefore always reliant on others to write the story for me, or for scripted stories to come to me.

Luckily on Streets Of Colour, I had an amazing writer and director, Ronnie S. Riskalla. It is actually his story, but I was there from the start to brainstorm with him and had the opportunity to be part of every draft. See, I cannot create something from scratch but I can add pieces and I can comment on what I like and don't like. He was generous enough to allow me to do that.



#### Do you try more to be original or to deliver to viewers what they want?

A bit of both. This is showBUSINESS. If you create content that people don't want to see, it is not good for business. So the more you can create what people want to see, the better. Saying that I am always trying to be original in the approach or to add something original. You still want to be distinguishable from other similar content. I will however never create something I don't like or don't agree with.

Occasionally there will be a project that, in reality, you are making for yourself and to scratch a tickle within yourself. For these projects, you don't want to consider what people want to see and whether it ends up being successful or not, is not the priority.

#### If you could tell your younger film making self anything, what would it be?

Study accounting. Don't even taste filmmaking, because it is like a beautiful addiction that you can never escape. No in all seriousness, I would say to not be scared of failing and rejection, the quicker you can become desensitised to that, the faster you will grow in the industry.

#### What was an early experience where you learned that filmmaking had power?

I can't recall a specific film, but I remember realising when I was very young that the seeds that get planted in films and TV Shows can make a big difference - in a good or bad way. Seeds that get planted while you are absorbing the content you love will grow much bigger than seeds planted when you are being preached to. People don't realise the power that content has.





**Can you tell us more about your latest project?**

I currently have a handful of projects in early and late development. But I also have *Streets of Colour* in post-production. This is the project that I am most proud of in my career. The story, the acting, the look, everything has exceeded my expectations. It is not done yet, and it was made on a small budget but it just comes to show that if the story, acting, and sound are good, you don't need fancy visual effects and crazy external factors to make it amazing.

It has a fantastic set of cast and crew and stars AACTA and LOGIE nominated actor Rahel Romahn. In my opinion, one of Australia's most talented gems. It was written and Directed by Ronnie S. Riskalla and we had an award-winning DOP, Zacharee-Peel McGregor. Depending on what happens in the cinema and distribution world, it should be released in 2021.

Here's the synopsis of *Streets of Colour*: "after being blamed for the death of his best friend in a racist street fight, Tez a 23-year-old drug dealer loses custody to a son he's never met. He must now find a way to get his life back on track and get his son before it's too late."

We also just started filming the third edition of *Yols Discover* which will come out on Amazon Prime (and maybe a few other platforms too).

**What is the best advice you have ever been given?**

"Live in the moment". I sometimes struggle to do this because I am always thinking about what is next and seldom reflect on what was achieved or what greatness I am experiencing at the moment. But the times that I do live in the moment, I feel great and peaceful and content. I am currently working on doing that more often.

**What advice would you give to a newbie filmmaker who wants to make it in the industry?**

Get experience and get credits, no matter what else you have to sacrifice to get it. That is how you learn and that is how you get your name out there. In the film industry, the first thing people want to know when considering someone is what credits they have and what the projects were (not where they or what they studied). Secondly, this industry is all about networking and who you know, so make yourself visible. If you are always at the front of people's minds, you'll be the first one they call for a job. But don't be annoying or harass people either.

**What are your future plans?**

I just want to keep creating bigger and better projects that get seen by more and more people. It's simple. If I can make a difference in the world through the stories I help tell, I'll die happy.



Photographed by Tony Paliser



# Hollywood's

## THE SECRET TO SUCCESS BEHIND RAGS TO RICHES STORIES

Let's face it; everyone can't help but dream to live the lives of famous Hollywood celebrities that are full of glamour and lavish, million-dollar real estates, luxurious red carpet fashions, fairly large bank account, sports car, caviar, among others. Indeed, who wouldn't want to have a lifestyle of the rich and famous right? I know I do! But, it's to be noted that some of them actually started out underprivileged and poor - even homeless. But then they rose to the occasion and were able to achieve financial security when they eventually made it big in their chosen craft after years of struggle.

The mega-rich Oprah Winfrey used to actually be supported by welfare at times when her mother cannot sustain their financial needs. Winfrey used this situation to venture into business and eventually making the leap from news anchor to talk-show host. In the long run of her flourishing career, she also went on to become the head of her own multi-platform media empire.

The A-list Tom Cruise had to move from one place to another because his struggling mother needed to find work. She even came to a point of juggling four jobs just to support all her children. During high school, Cruise fell in love with acting and became a member of the theatre department. He eventually dropped out of school to pursue his acting career full-time. This bold move eventually paid off as he is now one of the biggest movie stars on the planet.

Sarah Jessica Parker was the youngest child of a struggling family in Ohio. Her acting career started at the tender age of 11 when she landed her very first Broadway role. She then moved to Hollywood in 1981 and the rest was history.

Jim Carrey had his fair share of humble beginnings by working as a janitor and security guard to help his family pay the bills. His family eventually lost their home and was compelled to live in a van. He started his comedy career in Los Angeles and after years of struggle, he eventually made it big via the television show "In Living Colour."

Demil Moore was actually raised in a trailer park and she eventually ended up dropping out of Fairfax high school at 16. She then pursued a modeling career and moved to Europe where she met her husband Freddie Moore. A year later, her breakthrough finally happened when she landed a role in the soap opera General Hospital.

The mother of Sean Combs also known as P.Diddy worked several jobs in order to support her family after her husband was murdered. Combs has always been known to be ambitious and he eventually got his first break at Uptown Records when he was still a business student at Howard University. His big break came when he was able to sign Jodeci and Mary J. Blige and he was able to start his own record label "Bad Boy" records. Afterward, he basically won the lottery when he signed The Notorious B.I.G., Lil Kim and Mase. Biggie is known as one of the best rappers of all time, Lil Kim is believed to be one of the best female rappers of all time while Mase also had one of the best selling albums of all time even though he had a relatively short time in the music industry.

The Harry Potter author, J.K. Rowling, lived in UK government housing while writing the first installment of the said book. She initially had a rocky marriage that lasted a mere 13 months and she ended up living in a cramped apartment with her daughter. Jobless and penniless, Rowling fell into a deep depression and admits she even considered suicide. She was forced to rely on state benefits and spent much of her time writing "Harry Potter" in cafés with Jessica sleeping in the pram next to her. Unfortunately all the publishers she sent the manuscript to turned her down. Around 12 major publications actually rejected the Harry Potter script. She was devastated but not defeated. She kept approaching other publications and her efforts eventually paid off when Bloomsbury, a small publishing house gave "Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone" the green light in 1997. Things eventually changed when the book won prestigious awards such as the Nestle Smarties Book Prize and the British Book Award for Children's Book of the Year. Rowling has since become the UK's best-selling living author and one of the wealthiest women in the world.

With the inspiring stories mentioned above, it can be said that the secret to their success was their former living situation which they used as a leverage to work hard, persevere and be determined to thrive in their chosen field; and, coupled with luck, there is no way that one cannot succeed in this dog-eat-dog world!







# Movie Review:

## TENET

COVID-19 is still as inescapable and mortifying now as it was when we first heard of its lethal side effects and overwhelming quarantine procedures. It halted and crippled everyone's way of life and every facet of businesses, companies, and the future of those organizations. Movies have been one of the trickiest snags for the world to untangle with nearly every major movie company delaying their films release dates or even their films completion well into next year. Christopher Nolan bravely fought for cinemas to open up and claimed that his latest cerebral sci-fi blockbuster, "Tenet," was powerful enough to get scared viewers out of their homes and back into theaters and that it could save and stabilize the movie industry sufficiently.

And what was the end result? Well, much like "Tenet" itself, it's hard to explain. In a twilight world of international espionage, an unnamed CIA operative, known as The Protagonist (John David Washington), is recruited by a mysterious organization called Tenet to participate in a global assignment that unfolds beyond real-time. The mission: prevent Andrei Sator (Kenneth Branagh), a renegade Russian oligarch with precognition abilities, from starting World War III. The Protagonist will soon master the art of "time inversion" as a way of countering the threat that is to come by turning back and accelerating forward time itself to see what has to be done and how to do it before it's too late.

Directors are known for having trademark details; little things they do in each of their films that act as their signatures or using the same actors over and over again. Christopher Nolan is known to be a talented filmmaker (The Dark Knight Trilogy) but while many of his films exceed technical limitations and scope, he's also known for duplicating a most unfortunate formula: grand-scale films with poor representation of women, paper-thin characters and zero personality or humor to speak of and these flaws are painfully obvious in every film he's done: from "The Prestige," "Interstellar," to even his biggest cinematic success story, "Inception." With the implied promise of "Tenet" being the one film to bring people back into theaters, it's frustratingly disappointing to see the film suffer from all Nolan's aforementioned flaws and then some. "Tenet" is Nolan at his worst when he thinks he is being at his best.

Time travel films or films having anything to do with time travel in some capacity are often called confusing and hard to follow. "Tenet" is no different. This concept of time inversion makes time manipulation infinitely more confusing than it already was. Much like "Inception," 98% of "Tenet's" dialog serves to explain all the rules and mechanics of this new system, only this time it fails to clarify anything at every possible moment. The dialog and time mechanics are as lifeless and sterile as the hollowed husks that spout the dribble so commonly; they assume like everyone already knows what they're saying or that everyone talks this way in real life everyday situations. I barely had any idea what was happening and worst of all, I didn't care if I did understand because I didn't care about anyone or anything in this film.

The Protagonist feels as non-descriptive and generic as his pretentious name. We never get any sense or reason why he does what he does, who he is, or how he even counts as an actual person. The film nearly clocks in at 3 hours and everyone is devoid of a recognizable personality or sense of likability. It's all spent explaining how time inversion works and you STILL don't ever get a solid grip on the concept anyway. Sure, it allows for some inventive looking action sequences and unique combat maneuvers but even those become snore inducing once you realize there's still another 45 minutes left to trudge through. There's not a speck of soul in this film, not an ounce of humanity or sanity that feels real...that is until we get to the sole piece of gold in this mountain of dirt and grime: Kenneth Branagh.

Branagh is a rage binging monster of a person and our primary villain for this film and he, thankfully, owns this role with flawless perfection. For a violence fueled mad man, he's the only person in this film who talks like a normal person and feels like a believable human being. He dominates every scene he's in and energizes the script's lifeless dialog to the point you feel like he doesn't belong here, that he came from and needs to go back to a much better film. Overall, "Tenet" failed to save the movie industry the same way Branagh failed to carry this movie on his own (even though he wasn't supposed to). Outside of Branagh's stellar performance and a few flashy neat sequences, "Tenet" is a stiff, drifting piece of plywood and every scripted page and lifeless character is dragging it deeper and deeper down into the water where it needs to stay and sink so it can never bore or confuse another person ever again.

Rating 1/5 Stars



# Movie Review:

## THE DEVIL ALL THE TIME

Netflix movies have something of a bad rap. While their TV shows are praised and frequently top people's best TV series lists each year, their movies seemed to be hit or miss with stellar casts and viral marketing failing to make up for the poor and often forgettable quality of Netflix's original films. Some have said in today's pandemic panic-induced new world that streaming original films and films on video on demand are the way of the future beyond cinema chains and drive-in theater experiences. As someone who adores going to the movies and watching good movies, I truly hope streaming does not become the de-facto format of watching movies and I hope films like "The Devil all the time" do NOT become an indication of what all good movies will be like.

The film is an erratically structured narrative; twisting the lives of multiple characters from different families, couples, groups, and points in time between the end of World War 2 and the 1960s; set primarily in rural southern Ohio and West Virginia. There's Willard Russell (Bill Skarsgård), a tormented veteran of the carnage in the South Pacific, there's Carl and Sandy Henderson (Jason Clarke and Riley Keough), a husband-and-wife team of serial killers, there's the spider-handling preacher Roy (Harry Melling) and his guitar-playing sidekick, Theodore (Pokey LaFarge), running from the law. And there's also Arvin (Tom Holland), son of Willard who intersects several of these people and others as he struggles to deal with the violent, unstable, and suffocating twists and turns of life.

Trying to write down the details of this film's plot proves just as challenging and problematic as it is verbally speaking it to another person. The film supposedly plays out as someone telling you a story (complete with narration from the author of the book this film is adapted from) but much like the characters, no part of the story being told makes much sense and instead, feels like an exhausting amount of brutality and misguided religious symbolism mixed up together in a heaping helping of ugliness that can't stick a single thing together sensibly throughout its entire 2 and a half hour running time. "The Devil all the time" jumps around its timelines and events with no heads up or explanation, muddling the timeline and leaping through sections of people's lives with little to no care or concern for the development of its cast.

The film basically plays out like this: we meet someone, something horrific happens, it's related to God somehow, then ANOTHER horrific thing happens, more cryptic religious noise; then we meet someone new, rinse, wash and repeat. Every perception and use of God or religion spearheads someone doing something insanely sick and twisted and it gets more messed up; escalating the depravity or delusion with no sense or believability whatsoever. Like Roy for example he's so jacked up on God, he lets spiders bite his face in Church, then gets an infection that somehow makes him crazy, then he takes his wife out and kills her and believes he can resurrect her, only to run into serial killers who randomly want people to take photos with them before killing them, make sense? Don't worry; it's not going to anytime soon!

That's the real tragedy here though, nothing makes sense. Brutality and twisted mentalities populate nearly every character's mindset and the reason each time is the same: God made me do it. The tragedy hits especially hard because this film is beautifully shot and framed like a true work of art. It's gorgeous to look at and it makes the most vacant fields of Southern land look 10 times more extravagant. Speaking of extravagant, this cast is clearly doing their best to work with the material and they are serving commendable performances; despite this story's warped, wacked out narrative failing to make sense of its own purpose or point.

With the likes of Tom Holland, Jason Clarke, Sebastian Stan, Bill Skarsgård and Robert Pattinson, "The Devil all the time" should have been much more than what it actually is and that is a mangled, muddled, dark soaked story that drowns itself in its own misery that spreads to viewers like sickness with little hope, rhyme, reason or even common sense to balance it all out. "The Devil all the time" takes too long to tell a story and even longer to figure out when or what story it's trying to tell. This film is difficult to watch and stomach outside of its cast and cinematography, but neither one is strong enough to make any sense of its own messy structure, purpose, or why I should endure another minute of this film ever again.

**Rating 1/5 Stars**



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# Movie Review:

## BILL & TED: FACE THE MUSIC

Like many beloved film series, there are often talks of sequels and continuations that never get off the ground; even to films that came out over 30 years ago. "Bill and Ted" have been around since the late '80s and talks of a third one have been circulating since "Bill and Ted's Bogus Journey" came out in 1991. But due to an inability to nail down the right script and Keanu Reeves skyrocketing popularity and busy schedule, it seemed like a third entry would never take off. Imagine everyone's surprise that in a world cornered off by a deadly virus, the movie finally got made and ultimately ended up being the movie the world needs now more than ever. It may sound odd but "Bill and Ted: Face the music" is exactly the pick me up we needed.

Despite being told during their time-traveling adventures that their music would one day unite and save the world, Bill and Ted (Alex Frost and Keanu Reeves) have yet to write the song that would fulfill their prophesized destiny and it's weighing heavily on them and on their marriages. When Kelly (Kristen Schaal), the daughter of their old friend Rufus (the late great George Carlin) visits Bill and Ted, she tells them they have to create the ultimate song tonight or all of reality will be destroyed. Bill and Ted head into the future to see if their future selves wrote the song they can bring back to the present. Meanwhile, the daughters of Bill and Ted, Billie and Thea (Brigitte Lundy-Paine and Samara Weaving) wish to help their fathers and venture off on their own time-traveling journey; collecting famous musicians throughout history to aid in writing the song that will harmonize the world.

To be perfectly honest, I was never a big "Bill and Ted" fan when they first came out. I loved the sequel more than I did the first film and even then, this wasn't a series I found myself being deeply drawn towards. "Face the music" is not just a cheaply crapped out sequel from a franchise past its time, no, this film is a clear love letter and a celebration of everything the actors, characters, writers, and fans adore about the series and best of all, it presents everything with universal appeal. If you're a die-hard fan or a casual fan, this film is loaded with great callbacks, nods to the previous films, and the majority of the original cast from the past 2 films and it's a true delight to see. But even if you're new to the series or only decide to watch just this film, the humor works in a wonderfully weird way that you can still enjoy it without knowing its history.

Reeves and Frost settle back into their roles with absolutely no difficulty, it's like putting on an old pair of shoes and remembering everything you loved about them at that moment. They truly feel like the Bill and Ted fans knew all grown up and struggling to adapt. As goofy as they can be and these movies are, the themes of failing to live up to expectations, not accepting change; they're all very relatable themes that every generation can understand and I love that universal connection. One of the weirder aspects of this film (which is saying something in a film series about a time-traveling phone booth) is watching Reeves and Frost create newer and more unusual variations of their characters through the future timelines they visit. Most of their humor relies on this gimmick and while it can be hilarious at times, other times it feels overplayed.

But fortunately, there is so much more than just our titular heroes: their daughters Billie and Thea are the true secret stars and dual beating hearts of this film. They're adorable, funny, have immaculate chemistry together, and prove to be more than just goofy female variants of our main band boys. It's a true delight seeing William Sadler back as Death and new inclusions like Dennis the robot are worth the price of admission alone. There's just a consistent sense of fun with this film and it's infectious, you can feel it in the writing, the performances, and the humor and this is exactly the kind of palate cleanser we need in a year as disastrous and depressing as 2020. Never has there ever been a more relevant time for the words "be excellent to each other" than right here, right now.

Overall, "Bill and Ted: Face the Music" is just a blast from the past (literally and figuratively). It captures the heart and hilarity of the series and updates it for today's era at a time when this kind of message and this kind of movie is needed most. "Face the music" delights fans both new and old with a message and charm to lift our spirits and remind us there are still fun and good times ahead and that it is okay to just have fun with the world again.

**Rating 3/5 Stars**



# Movie Review:

## UNHINGED

This film, "Unhinged," was actually the first movie I got to see in theaters when they first opened up, this is largely due to the fact every money-grubbing, penny-pinching studio pulled out all of their tent pole films or shoved them onto streaming services and making things even harder for struggling theaters to maintain business. I heard about this movie before it came out and didn't think much of it but when I saw my theaters were back open and putting up bare-bones offerings thanks to stingy studios cowardly decisions to hold back their main attractions, I decided to see "Unhinged" in theaters became more of a need than a want and in that regard, I'm thankful for that motivation.

Shining a bloody light on the dangers of something very common we all experience at one point: road rage, "Unhinged" follows Rachel (Caren Pistorius) driving her son Kyle (Gabriel Bateman) to school before class starts and she loses her job. At an intersection, she gets a bit too confrontational with a man (Russell Crowe) and refuses to apologize for the misunderstanding. The man informs her she doesn't know what it means to have a bad day and sets out to show her exactly what he means by chasing her and tormenting her; killing and attacking anyone who tries to help her. Now Rachel has to stay one step ahead of this mad man and find help before everyone she cares for ends up in the murderous hands of this crazed lunatic behind the wheel.

The plot of "Unhinged" is very simple and straightforward: a crazy guy in a car goes nuts trying to kill a person because they happened to piss off the wrong lunatic; reminiscent of "Duel" or the beginning of "Jeepers Creepers." Using something very common as road rage is actually the perfect backdrop for the year 2020 as the film's painfully effective opening montage about rage, violence and explosive reactions to the slightest bit of negative stimuli sounds all too familiar to anyone who's watched the news this year. The first 5 minutes gives you a crystal clear understanding of what kind of man Crowe's character is. It's graphic, shocking, horrific, and does a masterful job of telling you what kind of nightmare ride you're about to embark on. That sense of brutal reality hits home especially hard and perfectly sets up the tone of the film.

Once Rachel crosses paths with the man, things spiral into showdown "Breakdown" vibes very quickly and the tension continues to escalate rapidly. Before you know it, mind games are being played, people are being butchered in broad daylight and that nail-biting tension never lets up until the credits roll. The film never presents Crowe as anything other than a brute, a fragile monster waiting to unload savagery at the smallest annoyance that inconveniences his already deeply troubled life. He's a scene-stealer and an effective big bad that oozes with every bit of evil and malice you'd expect from a person like him. Watching Russell Crowe go from zero to psycho in 3 seconds flat, it makes for some impressive and genuinely alarming sequences, especially involving one brutally horrific scene at a coffee diner.

Pistorius is acceptable as a lead, no standout moments but not hollow enough to go unnoticed. She gets most of the attention drawn to her by making stupid, horror movie cliché mistakes when dealing with the big bad. The film regrettably sometimes relies on convenient developments or people standing by; doing nothing (or doing stupid things themselves) to allow for things to keep escalating the tension and raising the stakes. It doesn't happen a lot but when it does it does take you out of the movie for a bit as this is a very reality-based and set story with little Hollywood flare needed. Thankfully, the film leans heavily into its sense of brutality and violence without fail. There is no restraint; showing vividly and clearly how ugly people can be when they go full beast mode.

Overall, "Unhinged" doesn't break any new ground but it's a wild, shock filled ride that does everything it's trying to do well and rarely disappoints. Crowe is at the top of his grizzly game and I enjoyed watching and learning more about his character as things went on. While the lead was passable at best and the script relied on plot clichés and stupid blunders one time too many, for the most part, the film works and stacks itself as a solid thriller worthy of your time and money.

**Rating 4/5 Stars**





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