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ISSUE 13 | 2018

WINGMAN

MAGAZINE



TECHIE TALENTS!

MORE STARS!

SUGAR RAY LEONARD ★ BEBE NEUWIRTH
MICHAEL YO

PATTI MURIN ★ EDDIE BRAUN

ROSS BUTLER ★ ZURIN VILLANUEVA

Hollywood Royalty MAX MADSEN,
AVA SAMBORA LOCKLEAR, & WESTON COPPOLA!

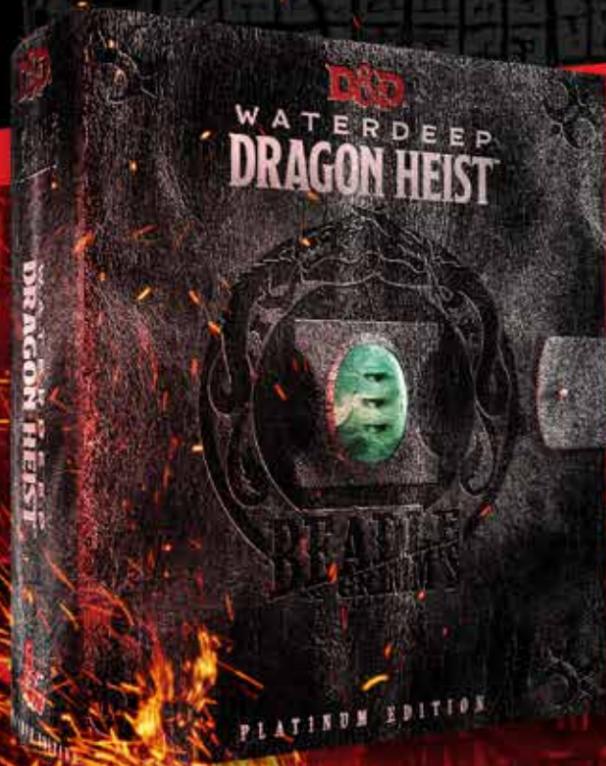
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GAMING GODS
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+

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EDITOR'S NOTE

On



November 12th, fans around the world lost a man that meant so much to not only their childhoods, but also their adulthoods. When Stan Lee passed away, not only did the comic book fans lose the man that created so many of the characters that were loved and cherished, but they also lost the man that made ways for these now adults to bond with their friends, their brothers, and their children. Whether it was Spider-Man, Iron Man, Captain America or any of the *thousands* of beloved figures, everyone could relate to one of the heroes, and even sometimes one of the villains in one way or another.

Stan Lee grew up in New York City, and with a lot of the characters that he created located around the city that never sleeps, it made sense that he told his stories based around the locales that he knew so well. Big Apple residents such as Spider-Man, Daredevil, and Luke Cage all have buildings, stores and restaurants in their world that the great storyteller recognized or visited. Writers and artists will write or draw things that they know, and no one did it better than Stan Lee.

The 95 year-old Lee frequently would meet fans at the comic conventions that celebrated his creations, and he would answer them and tell stories of how he came up with his books. Fans of all ages would line up for hours and hours just to meet the man that brought them so much joy over the years, and made sure to get an autograph on their favorite issue of their favorite character. The holy grails of the comic book world would be *Amazing Fantasy #15*, the first appearance of Spider-Man and *Captain America Comics #1*. And, if a collector had the signature of their creator on them, it would be even better.

There will never be another Stan Lee in this world and any comic book enthusiast, reader or film watcher knows just how important he was to their lives. Whether it was X-Men, Fantastic Four, or Avengers, there wasn't one person that was left behind and didn't read something that they would love. With the passing of Lee, the world will never be the same, and his legacy will live on for many generations and hopefully his books will do the same. In the words of Stan Lee; "*Face Front, True Believers!*" Take on the world and do good, that is what Stan the Man would want from all of his true believers and fans alike. Excelsior!

SINCERELY,
MICHAEL J. MCCARTHY

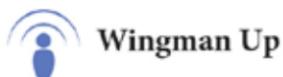
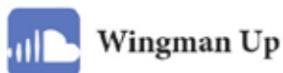
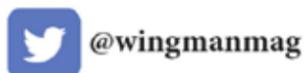
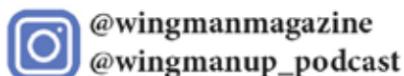
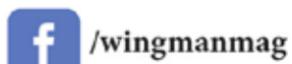
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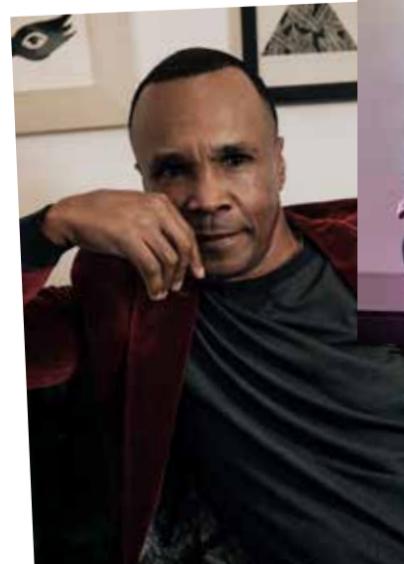
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For Fashion Credits, See Story On Page 32



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Bebe Neuwirth pictured with photographer Josh Lehrer





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To update your kicks, think about the past this new year in order to stay on trend. Gola was associated with some of the biggest names in football in '60s and '70s including LiverpoolFC and Manchester United. Gola Equipe Suede is a terrace influenced trainer style, which features an all white cup sole, with an all suede wingflash and heel return.

Gola; Gold; Men's Equipe Suede Trainer, \$75, www.golausa.com



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UGG; Gold; Zetik Boot; \$115, www.UGG.com

For all the wet days when your other boots just don't cut it, the Zetik keeps feet warm and dry. With waterproof leather, sealed seams, and vulcanized rubber, it's perfect for stepping in puddles or sloshing through storms. Plus the duck boot style lends a classic feel to jeans and a rain jacket.

JUST CAUSE 4



When video games are trying to become more serious in some genres, the Just Cause series sticks to its routes of: if you see it, blow it to hell! The return of Rico Rodriguez has been long awaited and this time armed with a missile firing jetpack, Rico will face some serious adversaries and not just enemies, but the weather. This generation of "Just Cause" will bring in different biomes to the world and in each biome there will be different weather anomalies that you will have to deal with, including an enormous tornado. Out December 4th, check it out and blow some stuff up!

KINGDOM HEARTS III



One of the most anticipated and talked about games over the past decade is the Disney and Japanese RPG mix of "Kingdom Hearts 3." Sora, Goofy and Donald are back along with so many other Disney characters that are loved by so many. With new worlds including "Toy Story," "Big Hero 6," and "Monsters. Inc," to name just a few, gamers are in for a big treat. February 22nd cannot come fast enough for gamers!

LET THE GAMES BEGIN

Get Ready To Lose Many Hours
To These Anxiously Anticipated
Hot New Games

CALL OF DUTY BLACK OPS 4



Are you tired of the same old single player campaign of every first person shooter and just want to get right into the multiplayer? Well now is that time. This is the first "Call of Duty" to never have a single campaign since the developers of this year's game "Treyarch" wanted to concentrate more on the multiplayer and the now extremely popular Battle Royale mode, "Blackout!" Pick this up if you just love some good old fashioned multiplayer.

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V

ery few names make people stand at attention the way Sugar Ray Leonard does. A man named after another icon, Ray Charles, the boxing champion not only matched his namesakes fame and reverence, but perhaps even superseded him- and Leonard's meeting the legendary musician at one of the biggest fights of his career is only more of a testament of his great stature. The Rocky Mount native had one of the most incredible careers in history, possessing a mind-blowing record of 36 wins, 3 loses and 1 draw- not to mention 25 knockouts and a record of 10-2-1 in title fights. In other words, it's easy to say that the swift-punching superstar is one of the greatest who ever lived.

Along with other champions Roberto Duran, Marvin Hagler and Tommy Hearn, Leonard was part of the elite "Fabulous Four," an esteemed group of bad-asses that consistently conquered in the ring. All four of these men went to battle in the squared circle and they came out swinging for the fences. Charismatic and magnetic, Leonard made his presence known when going against these heavy hitters, jabbing his way to victory more times than not, and while he would eventually become friends with these men after their retirements from the sport, he still made them well aware that he was only there to take care of business. And while Hearn continues to bring up the idea of possibly getting back into the ring together, the man known as "Sugar" to his fans is constantly there to tell his long time opponent and friend to check his license and remember their age.

Not that one look at the lean athletic superstar would ever give it away. In better shape now than most sports figures could ever dream of, Leonard *still* manages to give fans everywhere someone to admire and look up to- particularly since recently he has taken on motivating others through speech. A long way from where he started, the boxing bad-ass was actually known for being a quiet kid, always keeping to himself as he got lost in the world of comic books and superheroes- surprised to hear that comic conventions are not only still a thing, but also eager to check one out. And while burying himself in the world of *Batman* and *Superman* may have kept him out of trouble, knowing when to stand up for himself made him one of the *real* heroes of the world (and, let's be real, it would be more than great to see him take on a part in the DC or Marvel universes).

And while having superpowers might sound awesome, Leonard's own accomplishments actually seem far more impressive than our favorite comic heroes. Not only is the tremendous champion one of the most recognized people on the planet, but, he also has a great heart, a humble and down to earth attitude, and he is constantly trying to do good for others and inspire fans to be the best version of themselves- and, really, what could be more super than that? Using his celebrity status to raise awareness for Juvenile Diabetes Research, the inspirational star has started the Sugar Ray Leonard Foundation with his wife Bernadette- a great charity that is making tremendous waves in an extremely important corner of the world of healthcare. And never wanting to forget about the adults that suffer from diabetes, Leonard also helps spread the word regarding the disease, trying his hardest to make sure it is eradicated from existence- no matter what age of the infected.

And not only is he the king of the ring, but, he is also a master Olympian and Gold Medal winner. For any amateur athlete, the ultimate victory is winning an Olympic Gold Medal, so, it comes as no surprise that things were no different for the young pugilist. Having won with Team USA in the 1976 Montreal Olympics, everything was looking up for Leonard. That was until his father became very ill and he needed to make money for his family. A dutiful son, the admirable superstar did what any athlete that needs to make money would do; he turned pro and didn't think twice about it. During his career, Leonard was one of the first boxers to ever win a hundred million dollars for a cumulative career winnings and in the world of any sport, that is an incredible feat.

Not one to stop fighting, join Sugar Ray Leonard in his battle against diabetes and support the cause. But for now, check out what else he had to say in the following interview!

WINGMAN: You were named after one of the all time great musicians of our time; Ray Charles. How aware were you of his talent and of his celebrity status, and did you ever think that you would be just as big as him?

SUGAR RAY LEONARD: [Chuckles] I didn't really know who he was until I was in my teens. I had heard his name around the house, and then when I found out he was a singer, and I always thought "What's the connection?" But I will tell you what; it was awesome. I got a chance to meet Ray Charles, and in all places to meet him, it was in the ring for the "No Mas Fight." I mean of all places to meet Ray Charles, my namesake, it was in the ring during one of the biggest fights of my career.

WINGMAN: From what I've read, you were a comic book reader as a kid, and not a big talker. Did that change when you grew up? Were you a smack-talker, or were you the silent assassin? And, are you still a fan of comic books or the movies?

LEONARD: I was quiet and kind of reserved, almost introverted, and never talked smack. The only time I would ever talk smack is when they would insult me or my family, then I would say something. It is just not my personality. As for the comic books, I loved comic books and superheroes. Do they sell comic books anymore? [Laughs] I was always into things that were animated, not real, and superhuman- I was always fascinated by that.

WINGMAN: What meant more to you; winning a gold medal in the 1976 Olympics in Mon-

treal, or winning any of your world titles?

LEONARD: I am asked that question a lot, but, they are so different because the Olympic gold medal- that is the prized possession of any amateur athlete. That is the ultimate! You can say you are the world champion, but very few can say that they are a gold medal winner. Being a champion meant that you would make more money, and the reason I turned pro was because I wanted to help my dad and my mom, because my dad was very sick. When I got out of the Olympics, my dad went into a coma and we had no money and pops was about to leave us back then. I asked my mentor how I could make money, and he said to turn pro, and I did it without a second thought.

"I was quiet and kind of reserved, almost introverted, and never talked smack."

WINGMAN: Do you have a trophy room to display all of your accomplishments, or are they in boxes?

LEONARD: It's so ironic that you asked me that, because in a week or so I am heading to my mother's house in South Carolina

to get my trophies that are there. But the way they packed these trophies, we are talking thirty years ago, they packed them in a box, of all places! [Laughs] So I have a lot of trophies that I have to mend back together. I have no idea what I am going to find when I open that box.

WINGMAN: You were part of the "Fabulous Four" of boxers in the 80's. With all of you being so competitive with each other, were you friends as well at the time, or are you at all now?

LEONARD: It's interesting because I am friends with Tommy Hearns, and we will call each other periodically. He will call up and say "Ray, there aren't a lot of fighters out there that are household names, and that you and I should have one more fight." I will say "Have you looked at your driver's license recently? How old are you?" The thing that bothers me the most is that he is serious! He sees these guys like Mayweather fighting these other guys, and thinks that we can do it too. No one- and I mean no one- is going to hit me in the face again.

WINGMAN: How much of an influence did Muhammad Ali have over you and your career?

LEONARD: He was my idol, naturally. I idolized Joe Frazier first, but then I saw Muhammad, and he was so animated and doing his thing and I wanted to be like him too. There were so many great fighters ahead of us that passed the torch and told our generation that now it's our turn.

WINGMAN: What are your thoughts of MMA fighters and Boxers crossing over into

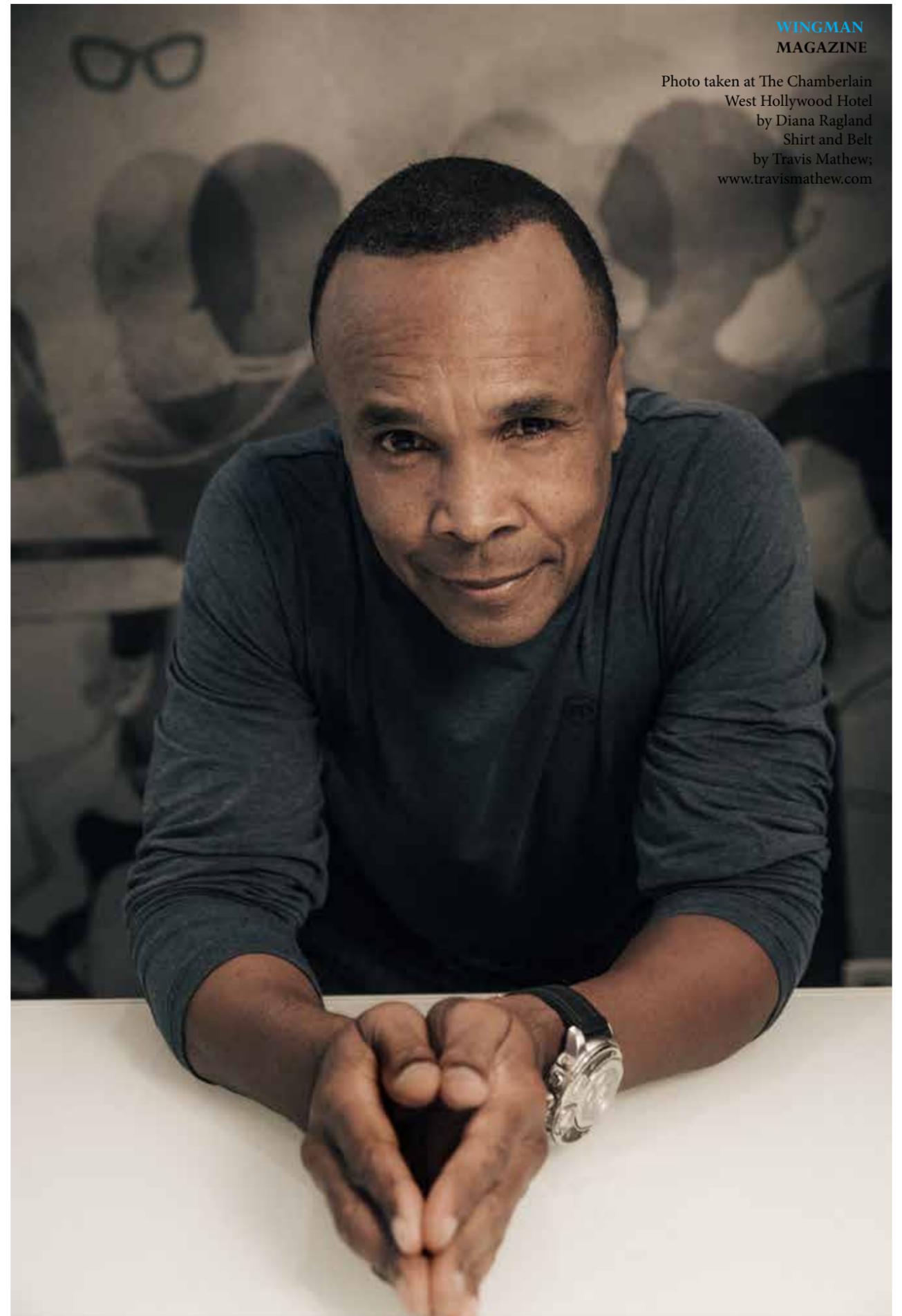


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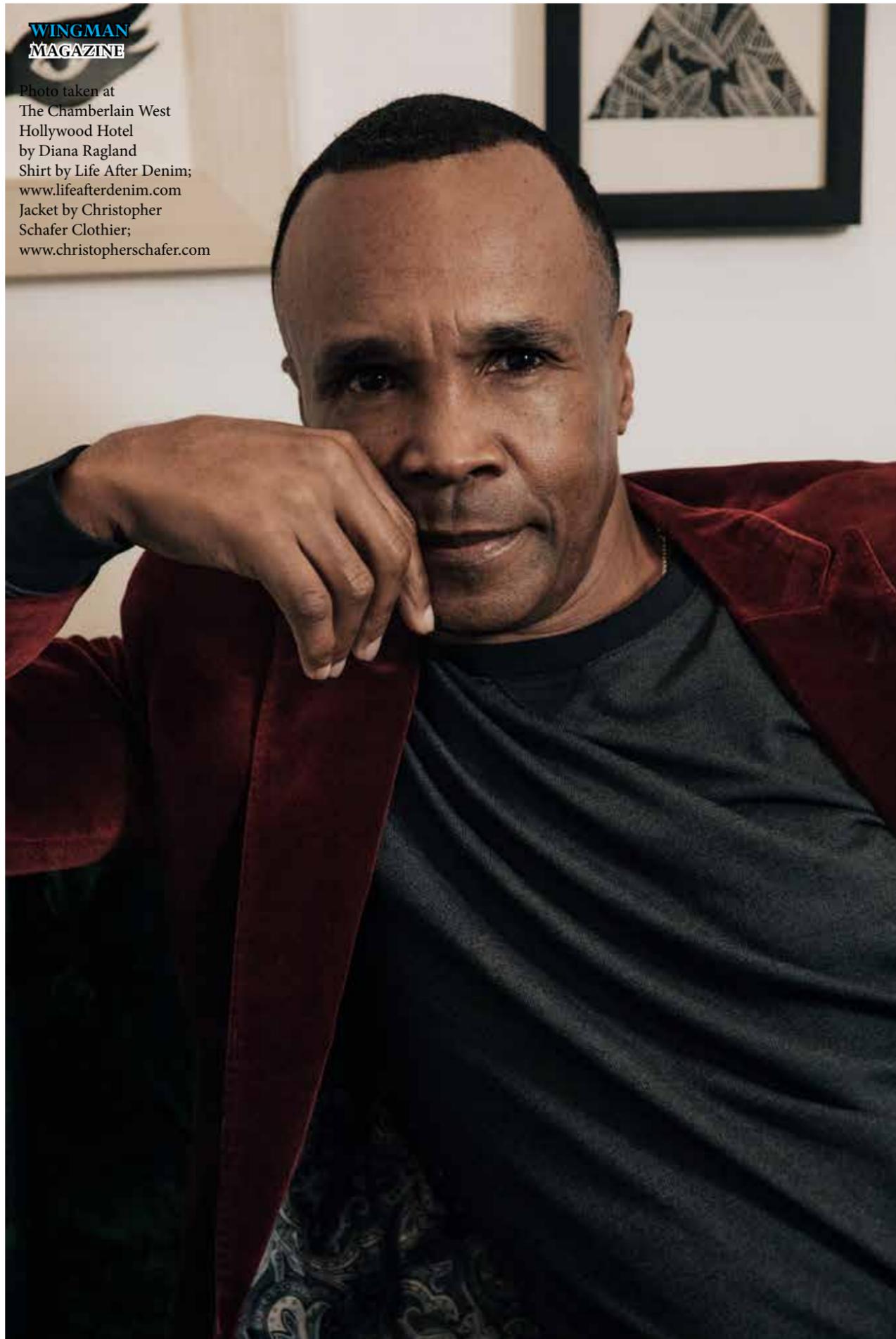
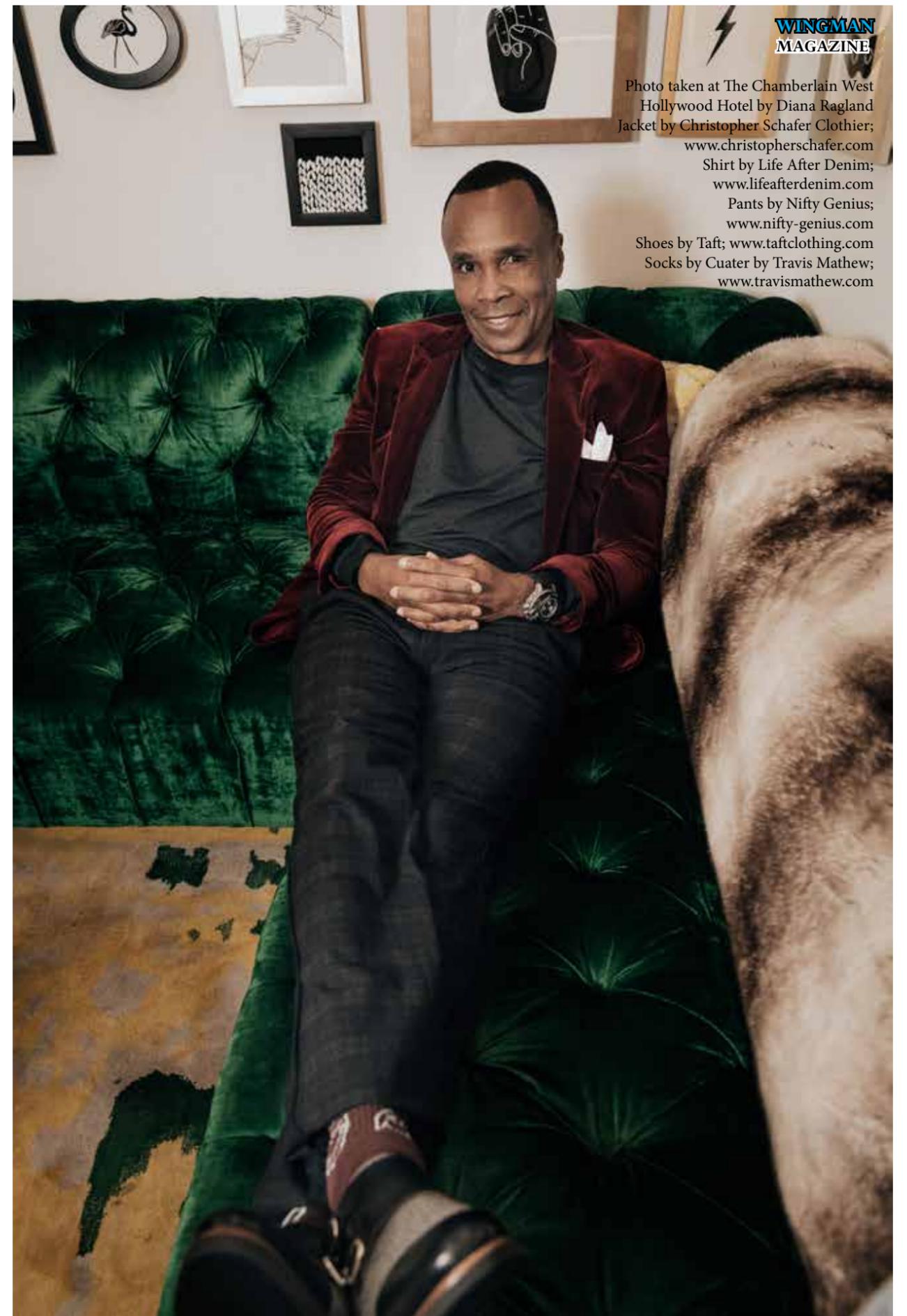


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the other sports like the Mayweather/ McGregor fight?

LEONARD: From a real boxing fan or MMA fan, the Mayweather fight was just a spectacle- just like when Muhammad Ali fought the wrestler Antonio Inoki. I remember thinking how cool it was. It depends on who the star of that industry, whether it's boxing or MMA, and those were the two guys that made it possible; Floyd Mayweather and Conor McGregor. They will say that no one will show up? Well, the fighters made out quite well [laughs.] For a fight like that, they are two different sports that require two different parts of your body between heart and mind, and for McGregor to fight one of the best fighters in the world for his first fight. I would say that he's in another tax bracket after that fight.

WINGMAN: Talk a little bit about your dedication to Juvenile Diabetes Research. That is such a great cause, and needs more notoriety.

LEONARD: My wife and I started the Sugar Ray Leonard Foundation nine years ago, reason being I always want to reciprocate and give back. My dad had diabetes and some of my friends and their kids had diabetes, so I wanted to start something to give back. We partnered up with Children's Hospital. It's all these things and I want to help others, especially kids. This thing is like my baby. I hope to be around when we eradicate diabetes.

WINGMAN: You were the fight advisor for one of my favorite movies, "Real Steel." Do you think it's ever going to get to that point in our lives where that could happen?

LEONARD: [Laughs hard] We are laughing because it is a pos-

sibility. Look at the technology that we have right now. People are talking about instead of taking a flight to Chicago, they will take a flight to the moon! Things will come to fruition. These types of fights are right around the corner, if not closer. I believe these things will happen. My friends will laugh at me now because I do think that it's going to eventually happen.

And while the future is still unknown, one thing remains certain; Leonard's name will last the test of time as one of the greatest who ever lived. □

LIGHTNING ROUND!

- 1. Hardest hitting opponent?**
Tommy Hearns
- 2. Favorite show to be on: "Hell's Kitchen," "Dancing with the Stars" or "Keeping up with the Kardashians"?**
Dancing with the Stars, although my pants were tight.
- 3. Favorite opponent: Roberto Durán or Marvin Hagler?**
Roberto Duran, because at first I didn't like him, but now we are friends.
- 4. Harder to do: dance or box?**
Oh come on, definitely box.
- 5. What kind of music would get you pumped for a fight?**
Any R&B. "I Wanna Rock with you," by Michael Jackson
- 6. What was your regular post-win meal?**
A cheeseburger and French fries. When I first met my wife, Bernadette, she said she couldn't wait to hear my diet, but, then she saw me eating fried chicken, corn on the cob, and soup. I don't have a diet, I just do things in moderation.
- 7. Which of your very few losses hurt the most?**
Hell, they all hurt! But, it was Hector Camacho, I shouldn't have been out there or anywhere near that fight.

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Succinctly put, one of TV's greatest classics; *"Cheers,"* has it right when its theme song states; *"Sometimes you want to go where everybody knows your name,"* and luckily for iconic *"Cheers"* actress, Bebe Neuwirth, finding that kind of place is never a problem. A household name in show business, the riveting performer's moniker is synonymous with Hollywood, Broadway, her home state of New Jersey, famed *"Cheers"* city; Boston, and of course, *"Chicago,"* a play in which she has come back repeatedly and taken on *three* of the lead roles- the first actor ever to do so.

But, when it comes to unique accomplishments, the impressive star always manages to stand out from the crowd. A two time Emmy winner *and* two time Tony winner, Neuwirth has conquered both stage and screen repeatedly, mastering everything from drama, to comedy, to song and dance- so much so that she is one of the rare talents out there that manages to avoid being pigeonholed by one of these gifts, as she remains equally recognized, revered, and celebrated for all of them, marking her as one of the most unparalleled triple-threats in history.

And while both *"Cheers"* and *"Chicago"* endure as two of Neuwirth's most instantly recognizable claims to fame, fans will also be quick to remember some of the other beloved work she has done as well. On stage, some of the plays the versatile artist has helped bring to life are *"Damn Yankees," "Funny Girl," "The Addams Family,"* (where she was *perfectly* cast as Morticia,) and *"Sweet Charity,"*- for which she won her first Tony. Then, on television, she can also be known for hits like *"Blue Bloods,"* and *"Madam Secretary,"* not to mention the fact that not only is she the only actor to ever come back and take on three *different* roles in one production, but, she is also one of the few stars who has reprised multiple characters on different shows, such as Lilith in *"Cheers," "Frasier,"* and *"Wings,"* A.D.A Tracey Kibre in the *"Law & Order"* franchise, and Judge Claudia Friend in *"The Good Wife"* and *"The Good Fight."* And while she has been applauded as a valuable staple of both Broadway and television, the unstoppable actress has also dominated film as well, turning in just as many classics for that medium with hits like *"Jumanji," "Summer Of Sam,"* and *"The Faculty."* Not to mention that she starred in the *only* pilot to be turned into a short film that went on to win an Academy Award with *"Dear Diary."* Again, when it comes to successes, Neuwirth remains in a league of her own.

So, what is it about the captivating actress that makes her so compelling? Beyond the immense talent that Neuwirth delivers with every performance, she also brings along a deep understanding of the role and the material, constantly creatively collaborating to make the work better. A true pro in every sense, she does her actor's homework through and through and puts careful thought into what she is doing- even on our photo shoot. When photographer Josh Lehrer set the scene for her, describing his vision of an introspective woman alone at a table with a glass of wine, the intuitive artist quickly adapted to the vision as if it were a role- expertly taking the wine glass and leaving a lipstick stain on it; the kind of actor's choice that only the real deal would ever think up. When it comes to creative input, the former *"Cheers"* star is any director's dream; the best of the best as she truly thinks about her motivation, crafting characters that constantly cough up both rich subtext and riveting inner-monologue along with her fantastically delivered lines. When Neuwirth takes on a role, the person she is playing is nuanced and three-dimensional, and never just one thing.

In fact, it was that distinguished complexity that made Lilith the fascinating character that she was; a buttoned-up, neurotic stuffed shirt on the surface, a sharp-tongued and sarcastically slaying siren the next minute, and an irresistible vixen underneath it all, which, in truth, couldn't be disguised no matter what outfit they put her in. Possessing a magnetic sex appeal, an impossibly gorgeous face with the finest of features, and a body that simply doesn't quit- even to this day, Neuwirth, herself, *is* irresistible. On set, the beauty's twinkling dark eyes lit up when talking about *"House Of Cards,"* quick to praise actress Robin Wright for her impeccable talent, and going on to applaud her disinterest with her own ravishing beauty, and really, the very same can be said for the New Jersey native. Never afraid of characters like Lilith that required her to tone down or cover up her natural God-given beauty, Neuwirth constantly remains committed to the character, the comedy, the song, or whatever else the material requires- which always makes those moments where she *does* show off how stunning she is have such an impact, such as taking down her hair as Lilith, transitioning from frumpy principal to sultry alien in *"The Faculty,"* or stripping down in *"The Associate,"* - she's so good at what she does that she can actually get the audience to forget her appearance, only leaving them in complete and utter awe when she does in fact remind them.

An utter gift to entertainment, the captivating star is not only at the top of her game with everything from singing, to dancing, to acting, but, she also regards *"The Faculty"* as her favorite on-screen experience, delighted to

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work with Robert Rodriguez and run through the halls with greats like Robert Patrick- another *WINGMAN* icon we adore. That said, considering the exceptionally toned actress is in better shape than most of Hollywood's leading men, it would be great to see her return to the genre and kick some ass alongside Patrick in some kind of television reboot of the cult film (which he said he would be totally down to do.) And with Jamie Lee Curtis just proving that women are more than capable of turning genre work into blockbusters- regardless of how old they are, Hollywood should take note and immediately rush to cast the supremely buff and bad-ass Neuwirth in a role. And, if we can't get her quickly starring in a sci-fi project, let's get her back up on stage, or, rebooting "*Frasier*" alongside the extraordinary Kelsey Grammer, because if anything is certain; *anything* with Bebe Neuwirth will never disappoint. Read on below to see what she has to say!

WINGMAN: You're one of very few actors who easily transition back and forth between stage and screen- and you're truly iconic in both mediums. You always see television and film as a means to an end when it came to getting roles on Broadway, right?

BEBE NEUWIRTH: I wouldn't put it that way, no. I always only wanted to dance on the stage, and hopefully do it on Broadway. After doing a few Broadway shows, I got a small part on "*Cheers*." When they asked me to come play that role again on a more permanent basis, I was happy to do so for two reasons - it was a fantastic part on a fantastic show with fantastic writing, and - there was a chance it could lead to more work in more shows.

WINGMAN: Two people who advised you on this transition were the legendary Bob Fosse and Gwen Verdon. They are now making a television show about that dynamic duo. What would you hope that show really captures and includes?

NEUWIRTH: Bob Fosse and Gwen Verdon were geniuses, and extremely complicated, fascinating artists. My hope, and my belief, is that the television film about their relationship is going to respectfully capture the essence of who they were.

WINGMAN: You're the only star to play three lead roles in one play; Velma, Roxie, and Mama in "*Chicago*." Would you ever be interested in playing a gender-swapped version of Billy

Flynn? That character would be great- and really topical right now considering how lawyers and the media have been creating sensations out of shady characters.

NEUWIRTH: [Laughs] I'd love to play Billy Flynn. I actually performed the number "*All I Care About*" for the Broadway Backwards benefit show. I wore a white suit with a black boutonniere- which is Billy's costume in reverse, and I did the number with six gorgeous gals with their big white fans. So fun.

"If Kelsey wants to do a 'Frasier' show again, then I have great faith that he'll make all the best creative decisions on how best to present it. If it includes me in some way, sure I'd be happy to take part."

WINGMAN: You also recent-

ly played Morticia in the stage version of "*The Addams Family*." That was such a wonderful part for you- you were really perfectly cast. Would you have any interest in taking that musical to the big screen?

NEUWIRTH: Thank you! I think Anjelica Houston had a pretty definitive and fabulous film performance of Morticia. But sure, I'd be happy to play her again. I always loved the Charles Addams cartoons, and when I was a kid I thought Carolyn Jones as Morticia was incredibly elegant.

WINGMAN: NBC has really had a lot of success in bringing live musicals to television. That kind of blends both mediums well. Would you be interested in participating in one of those?

NEUWIRTH: [Simply] Sure!

WINGMAN: Recently, you've worked a lot with CBS on shows like "*Madam Secretary*," "*The Good Wife*," and "*The Good Fight*," and a show with a cast that we absolutely love here; "*Blue Bloods*." In general, you've always been a big fan of CBS, and are really drawn more to procedurals and dramas than comedy, right? Why is that?

NEUWIRTH: I wouldn't say so, no. There's plenty of good television across all the networks and platforms, really. I think it's just a coincidence that I've recently done a lot of work at CBS. I certainly didn't plan it that way! Honestly, I plan very little in my life. As for procedurals versus dramas versus comedies — I

really don't discriminate. Whatever is well written and has a character that I feel I can flesh out and make interesting, that'll be the thing I'm drawn to.

WINGMAN: "*Madam Secretary*" did give you a chance to bring theater into the show when you performed "*For The Longest Time*" with other Broadway-turned-TV stars Patina Miller and Erich Bergen. Did you guys come up with that idea, and were you eager to perform for a while on that show given that you are all such fantastic musical theater talents?

NEUWIRTH: "*Madam Secretary*" has quite the cast of theatre folk - Zeljko Ivanek, Tony winner Keith Carradine, Sebastian Arcelus, Geoffrey Arend, Mandy Gonzalez, Tim Daly, as well as Erich, Patina and I. There are some amazing singing voices in that group - holy moly! The idea for "*The Longest Time*" bit was not ours, no, but we were certainly happy to do it!

WINGMAN: While you're great at drama, and brilliant at musical theater, you really are also masterful at comedy. Lilith was such a spectacular character- and you had such a fantastic cast; Ted Danson, Woody Harrelson, Kirstie Alley, George Wendt, John Ratzenberger, Rhea Perlman, and of course, the brilliant Kelsey Grammer. That must have been a dream cast to act off of, right? It was the most fantastic acting table-tennis.

NEUWIRTH: "*Cheers*" was an extraordinary television show. What made it extraordinary, I believe, was a combination of things which put together became greater than the sum of their parts. As a Situation Comedy, its Situation was very smart and rife with possibilities. That is to say; a bar where a group of people from different walks of life very naturally and truthfully become a community. The show was truly character-driven, and that was due to several

things - great writing with a constant eye for the truth of the characters, great actors who diligently looked for the truth of their characters and quite rightly respected the comedy, great producing - as in taking care of the truth and creativity of the action, structure, and trajectory of the stories, and lastly - brilliant direction from James Burrows, who is a comedy master. The other wonderful thing about that show and all of its components, was it respected its audience. It never played down to the audience. It always assumed that the audience could get the humor without it being explained.

"I've worked with some wonderful performers and many of them I'd love to work with again"

WINGMAN: Yes- James Burrows is a genius. The writing on that show was so spectacular- right down to the character's names; Sam Malone could be seen as Sam ALONE, Norm being a "normal guy," and Lilith and the Biblical connotations. The writers said they pulled a lot of their ideas from classic plays and literature, noting how that's not done as much now. Can you touch on that?

NEUWIRTH: I'm afraid I can't speak to that. You'd have to ask the writers!

WINGMAN: Kelsey Grammer has discussed potentially rebooting "*Frasier*." Would you want to be a part of that?

NEUWIRTH: If Kelsey wants to do

a "*Frasier*" show again, then I have great faith that he'll make all the best creative decisions on how best to present it. If it includes me in some way, sure I'd be happy to take part. I loved working with Kelsey, David [Hyde Pierce,] Peri [Gilpin,] Jane [Leeves,] and John [Mahoney.] Oh man, what a cast.

WINGMAN: While you've conquered stage and the small-screen, you've also starred in some great classics for the big screen as well; like "*Summer Of Sam*," and "*The Associate*," just to name a few. You were also in "*Jumanji*," which also recently got a reboot. Did you see it? Would you be interested in participating in that franchise again?

NEUWIRTH: I loved working on "*Jumanji*," and thought it was a terrific picture. I haven't seen the new version, but I'm curious how new technology has played into it.

WINGMAN: You were also in what I believe to be one of the best movies of all time; "*The Faculty*"- featuring another fantastic cast; Robert Patrick, Salma Hayek, Piper Laurie, Famke Janssen, and a great director; Robert Rodriguez. Did you like working in a genre project?

NEUWIRTH: "*The Faculty*" was some of the most fun I've ever had working on a film. The actors, the crew, and Robert Rodriguez made such a wonderful environment in which to play in this hilarious dark film. I got stabbed by Piper Laurie! I ran races with Robert Patrick through the halls of a high school!

WINGMAN: You were also in "*Star Trek: The Next Generation*." You are so well-suited for sci-fi, action, and fantasy- you are in amazing shape and could really kick-butt, and while men like Robert Downey Jr. and Bruce Willis continue to work in those projects, it would really be refreshing to see more women over the age of 22 in those roles. Thoughts on that?

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NEUWIRTH: [Quite enthusiastically] YES.

WINGMAN: You were also in another movie I love- especially as someone who works in a magazine; *“How To Lose A Guy In Ten Days.”* Your no-nonsense character, Lana, was fantastic. That film preceded *“The Devil Wears Prada,”* which also featured an ingénue named “Andy” complaining about her job and boss. In our more woke times, isn’t it silly how those strong boss-ladies were seen as villainous, when really, the protagonists of the films were kind of weak and resistant to do their jobs as they put men first? What horrible role models for young women, and really, anyone in the magazine business!

NEUWIRTH: I’m not sure what to say to this. Except maybe - yes, strong women are frequently seen as villains- everywhere.

WINGMAN: And while you have two Tonys and two Emmys that establish you as the queen of both stage and TV, you have also starred in an Academy Award Winning movie; *“Dear Diary,”* by David Frankel- which was originally filmed as a pilot for TV and then turned into a short that went on to win an Oscar- the only of its kind. Imagine being bummed that your show doesn’t get picked up, and then goes on to win an Academy Award! What was your thoughts on that?

NEUWIRTH: *“Dear Diary,”* written and directed by David Frankel, was a terrific TV pilot. When it was turned down for airing on television by the networks, David and its producer, Dreamworks, gave it a theatrical release as a short film, garnering its Oscar nomination and subsequent award. At the same time - the May that it was turned down for TV - I did a production of *“Chicago”* for City Center Encores, and we got the word that we would indeed be going to Broadway. So, I’d say everything worked out just fine all around. Da-

vid and *“Dear Diary”* got the recognition they so well deserved, and I got to play Velma on Broadway.

WINGMAN: Not only have you dominated all entertainment mediums, you’ve also worked with some of the greatest people; Whoopi Goldberg, Robin Williams, Chita Rivera, Spike Lee, Nathan Lane. Who else would you love to work with- or work with again, and what other roles would you love to play?

NEUWIRTH: You’re right, I’ve worked with some wonderful performers and many of them I’d love to work with again. I can’t even begin to list all the fantastic actors, actresses, and dancers out there that I’d like to work with in the future.

Whoever is on the talented Neuwirth’s dream list, one thing is for sure; they would be lucky to work with her. ■

LIGHTNING ROUND!

1. Which decade do you prefer? The 70’s like *“Summer Of Sam,”* or the 20’s like *“Chicago”*?

Better clothes in the ‘20s. Absolutely.

2. You are famous for five places; New York and Broadway, Chicago, Boston for *“Cheers,”* L.A. for Hollywood, and your home state; New Jersey. Which location is the best?

Wherever I am.

3. What is your absolute favorite song to perform on stage?

Whichever one I’m singing. You have to be in love with and invested in truth of whatever you’re doing.

4. Your husband Chris Calkins owns Destino Wines vineyard. Do you prefer red or white?

Chris sold Destino in ‘08! He owns Gotham Coffee Roasters now, roasting in Brooklyn, selling to several coffee joints around the country as well as online and in his own store in the Flatiron district of NYC.

5. You’ve played three roles in *“Chicago.”* What other role would you love to revisit in one of your famous plays, other than the one you played?

I can’t think of a thing. . .

6. Like Kelsey Grammer, you also do tons of voice-over work. What is your favorite character you’ve voiced?

Oh, I love doing cartoons! I did one the other day and such a blast. No favorites; I love them all.

7. What advice would Lana from *“How To Lose A Guy In Ten Days”* give to this magazine?

I have no idea. She had some crazy notions. . .

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IN

the world of entertainment, technology and gaming is running rampant throughout the community no matter the age group. Everyone has cell phones, smart TVs, home theaters, smart watches, and everything in between, and while the public is swiftly embracing the dawn of the new age, our media has been no exception. And within the culture that is Hollywood, there are communities of gamers that will now play in tournaments and have marathons to help out charities, or just to decompress, and our cover guys; Scott Porter and Masi Oka, represent the best of what is represented in those worlds.

Scott Porter is a gamer and geek at heart. Whether he is playing games, visiting the XBOX Headquarters, or using his voice and motion capture for a game, he is fully immersed in the gamer universe. Growing up in the 80's and 90's, Nintendo was *life* for so many, and the gifted actor was no different- in fact, when *WINGMAN* showed Porter the prop he would be using in the Nintendo Power Glove, the nostalgic look on his face said it all. And now, the "*Friday Night Lights*," star is participating in a yearly charity event called *Game4Paul* which is a livestream of celebrities playing video games for charity for the late Paul Walker's charity, Reach Out Worldwide. In fact, the talented star is so invested in this world, that trying to find games that he is *not* a part of now would be harder than to find ones where he is. In the past two years he has done voice work for eight different games, all of which have been enormous successes.

And while Porter is holding it down as gaming expert, "*The Meg*" star Masi Oka remains as *THE* number one celebrity involved with technology. Going back to the 80's, the Japanese actor's games of choice were the Nintendo classics; "*Zelda*," "*Mega Man*," and "*Super Mario Bros*," but, now he is spending his spare time running raids in "*Destiny II*," and reliving his childhood playing "*World of Warcraft*." And not only does Oka *play* games, he also *owns* an Indie game company called Mobius Digital which is developing a game called "*Outer Wilds*," due out soon. Not just a gamer, the actor and digital artist- who has even worked on the "*Star Wars*" prequels- is also one of the biggest tech investors in Hollywood, and will also usually come on hand to the company as adviser, helping them break through into the mainstream world.

With gaming and technology still in its infancy, having these two men lead the way means that we gamers and tech-heads can certainly look forward to a brighter future. There is so much that can be done with gaming, and of course, you can't do any of it without the world of technology. Whether it be Virtual Reality, augmented reality, or whatever may come next, it is all intertwined into our lives and can take us to worlds we have never been, or would never ven have the option of going to, and we definitely have faith in Oka and Porter as the ambassadors for this community.



THE WIZARD

Unstoppable Genius

MASI OKA

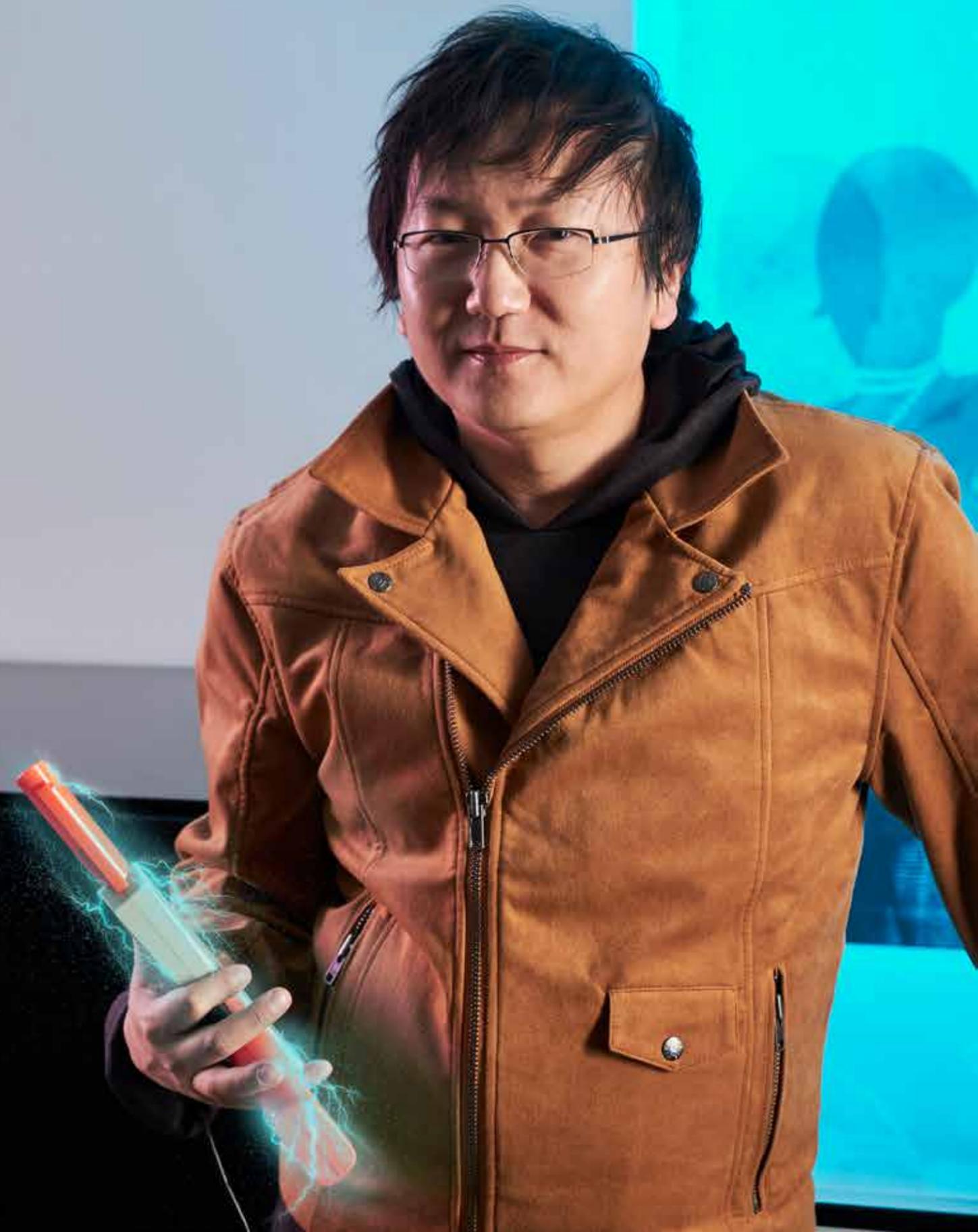
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T

hese days, technology investors are the men and women that exhibit the love and commitment to a project that could make or break our future- so, it would only make sense that many of Hollywood's most respected talents are getting their hands in on the action, and actor and graphic artist Masi Oka has not only turned his love of technology into an incredible venture for himself and the companies that he works with, but, he is also listed as *the number one* celebrity out there getting involved with technology. One of the main avenues that the beloved star has been giving his attention to have been the video game and Virtual Reality way, and considering games are not going anywhere anytime soon, and since he was and *is* a fan of them himself, the thought of creating his own has definitely peaked his interest. With his company Mobius Digital in full swing on their upcoming game "*Outer Wilds*," there is no stopping the intuitive talent from conquering the gamer world.

Video game based movies have suffered quite a bit of criticism in the past, but the actor-gamer plans on changing that stigma with some of his upcoming projects. All gamers over the age of twenty have endured many hours of struggle with any of the "*Mega Man*" games- including Oka, himself. However, it seems as though the Tokyo native will have the last laugh at the frustrating game as he will soon be producing a live-action film of that world-wide phenomenon. Not many details have been announced as of yet, but definitely keep the eyes and ears open for more information coming soon.

Of course, anyone who has turned on the TV or seen a movie in over the past two decades can recognize the Japanese actor, who has been in everything from "*Along Came Polly*," to "*Scrubs*," to "*Heroes*," to "*Hawaii Five-0*." And, whether it be action, drama, or comedy, he has ruled the airwaves and managed to conquer at every genre as he really became a fan-favorite in each of them. As an actor, Oka possesses incredible subtlety and naturalism that makes it easy to believe him in any role- whether that be a superhero, an action star, or a funny man.

His work has captivated audiences not only as an actor, but also as an artist- a rarity for someone to have mastered both techniques. The computer science major from Brown University had no idea what he was in for when Industrial Light and Magic went to their career fair and he joined their team as a visual artist. And when it comes to art on screen, Oka has some major accomplishments to his name as he drowned George Clooney in "*The Perfect Storm*," and blew up asteroids in a "*Star Wars*," film, which all certainly adds a level of prestige to his name .

A lifelong fan of Anime and Manga, Oka has gone from a fan to a producer of some of the most sought after adaptations of that world. As a producer, he has already helped make an adaptation of "*Death Note*" for Netflix, and he is now working on "*Attack on Titan*-" a project which fans have been waiting for years for someone to make. And as a fan himself, he serves as the best person to have a hand in the projects audiences want, remaining dedicated toward making sure the work is true to the creators, or *senseis*, as he refers to them- which is absolutely paramount for any loyal fan. That kind of dedication toward the fans is what has garnered the "*Heroes*" star so many of them himself, and as he continues to build his impressive empire, we will follow him down any road he takes- from performing, to graphics, to gaming. Read on the next page to see what Oka had to say!



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WINGMAN MAGAZINE: In the world of technology, you are on the top of the mountain as one of the biggest tech investors in Hollywood. Talk a little bit about what draws you to one company over another with the same product?

MASI OKA: I am Japanese, and I think that I almost want to help other Japanese companies make it to America. A lot of the investments that I do make involve Japanese companies trying to bridge the cultural divide to America. It's not just in tech, but in games as well. I think that definitely may not be the best investment strategy, but I'm not going to look for anything that is just, like; "Oh, this is a slam dunk to make money," but, rather something that is a builder of bridges in multiple worlds, and something that is giving hope and dreams to inspiring the next generation. I am more of an advisor, as well as investing. It's a way of saying that I believe in the company and not just investing.

WINGMAN: Right- you are not only an investor, but you are also on the board of advisors for Limitless VR. Is gaming the way that you thought you would be investing your money?

OKA: Well, both actually. Usually I will advise a company and then invest in them because I want to put my money where my mouth is. It's easier to say "hey, I believe in this company," and put my money down, but, I want to be a bigger part of it. Unfortunately, Limitless VR is gone now. They got bought out by a different company but also went bankrupt.

WINGMAN: You have your own mobile gaming company called

Mobius Digital. What can we expect from your company, and how soon should we expect it?

"A lot of the investments that I do make involve Japanese companies trying to bridge the cultural divide to America"

OKA: We have transitioned more into an indie game studio, and right now we are developing a game called "Outer Wilds," which is going to come out soon. At launch it will come out on XBOX and PC. We are working with Annapurna Interactive- who are a fantastic publisher and have some amazing tastes, especially on the indie side and we are happy to be partnered up with them.

WINGMAN: Before you became an actor you went to Brown and got a degree in computer science, and then worked for ILM [Industrial Light Magic.] Were you always into graphic arts?

OKA: Not really! I was also a math and computer science guy, and loved video games and grew

up watching Manga and Anime, but I never really thought about computer graphics as a career. It's one of the prospect classes I took in college, but it was always more satisfying to write a bunch of code and see some cool stuff visually afterwards. Most of the time if you are coding a cool database, it's cool and all, but there is really not much to visually see. You can go to your friend and say "hey, check out this cool database with all of these algorithms," and they just don't get it. But, if you write a cool animation code and then show it off, people like it. To be honest, I didn't even know that it was a profession. My senior year, ILM came to our career fair, and I was trying to figure out what to do with my life, and I saw ILM and thought "wow, you can make "Star Wars," on computers?" So I applied and got a job there, which was pretty cool.

WINGMAN: What were some of the projects that you worked on for ILM, and which one were you the most proud of?

OKA: One of my biggest jobs was "The Perfect Storm," since I was on it from day one until the end, which was very rare, and I got to digitally drown George Clooney- which you don't get to see too often. Of course, "Star Wars," the prequels- there are some really great shots in those too. There's the one scene in "Episode II" where they had Jango Fett going through the asteroids, and he has a bomb come off and it blows an asteroid into a million pieces. That was one of the shots that people talk about and that I am proud of.

WINGMAN: Seeing as you are now working on video games, were you a gamer as child, and what were your favorite games?

OKA: Oh yeah! I am working on games, but I am not designing them. As a kid I really liked the JRPG's like "Final Fantasy," and "Dragon Quest," -those were some of my favorites. Of course I enjoyed all of the "Nintendo" games- like all of the "Mario" games, "Zelda," "Metroid," "Rock Man," or "Mega Man." In the U.S. As a kid I grew up on the Super Nintendo games, and those were the ones I really enjoyed. Right now, I am playing "Destiny 2." I was in a room writing on a TV show and the other writers were telling me that I should check it out and since I was talking about how I was such a "World of Warcraft" fan, and how I was part of a guild, an officer, would go on raids and stuff. A lot of these games are such a time-suck, and that is one thing that I run out of.

WINGMAN: In your acting career you have been a hero, a scientist, a medical examiner, and much more. One of my favorite scenes of yours was in "Friends with Benefits." What are some of your favorite scenes?

OKA: Oh man! That is a great scene too, and it was directed by Will Gluck- and I have been fortunate to work with him on some television shows as well. Some of my favorite scenes definitely come from "Heroes." One of the scenes I love is my Godzilla scene from "Austin Powers in Goldmember." In the audition, I broke the fourth wall, and I knew that movie does that type of stuff, and I wanted to take a risk and do that and the director loved it. In "Along Came Polly," I did this whole dance and jazz thing from "Jesus Christ: Superstar" but, unfortunately it got cut from the movie. I wish it was part of the extras on the DVD. Three of the scenes from "Heroes" that comes to my mind are the first subway scene where Hiro meets future Hiro for the first time. The second one would be where Hiro and Charlie are in the Burnt Toast diner surrounded by 1000 cranes. And the third one would be the scene with Adrian Pasdar who played Nathan- there was so much fun and improv in the little diner where they meet for the first time. Those are the scenes that I have fond memories of and really love.

WINGMAN: "Death Note" has a huge following in the anime world, and you helped bring that to life. Were you a fan of it before you joined the cast and crew?

OKA: Yeah I loved "Death Note," and for me, I am all about protecting and bringing a wider audience to the world of Manga and Anime. The way I see it is I want to welcome more people into the community and the more fans we have around the world, the more we can talk about it. It's great for the senseis, and what it's done is have the senseis create more material, so it's a win-win scenario. Instead of pulling tight on the community, I actually like to spread it around the world and get as many people involved as possible. Same thing as comic books, because since we have widened that world, we get great movies and shows and not just a book, and we get to geek out about it all. The one thing about "Death Note" is that there have been lots of different adaptations, and lots of Japanese adaptations, and I think Adam Wingard had a little more leeway to bring his



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own vision to it. Anytime I work on an adaption as a producer it's really important for me that the creators voices are heard, because a lot of the time the creators are ignored. This is their baby, and they know what is at the core of it and what the fans will react to. It's all about showing respect, and that they are onboard with everything.

WINGMAN: You are slated to be producer of the upcoming “Mega Man” film. Now, I am a huge fan of the games and have been since I was a kid. I know we can't talk about the film yet, but, how much of a fan of “Mega Man” are you?

OKA: I haven't played the latest game yet, but, yeah, I am a huge fan of the game! One thing I will say that I remember, is the frustration [laughs.] That was a hard-ass game, and it was impossible as a kid. Definitely a fan, but I definitely had a lot of *interesting* memories of that game [chuckles.] We will get to start shooting that film soon. I am also really excited about another film that was just announced, “Attack on Titan,” that I am producing as well. I have a couple more up my sleeves that haven't been announced yet but I am glad to be a part of those properties as well.

And as fans, we are just glad when Oka is a part of ANY project, period. □



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With

a muscular tall frame, a cool and charming disposition, and a devastatingly handsome face, former *"Friday Night Lights"* star Scott Porter seems perfectly cast as the popular all-American jock. As the quintessential leading man in appearance, to judge a book by its cover would be to assume that the fan-favorite actor is simply no more than the fresh-faced hero fans see on screen, when really, his levels of interest not only run deep- but, also very much juxtapose his great looks considering at his core, he is a musical theater lover, a severe comic aficionado, and one of the most major gaming geeks in Hollywood- all a far cry from simply the studly football star one might think.

Well aware of these preconceived judgments, the intuitive talent realizes that many of his interests outside what those might assume on the surface all have plenty of long-standing stigmas around them. Up until recently, gamers, comic nerds, sneaker-heads, and kung-fu lovers have all been looked at with disdain, as if they are dorky, or childish. But, as these communities grow more and more embraced, Porter is not only glad to be such a strong part of them- but, glad to be one of the major reasons *why* gamers and comic lovers no longer have to fear negative judgment. After all- if a guy who is as cool and as good looking as Scott Porter likes these things, then, how could it *not* be awesome? Offering the same effect as when the most popular guy in school befriends the nerd, the relatable actor has taken these fan universes and given them credence as not only world's that are worth rallying around for fans, but, also as valuable world's worth investing in for industry insiders.

And not only is he a major fan himself, but, he is also quite literally a leading voice in the community. A lifelong gamer, the Nebraska native grew up reading comics, playing video games, and giving voices to his action figures when he played with them- voices that would then go on to become the voices of Aquaman, Star-Lord, Nightwing, Superboy, and many, many more all across gaming and cartoons. A trained singer and beatboxer, Porter possesses a limitless voice that can impressively shape-shift, and the dedicated actor takes each of the variations and nuances between his voice characters deeply seriously as he is proud to be a part of the tight-knit and competitive world of voice-acting- a world that, again, with his immensely dapper good looks he might not initially seem like the prototype for.

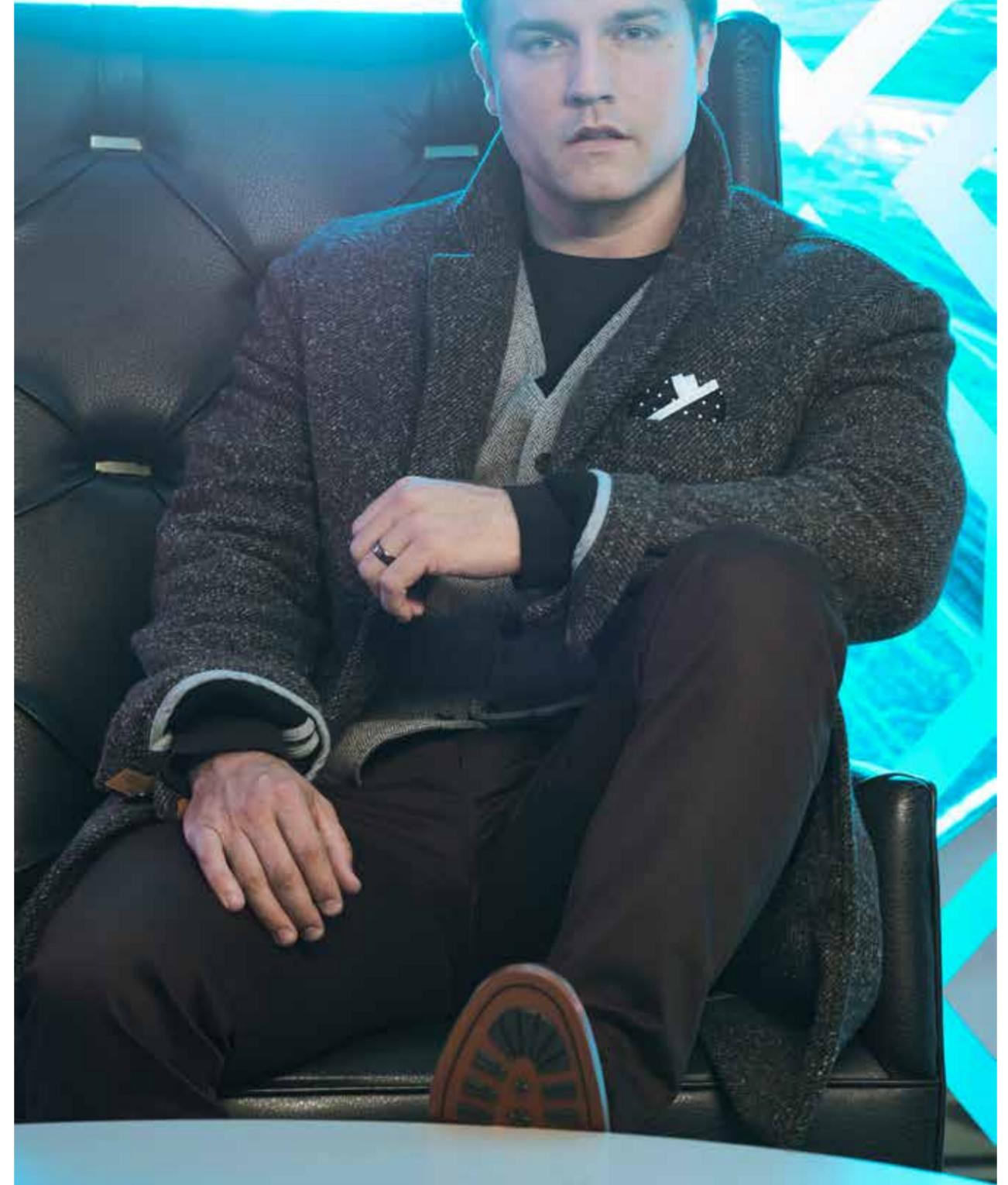
But, just like that diamond in the rough good-hearted popular kid who inspires his classmates to not bully others, Porter is continuously a gift to these communities considering the incomparable passion he has for them. Using his platform and playing skills for good, the revered actor frequently contributes to charitable game nights, motivating his peers to do the same as his gaming helps to raise money for sick children, devastated territories, or gun-safety awareness. Enthralled to be talking about his gaming piers, the benevolent star profusely praises the love, strength, camaraderie, and generosity of the community, thrilled to be a part of it and help give it the limelight it's been receiving.

And while his admirable appearance and persona may attract fans and help bring them out of the geek-closet, it's his impeccable talent that has truly created such a platform. A true theater vet having started on Broadway, Porter is the real deal when it comes to performing- a triple threat that can act, sing, *and* dance, as well as of course masterfully disguise his voice. Not only has the gifted artist recently taken part in *"I Know What You Did Last Summer: The Musical,"* but, his beloved roles on *"Friday Night Lights"* and *"Hart Of Dixie"* also connect with an audience in the heartland that feels stigmatized and ignored by mainstream media, making him even more adored by yet *another* community of people.

A strong and devoted member to the gaming community, a talented actor, and a talented *voice-actor*, Porter was easily a prime person to pick for this cover, and Wingman is more than glad to shine a light back on the man who is constantly help shine a light on the world's we love, and is consistently building their respectability. To find out more about his gaming, his career, his charity work, his love of sneakers, and his obsession with all-things nostalgia, read on!

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WINGMAN
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WINGMAN: So this feature is about technology, and you are a major gamer, both personally and with voice-acting actually in the games. Talk about your love of gaming.

SCOTT PORTER: I started gaming when I was four years old. My dad bought us an Atari 2600, and the game that I remember most from that system was called "Bouncing Babies." It was very simply a building on fire, you play firemen holding a trampoline at the bottom of the building and as they would throw babies out of the top, you would have to bounce them to safety, which at this point *not* being four years old anymore, I realized is *not safe* [laughs,] but also an awesome video game. When games first started they were simple like that. We got a Nintendo close to that and I played a lot of "Kung



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Fu, or "Ice Climbers," and "Mario Bros." of course. I never really cared about the stories until Super Nintendo hit and "The Legend of Zelda: A Link to the Past" and "Final Fantasy III" here in the states or "Final Fantasy VI" in Japan came out and I very quickly realized that it could be a medium that could tell greater stories almost than any other medium. Books are fun and movies are 90 minutes long, television you spend an hour with a week, but with a video game like "Final Fantasy VII," I spent 900 hours on that game. I just very quickly realized that if they ever added voices to this it would be incredible. And when Xbox came and "Halo" was first released and you hear Master Chief's voice speaking to Cortana and their interplay. And you hear Keith David who is this amazing actor in the game, you start to quickly realize "Oh wow, we really can tell stories and this is an actor's medium in a way." Because people will connect to these characters almost more than they connect to any other character in any other medium. So I was chomping at the bit to be a voice actor and it took me just about five years of being on TV before I first broke in, but once it happened I didn't want to let go. I jumped in, held on tight and I just kept on really hustling to try and get myself in front of as many people as possible and there's a lot of gaming companies out there that took a chance on me and I'm hugely grateful. Going forward, if there's any games that I would love to work on they would probably be "Destiny," I would love to be a part of the "Destiny" universe, that would probably be my number one. "Halo," as well, of course. There are so many more games that are coming out that are adventure style games

that are just *really* cool stories that are stand alone games that are off by themselves. There is a game called "Gone Home" that comes to mind. Being a part of any of those things and being a part of the fabric of video game storytelling, that was something I have been building towards since I was a kid and it's just incredible to be a part of it now.

WINGMAN: How did you get into voice-acting, and how do you do all of those voices?

PORTER: Growing up, I was an only child until I was 15, and I used to play with my G.I. Joes, or He-Man figures, and I would always give everyone different voices. It's just something I used to pass the time- never something I imagined I would do as a career. Growing up and playing video games in the 80's-90's, voices weren't present in games- it was all about the music, and the text on screen would deliver the story. You started seeing emotions in the faces of the characters in the late 90's, or when "Final Fantasy VII" came out. But, getting into voice acting was something that happened late for me. I had done Broadway, then television, then some film, and I figured that maybe I should utilize my efforts in the other arenas of entertainment and try voice work, because it was something I had always wanted to do. As you said- I'm a huge gamer, and I figured it would be kind of cool to hear my voice in some of the games I played. So, I went to E3- which is a giant video game convention in Los Angeles, and I kind of went to every booth and saw all these games before they were being released, and some of these people were fans of "Friday Night Lights," some were fans of "Speed Racer," and whenever someone would tell me

that they were a fan of my work, I'd tell them how big of a fan I was of the games, and finally we just said; "Why don't we work together? If we're fans of one another, why not make it happen?" So, it was all a hustle. Voice-acting is a very small community and tough to break into, but, luckily I had an in with what I had done before on screen.

"A lot of people are saying this now because they feel safe to do so; that they were big comic nerds as kids"

WINGMAN: You've voiced Aquaman, Cyclops, Nightwing, and many more. Do you have a favorite?

PORTER: I would have to say Star-Lord was really cool to do with TellTale Games. As they did with all their games, they really made an existing property into something their own. The story we were able to tell with "Guardians Of The Galaxy" was unique and fresh- I wasn't doing Chris Pratt. That was *my* Star-Lord. We weren't imitating the movies, or borrowing from the comics or cartoons, we were telling a completely new story- and I got to be the voice of Star-Lord, which

was really neat. Outside of that, I love doing some of the funnier voices. I love doing Aquaman, where he rides around on a giant sea horse. I love doing Superboy in the Lego games. We made him a little bit of a Valley boy- a young Keanu Reeves if you will. It's always fun when you get to step outside of your normal voice. The voice I use for Cyclops, or Nightwing, or Robin- which I did in "Injustice II"- they are just small degrees away from my normal speaking voice, so, getting to go outside the box is fun. Like, Scarlet Spider- I voiced that for the cartoon on "Ultimate Spider-Man," that was a lot of fun. But, at the end of the day, telling great stories is why I got into this business, and using the medium of video games allows you to do so, so, telling a completely unique "Guardians Of The Galaxy" story was probably my favorite.

WINGMAN: We just lost Stan Lee. Was he a major inspiration for you?

PORTER: He was. You know, I'm sure a lot of people are saying this now because they feel safe to do so; that they were big comic nerds as kids. I honestly was. There is a comic shop in Omaha, Nebraska called Dragon's Lair, and I used to go there every week to just have a place to escape into. I loved football just like every other kid in Nebraska, and I loved getting outside and getting my hands dirty, but what I really enjoyed was reading fantasy stories. I read "The Hobbit" by the time I was 7. Escaping into these fantastic worlds of superheroes was my life, and Stan Lee really set the tone for that. He just gave kids like me a place to disappear into. The first game I did with E3, I met with the guy from Activision,

and they gave me forty characters to audition for- it was for a game called "X-Men: Destiny." And I wound up booking one of the leads. It was me, Milo Ventimiglia, and Jamie Chung, and we made this really cool game. You could choose whether to be a good guy or bad guy, follow Cyclops or Magneto, and these were all characters Stan Lee created. So, when I got invited to a panel for the game at a comic con, I thought that was pretty cool- the panel had so many great people; comic artists like Peter David, Mike Cary- and I thought that was just the tops. And then, Stan Lee showed up and joined the panel, and he was just as spry and energetic as anyone, and to be on a panel with that legend for 90 minutes was something I will cherish for my entire life. He did so much that helped my career- I've been able to piggyback on what he built, on worlds him and other creators allowed us to play in. It's an everlasting effect. He touched so many lives. I saw a quote that he had said he really wanted to do something important with his life, and thought he failed at that, until he realized that everyone needs some form of entertainment to escape into- and if you can give someone something that allows them to laugh, smile, or feel, then you have accomplished something very special- and he did that for all of us, and now we can pay it forward and do the same in kind.

WINGMAN: Recently you've been in "I Know What you Did Last Summer: The Musical" alongside Greer Grammer. You are an amazing singer. Is Broadway something you would like to do, or a musical like "La La Land"?

PORTER: Oh, man, I would love to get back to my musical roots. My father was a drummer, my mother was a singer, and I taught myself how to beatbox and a young age- and that's really how I started my career. I went to New York for a show called "Toxic Audio"- which had a tagline of "Exploring the boundaries of the human voice." They needed someone who could beatbox, dance, and sing, and I fit the bill. I did the show and we won a drama desk award, and a few other awards. From that I was in a show called "Alter Boys," and then in another show, and then I got "Friday Night Lights." I then came to LA, and everyone just looks at you kind of with this squint down their nose when you tell them you sing. They say, "Oh, that's so cute!" But, they don't do anything with it. But, yes, I would absolutely love to do something musically and get back to Broadway.

"Stan Lee touched so many lives"

WINGMAN: What about an album?

PORTER: With two kids, and working, and auditioning, I find it hard to write music. I love to sing, but an album wouldn't be my immediate venue. I'd rather do a show, or get back on stage first. But, I wouldn't be shy about doing an album- it's just not in the cards yet.

WINGMAN: Has anyone from

the original "I Know What You Did Last Summer" come to see the play?

PORTER: Kevin Williamson came on our opening night- and he was the reason for all of this. He thoroughly enjoyed it, and to have his stamp of approval was enough for us. The cool thing about the show is that it doesn't parody or spoof the movie, we pay homage to it. We find humor where we can, we add music with either existing songs, or something in the soundtrack, and really we're borrowing from the 90's and build a musical journey that can accompany the piece, really paying homage to it. That's probably why we got his stamp of approval.

WINGMAN: Speaking of nostalgia, you love retro sneakers, and you have a killer sneaker collection. How did you become such a sneakerhead, and do you have any favorites?

PORTER: There's just something to be said about the era you grew up in forming who you become as an adult. When Michael Jordan broke in around 1985 and the sneaker boom really started to happen through the late 80's and early 90's, I was there for all of it. I was a huge Knicks fan in the early 90's- still am, and the second addition of the Reebok Pumps were orange, blue, and white, and I just thought they were awesome. I had a Starter jacket, and I loved hip-hop, and kung-fu movies, and video games, and that all was because I was a child of the mid-80's, early-90's. I think we're in a much safer place now to say what we really are, and I'm a video game geek, I'm a comic nerd, and I'm a sneakerhead- all of these things

which if I said 20 years ago in a room full of adults would prompt them to look down at you, or laugh at you about it, or think that you just need to grow up. I think in this generation, we've proven that we can grow up and still love the things that we loved as a kid. We have the freedom to do that, and it's pretty cool. I wasn't able to really chase some of the sneakers that I loved until I became a little more successful, and since then I've been able to buy a pair here and there that I really love, but, I'm still pretty attached to Jordans, and definitely Nike- because that's really what I grew up with. It's just the same with video games, comics, hip-hop, kung-fu movies, and sneakers- they all roll into who I am.

WINGMAN: You're also a philanthropist, and you participated in the "Game For Paul," for Paul Walker's "Reach Out Worldwide" charity. How did you get involved in that?

PORTER: Well, for years I had been a major Xbox fan, and they were doing that in conjunction with Microsoft to raise money. I had done some other charitable video game nights through a site called Extra Life. It's a big event that happens annually, and gamers across the world do a 24 hour gaming marathon, instead of like a walk where friends would sponsor you for however far you walk, in this case, friends sponsor you for every hour you spend playing video games straight. My friend and I formed our own team and raised money for The Children's Miracle Network Hospitals Of America- which is where all the money that Extra Life raises goes to. We were able to raise over tens of thousands of dollars for the cause, and Microsoft knew that

and they helped me a couple of times to figure out prizes to give away, or ways to reach out to the community, and ways to find extra avenues of revenue for that amazing charity. So, when this came along and they asked me if I was interested, I, of course, said yes.

"There's something to be said about the era you grew up in forming who you become as an adult"

The charity; "Reach Out Worldwide" was important to me because my parents live in Florida- they've already had hurricanes, we've seen the devastation from the fires in California this year, and this charity really works globally- not even just in the United States, raising money to put boots on the ground and help people immediately after a tragic act of God, and be there with water, lights, medical instruments, helping people and making sure they don't get sick, or hurt. So, when Microsoft asked, I naturally jumped at the opportunity. What a great way to make money; taking gamers who love to play for fun, and when you take those people for a charity you realize this community is so willing to help each other, and offer someone else a hand.

Gamers are a strong community that has each other's backs. We rebound from things. I was in "Madden 18" and "Madden 19," and in a game called "Longshot." It was me, Mahershala Ali, and a few other actors, and I was so proud to be a part of the Madden franchise. Then, there was a shooting in Jacksonville Florida, and we weren't quite sure how to handle it. Do we board up the windows? Do we not hold tournaments anymore? Or, do we rally together and remember those we lost, and raise money for gun-safety awareness and mental illness? Within two weeks, EA Sports put together a rally, and we linked up and raised a ton of money and were able to tell the world that we are here to help. We're a community filled with love, ideas, and we are strong- and we're not going anywhere. The more you look at these charities, the more clear it is how many gamers there are, and we're all incredibly connected and generous.

WINGMAN: You've already been a regular on two successful shows, and you've worked with some great people such as Kyle Chandler, Drew Barrymore, and Robert Patrick. Who else would you love to work with, and what other roles would you love to play?

PORTER: I get that question a lot- what kind of role I would love to play, and really, I just want to tell good stories- whether that be in film, on stage, on TV, or in video games. At the end of the day, we're allowed to play so many different roles and tell so many different stories, and would I love to be in a Marvel film? Sure. Would I love to work with the best of the best? Yes, of

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course. But, some of the greatest actors I've ever worked with are some of the less renowned. I just want to be on set and work with people. Sometimes the relationship part of this business is lost within the industry, and not seen by those outside of it. The friendships I've forged on "Friday Night Lights," and the friendships I forged on "Hart Of Dixie" are lifelong friendships I'll cherish forever. No one knew who Michael B. Jordan was when he started on "Friday Night Lights," and look where he is now. So, I don't know if there is a specific actor I'd love to work with, or a specific role, I just want to continue to tell great stories and continue to forge these great relationships.

WINGMAN: Of course, fans know you from "Friday Night Lights" and "Hart Of Dixie"- two shows that really celebrated the heartland. Being from Nebraska, is giving entertainment to an audience that feels forgotten by mainstream media important to you?

PORTER: I think perspective of the midwest is sometimes lost on the coast lines, and I would love to tell stories from their perspective. There's just a different way of life. The way we were raised in Nebraska is very blue-collar, but not blue-collar in the way Philadelphia is blue-collar, or New York. It's very different- not to say it's more difficult, but just different. Filming "Hart Of Dixie" and "Friday Night Lights" were easy to relate to, because I grew up knowing people like that. "Friday Night Lights" was set in Texas, but being from Nebraska is similar. I actually got a call from my Uncle when "Friday Night Lights" was on, and he complimented me and said I was great in it, but then said "I don't know

if I need to see my life on television every week. If I'm going to watch TV, I want to see sexy doctors and lawyers doing impossible things!"
[Laughs] I thought that was pretty funny. To the coastlines, those shows might not be so interesting, but in the midwest they're not as familiar with those themes. I think that's a reason why "Friday Night Lights" was so successful- it offered a way of life that metropolitan people weren't really familiar with, and I'm happy to help make that life seem cool.

Hopefully Porter realizes that ANYTHING he is associated with seems cool- and for that, us nerds bow down and thank him.



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W

ith the amount of love fans have for Disney classics, it's needless to say that it takes a truly special performer to be able to help bring them to life- particularly as one of the much adored Disney Princesses- there's a lot of hype to live up to. However, having already played Belle and Ariel in other productions, stage sensation Patti Murin was a shoe-in for her coveted role as Anna in Broadway's version of the juggernaut hit "*Frozen*," not only meeting fans' expectations, but greatly exceeded them.

In truth, the gifted performer comes across as a natural for these leading ladies since she already has so many of the traits that are admired in them. She's strong-willed and courageous, a total romantic, beautiful as can be, and she exhibits an innate kindness that could melt even the most "*Frozen*" of hearts. Completely down to earth and a total joy to be around, Murin is the exact kind of person that fans dream a real life Disney princess might be as she possesses the voice of an Angel, a megawatt smile, and an admirable dedication toward fighting off bullies and making the world a better place.

Social media is rarely an uplifting platform and sadly can often times lead to even *more* depression for a person as it usually offers more negativity than imaginable. Between the not-so-humble brags and insults, it's a wonder why anyone ever joins. But, when it comes to the "*Frozen*" star's internet presence, her feed is not only exceptionally positive *and* interesting, it's also inspirational. Like many of Disney's leading ladies, the fiery redhead has no trouble slaying trolls or reminding people how to treat others. A strong advocate of mental health and defeating stigmas around the world, the brave actress raised her voice about anxiety and, in return, received an outpouring of responses from fans telling her how much her bringing visibility to the subject meant to them. Not one to use the cause as a gimmick for her own publicity, brag, or try to be a hero, Murin shrugs off her praise for her contributions to the community, stating that while she gladly welcomes how it touched people, that she is really the one who's in awe of *them*. Her sincerity and humility are refreshing, to say the least, and with so much ugliness sweeping the internet, it's great to see a star stand up against it without a personal agenda.

And best of all- the multi-talented beauty is not alone in her fight. The leading lady in her *own* fairy tale, Murin recently wed awesome "*Chicago Med*" actor, Colin Donnell- who our readers also know and love from one of the biggest superhero hits on TV; "*Arrow*." A true power couple if ever there was one, it seems like any modern millennial's dream to see a Disney princess and a superhero end up living happily ever after, and what makes the courtship even better is getting to watch the stage beauty show up on the small screen when she takes part in the "One Chicago" franchise.

And better yet? Murin has even bigger goals than simply fighting crime and saving lives in Dick Wolf's ratings-sensation of a world, as she herself wouldn't mind kicking some butt as a superhero- and bringing the genre right to the stage. Dreaming aloud that she would love to play a female Captain America in a Broadway version of "*The Avengers*," the New Jersey native certainly knows how to steal the hearts of fans everywhere- and there would definitely be no arguments to the idea of watching her bring even more blockbuster hits right to the stage. Until then, audiences can consistently enjoy Murin showing what a hero she can be in "*Frozen*" at the St. James theater, and of course, also in real life as she continues to make social media a happier, brighter, and more honest place. Read on to see what the inspiring actress had to say!

**"I WOULD LOVE TO TAKE OVER AS THE FIRST
FEMALE CAPTAIN AMERICA!"**

WINGMAN: So, “Frozen” has been getting rave reviews and fans are loving the show. For audiences who haven’t gotten a chance to see it yet, can you tell people what makes the show similar to the film, and also how it differs?

PATTI MURIN: The writers did such a fantastic job of keeping everything that is familiar and so beloved about the film, and expanding on it even further in the show. There are twelve new songs in addition to the original songs from the movie, which allows us as actors to dig deeper into our characters and their emotional inner lives. The new material is honestly blended so seamlessly that sometimes I can’t remember which ones are the originals!

WINGMAN: One thing that sets “Frozen” apart from many of the other Disney classics is that in this case, the central love story is between sisters. Yes- there is a romance, but these are two very strong women in their own right who value their relationship with each other first and foremost. Can you talk about that?

MURIN: The entire show is this beautiful emotional and physical journey towards connection. These two women were ripped apart at an early age after being the best of friends, and Elsa sacrifices her childhood to protect her sister from harm. And then it’s Anna’s turn to sacrifice when she literally trades her own life to save her sister’s. The phrase “true love” is the theme of this show and this story, and it’s such a phenomenal lesson that doesn’t necessarily mean romantic love. It means the purest

form of love, which is that person that you would do anything for. I love learning this as Anna every single night, and I really love going through her journey from the more traditional Disney princess to a more modern strong, courageous Disney heroine.

“I REALLY LOVE GOING THROUGH HER JOURNEY FROM THE MORE TRADITIONAL DISNEY PRINCESS TO A MORE MODERN STRONG, COURAGEOUS DISNEY HEROINE.”

WINGMAN: You are married to a great actor; Colin Donnell, and you two worked together on the One Chicago franchise. You’ve been on both “Chicago Med” and “Chicago Fire.” Any chance you’ll come back to the franchise?

MURIN: I did an episode of “Chicago Fire” earlier this year, and I’m actually scheduled to appear on “Chicago Med” again soon! I love the city of Chicago, and every single person who works on those shows. It’s such a big, wonderful family. And the fact that I get to go to work with my husband makes it the perfect job!

WINGMAN: Your husband is also very popular with our readers for his work on “Arrow.” With Spider-Man already having been on Broadway, what superhero would you like to bring to the stage, and who would you like to play in that world?

MURIN: The obvious answer is The Avengers! And since Chris Evans has retired his shield, I would love to take over as the first female Captain America!

WINGMAN: Juxtaposing that question, what play would you love to bring to the screen, and which character would you take there?

MURIN: I would love to play the role of Brigid in a movie version of “The Humans” by Stephen Karam. I could not stop thinking about that play after I saw it. Honestly, I don’t even have to be in it, I would just love for them to turn it into a film!

WINGMAN: What are some of the luxuries stage has as opposed to film, and vice-versa,

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and which do you prefer?

MURIN: I love theatre because it's live. It's in the moment, and the show is a living, breathing thing that is different every single night, even though you're technically doing the same show each time. It's instant gratification in terms of laughter and applause, and as my dad told me early on, "It's not every job that people stand up and clap for you at the end of the day." On the other hand, I love television because it's a completely different set of skills and a different style of acting. It's much smaller and more intimate, and you get a few different chances to get the scene right. It also affords you the opportunity to play the same character but in different circumstances and storylines. It's an entirely different way of getting to know your character, and it's never the same, which is also fun.

WINGMAN: You are also a huge advocate for the cause I personally feel strongest about; Mental Health. Your "mental health day" post received tons of fan mail. How did you become such a strong ally for the mental health community?

MURIN: I posted something on Instagram last April after I had to call out of a show because I was having a panic attack. I honestly didn't expect such an overwhelming response, and I sort of accidentally became an advocate for the mental health community! Best accident ever. I keep binders of all of the letters people have written me telling me their stories, and it's something I can look through when I need to remember that I'm not

alone. There are so many brave people out there who live with these mental health illnesses, and I'm perpetually in awe of them.

AND AS COOL AS THE IDEA IS OF MURIN TAKING OVER THE CAPTAIN AMERICA SHIELD FOR A STAGE VERSION OF "THE AVENGERS," IT'S NICE TO KNOW SHE'S ALSO A REAL LIFE SUPERHERO THAT HELPS SO MANY STRUGGLING PEOPLE. SOME HEROES TRULY DON'T WEAR CAPES. ■



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It

seems like one thing the world is in agreement on right now is the phrase; “*Comedy is in danger,*” as everyone becomes increasingly more petrified that our culture will force censorship over jokes. But, what if there was a comedian out there that could make the world laugh *without* making anyone cry? Lucky for audiences everywhere, the upbeat and jovial Michael Yo seems like the perfect solution to keeping a divided nation happy and in stitches.

A native of the heartland himself, the Texan comedian has no interest in alienating any of the public, any gender, any race, any region, or any age-group, in fact, according to Yo, his comedy style is “family-first.” Not that the lighthearted comedian has anything against those who *do* have more abrasive styles of comedy, he just states that’s “*not his style.*” And truthfully, like some of the greatest network TV classics, his humor doesn’t *need* the shock-jock cruelty in order to be funny. The humor never suffers from his disposition, and it actually becomes quite clear that really, insults are kind of an unnecessary evil altogether.

Raised in a good home with loving, hard-working, well-educated parents, the broad-smiled funny man feels comedy comes from life experiences, and many of his own were positive, so, it’s easy to see why he brings that into his work. In fact, it was the amiable star’s upbringing and parents that inspired his hard work-ethic- leading to the many gigs he juggles, as well as his new FOX autobiographical sitcom that he hopes will be a lot like “*The Cosby Show,*” by way of showing a wholesome non-white family with quality values. Like anyone else, Yo himself has dealt with disappointments and traumas, and even suffered racist bullying in school by being called “*nigger chink*” by his classmates, however, it’s not his style to dwell on that pain- or badger others with it. The intuitive comedian figures that instead of living in those moments and making them consume him or his work, he would rather turn them into teachable moments and quickly move on to happier fare.

Besides, after all- he’s getting the last laugh now. Those ugly words about his blended ethnicity were only a precursor to his new laugh out loud comedy special; “*Blasian,*” which the former “*Chelsea Lately*” star says is, once-again, completely family-friendly. Airing all throughout the holidays, Yo states that his special is the perfect family-watch to keep everyone happy and rolling with laughter, and one of his favorite things about it is that when he takes it on the road, fans of all races, ages, creeds, and political inclinations come up to him and appreciate the show’s lack of politics. At the end of the day, the admirable artist is just looking to make the world laugh- and he seems dedicated on doing so without hurting anyone’s feelings.

And with the world in flux over finding comedians for hosting gigs, Yo continues to be the ideal candidate to step up to the plate. But, while it might be refreshing to see more non-divisive and non-white hosts on late night talk TV, the charming comedian insist that the lifestyle is not something he would like to endure. That said, fans can still look out for him *everywhere*, from Yahoo! to “*The Michael Yo Show,*” to his new sitcom, to “*Blasian.*” But, for now, read on to see what he had to say in *this* interview!

**“IF YOU ARE A COMIC THAT DOES PUSH THOSE BUTT-
TIONS, AND THAT’S THEIR THING, THEN THAT’S GREAT-
IT’S JUST NEVER BEEN MY THING.”**

WINGMAN: So, let's talk "*Blasian*." Obviously the name stems from the fact that you're black and Asian. That must make it even harder to find work in Hollywood where everyone wants you to fit into a box and be one thing, right?

MICHAEL YO: I think honestly it goes both ways; I believe I get a lot of jobs because I *do* look the way I look, but, obviously if they're looking for someone who is a hundred percent Asian, I'm not going to get that job. Same with if they're looking for a straight up black person. I've been told at auditions right to my face; "*You're just not black enough for this role.*" So, it goes both ways. But, I've gotten tons host jobs because I look the way I look- and people feel like eventually everyone's gonna look blended in some kind of way. So, it is refreshing to know that I've gotten jobs because of the way I look.

WINGMAN: What made you want to make a special, and what was that process like?

YO: The main thing that makes it special is that my comedy is very family oriented. It's not about politics, or about anything that tears people apart- I'm all about bringing people together; friends and family. We've all got crazy family members that act crazy and we have to deal with it. I'm more like a Jim Gaffigan or Bill Cosby, before the rape. And that's the kind of comedian I want to be- I want to be a family comic. So, while I was writing it I felt that I *could* talk politics, but, it's really not my thing. If I do a political interview and have to talk politics, sure I can do it, but when I perform, I just want to get away from it. I want people to watch this with

their teenage children, especially right around the holidays- that's the perfect time for it. This is a special that's perfect for the whole family. Yes, there's a few curse words- I'm not gonna lie, but it's really a family comedy when it's all said and done.

"MY FATHER ALWAYS SAID; 'DON'T TALK ABOUT IT- BE ABOUT IT'."

WINGMAN: People keep saying "*comedy is in danger,*" and yet, you seem to be really funny without ever offending anyone. How do you make humor work without offense?

YO: Well, if you are a comic that does push those buttons, and that's their thing, then that's great- it's just never been *my* thing. They say comedy comes from pain and drama in your life, and I'm not gonna lie- my parents are still married, I grew up in a good neighborhood, and I had a good life, so, that's what I bring on stage. I'm not going to make anything up. I'm not going to say that I went through hard times when I didn't. So, the one thing I know is that when I travel across the country is that when both liberals and conservatives come to see me they are unified in saying that they love the show and glad I didn't mention politics- and I like bringing people together. I don't offend people in real

life, so, what I'm doing is just how I am.

WINGMAN: You're also an extremely busy guy between stand up, your radio show, your yahoo show, and the television show you have in development. Discuss your work ethic.

YO: My parents really instilled it in me. My father always said; "*Don't talk about it- be about it.*" My mother also worked really hard- she would watch me all day, and then at night help my father because he had his own business. Now, I see them working their butts off in the restaurant business- and that's the toughest business ever. So, I got my work ethic one hundred percent from my parents. I started working at 14, and I didn't go through hardships, but I just wanted to work. So, that's the way I grew up.

WINGMAN: With "*The Michael Yo Show*" and Yahoo!, you're usually in this seat as the interviewer. What kind of guests do you like, and would you ever consider late night, or morning talk TV?

YO: I'd eventually love to do a morning talk show for *radio*. Hopefully that will be in the cards in the future for Sirius. But, when I started I thought I would love to do late night, but I have a lot of friends in late night and they warn me that you're there all day- you never leave or see your family. So, I realized I don't really want that anymore. I just really love stand-up comedy. FOX just announced my sitcom, and we're working hard to get that on the air. I would love to do that and stand-up. But, I would also love a weekly show

that I only have to do once a week. Something like John Oliver- because I love interviewing people. I love sitting down and getting to know someone.

WINGMAN: Right- you also have your own autobiographical family comedy in the works for FOX. You mentioned Bill Cosby before, and outside the dark side of him, that show did a lot for the civil rights movement. What can fans expect from your show?

YO: I wanted to expand on that. What I love about Bill Cosby is that it was very influential watching that show. And I'm not talking about Bill Cosby as a person, but the Huxtables meant a lot to television. It was the first time you ever saw a black family doing well on TV and not living in the projects. He was a doctor, the mom was a lawyer, the kids were all well-educated. It was revolutionary. When I was growing up, I was black and Asian [laughs,] well, I'm *still* black and Asian, but as a kid I could really identify with that show. My father has a degree in physics, and I grew up in a good household- and that was never portrayed in the media, so, to see that on television was very inspiring. I love the lessons you take away from that, and as I work on my own sitcom and yes, we're going to talk about racial issues, but we're going to make moments out of them rather than the entire episode being about race. It won't be ignored, but I just want to turn them into *moments*- because otherwise, it's just not my kind of comedy. If you come to my comedy show I *do* talk about racial issues, but I don't stay on them. I address it, make a joke about it, open people's eyes, and move on- and that's all you really need. No one needs to be drilled over the head for thirty minutes about one incident. You make someone feel like shit, but no one wants to feel like shit for another hour- let them understand that what they did was wrong, and move on. I do talk about how people were racist to me growing up. I went to an all-white school, and growing up,

people would call me "*Nigger chink.*" And yes, I do talk about that in my show, but it's something I learned to live with and now I open people's eyes. You address the issue, show people that it's wrong, and then you move on.

WINGMAN: And, of course, you got your big break on "*Chelsea Lately.*" Was that show fun?

YO: "*Chelsea Lately*" put me on the map, and Chelsea Handler is one of the most loyal people you will ever meet in your life. And, yes, she beat me up for seven years on that show, but, without that show I would never be here today, and without Jo Koy being my mentor, I would never be here today. So, big shout out to Chelsea because she knew what her audience liked. Her audience loved her beating up on me like I was her little brother, and I took it because I



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knew it was my role on the show. And if I wasn't on that show, I probably never would have started stand-up comedy. So, I owe a lot to Chelsea, and for my stand-up career, I owe everything to Jo Koy, because he was the one that guided me and taught me to tell real stories rather than just jokes, because then people invest in *you* rather than just a joke.

WINGMAN: So, with a scripted series on the way, and a very busy schedule, what else would you love to do?

YO: I would love to host a game show! I love watching people win money! So, if I had a checklist, the next thing I'd love to do is host a game show. I just love being around families, or happy couples.

A COMEDIAN THAT DOESN'T HATE PEOPLE TO THE POINT OF BEING GLAD TO BE AROUND HAPPY COUPLES? HOLLYWOOD NEEDS TO GIVE YO WHATEVER HE WANTS— HE JUST CROSSED INTO SAINT TERRORITY! ■

LIGHTNING ROUND!

1. You're from Texas. Where's the best place to eat there?

Good Company BBQ. I miss them so much!

2. Funniest show currently on TV?

I don't watch a lot of comedies. The show I watch all the time is "This Is Us."

That is *definitely* not the funniest show on TV.

No, that's the show that makes you cry the most! But, there is a comedy I do really love right now; "The Neighborhood." "Happy Together" is good also.

3. Favorite guest to interview?

Dwayne Johnson, followed closely by Will Smith, followed closely by Kevin Hart, followed closely by Tom Cruise, followed closely by Robert Downey Jr., followed closely by Tom Hanks. If you could mesh all those people together, that would be my favorite interview, because they're all amazing- and they bring it. They have insane work-ethic, and even though they have to do a thousand interviews, they still knock it out of the park and see it as their job. They come to work.

4. Best talk show host of all time?

Without a doubt, Johnny Carson.

5. You were VJ number 2 in "From Justin To Kelly." Favorite Kelly Clarkson song?

[Cracks up] I have yet to watch that movie. I was only in the extras, I didn't even make it into the film, how bad could that scene have been?

Compared to the rest of the movie...

[Cracks up] You're the first person to ever bring it up. But my favorite Kelly Clarkson song is "Since You've Been Gone." That's my jam. That's one of the best songs ever.

6. Biggest guilty pleasure?

Chocolate and pizza.

7. TV show most in need of a drinking game?

Let's circle back to "This Is Us" on that one. [Laughs]



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D

rew Barrymore. Josh Brolin. Scott Eastwood. Kate Hudson. Colin Hanks, Eva Amurri, Scott Caan, Bryce Dallas Howard, and Liza Minnelli. All some of the biggest stars who were born into Tinseltown through a blood line of Hollywood's most powerful players, only to fulfill the destinies of their crest and become powerful in their own right, and now, three more heir-apparents are about to claim their thrones.

All having grown up as children of icons with multiple mega-stars in their families, rising talents Max Madsen, Ava Sambora Locklear, and Weston Coppola are no strangers to film sets, red carpets, and unfortunately, even tabloids. In fact, each one has had their names printed in the press before they could even speak, and they all have already had to shrug off the negative attacks that sometimes comes with fame, handling it like a champ, and proving their skins are thick enough to take on such a tough business as they embark on their own acting careers.

Having already modeled for Italian Vogue, handsome and introspective Max Madsen has already proven that he has the good looks leading man status, and with movies like *"Rock, Paper, Dead"* on the way, the lean star shows he has the acting chops to accompany his dapper appearance. As the son of iconic actor Michael Madsen, and nephew of the highly revered Virginia Madsen, Max comes from a long line of incomparable talent, not to mention a slew of brothers that are also now acting to start an empire with. Possessing the same competence as the rest of his family to display subtle and sophisticated emotion with just one look, Madsen is sure to immediately become in high demand.

Meanwhile, as the princess in one of the biggest rock and roll *dynasty*, Ava Sambora Locklear gets her name from *"Bon Jovi"* musical legend Richie Sambora, and inimitable bombshell Heather Locklear- who is easily one of the most quintessential television stars to have ever lived. Much like Kate Hudson and Goldie Hawn, Ava is a radiant stunner that could almost serve as a doppelganger to her beloved mother, offering up the same magnificent beauty, magnetic charm, and, of course, million-dollar-smile. All we can say is, *AVA, BE THY NAME!*

Then, of course, there's Weston Coppola- not only the son of Academy Award winning talent Nicholas Cage, but, also part of one of the most heavy-hitting families in show business. As the grand-nephew of *"The Godfather"* director, Francis Ford Coppola, and possessing a dominating presence that makes people quickly stand to attention, Weston is easily prime for the role of a powerful mobster, or really, Roman king- and the fact that his acting reel proves that he has the ability to take on countless accents and dialects is even a further testament to his talent.

And while these three were born into what is known as Hollywood royalty while all possessing a slew of their own good looks and talents, really, at the end of the day, they are relatable, down-to-earth, and come across like normal kids. Having already known one another, the boys both immediately gave each other a hug and started catching up, while Ava, coming from school, was bummed about potentially disappointing her super-famous parents with a less than stellar grade. They were each born into some of the most talented and powerful families in the world, and still, they face the same day to day issues as everyone else. And while they have grown up surrounded by glitz and glamour, the most obvious thing they can all boast is tremendous love and support from their iconic families as they each begin on their own paths to success, ready to conquer their crowns.

Look out for exclusive interviews with Madsen, Sambora Locklear, and Coppola online at www.wingmanmagazine.com, and keep an eye out for all of them on the big screen very soon!



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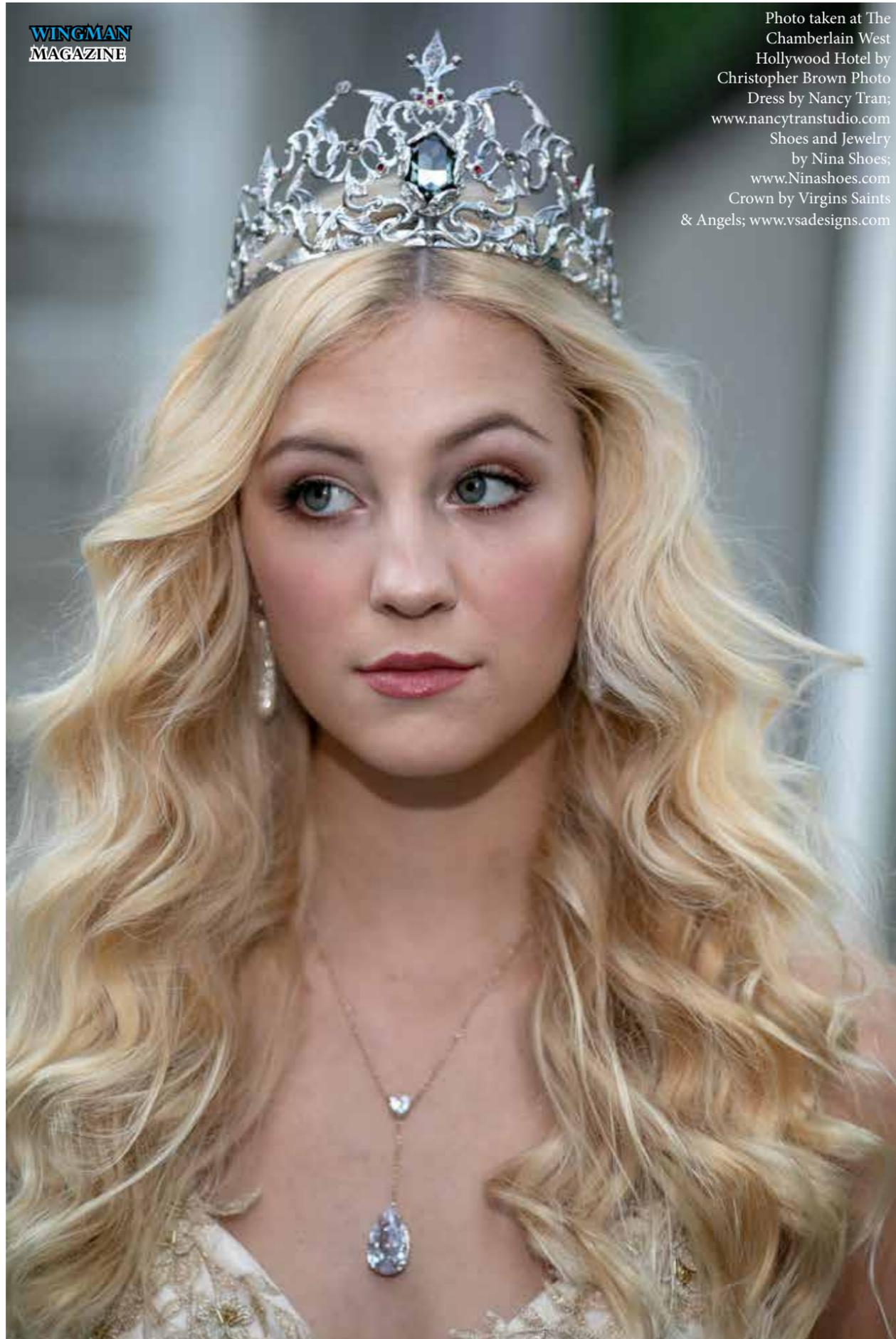


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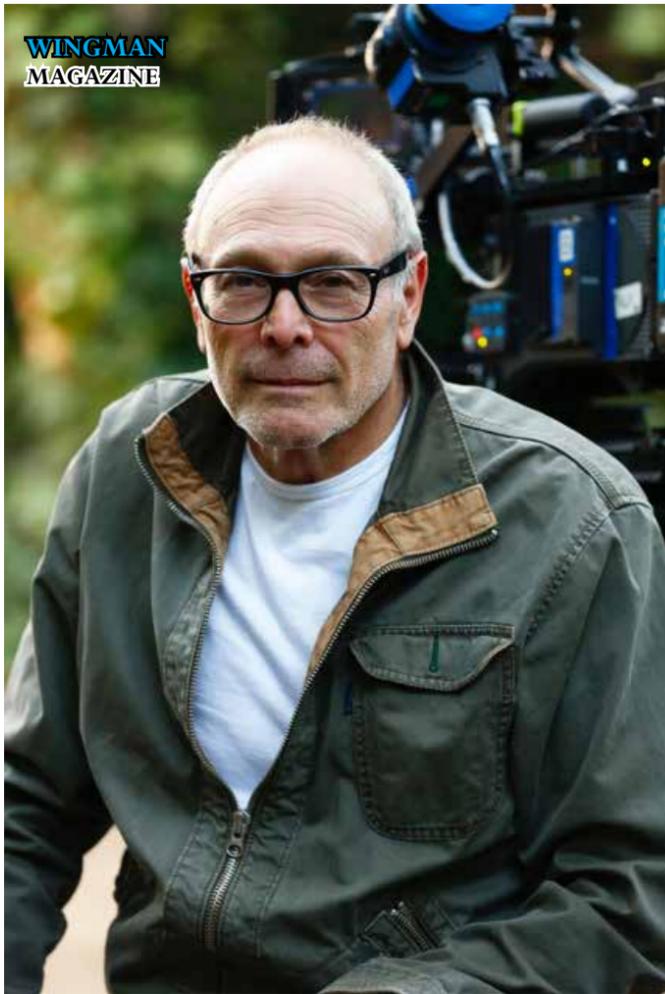
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DIRECTOR'S
SPOTLIGHT

SOME KIND OF
WONDERFUL

FROM
"PRETTY IN PINK"
TO
"THE REPLACEMENTS"
AWESOME AUTEUR
HOWARD DEUTCH
MAKES MEMORABLE MOVIES

Story by Andrew Cristi

Kastner, Deutch learned early on that when it comes to making great movies, it's all about the material- and smart enough to see the genius in Hughes before everyone else, he sagely knew the gold that was given to him.

Passionate about his films to a fault, the dedicated director actually cried when he first read "Pretty In Pink," was traumatized by the change in ending, and then felt so strongly about "Some Kind Of Wonderful" that he almost left the film when he felt like it wasn't perfectly cast- and it's that devotion to perfect casting that not only gets Deutch the best talent in the business from Ted Danson, to Sophia Loren, to Keanu Reeves, but, it also brought him together with his wife; Lea Thompson. From the first version of the script, Deutch knew that he wanted the talented "Back To The Future" stunner in his movie- and it wasn't until after he came back to the film and it changed to more of a drama that he got his way, which then, of course, lead to over 30 years of marriage.

In real life, the dynamic duo have had a romance that rivals even his best on-screen creations as they have not only made beautiful movies together, but also beautiful children who are just as talented and hard-working. The unstoppable family recently all joined forces to make "The Year Of Spectacular Men," with Deutch producing, Thompson directing, their daughter Madelyn Deutch penning the script, and their daughter Zoey Deutch starring alongside her. With only a minimal budget, the family moved mountains and put together the compelling dramedy, complete with not only all *their* talents, but also gift artists like Cameron Monaghan and Jesse Bradford.

These days, the New York native has turned some of his attention to the golden age of television,- directing tons of TV hits such as "True Blood," "Empire," "Claws," and "Barry," and working with greats like Robert Kirkman on "Outcast," and Guillermo Del Toro on "The Strain." Never pigeonholed by a genre, Deutch consistently shows that he can excel at dramas like "Life Unexpected," comedy like "Young Sheldon," and even horror like "American Horror Story"- and he was even nominated for a Director's Guild Of America award for his riveting TV movie; "Gleason."

Intending on now turning his focus back to film, the passionate filmmaker is excited about a film he has in the works starring living legend Shirley MacLaine- a movie Deutch promises to be funny, touching, and surprising. And while the movie might pack some punches, one thing that would never surprise the audience when it comes to his films is how great it's going to be- fans already know that's a given. To find out more about the incredible auteur and his career, read on!

WINGMAN: Let's start with this; you are the master at creating believable romance on screen, and even more-so, romance that GUYS believe in. From "Some Kind Of Wonderful" to "My Best Friend's Girl," to "The Replacements"- which features one of the best on screen kisses of all time. How do you create such chemistry?

HOWARD DEUTCH: It all comes down to working with actors who are talented- actors know all about human behavior and know how to create a sense of longing for their partner. I always feel like

**"IT ALL
COMES DOWN
TO WORKING
WITH ACTORS
WHO ARE
TALENTED"**

that's 90% of it. With real estate it's location, and with this, it's all about casting. We had a lot of auditions for a female to star opposite Keanu Reeves in "The Replacements," and when Brooke Langton came in, I just instantly knew that she was the girl. Plus, she was an amazing cheerleader! Her understanding of the part, and her eagerness to create a character that was so much more dimensional than it was on the page- it really made it work.

WINGMAN: In general, you have an amazing eye for talent- from superstars like Ted

Getting young men to fall in love with love seems like an impossible task, and yet, for gifted filmmaker Howard Deutch, he makes it seem effortless as he repeatedly does so time and time again. Usually, when a romance is prominent on film, studios pitch them as "chick flicks," but, with Deutch at the helm, it seems as though there truly *can* be romances that capture the male heart and trajectory. With "Some Kind Of Wonderful," the intuitive auteur took the drama and perfectly captured the angst of a young man caught in the middle of choosing between his own Betty and Veronica. Then, in "The Replacements," he cleverly mixed sports in as the sparks flew, and with "My Best Friend's Girl," not only did he work in the bond between bros, but, he also made, perhaps, the funniest movie of all time. His scenes are epic, the feelings are real, and when he creates a kiss, it steal the show; case in point, when Mary Stuart Masterson's "Watts" teaches Eric Stoltz' "Keith" how to kiss in "Some Kind Of Wonderful," or, when Keanu Reeves finally plants one on Brooke Langton in "The Replacements"- which between the acting and the music made for one of the greatest on-screen kisses of all time. When it comes to his films, characters and material are key, and it becomes just as easy for audiences to fall in love with the people on screen as it is for them to fall in love with one another.

Of course, a major reason for this is because the "Pretty In Pink" director was mentored by his frequent collaborator, the late, great John Hughes- who is easily one of the most iconic writers of film history. Together, these men were an unbeatable pair, taking what the world saw as "teen movies" and creating classics for audiences of all ages, classics that stand the test of time and go down in history easily alongside "Star Wars" and "Titanic" as some of the greatest movies within their genre. Taught by United Artists' Elliott

Danson, Macaulay Culkin, Sophia Loren, Ray Liotta, Dan Aykroyd, John Candy, and Keanu reeves, to sleeper greats like Brooke Langton, and Glenne Headly, and you even gave Candace Cameron-Bure and Annette Bening their on screen debuts! How do you pick 'em?

DEUTCH: Oh, I'd love to take the credit for that, but it's all luck- and it always starts with the material. One of my first jobs was working for Elliott Kastner at United Artists, and he was very generous in teaching me about the business. He always said to me that it's all about the material- that's really what drive the script. So, if you have something good that draws in the artists and makes them want to do a good job, you will get the best performances. Without that, you have nothing. So, I've been fortunate to get good material, and that has really attracted top-notch talent.

WINGMAN: You're also great at love triangles. "Pretty In Pink" has a pretty famous one, and supposedly John Hughes wrote "Some Kind Of Wonderful" as retaliation for Duckie not getting the girl. How did you feel about that ending?

DEUTCH: Well, I suppose you already know that the original ending of "Pretty In Pink" was for Duckie to get the girl, but the audience didn't respond well. They wanted her to get the cute boy [laughs.] So, forgetting the politics, we gave the audience what they want, and John [Hughes] had to rewrite that. And the movie still worked great. At first, I was inconsolable- because really the whole movie was built on that ending and the whole idea

that true love endures, and it just didn't work out that way. But, then John came to me and said; "Blaine has to go alone," and that would redeem him- and it worked. But, it was my first movie and that was pretty traumatic. I don't know if "Some Kind Of Wonderful" was retaliation, per se. I was on a plane with Brian De Palma before that movie, and I was having such a hard time casting Eric's [Stoltz] role. Brian told me; "If you can't cast it, don't do it!" So, I told that to John and he quickly replaced me- and I was bereft over it. Luckily, John was generous enough to let me back in on the project. So, I went back to the film, and the script was rewritten a bit while I was gone. Originally it was more of a comedy, and when I came back it became more of a drama. I had wanted Michael J. Fox and couldn't get him, and I just didn't want to do the movie as a comedy without the right star in the lead. When I came back and it was a drama, Eric was really right for the role. He did a great job, and the rest worked really beautifully.

"IT'S ALL LUCK- AND IT ALWAYS STARTS WITH THE MATERIAL"

WINGMAN: And you met your wife, Lea Thompson, on the film.

DEUTCH: And she also originally turned it down! But, when I came back in, they wanted her again- and she had just done "Howard The Duck," and it didn't open very well, so she was more inclined to do it.

WINGMAN: You worked with her again on "Caroline In The City," and now she is directing also. And you daughters are also now acting. You all just had a bit of a family affair with "The Year Of Spectacular Men."

DEUTCH: That was really exciting, and a very good movie. And it was made on such a minimal budget. Lea was a great director, and my daughter Madelyn wrote a great script, and Zoey is really a great actress- they all really shined. And people really liked the film, which was great.

WINGMAN: You were really John Hughes' go-to guy. How was it working with him?

DEUTCH: John was great. He was my mentor and gave me my first break. We met when I was doing trailers, and I did some for him and we really liked each other. He told me he was going to send me two scripts; one was about his high school experiences in Arizona called "The New Kid," and the other was "Pretty In Pink," and the latter actually made me cry, so, I figured that was the one I should do. So, that was what happened, and through him I got a huge support system. At the time, I didn't know I'd be working with what is perhaps the greatest screenwriter of our generation, but, that's what he

turned out to be, and I was really lucky he was so invested in me. It turned out that I was working with a genius, but at that time he was just a great guy to me.

WINGMAN: You guys created teen movies that touched audiences of all ages, and they really became classics. What are teen movies of today doing wrong?

DEUTCH: I don't think they're doing anything *wrong*, and it's funny- I get asked that question a lot. I think it was just that John was a very unique writer and very ahead of his time. He wrote characters that people could really relate to. And his characters were all based on *truth*. They weren't based on what people *might* like, these people were all true to him. Those characters were real, and people identified them with their own lives, and that's what might be missing today. That's not just teen movies, though, it's a lot of movies. John didn't focus the story on the *plot*, he focused the story on the *characters*. His movies, like "The Breakfast Club," worked like plays- you would have an event, and then the characters would orbit around that event like the sun. In "The Breakfast Club" it was detention, in "Pretty In Pink" it was the prom, in "Sixteen Candles" it was a birthday. It was all about following the characters through the undertow of whatever journey they're on.

WINGMAN: "My Best Friend's Girl" was truly one of the funniest movies of all time. It's actually shocking that Kate Hudson was nominated for a razzie for it. She was the funniest part of the film! She is a great comedic actress! She

should have seriously been nominated for a Golden Globe!

DEUTCH: I didn't know she was nominated. But, I really loved that movie, and I always felt hurt that it didn't do better. I don't want to put the blame on the studio, or anyone really, but I think the financial crash really had a lot to do with it. But, Kate was great- and I'm so glad she said yes. I wasn't having a lot of success at that particular period and time, and she's one of the biggest actresses, and she said yes to the film- and that really meant a lot to me.

"AT THE TIME, I DIDN'T KNOW I'D BE WORKING WITH WHAT IS PERHAPS THE GREATEST SCREENWRITER OF OUR GENERATION"

WINGMAN: You've directed a few sequels where you weren't involved with the first- "Grumpier Old Men," "The Odd Couple 2," and "The Whole Ten Yards." Is there any sequel you would really love to do?

DEUTCH: There's not really any sequels I want to do, but there's this movie with Shirley MacLaine that I'm really excited about. I've been working on it for a long time, and I think it's going to surprise a lot of people. It's funny, but also touching. I'm very excited about it.

WINGMAN: Lately you've been directing a lot of TV, including "True Blood," "Claws," "Young Sheldon," "Empire," and you even directed the pilot of "Melrose Place." How is it different directing TV?

DEUTCH: I really like them both. Right now I've been craving to do a film, because I really haven't done one in a while. I have a great appreciation for television though, because it kept me working, and it's fast. I never really liked the waiting around part of the business- time is precious.

WINGMAN: Music is also really important to your films and you really pick music that makes the scene, and many of your hits are named after songs, and you even directed Billy Joel and Billy Idol videos!

DEUTCH: Music is everything to me. I heard the other day from someone; "Music cuts through everything- even politics." Music is a unifier. When I worked at United Artists, I worked very closely with musician and composers- I was really involved in a lot of levels with the music. In "Pretty In Pink," I wanted to open the film with the score, and John told me to open with the title song, so, we showed it with both and really, I was dead wrong, and it taught me an important lesson about music and how to stay true to the DNA of the work. the story was about a fashion

designer who went to the prom and designed her own dress, which made her "Pretty In Pink." You have to stay true to the story.

LUCKY FOR FANS, DEUTCH'S ENDLESS DEDICATION TO THE STORY HAS MADE FOR MANY CLASSIC FILMS. ■



Deutch, pictured with Walter Matthau, filming "Grumpier Old Men"

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PRETTY IN PINK

Captivating "SHAMELESS" Star
JESS GABOR
Helps Pay Tribute To
HOWARD DEUTCH

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W

ith an esteemed collection of leading ladies such as Kate Hudson, Brooke Langton, Molly Ringwald, Mary Stuart Masterson, Annette Bening, and of course, Lea Thompson, beloved filmmaker Howard Deutch certainly has a knack for picking incredibly talented and magnetic women. That said, we here at Wingman knew that in order to truly do the director justice, our pick for this tribute would have to be spectacular. Luckily, we found the perfect actress; electric "Shameless" star Jess Gabor, who is not only immensely talented, but, also a total knock-out, with fiery red hair, radiant features, and an understated, natural beauty that channels many of the aforementioned iconic women from his films.

A total show-stopper, Gabor steals every scene she's in, possessing many of the wonderful qualities Deutch's leading ladies have all combined into one. She's hilarious like Hudson, a cool as can be tomboy like Masterson, great at capturing relatable angst like Ringwald, sultry in an unassuming way like Langton, immediately lovable like Thompson, and not only can she raise the bar like Bening, she also bears a striking resemblance to the academy award winner. All that, and still, the quickly rising new star manages to remain unique, and a total breath of fresh air for Hollywood.

Coming in to a cast like "Shameless," a show that boasts one of the greatest ensemble casts ever on television (one long overdue for a SAG award,) it would be easy for any actor to fade into the background. However, the adored Showtime series is known for casting the absolute best of the best, and true to form, Gabor not only holds her own against talented heavy-hitters like William H. Macy, Jeremy Allen White, Shanola Hampton, and formerly featured Wingman star Steve Howey, but, she also manages to stand out and shine. A true talent, the gifted actress masterfully handles the complex nuances of the show from its intense drama, to its laugh-out-loud comedy, and it's no wonder why she instantly became in such high demand. Her grasp of the material and her exceptional professionalism speaks way beyond her age and experience, and it comes as no surprise that everyone has swiftly become desperate to work with the highly competent beauty.

And, not only does the Los Angeles native have more on "Shameless" coming up this winter, and an exciting new movie, "The Confessional," on the way, she also can be prepared for a huge swarm of devoted fans as she was just tapped to lead the new FX/Freeform series; "Breckman Rodeo." Set among the rodeo scene, Gabor is excited that the show will appeal to all audiences and be able to also touch audiences in the heartland that might feel ignored by modern media. A writer herself, the multi-talented actress is business-savvy and intuitive on what sells, speaking of her projects with an astute knowledge that few get even after decades of working within the business.

And that keen insight comes in handy when the actress stops to praise Deutch for his classic films, which Gabor immediately applauds for not only being relatable, but *remaining* relatable to this day as they stand the test of time, citing that as exactly the kind of work she would love to be a part of. And with such undeniable talent, exceptional beauty, and innate ability to become beloved by both men and women, the fresh-faced girl next door would be a shoe-in to work with him- as well as other revered directors she mentions, such as M. Night Shyamalan, Aneesh Chaganty, and Damien Chazelle.

With "Shameless" ready to finish off its ninth season this winter and Gabor in such high demand, Wingman knew we got the perfect pick for our tribute- and she was more than game to dress up in homage to Molly Ringwald in "Pretty In Pink," and Lea Thompson in "Some Kind Of Wonderful," in order to help shine a spotlight on Deutch's iconic work. For more on Gabor, check her out on "Shameless" next month, and in the interview following!

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WINGMAN: So, let's start with "Shameless." Were you a fan of the show before you started?

JESS GABOR: Huge fan! I binged it all when I was in college.

WINGMAN: How does it feel to join such a phenomenal ensemble cast?

GABOR: It feels unreal. Because the ensemble is so present in the moment and makes such bold choices, I was constantly challenged to go beyond my acting abilities. It forced me to raise the bar for myself and bring my A-game every day.

WINGMAN: What can fans expect from the second part of the season in January?

GABOR: A whole lot of drama! I can't say any spoilers, but I promise you will not be bored.

WINGMAN: You are also working on a new show for Freeform; "Breckman Rodeo." Can you talk about that?

GABOR: Yes! "Breckman Rodeo" is a new FX/Freeform pilot following a bad-ass 17 year old girl who struggles to combine her love of the rodeo with today's modern world. I am actually about to hop on a jet to New Zealand to film it!

WINGMAN: Word is that the show should be pretty unifying and serve as great entertainment for both metropolitan viewers, as well as those in the heartland. Can you talk about being part of a series that looks to touch the hearts of all fans, regardless of geography?

GABOR: I think there is something very special about getting to watch yourself in TV and film. What I mean is when people get to watch a show about *their* profession or a show set in their community. It feels relatable and cherished. There has not been a lot of programs that show the 21st century struggles happening in middle America. I am only hoping that "Breckman Rodeo" will show that everyone, no matter geography, wants the same thing. We may differ in values and ways of life, but in the end we are all human and need love and connection.

WINGMAN: Of course, this shoot was in tribute to incredible director Howard Deutch. How did it feel stepping into the iconic roles from his classic films?

GABOR: Deutch created such a beautiful manifestation of the 80's that it felt like I was just stepping into an era. There is nothing like getting all dressed up as characters I watched as teen.

"I AM ONLY HOPING THAT "BRECKMAN RODEO" WILL SHOW THAT EVERYONE, NO MATTER GEOGRAPHY, WANTS THE SAME THING."

"I LOVE HOW DEUTCH WAS ABLE TO CAPTURE THE CHALLENGES OF WHAT IT'S LIKE TO BE IN YOUR ADOLESCENTS, AND HOW RELATABLE IT IS"

WINGMAN: Which Howard Deutch film is your personal favorite, and why?

GABOR: I would have to go with the classic "Pretty in Pink". One; because I am a huge fan of Molly Ringwald, but also because I love how Deutch was able to capture the challenges of what it's like to be in your adolescents, and how relatable it is. A movie made in 1986, but still applies to present day.

WINGMAN: With a role on "Shameless"- one of television's most popular shows, and a new leading role on Freeform, you are going to be in high demand. Who else would you love to work with, and what other roles would you love to play?

GABOR: Thank you, I hope that this will open up more doors for me! With having success in the TV world, I think my next venture would be towards feature films. The dream would be to do a film directed by M. Night Shyamalan, Aneesh Chaganty, or Damien

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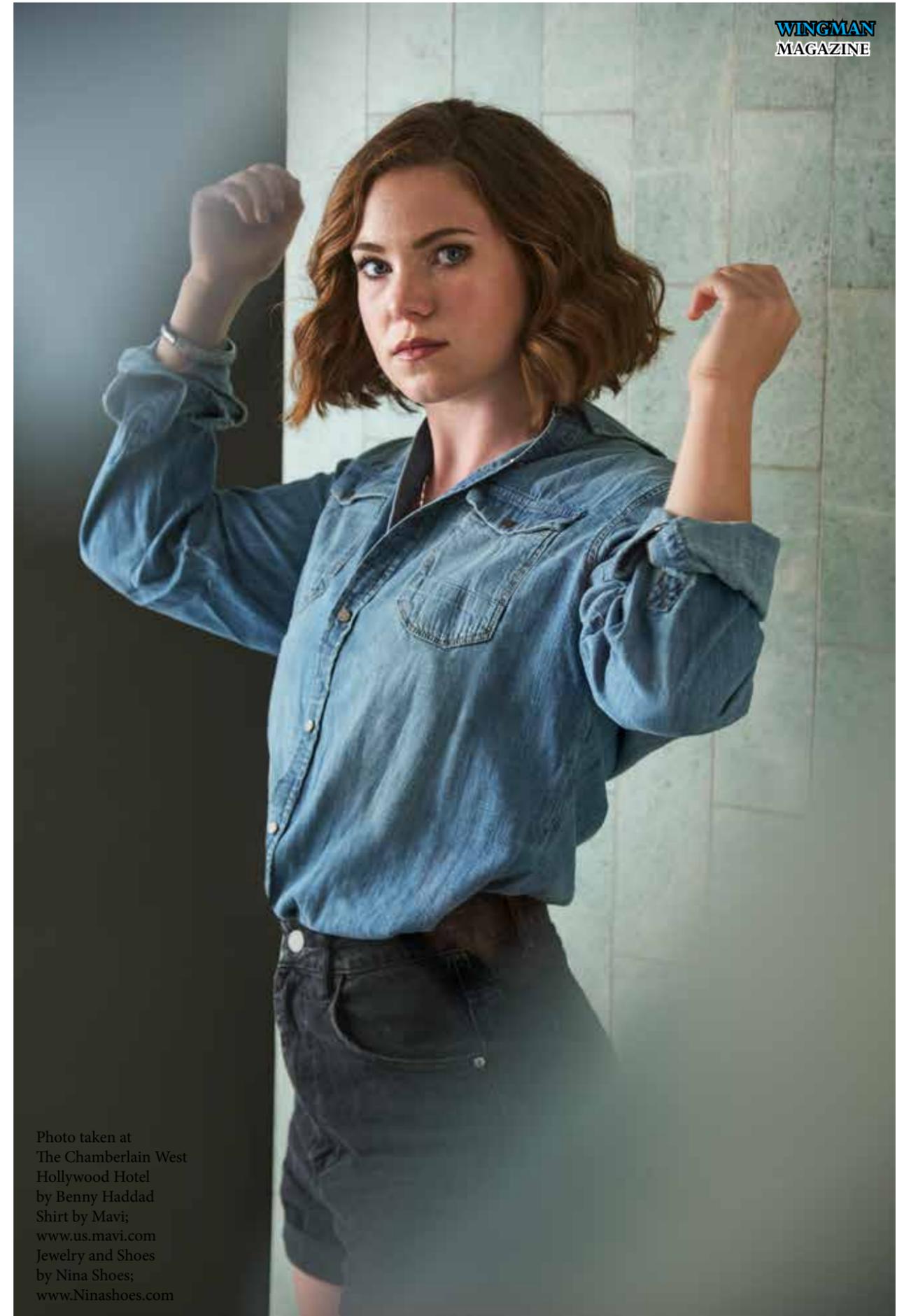




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Chazelle. There is also this amazing YA novel called *“Starters”* by Lissa Price that I would love to do the film/TV adaptation of.

WINGMAN: You also have a movie on the way; one alongside Vanessa Marano; *“Confessional.”* Can you tell fans about it?

GABOR: I am so excited for *“Confessional”* to come out in 2019! It is a thriller where the entire movie takes place in a confession booth on a college campus. Think *“Pretty Little Liars”* meets *“13 Reasons Why.”* I also just produced, wrote, and starred in a short film called *“Her Story.”* It is a mockumentary style film that follows the struggles of a young heroin addict. It is currently on the festival circuit but will be show soon to the public.

So, not only is **GABOR**
a GREAT actress, BUT SHE
ALSO WRITES, PRODUCES, and
CLEARLY KNOWS HOW TO SELL
a MOVIE; a MIX OF **“13 REA-
SONS WHY”** and **“PRETTY
LITTLE LIARS”**? SOUNDS LIKE
an **instant Hit!**

CHANGING THE GAME

**Between Being The Nicest Character On
“13 REASONS WHY”
And Helping To Bring Visibility
To The Superhero Genre With
“SHAZAM,”
ROSS BUTLER
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Clothing Credits on Next Page



When it comes to breakout sensation Ross Butler, it's easy to give way more than thirteen reasons on why the "13 Reasons Why" star is so worthy of admiration. Not only does he play the most kind-hearted character on the explosively hot series, but, he is also immensely talented, built like a superhero, he has the face of a model, and judging by his Instagram, a beast-like workout routine. He's affable and funny in person, humble and down-to-earth, he's smart and well-spoken, and he has the thick head of hair every man dreams of. Seriously- he could easily sell *any* hair product. But, even beyond his amiable personality, his incredibly handsome good-looks, and his extraordinary acting ability, there's one major reason why the quickly rising star is making such a splash in Hollywood- he is breaking glass ceilings everywhere.

In a sweeping movement that surprisingly *just* began, Asian visibility has become celebrated and promoted by the media- a smart move considering how powerful and profitable the Asian film market is overseas. And, in a world where "Crazy Rich Asians" is not only the most successful romantic comedy in years, it's also a major award front-runner, and Tinsel Town has begun to realize the value in Asian-American actor and projects, and with that, Butler is one of the most prime and bankable up-and-coming leading men in the business.

With a stint on "Riverdale," and a leading role on "13 Reasons Why," the magnetic talent has already been a part of two of the most popular TV shows in the past decade, breaking major boundaries as he performs in roles that actually weren't written for an Asian actor. Dedicated toward ending stigma, when Butler first got into the industry he specifically looked for roles that challenged the stereotypes associated with his race- and as of five or six years ago, the only roles that offered that were unfortunately *not* intentionally written for Asians. Not letting that hold him back, the perseverant actor took on characters that allowed for color-blind casting, and by doing so, became one of the leading forces in entertainment to help prove just how important Asian-American actors in fact are, all of which helped lead to the major movement created in media now.

And with his career on the fast-track leading him to super-stardom, the game-changing artist has little intention of putting on the breaks. Recently cast in the anxiously anticipated "Shazam," Butler is one of *very* few Asian-American actors to take part in the massive superhero genre- and, again, he has every intention of helping to expand on that. Not able to tell too much about the super-secretive film, the Singapore native promises that it will be very different from anything D.C. has ever done before, and that fans can expect a film that is unique and refreshing.

And while it appears that everything that Butler takes part in seems new and refreshing- particularly because of his presence in the project, to him, changing the game is already becoming old hat, and as a truly dedicated performer that puts tremendous care into his craft, he is next seeking some more character-driven indie work to be a part of. Passionate about the roles he takes on, Butler is excited for sophisticated, three-dimensional roles that offer diversity of character, complex emotions, zero stereotypes, and many levels, and, again, as one of the most highly celebrated new leading men in the business, it's safe to say he will get them. With "13 Reasons Why" gearing up for a third season, "Shazam" set to be one of the hottest films of 2019, and his star on the rise like a rocket, Wingman sat down with Butler to hear all about his upcoming work, his love for his cast, and find out just how he helped change the entertainment business forever. Read on to see what he had to say!



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WINGMAN: So, let's start with "Shazam." I know you can't tell us much, but it must feel great to be an Asian-American in the superhero genre, one that isn't just a martial artist.

ROSS BUTLER: Right- unfortunately I can't tell you too much about the exact role, or what I'm doing, but it's great to be able to play an Asian character in a DC movie. Marvel has a couple of Asian characters, like Mantis, but there hasn't been too many. There's one in "Suicide Squad." But, it's really the kind of role I've always wanted to add to my resume. I wish I could elaborate more, but, [laughs,] as you know- I really can't.

WINGMAN: In general, Asian visibility is just starting to get attention. While "Crazy Rich Asian" has obviously helped, so have you in the fact that you play characters that are casted color-blindly. Discuss that.

BUTLER: From really the beginning of my career I had made a quick decision that I didn't want to just play



Photo taken at The Chamberlain West Hollywood Hotel by Diana Ragland

"We're finally seeing one another as people rather than for their ethnicity"

roles exclusively written for Asians, and that was because at that time- and that was only five or six years ago, all Asian roles were stereotypes. In "Crazy Rich Asians" they really don't have those stereotypes- these are deep and diverse roles, like the mother, and both Henry [Goulding] and Constance [Wu]- they also both play elaborate characters. They are not simply the nerd, or whatever. They are deep people. So, I'm glad we've gotten to the point now where Asians can play Asian roles and not feel like they are being pigeonholed to a negative idea or stereotype. But, yes, when I joined "Riverdale" and "13 Reasons Why," these characters were not exclusively written as Asian, and I think we're thankfully now at the point where in media Asian roles are starting to merge with what would be roles for actors of all races, and we're finally seeing one another as *people* rather than for their ethnicity. It's nice to be able to take on roles that are written for Asians without feeling stereotyped.

WINGMAN: "13 Reasons Why" really exploded in our culture and with it, swarms of fans came. Can you talk about that fan devotion?

BUTLER: We were not expecting it to do anywhere near as well as it did. Of course, the book and the script were great, but we would never have guessed how much it could have held audience's attention. I was surprised it

got as much attention as it did, but thankfully I had other roles before that which sort of prepared me with how to deal with the popularity of the series. So, while I may have been surprised, I was ready for so many people to watch.

WINGMAN: On the show you've tackled suicide, gun violence, and bullying. What else would you like to see the show tackle?

BUTLER: Personally, I am actually looking forward to the more character-driven material of the show rather than just the hot-button topics. Like, for example, I really liked exploring my character's actual relationship with Hannah, and the feelings that occur when a person cares about someone or something, and it's kept secret. I took a lot away from that; don't keep anything secret if it's something you really care about, because in the end, it might be fleeting, or hurtful. And that's really a major lesson I took away from the show.

WINGMAN: Any scoop for season three?

BUTLER: [Chuckles again] Absolutely not. Just like "Shazam" I'm pretty sworn to secrecy on season three of "13 Reasons Why."

WINGMAN: We had your "13 Reasons Why" co star Devin Druid, and I've also interviewed Tommy Dorfman- they're both wonderful. Talk about your great cast.

BUTLER: After spending so much time together, we really are like a family. We've come to a greater understanding of who we really are, and we've really in many ways now done a lot of growing up together. Devin came on to the project when he was 18, and I came on when I was 26, and he really feels like a little brother at this point- and that's the same with everyone involved. If we're going to be

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"After spending so much time together, we really are like a family"

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shooting in San Francisco, I'm glad to be shooting with them, because we really have built our own small community. We're very close.

WINGMAN: You are clearly in high demand. Who else would you love to work with, and what other roles would you love to play?

BUTLER: I would love to work with Emma Stone, because I have the hugest crush on her. I would love to do an indie movie with Emma Stone- that would be next level for me. [Laughs] but, just in general, a really good artsy, low-budget indie film. "Shazam" is an awesome project, but it does take up a lot of time, and I'm really excited for deep character-driven material to work on.

WINGMAN: Describe "Shazam" in three words.

BUTLER: [Long pause as he figures out what won't get him in trouble.] New. DC. Vibe. That's really all I can say. It's really different than anything they've ever done, and I think it's going to be very refreshing for movie fans.

***Again; leave it
to Butler to offer
something new, dif-
ferent, and refresh-
ing, and continue to
help changing the
game. ■***

CLUED IN!

ZURIN VILLANUEVA Helps Take “CLUELESS” From Beverly Hills To Broadway!



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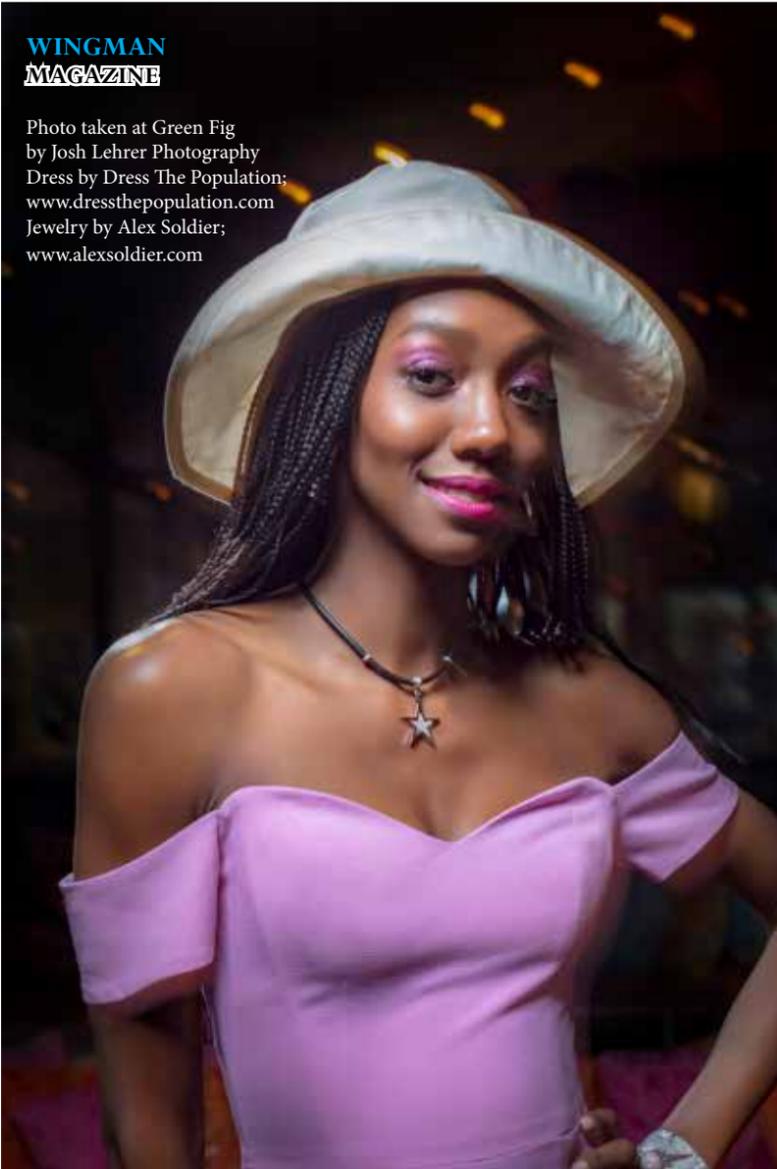
goes without saying that the Amy Heckerling hit “*Clueless*” practically defined the 90’s, as well as the generation that lived through it, and with all the screen-to-stage reboots happening, turning the film into Broadway musical was only a matter of time. However, with so many vehement fans of the flick that made “*As If!*” famous, casting is major key to the success of the show. Luckily, the producers found the perfect actress for the wise-cracking Dionne in Zurin Villanueva; who is totally ready to rock the 90’s garb and “*like, totally*” make it her own. Having grown up watching the movie with her older sister, the magnetic performer already knew every line before she even got cast!

As a child, the New York native knew that she was destined for stardom, and studied at the prestigious Laguardia School of the Arts where she honed her crafts of acting, singing, and dancing into one solid dynamic performance package. Being the well-trained triple threat that she is, Villanueva can keep the audience on their toes *and* keeping them coming back for more of her incredible performances.

And not only is the Broadway star a fantastic actress, but, her singing voice is off the charts. Whether it be songs from “*Clueless*,” “*The Book of Mormon*,” or “*Waitress*,” the young actress is making all of her roles come to life as she constantly rocks the mic. No stranger to classic teen movie stage adaptations, Villanueva has already been a part of the ensemble cast of Broadway’s version of “*Mean Girls*,” and even understudied for the roles of Karen and Gretchen. Having loads of fun on stage with those cast-mates, it’s needless to say that the quickly rising star did, in fact, make “*Fetch*” happen.

As an actress that does stage and screen, preparing for a role can require polar opposite versions of practice- depending on the project. When Villanueva works on a film, she is seeing the scenes one at a time, not able to see the film as a whole until completed, as opposed to a play or musical where she sees the whole show unfold in front of her- however, you would never know that the knock-out actress goes through any preparing at all as she always comes across like a complete natural- regardless what medium she performs in.

Fans have until January 13th to get to New York and see Zurin Villanueva as Dionne in “*Clueless: The Musical*,” on Broadway. Until then, read on to see what the breakout star had to say about her new hit play, her beloved role, and find out which movie cast members *she* thinks will be in those seats!



**WINGMAN
MAGAZINE**

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WINGMAN MAGAZINE: You are starring as Dionne in the Broadway musical rendition of “*Clueless*.” Talk about that a little bit, and what it means to be part of something that defines a generation.

ZURIN VILLANUEVA: The 90’s was a really great time for, because I was a kid [laughs,] and had no responsibilities. The music carries a certain mood of any time period. In the 70’s it was all about stepping out and being your own person. In the 80’s it was sex, drugs and rock and roll, and in the 90’s I felt like there was just an ease to it all. I find myself remembering that ease because the ease was in fact in the music. Even the hip hop was just beginning, so there was a lot of groove to it, and it’s wonderful to remember that.

WINGMAN: Since you had been cast for the part, how many times have you watched the film- either by yourself, or with your friends and cast mates, to try and get some of her mannerisms down?

VILLANUEVA: We have been so busy getting ready for the show as a cast, and we *did* have plans to watch it, which we unfortunately haven’t been able to do since we have been working so hard. I’ve seen it at least fifty times. It was geared towards my older sister when it came out, and when you are really little, whatever your older sister does, you do it too! She had me watching that movie inside

out, backwards and forwards. We wore out that VHS [laughs.] I could do the entire movie right now. I haven’t watched it again since we started rehearsal because I know it so well. It has been wonderful remembering all the lines and we have been meaning to watch it together, we just haven’t found the time.

WINGMAN: With the show just opening, how has the response from the crowds been?

VILLANUEVA: They have been all over the place! I believe our audiences have been extremely varied throughout the preview process. Sometimes we get subscribers, sometimes we get older fans of the movie, and then we have been getting kids that maybe haven’t seen it before. All of those different kinds of people are giving us a different respons-

es, so it’s been all over the place, and we can’t really expect anything, which is great, because it keeps us present and listening to what’s been happening. I kind of like it like that. I don’t want us to get too comfortable. We need to stay up on our toes a little bit.

“If I was a gambling woman, I would completely gamble on Alicia Silverstone and Paul Rudd coming to the show”

WINGMAN: We saw that the teacher from the film, Wallace

Shawn, stopped by the show. Has anyone else made an appearance as of yet?

VILLANUEVA: He did! We haven’t had anyone else, and we don’t have any confirmations as of yet. If I was a gambling woman, I would completely gamble on Alicia Silverstone and Paul Rudd coming to the show. I *really* think they are coming, I feel it in my bones.

WINGMAN: You were just in a Broadway version of “*Mean Girls*” as the understudy for Karen and Gretchen. Are they still trying to make “*fetch*,” happen?

VILLANUEVA: Of course! They have made it happen, many times over. They are doing wonderful over there, and I am just so happy that I was a part of it.



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It was such a great experience to see a musical production be created from the ground up. I had never done that before, I am just absolutely speechless from what I have observed and learned, and getting to go on for Gretchen and Karen is truly the most thrilling thing in the world [chuckles.] It's such a young vibing cast, and we just had a lot of fun.

WINGMAN: Your singing voice is absolutely incredible. What are some of your favorite Broadway songs to sing, and which one would you love to try and audition for?

VILLANUEVA: Recently I have added "When he sees me," from "Waitress," in my book after I went in for the tour. I would love to play that role of Dawn- it is just the sweetest role. And I love, love, love that song, and have been having a lot of fun in audition rooms with that one. I was doing "On My Own," for a while, and I love that song. It was a revisit, because there are songs that you start singing when you do in musical theater, and then you realize you are a bit green and you need to take some time away from a song. After a while I revisited the song once I became a stronger singer, and now I have been having a lot of fun singing that song. I would also love to do "The Last Five Years," which they don't produce that often.

WINGMAN: You have gone back and forth between stage and screen with your roles in "Detroit," and "The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel." How does preparing for one art differ from the other?

VILLANUEVA: When you are shooting film, you don't need snacks because they have them! [laughs] And I do love snacks. I find with television and film that it's interesting, because you do

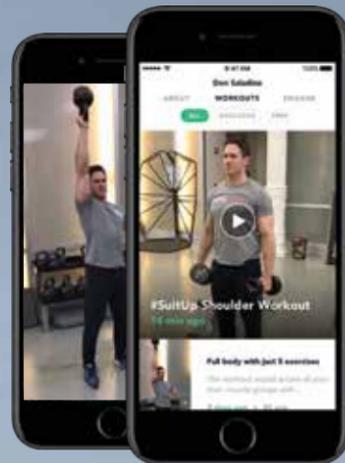
one scene at a time, one moment at a time. So I will rehearse one moment at a time and then the next one, and so on. So, I thought that was really cool that it's just one thing at a time, so you aren't looking at it as one beast all at once, and that's what theater is. You have to get a sense of what it is from beginning to end and you are rehearsing the whole thing a lot. It's the difference between sprinting and a marathon I suppose.

Villanueva better get ready for that marathon, as her career is sure to last a long time- because she is about to be in major high demand. The smash sensation better not make any plans to do anything outside acting for a while, because, as Dionne would say; "There goes her social life." ■

Today's top fitness & wellness expert, Don Saladino



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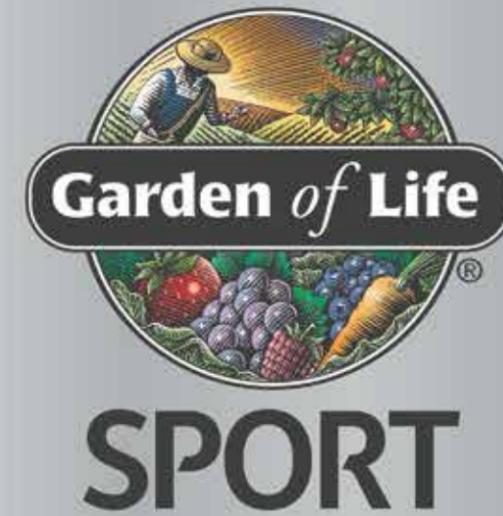


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requently, fans grow to love their favorite stars based on how well they “kick-ass” on screen- even though it’s well-known that the actors themselves are very rarely the ones doing the ass-kicking. For more than thirty-five years, stuntman Eddie Braun has been taking over for some of the biggest names in Hollywood, helping actors look as though they are defying death. Never recognizing himself, the fearless film asset has made his career by hiding his face and being the man behind those car chases, fight scenes, and explosions, all with complete disregard for his own health and safety.

In fact, many of the best and hottest shows currently on the air have had Braun step in for the action. From “Hawaii Five-O,” (co-starring out cover hero; Masi Oka,) to both the original *and* the reboot of “Magnum P.I.,” Braun has been a beloved stuntman on many of audiences favorite projects- and he is very highly revered behind the scenes. So much so that the latest season of “The Ranch” even threw an on-screen shout out to the master action man when Ashton Kutcher’s character joked; “Eddie Braun lost a finger!” (Just a joke, of course. Braun’s fingers are, in fact, still in-tact.)

One of the toughest stunts personally for Braun was done in 1995 when he was doubling for Charlie Sheen on the film, “Shadow Conspiracy.” Being deathly afraid of heights, Braun had to hang off of a building on one of those little windows washing carts from the 21st floor. He had to be out there when three of the four cables snap and it dropped from the 21st floor down to the 17th floor with nothing below him except for the traffic and passers-by. Not only did he have to do it once, but on three different nights and to say it messed with his head is an understatement.

After partnering up with Seven Bucks Productions, the film company of none other than Dwayne Johnson and Dany Garcia, Braun decided to make “Stuntman,” a documentary that chronicles his most dangerous stunt to date- and with the stuntman spending his entire career serving as the unsung (and *un-seen*) hero, being front and center in the film is much like the microphone drop for his career. Adopting the mantra of; “You never want to be the last person at a party,” the 57 year-old gets to walk off into the sunset on his own accord. And, with someone like The Rock in his corner producing the film, he is extremely excited for it to come out and for people to see what really goes into making a stunt work.

A lifelong fan of the iconic stuntman Evel Knievel, Braun knew at a young age what he wanted to do with his life. In fact, when the man behind the mask met his idol, he has to this day brought his autograph wherever he goes- including inside the rocket with him when he *finished* the famed stunt that Mr. Knievel never got to. Braun doesn’t look at it as *completing* what the legendary stuntman couldn’t, but, instead, *finishing* it. In fact, it meant so much to the fan-turned-stuntman to finish the stunt that he even named the rocket after his idol, “Evel Spirit.”

And, while the death-cheater may have idolized Evel Knievel, one thing he will never do is wear a cape during any of his own stunts, feeling it would be sacrilegious, believing that the only stuntman that could ever pull off the cape is Knievel, himself. Considering himself a very regular guy, Braun fancies himself more Clark Kent than Superman, but for industry professionals, they full-well know that the respected stuntman is every inch a superhero.

People may not know his face yet, but after “Stuntman,” comes out, they won’t forget it. For now, check out the interview with the great Eddie Braun below.

“No stunt is the same, they are all different, but you have to have a core sense of excitement and ability within to try and beat the challenge.”

WINGMAN MAGAZINE: You have a new documentary coming out soon produced by Seven Bucks Productions, which is of course owned by Dwayne Johnson. What is the documentary about, and how has it been working with Dwayne Johnson?

EDDIE BRAUN: It's been very humbling and insanely exciting! Imagine the ceiling when you have the *biggest* action star in the world embrace your little adventure and kind of say "I wanna take this thing globally," it's actually humbling. The film "Stuntman," in short, is about my 35+ year career, having met Evel Knievel as a child; which is the reason that I became a stuntman. To then become a professional stuntman, and towards the end of my career finish out what he started- that is really what the movie is about. How many people get to finish the dreams of their hero? I would guess; not many [chuckles.] The film "Stuntman: The Face You Never See," follows my career, and it culminates with the odyssey of me finishing out my idol's dream.

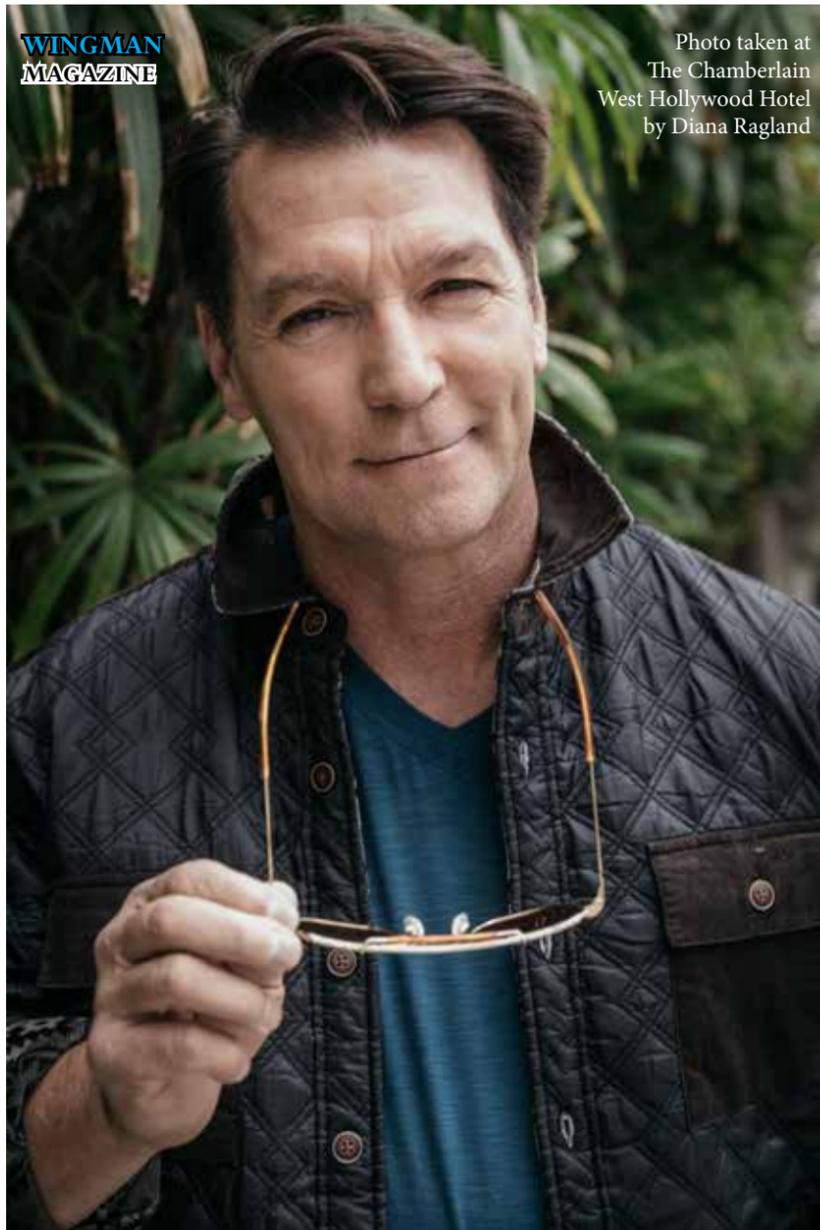


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WINGMAN: What is the training you go through- not only before a stunt, but during the process of a shoot to make sure you are fully ready and immersed in that stunt?

BRAUN: A lot of it has to do with the training that you have built up over the years. No stunt is the same, they are all different, but you have to have a core sense of excitement and ability within to try and beat the challenge. The challenge is always different, but the basic core motivations are always the same, and that is to do a real bitchin' job, do it well, and *survive* it. It's not a kind of job where there is a job description that can adequately describe it. It's part technical, part- and *mostly*- mental. It's a willingness to push yourself. And, it's a team effort. In essence you are trying to make someone else look good, it's not about one's self. A lot of people have called me a daredevil and I have *nothing* against daredevils, but a stuntman and a daredevil are two *entirely* different things. A professional stuntman is part of a team, you never see him, and he's there to make someone *else* look good. A daredevil is more of a self-glorifying thing. Even my rocket, there was a reason that I named it "The Evel Spirit," and not "Eddie Braun." It wasn't about me, it was about paying homage to the man that inspired me. There is a reason I'm a stuntman and not an actor. A; I *suck* at acting [laughs,] but B; I don't need to be famous. There are enough Kardashians in the world. I'm perfectly content with people not knowing my name. That was a conundrum I faced with this movie because it *is* about me- which is very weird.

WINGMAN: You just recently became the face of Best Made Co. What does it feel like for you to be front and center, seeing as you have made your career out of hiding your face to make others look good?

BRAUN: It makes me feel that I have used up about fourteen and a half minutes of my quasi-fame [laughs,] and I'm down to my last half minute here! I've done my rocket and everything associat-

ed with it as sort of my mic drop. None of this is to move up to a higher level of notoriety or anything. I am perfectly content to fade into obscurity, and maybe become some weird trivia question about "Who finished Evel Knievel's jump?" It's a means to an end for me.

WINGMAN: You are in your mid-50's and still making some of the biggest actors in the world look good with your stunts. What is the secret to your longevity, and how you take care of yourself?

BRAUN: [Laughs hard,] A lot of prayers and luck! There are so many factors that factor in. I have always said that I would rather be lucky than good any day of the week. You can learn to be good, but you can't learn to be lucky. So many times I have been banged up, and I have seen other super talented men and women, and they get so wrapped up and get injured and never work again. Maybe my secret is that I drink a lot of coffee and eat Pop Tarts! I don't know why I have been around for so long, maybe I'm a cockroach, I'm always going to be here. I have said before that sometimes I am riding high on the hog, and sometimes I've got nothing, but I'm always working! I've always said you don't want to be the *last* guy at the party. I have looked at my career like that. In the 35+ years of my career, I have had the time of my life, but there comes a time where you need to leave before you are asked or forced to leave. That's one of the reasons that I did The Rocket. What better way to wind down my career than to pay homage to the man that inspired me. I figured if I could pull that off and *survive*, that would be a pretty fitting mic drop. One of the last things that I put into my rocket when I got in it, was the autograph that I got from Evel Knievel I got as a child, it said "To Eddie: Happy Landings, Evel Knievel." I held it all these years. I didn't even know myself but I wonder what Mr. Knievel would think if that kid he signed an autograph to so many years ago would grow up to be a professional stuntman and finishing out his most audacious stunt.

WINGMAN: You attempted and fin-

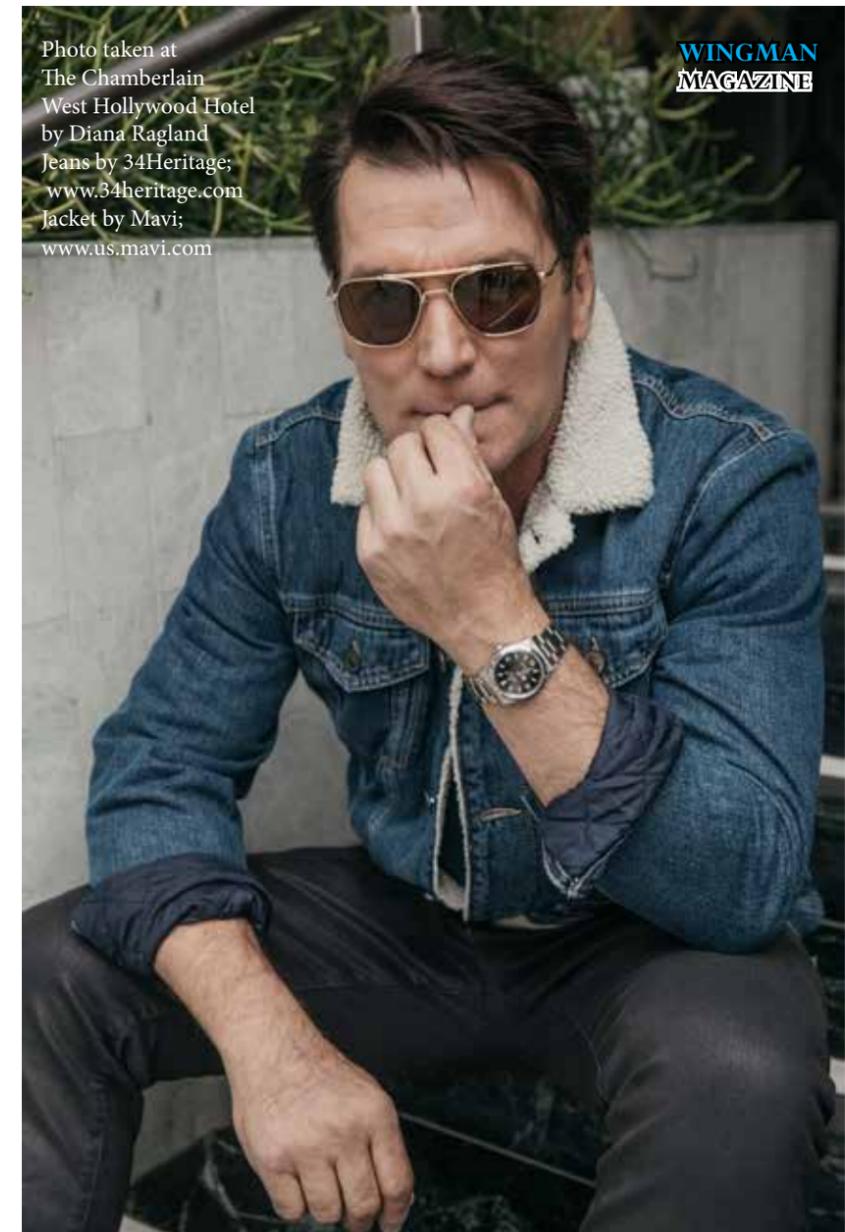


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ished the stunt that Evel Knievel started in 1974, which is jumping over Idaho's Snake River in a rocket. Talk about that.

BRAUN: A pitcher comes in during the 8th inning and closes out and wins the game, it doesn't mean all the other pitchers *suck*, they are all part of the same team. I don't think Evel Knievel failed, I feel like he inspired a generation of professional stuntmen. Me finishing out what he started doesn't make him a failure, it makes him uber-bitchin' because he inspired someone to go even further than him. When I set out to do this I had people from Redbull and Nitro Circus who all wanted to do this and *best* Evel Knievel. All these punks man wouldn't even be *here* if it wasn't for Evel Knievel [laughs.]

WINGMAN: Talk us through your thought process when you were sitting there in the rocket, knowing it could go really well or really bad in a blink of an eye.



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BRAUN: When you get down to those final moments, it gets very myopic and I became very focused. Half of me is thinking what I have to do and believe me there is a lot of things that I need to keep my wits about. The other part for me personally is that I am a religious guy and I am totally prepared to meet my maker. Hopefully, it's not painful, but fully prepared to meet my maker. Lastly I had to sit in the rocket for 45 minutes while they get everything ready and it gave me plenty of time to think. While I am sitting there I am listening to Eminem's "Lose Yourself." There is the side of me that is saying that if things go bad, they are going bad *quick*. The other side of me is the cockiness thinking that I can pull this off, I'm not an idiot and I'm not crazy and I wouldn't be here if I didn't think I could pull it off. I had a lot of things to do before I hit the ignition button and at that point I went from zero to 439 miles an hour in less than seconds. It was *insane!* I was going eight g's! Nothing I would ever do again! Now I know why Mr. Knieval never went back to do it again, it sucks! There was nothing pleasant about that whole thing and at no point during it was I having fun [laughs hard.] I do love my job but I definitely would not do that again.

WINGMAN: With all of the stunts you have done over the past three decades, your body must've taken a beating. What's the worst injury you have ever gotten due to a stunt?

BRAUN: The worst injury I would say happened in 2000 during a show I was working on at the time called "Walker, Texas Ranger" with Chuck Norris. I got injured getting ready to do a

stunt I have done 100 times but they will get you sooner or later. I severely broke my back in three places, broke my pelvis, collapsed my lung and did a lot of damage. I thought I was going to be wheelchair bound for the rest of my days but after a nine hour surgery they put humpty dumpty back together again and I was back to work not long after that.

The prestigious stuntman might call that luck, but audiences all know that Braun is just that good- as do all our favorite stars, from Ashton Kutcher, to Masi Oka, to Dwayne Johnson. When THOSE are a person's references, it's easy to say they offer a lot more than good luck! □

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