

LEONINE

STUDIOS

präsentiert



mit
Ana de Armas,
Anjelica Huston, Gabriel Byrne, Lance Reddick, Catalina Sandino Moreno,
Norman Reedus sowie Ian McShane
und Keanu Reeves

Regie: **Len Wiseman**
Drehbuch: **Shay Hatten**

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STAB

Regie	Len Wiseman
Drehbuch	Shay Hatten
Charaktere kreiert von	Derek Kolstad
Produktion	Basil Iwanyk, Erica Lee, Chad Stahelski
Executive Producer	Keanu Reeves, Louise Rosner Kevan Van Thompson, Kaley Smalley Romo, Shay Hatten
Kamera	Romain Lacourbas, AFC, ASC
Produktionsdesign	Phil Ivey
Schnitt	Nicholas Lundgren, Jason Ballantine ASE, ACE
Kostümbild	Tina Kalivas
Visuelle Effekte	Paul Linden
Musik	Tyler Bates and Joel J. Richard
Casting	Olivia Scott-Webb, CDG, CSA

BESETZUNG

Eve	Ana de Armas
Winston	Ian McShane
John Wick	Keanu Reeves
The Director	Anjelica Huston
The Chancellor	Gabriel Byrne
Charon	Lance Reddick
Lena	Catalina Sandino Moreno
Daniel Pine	Norman Reedus
Nogi	Sharon Duncan-Brewster

KURZINHALT & PRESSENOTIZ

Es ist ein Fest für die Fans des John Wick-Universums! In **FROM THE WORLD OF JOHN WICK: BALLERINA** schwört Ana de Armas alias Eve Macarro Vergeltung für den Mord an ihrer Familie. Der Film, der während der Ereignisse von „John Wick: Kapitel 3“ spielt, folgt der jungen Rächerin, die bei den berüchtigten Ruska-Roma ihre Ausbildung in der Kunst des Tötens beginnt.

In der Hauptrolle als Racheengel trifft Ana de Armas („No Time To Die“) nicht nur auf Anjelica Huston („John Wick: Kapitel 3“) als The Director, die Leiterin der Ruska Roma, sondern auch auf den Besitzer des Continental Hotels, Ian McShane („John Wick 1-4“) als Winston, seinen Concierge Charon, den kürzlich verstorbenen Lance Reddick („John Wick 1-4“) – und auf Keanu Reeves in der Rolle den legendären John Wick.

Zu den neuen Darstellern gehören u.a. Gabriel Byrne („Hereditary – Das Vermächtnis“), Catalina Sandino Moreno („Silent Night: Stumme Rache“) und Norman Reedus („The Walking Dead“). Regie führt Len Wiseman.

PRODUCTION NOTES

Set during the events of *John Wick: Chapter 3 — Parabellum*, *BALLERINA* follows Eve Macarro (Ana de Armas), a ballerina-turned-assassin trained by the Ruska Roma, who uncovers secrets from her family's past.

Eve is a powerful, new voice in this world. She's in a domain dominated by ruthless assassins, but she's highly trained and seeks vengeance *her* way, ultimately changing the terms of her epic, adrenaline-fueled quest.

The film brings together familiar faces and exciting new characters. Returning icons from the *John Wick* world are: The Director (Anjelica Huston), the formidable leader of the fearsome training ground / ballet school, the Ruska Roma; as well as Winston (Ian McShane) and Charon (Lance Reddick) as, respectively, the head and concierge of the hotel for assassins, The Continental New York.

At the same time, we're introduced to intriguing characters new to the franchise, including the mysterious Daniel Pine (Norman Reedus), with whom Eve has a fateful encounter at The Continental Prague; and The Chancellor (Gabriel Byrne), the domineering head of a cult-like army of killers.

Under the direction of action maestro Len Wiseman (*Live Free or Die Hard*, the *Underworld* films), *BALLERINA* puts a new spin on the action franchise's hallmark elements, including high-level chases, never-before-seen propulsive set pieces, striking international locations, intricate fight choreography, and an arsenal of inventive weaponry — from ice skates and katana swords, to ice axes and flamethrowers.

As the story opens, young Eve's father is murdered. She is orphaned and sent to the Ruska Roma, a shadowy institution that uses its rigorous training in ballet to mask its true curriculum: contract killing.

Years later, the now adult Eve rejects academy head The Director's insistence that she refrain from seeking revenge for her father's murder. Eve travels to The Continental in New York seeking help from Winston and Charon to uncover information about her family. As she digs deeper into the mystery of her past, Eve finds herself near a remote Austrian mountain village, Hallstatt, which is populated entirely by professional assassins — all of whom are targeting her. Eve has no choice but to fight her way out, using what she has been taught by the masters at Ruska Roma.

While Eve's story is set in the world of John Wick, Wiseman was intent on making her very much a singular character, with a perspective different from Wick's. The filmmaker was already well versed in stylish world-building and in pushing the action to the limit, and he embraced the challenge of bringing to life a new character in a familiar universe.

"One of the things I really liked about the *BALLERINA* script," Wiseman remembers, "is that it's kind of the opposite of John Wick's story. Wick is trying to get out of his life as an assassin; Eve is wanting *in* — she wants to be a killer. I was interested in exploring the circumstances under which someone chooses that life."

Producer Chad Stahelski, who directed all four of the *John Wick* features and is the architect of the franchise, remembers that he began thinking that the *John Wick* universe could exist outside the central character when he came across an original script with a lead character who was a ballerina by a young writer, Shay Hatten, whose strong style and mix of action and revenge impressed the filmmaker and action specialist. “It was around the time when we were shooting *John Wick 3 — Parabellum*,” he recounts, “and I was big into ballet at the time. I was trying to put a ballerina sequence into the film, as part of the Ruska Roma, where John Wick comes from. I read Shay’s script and thought, ‘Oh, that kind of fits into this world.’”

Producer Erica Lee remembers meeting Hatten and being similarly impressed by his work. This led her to persuade Lionsgate to buy his spec script. “Shay’s voice is really extreme and wacky and fun,” Lee notes. “He writes set pieces you’ve never seen before.”

“The original draft of *BALLERINA* was nuts, and we wondered if we could incorporate it into the *John Wick* world,” she continues. As it turns out, the franchise’s filmmaking core team — Lee and her Thunder Road partner Basil Iwanyk, Stahelski, and Keanu Reeves — were brainstorming ways to expand that universe.

Meanwhile, Hatten’s talent earned him a role as a contributor to the *John Wick: Chapter 3 — Parabellum* and *John Wick: Chapter 4* scripts while the filmmakers considered the right place for *BALLERINA*.

One of the earliest decisions the team made was where this film would fall within the *John Wick* timeline. After wrapping *John Wick: Chapter 3 — Parabellum*, they revisited *BALLERINA* and dove into developing and refining the story, staying true to John Wick world’s sensibilities and style while making *BALLERINA* a piece of that world, with its own flavor and titular anti-hero.

INTRODUCING EVE MACARRO

One of the key elements to the success of the *John Wick* films is Keanu Reeves’s Zen-like charisma and unique athletic prowess, which have enabled the series to deepen Wick’s story and elevate the action to more spectacular levels with each chapter.

A female-led story in the Wick world would require a similarly gifted performer. Ana de Armas’s acclaimed and compelling turns in *No Time to Die* and *Knives Out* led the filmmakers to her.

“There was a kind of fire in Ana that I wanted to meet and work with,” Wiseman recalls. “At the onset, I told Ana that since Eve is just beginning her journey as an assassin, the character is going to, at times, get her ass kicked. Ana’s reply was, ‘Cool. Okay, I’m in.’ During production she’d show me her bruises from the action and stunts, and they became like merit badges.”

“She’s perfect for the role in many ways,” Wiseman shares. “What I love about this franchise series is that it is more of an actor-based action, and so we see the actors doing more of their own performance and choreography. And she was game with that.”

De Armas, in turn, admired the John Wick films, but also knew that *BALLERINA* was a story that could stand on its own. “We wanted Eve to be approachable and realistic. She had a very traumatic childhood that changed the lens through which Eve sees life.”

Adds Wiseman, “Eve is seeking many things at the Ruska Roma, and really finds herself there. We experience, with Eve, some new layers, and how that organization works — this time from the point of view of someone who’s brand new to it and experiencing how to train and move up the ranks.”

Because *BALLERINA* takes place during the time of *John Wick: Chapter 3 — Parabellum* — in which John makes a plea for help to his former teacher, Anjelica Huston’s The Director — it was only natural that her authoritative character was at the heart of *BALLERINA*. “Anjelica was essential,” says Lee. “She’s a mother figure to Eve, but they also have a uniquely intense relationship.”

Huston was delighted at the prospect of returning to the world of *John Wick* as The Director. “It’s such an incredible franchise, both in popularity but also artistry — the action, choreography, stunts, locations, and talent,” she says. “And I had such a fun time working with Keanu and Chad in *Parabellum*.”

De Armas and Huston worked closely together throughout the film. Reflecting on their dynamic, Huston shares, “The Director takes Eve in as a young girl and trains her, and I think genuinely cares for her. She’s a special child.”

Speaking about de Armas specifically, Huston adds, “To watch her learn ballet and combat and to fight in these elaborate action sequences was like watching a beautiful dance. She’s fierce and powerful, and I think audiences are going to love her and root for her.”

The film opens with a pivotal moment in Eve’s life: the murder of her father. David Castañeda plays Javier, Eve’s fiercely devoted dad. “I think the fear of trying to maintain young Eve’s world as safe and as protective as possible, while knowing that eventually the truth is going to come out about who she is and what world she lives in, it’s a fight-or-flight moment. And obviously, he goes into somewhat of an autopilot to protect his daughter,” Castañeda explains.

With her father gone, Eve is taken in by The Director. Wiseman elaborates, “Eve had lost her family, so The Director becomes somewhat of a surrogate mother. But Eve eventually heads out on her own mission, against the wishes of The Director, whose true allegiance is not to her young charges but to the Ruska Roma itself.”

Sharon Duncan-Brewster joins the cast as Nogi, an instructor at the Ruska Roma Ballet School. Fierce yet thoughtful, Nogi shows Eve the ways of an assassin. She teaches Eve to turn her weaknesses into her deadliest weapons.

“When I first read the script, I thought, this is a really interesting take on the *John Wick* world — told from a female perspective, with so many strong, kick-ass women on screen together. We’ve seen that dynamic so many times with men, but not often with women,” says Duncan-Brewster.

Describing Nogi's bond with Ana de Armas's character, Eve, she shares, "Her first perception of Eve is that she's this strong, determined survivor who has, in a way like Nogi, come from a world where she cannot be anymore. And so, there is an understanding of being left on your own, an orphan. And then becoming your own strength, and your own identity. And I believe as they grow, their relationship does strengthen, and there's a slight maternal connection."

Eve's childhood with The Director seems to mirror John Wick's mysterious past, which underlines the connection between the two women. When Wick comes to the Ruska Roma in *John Wick: Chapter 3 — Parabellum*, he approaches the organization with a deep familiarity. Lee notes that in that film, "You get this glimpse of what John was like as a boy, and how he was raised."

It is Winston who paves the way for young Eve's entrance to the Ruska Roma. He recruits Eve — who's still in shock from the assassination of her father — to the school. Years later, the now adult Eve, seeking answers and revenge for her family tragedy, visits Winston on his home turf.

Reflecting on the role of his iconic character both within this project and the larger *John Wick* universe, Ian McShane notes that Winston somehow "knows everything and maintains his hotel as a safe space for assassins."

As a hospitality manager in this ruthless world, Winston seems to avoid getting his own hands too bloody. Still, he maintains a firm grip on this unique lodging, which is only one of several across the globe, including locations in Osaka, Prague, Rome, and Casablanca.

Regardless of Winston's true affiliations and allegiances, he continues to be a central part of the franchise. McShane embraces how Winston brings gravitas to the action-packed films, observing, "Winston has a grounding effect. He's rather pithy. You don't really know who he is. This gives his scenes with Ana de Armas a mysterious tension."

There is also a poignant appearance from fan-favorite Charon, the stoic concierge at The Continental, portrayed by Lance Reddick.

During production, Reddick told Wiseman on set that the film "feels very Shakespearean."

"The original *Wick* deals with individuals trying to assert their individuality within the boundaries of cultural restrictions," Reddick continued. "But this takes it to the level of family. It made me think of *Lear* and *Hamlet* and the Greek tragedies. And the action is off the hook."

During production of *BALLERINA*, *John Wick: Chapter 4* — which sees Charon meeting a heroic death — had not yet been released. Since the new film was rolling back the clock in the timeline to *John Wick: Chapter 3 — Parabellum*, *BALLERINA* gave Reddick the chance to play the part of the dignified man behind The Continental front desk one more time. Sadly, the *Wick* family had no idea they would also soon lose the gentlemanly actor himself. Reddick passed away on March 17, 2023, just weeks after principal photography had wrapped. It was a terrible loss to the *Wick* cast and crew.

Says McShane, who worked closest with Reddick, “We were so lucky to be able to work with Lance. He was a valued colleague and friend and remains a mainstay of the franchise.”

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EXPANDING THE JOHN WICK UNIVERSE

A new and exciting addition to the *John Wick* universe is Norman Reedus, the popular star of the AMC series “The Walking Dead” and its current spinoff, “The Walking Dead: Daryl Dixon.” Reedus was already friendly with Keanu Reeves, the two having bonded over their passion for motorsports. More significantly, the laid-back Reedus was a natural fit for the role of Daniel Pine, an assassin rife with contradictions and delicious idiosyncrasies.

A longtime *John Wick* fan, Reedus tells us, “I like everything about those films, including the characters, lighting, and action. I remember the first time I saw Keanu, as Wick, flick a cartridge out of a pistol. I was like, ‘Oh my god, rewind, rewind.’”

“I’m honored to join the *John Wick* world,” Reedus continues, “and I can confidently say there’s nothing like it or its passionate fanbase.”

In preparation for his role, Reedus did a full rewatch of the four *John Wick* films. “One of the things I really like about this universe is that nobody lies. The idea of the honest assassin is just one of the many rules that makes these movies unique. Everything about them is cool and badass. You want to watch them repeatedly.”

Wiseman, who had previously collaborated with Reedus, wanted the actor from the onset. “Norman has a specific quality that just fits in perfectly with the *John Wick* world,” he says. “Norman doesn’t think he’s cool — and that’s what makes him cool.”

An encounter between Daniel and Eve in *The Continental* Prague reveals another enigmatic figure, Lena. It was a role that proved challenging to cast, as there are several layers to the character that are slowly peeled away in the third act. “We wanted someone who felt senior to Ana,” says Lee. “When you meet Lena, you don’t know who she really is.”

When Catalina Sandino Moreno read the script, she was intrigued by the businesslike Lena: “We meet her at *The Continental*, and she is this very determined, cold-blooded woman who is just doing her job,” she notes.

Moreno adds that Lena, like Eve, is an orphan, leading her to form a strong bond with those who have adopted her. “Lena grew up with great devotion to this insular tribe, led by *The Chancellor*.”

The film’s central antagonist, *The Chancellor*, has created a cult-like village in the middle of the mountains. He’s a force of nature who can manipulate an entire community and is not above putting a hit on members of his own family.

Veteran actor Gabriel Byrne, who takes on the formidable character, says with a laugh that joining the *Wick* world gave him instant credibility with the younger members of his family. “Being in the vicinity of this franchise has upped my cool quotient immeasurably.”

Despite his vice-like grip on his community of killers, The Chancellor is a multidimensional character who, in his mind, Wiseman insists, “is providing the optimal atmosphere for those who work for him. Why give up on things like falling in love and having a family, just because you’re an assassin? It’s The Chancellor who makes that possible for his people.”

Beyond the enthusiasm of his nieces and nephews, Byrne sparked to the role of an elusive cult leader. “You’re not quite sure what universe The Chancellor operates in,” Byrne explains. “Even the most villainous people have human sides to them. There’s no such thing as an out-and-out devil-type villain. Even the ones we hear of in real life are human, and that’s what makes them scary.”

YEAH, WE’RE THINKING HE’S BACK ...

After reading the script, John Wick himself, Keanu Reeves, joined the project. Keanu typically undergoes six months of intensive training before he’s ready to step onto a John Wick set ready to carry a dense action-packed film. But with *BALLERINA*, Reeves had the unique opportunity to contribute significantly to the film without as much pressure — or pain.

“It was an interesting prospect for him because it’s Wick, but it’s not Wick,” says Lee. As soon as he stepped on set, Reeves was “deeply involved like he always is,” she adds. Reeves collaborated with Wiseman and contributed ideas by suggesting action sequences and tweaking dialogue, all of which enhanced the film. “No one knows John Wick better than Keanu,” says Wiseman.

The new story, says Stahelski, also provides a different perspective on John. “If you go back to the first film, John is a bit of the bogeyman,” he notes. “So, it’s interesting to experience John from Eve’s perspective. He’s still John Wick, and still a force to be reckoned with, but in another way. It’s a slightly different Wick, because we’re seeing him through the eyes of Eve.”

ACTION CINEMA — ELEVATED

Given Reeves’s storied prep and action skillset, de Armas had some big shoes to fill. The rigorous training Reeves endured for each film aligns with the methodology of 87Eleven, the industry-leading action design company co-founded by Stahelski. 87Eleven’s stunt team is one of the most seasoned and celebrated in the business, and while Stahelski and his associates have dozens of films to their credit, the *John Wick* films have become the jewels in their crown. With authentic fight scenes and innovative choreography as a baseline, extremely rigorous actor training comes with the territory.

Anisha Gibbs, a stunt performer and trainer who doubles the role of Lena and other assassins in *BALLERINA*, explains that 87Eleven is proud of pushing actors to do a lot of their own stunts. “I think it’s important to the *John Wick* world for the actors to really want to embody the role and to put in the training.” And the results, she says, are evident on the screen.

De Armas proved more than able to rise to the formidable challenge. She admits that the physical demands of the role were initially quite intimidating. “I had some experience in

action films, but I don't think I knew the level of discipline that was required for this film," she confesses.

De Armas appreciated how 87Eleven's approach helped her push past physical and mental limitations and gain a new skillset. "It is a process that, despite its physical challenges, was really inspiring. It was also a mental discipline I was not familiar with."

The physical training for the role also served as good character exploration. What better way to get into the mindset of an international assassin than to train to fight? "It put me in the headspace of the character," de Armas muses. "The process also helped me understand the evolution of Eve, how to improve myself, and grow confidence."

Inspired by Reeves's dedicated and disciplined approach to the action and stunts, de Armas dove right into getting into fighting shape. "I love watching Keanu work and how dedicated he is. He lets other actors find their way into the action which is very inspiring. While working with him, I was just thinking 'I hope I can do that as well, at the same level.'"

Stahelski admired de Armas's ability to make Eve a richly complex and surprising figure. "Ana is vulnerable and tough at the same time. She can instantly transition from Eve being happy and gentle to, like, 'Oh, I would not want to make her angry.'"

Stahelski adds that de Armas's training regimen began with "trying to get behind her eyes a little bit and see what's going on inside — how Ana moves, and how she was going to react in certain situations. So, it was just getting to know Ana and customizing the choreography for her. Yes, she undergoes the expected training in firearms, acrobatics, and martial arts, but the result feels like it's a custom fit for Ana."

The stunt team was similarly impressed by de Armas's attitude, natural talent, and grace. In *BALLERINA*, the world of the Ruska Roma is an amalgamation of dance and combat. The actor praises the team for their support, which empowered her to push herself harder and stretch her comfort zone: "Making this picture pushed me over my limits, for sure," de Armas confirms.

Stunt coordinator Jackson Spidell and supervising stunt coordinator Stephen Dunlevy have a long history with *Wick*. Along with their action-stunt team, they challenged themselves to look at ways to put a new spin on the series' epic action and *gun fu*.

As the film's title character is a female assassin, there were several women on the stunt team. In addition to Lena double/trainer Anisha Gibbs, Cara Marie Chooljian, served as de Armas's primary fight double and additional trainer. Rounding out the cadre of stunt women was Erika Keck, Chau Naumova, and Enikő Korcsmáros, who perform some of Eve's most memorable moments, like being thrown from a moving vehicle and fighting in the ice bar.

NEVER-SEEN-BEFORE ACTION SEQUENCES

Because the film revolves around a female protagonist, the production team fully embraced the physical reality of de Armas's frame to create fresh and unique choreography for the fights. De Armas appreciated this approach, stating, "I wanted the action to be believable and not larger-than-life."

Instead of overpowering her adversaries with brute strength, Eve gets creative, utilizing whatever is around to defend herself. De Armas describes Eve's modus operandi as: "Be smart and turn a disadvantage into your weapon. She knows how to use her surroundings to get out alive."

Eve's scrappy anger seems to boil over at certain points, which helped the team take big swings and stage risky moves. This approach leads to a lot of creativity in the action design, because any object could become a weapon.

The expression of that creativity is evident in the diverse arsenal Eve employs, from ice skates that become makeshift nunchakus to swords, grenades, a flamethrower, and even pots and pans.

A fight in a restaurant kitchen between Eve and a mountain village female assassin was one of the crew's favorites. This is where Eve gets creative in using pots, pans, and knives as weapons as she maneuvers through the restaurant. Chooljian explains, "Eve finally gets to fight someone equally, because it's another woman. It is somewhat rare to see an all-out battle between two women in an action film."

Another key fight moment is when Eve has a scene in a dance club. De Armas viewed it as a "coming of age fight. Eve is transitioning from the ballet school and heading out into the real world. She gets mad at herself, she's making mistakes, and becomes frustrated. You see the progress of her learning all the skills she needs to do the job." This scene is a captivating sequence. In choreographing the movement, there is always awareness of how the action best serves the story.

Sooyoung Choi plays Katla Park, the high-profile target of Eve's first mission at the dance club. "When I first read the script, I was instantly drawn to the story because it is obviously an action movie, but it also shows the relationship between father and daughter," Choi shares. She adds, "And this is my first American production, and this is my first experience shooting overseas." Reflecting on her role in the franchise, Choi says, "It's really exciting to see Korean characters in the *John Wick* world...and to see the representation and impact it will have."

One of Ana's favorite fight sequences is the grenade fight, which takes place after her character travels to Prague on her mission. She finds herself in a gun shop, and a fight breaks out. Speaking of that scene, Ana says, "I've never seen that before. It felt very unique. Something I like a lot about Eve is that she knows how to use her environment. She can turn any object into a lethal weapon."

She continues, "And in that case, it's something that I thought was a great idea to have in a situation where she cannot find one gun that she can shoot, and all she has with her is a box of grenades. And the way that fight came out is wonderful. It was a long shoot, but I thought it was just very refreshing and surprising. It's very unique. And this that we're doing now is also pretty amazing."

EVE MEETS WICK

Eve first encounters John Wick while she is still in training to become an assassin, feeling ready to transition into the professional world. During their first interaction, Wick tries to dissuade her from pursuing the assassin's life, advising her to quit. As Ana de Armas explains, "But she won't. She doesn't listen. They are very similar in that way."

Later in the film, Eve and John Wick meet again for an intense face-off, setting up one of the movie's most exciting moments. "He's the one that, especially if you're a student at the Ruska Roma or that's who you're trying to become, he's the one that you look up to."

The Eve vs. John Wick fight was actually one of the first action scenes filmed. "It was kind of intense because that was the first real fight that we did," recalls Chooljian. "It's a huge moment in the film, and we said to Ana, 'We're gonna throw you into the water. Go ahead, fight Keanu Reeves, fight John Wick.'"

De Armas rose to the challenge. With Reeves' experience and de Armas' ability to pick up choreography quickly, the production captured an incredible moment on film. Chooljian adds, "They have different approaches, but they're both perfectionists. If what they did is not perfect, they want to do it again."

Eve's stunts escalate after her face-off with John Wick. Standout action sequences include her inventive use of ice skates in a frozen-over boathouse, an epic (and explosive) fight involving a flamethrower, and a moving-vehicle shootout on a snowy road. Ana had never performed stunts involving fire and had to overcome her initial fear. The team took a methodical approach to familiarize her with the flamethrower, helping her wield it safely.

DESIGNING THE WORLD OF *BALLERINA*

The *John Wick* films have a distinct style and beauty and are all about world-building. While the previous films spanned New York, Rome, Morocco, Japan and Paris, *BALLERINA* offers an entirely new element to the series: snow-covered Eastern Europe.

"Wick fans love world-building," Erica Lee notes. "I think that we've given them a lot of new things and elements and worlds and locations for them to sink their teeth into." She continues, "Eastern Europe was somewhere we hadn't really explored in the *Wick* franchise."

The filmmakers were able to bring back key collaborators from previous *Wick* films while also introducing new talent to the world of *Wick*. In addition to a new director, the DP, production designer, and composers were also new additions.

Production Designer Phil Ivey highlights the balance between continuity with the *Wick* films and tapping into a new aesthetic for *BALLERINA*. "The important thing was, yes, it has to fit within the John Wick world, and it needs to feel like a *John Wick* film, but it needs to have its own vibe. People have been watching these films for a while. They're coming to this to watch something else. So, it's a case of us putting our own spin on it."

Ivey continues, "Instead of New York, and Rome, and Morocco, or Jordan, we're set in Europe—with snow. So, color temperature changes immediately, the tonality, and materials.

We're into stone, timber, and that kind of thing. So, very different from the other *John Wick* films, but I think stylistically, in terms of some of the lighting and so on, we share the same world."

The film's location base was Prague and surrounding areas in the Czech Republic, with a road trip to Hallstatt, Austria, and additional action sequences filmed in Budapest, Hungary.

Hallstatt is an idyllic village perched on a glacial lake, surrounded by mountains, to stunning effect. Production designer Phil Ivey and Wiseman fell in love with the look of the fairytale-like spot. "I was obsessed with Hallstatt," the director confirms. "I had tracked it via Google Maps when we were scouting locations. It's unlike anything I've seen before: a town built into a hillside, so it has these amazing layers."

Hallstatt has a robust tourist season, so it was not possible for the production to move in for several weeks of filming. The solution, says Ivey, was "to sort of make a jigsaw puzzle." He reveals that they stitched together places in the Czech Republic to create the illusion of more screen time in Hallstatt: "We scoured the whole of the Czech Republic, and then it was a matter of putting that puzzle together, seeing what is going to work best together, how we augment those locations, and make it feel like a cohesive world."

As a fan of the *John Wick* world himself, Ivey sparked to the script and connected easily with Wiseman. "We share a very similar aesthetic," Ivey notes. That shared vision was helpful in molding the film's look to the series as well as giving it a signature style.

Ivey enjoyed using the interiors to explore character, like expanding upon The Director and her Ruska Roma school, first glimpsed in *John Wick: Chapter 3 — Parabellum*. "I wondered," he remembers, "How do they live? What goes on there? What is their dormitory like?"

Ivey also designed a home with a kind of diabolical hunting lodge chic for The Chancellor, using design elements to reveal more about the dark figure. "The environment provides additional insights into the character," Ivey maintains. "The sets become a subplot and tell you immediately what that character's about."

More striking visuals are provided by the costumes. Costume designer Tina Kalivas says she wanted them to look "tailored, slick, sharp, expensive and crazy, but glamorous." It was important for *BALLERINA* to establish a look different from the prior films, though Kalivas used The Director's scenes from *John Wick: Chapter 3 — Parabellum* as a starting point for her designs.

Kalivas also observes that the Wick look is "all about tailoring, so we started off with tailored pieces. Eve's look is functional for an assassin, but underneath is a base layer of a bodysuit, which is a nod to her being a ballerina."

Wiseman had a specific vision about the inhabitants of Hallstatt. Kalivas explains, "Instead of being this kind of traditional ski look, the people of Hallstatt were more tailored and dressed up." Creating sleek and sharp lines "was a great way of communicating the assassins. Their looks also hinted at their isolation, and that they perhaps were out of touch with current trends."

Of course, there was one more character Kalivas loved styling: John Wick himself. “It was thrilling to be able to create a John Wick suit because it’s iconic,” she says. Building upon the work of past designers, Kalivas made sure to work with her favorite tailor and get the highest quality wool fabric for her iteration of the suit, adding a small secret monogram: “We embroidered ‘John Wick’ inside his pocket, so that was fun.”

IN THEATERS

Stahelski summarizes his closing thoughts by recalling an early scene in the first film, *John Wick*. “I remember when audiences experienced John burying his puppy, they went silent. I thought that was either really good or really bad. A little later, John transitions into full assassin mode, and the audience went nuts. I think there’s a great mix of big action and get-behind-Eve moments in *BALLERINA* that will make you want to ride that same kind of roller coaster.”

And see it in a theater; nobody wants to ride that roller coaster alone.”

Wiseman shares his appreciation for the action genre, and what he hopes to achieve with the film. “It’s part of a franchise, of course, which is always a bit of a challenge, because I wanted to create something new within that world that we all know. *BALLERINA* is a new take — a different perspective — exploring a new character’s introduction to that world.”

“Eve is transforming into an assassin, which is a different entry point than we’ve seen before,” Wiseman continues. “I think audiences are going to love how Ana plays Eve, and they’re going to have a great time embarking on this journey with her.”

CAST BIOGRAPHIES

ANA DE ARMAS – ‘EVE’

For more than a decade Cuban born, Oscar-nominated actress Ana de Armas has made a name for herself in Spain and America and is now becoming one of the industry’s most sought-after actresses. de Armas garnered an Oscar, SAG, Golden Globe and BAFTA Award nominations for portraying actress, model, singer, and icon Marilyn Monroe in Andrew Dominik’s film “Blonde.” The film premiered in-competition at the 2022 Venice International Film Festival and received a 14-minute standing ovation.

For her role in “Blonde,” de Armas received the Hollywood Rising-Star Award at the Deauville American Film Festival and will also present the film at San Sebastian Film Festival. The film is based on Joyce Carol Oats’ novel of the same name, chronicling Marilyn Monroe’s life in Hollywood. The bestselling novel, which was a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize and the National Book Award, is a fictionalized account of Monroe’s personal life. The film was produced by Plan B Entertainment and was released in select theaters and on Netflix.

de Armas received her first Golden Globe Award nomination for her performance in Rian Johnson’s “Knives Out” as Marta. The modern-day murder mystery made its North American premiere as a special presentation at the Toronto Film Festival and its UK premiere at the

British Film Institute's London Film Festival and opened nationwide to rave reviews from critics and audiences. It is distributed by Lionsgate.

In April 2023, de Armas was seen in Apple TV+'s romantic action-adventure film, "Ghosted." She starred opposite Chris Evans in the film directed by Dexter Fletcher. The film marked Apple TV+'s biggest debut.

In July 2022, de Armas was seen in Netflix's "The Gray Man," a film adaptation of the best-selling novel series by Mark Greaney. Also starring Chris Evans and Ryan Gosling, the highly anticipated action film is directed by the Russo Brothers and is produced and debuted on Netflix in July 2022.

In 2021, TIME Magazine included de Armas in their TIME100 Next List, naming her one of 100 emerging leaders, artists and innovators who are shaping the future. In October of the same year, de Armas appeared in "No Time To Die," the 25th installment of the James Bond franchise directed by Cary Joji Fukunaga, co-written by Scott Z. Burns and Phoebe Waller-Bridge. She portrays Paloma, a fierce and knowledgeable ally to Daniel Craig's final performance as Bond. Lea Seydoux, Naomie Harris, Lashana Lynch, Rami Malek, Ralph Fiennes and Ben Whishaw also star. The film received a BAFTA nomination for Best British Film.

de Armas was also seen in "Sergio," a biopic about Sergio Vieira de Mello, played by Wagner Moura, an honorable Brazilian diplomat known for his work in the middle east over the 1990s and early 2000s. She portrayed Carolina, an Argentine economist in the United Nations peacekeeping department, who was deMello's partner at the time of his death. The film was released on Netflix.

In 2018, she received critical acclaim for her performance in "Corazón," a short film directed by John Hillcoat which premiered at the Tribeca Film Festival. The film is based on the life of Elena Ramirez, a young Dominican woman who journeys from Santo Domingo to New York for a rare heart procedure. The film marked the first collaboration between the Tribeca Film Festival and a health organization, the Montefiore Health System, raising awareness for organ donation.

Additional credits include Denis Villeneuve's Academy Award-winning neo-noir science fiction film "BladeRunner 2049" alongside Ryan Gosling and Harrison Ford, Venezuelan filmmaker Jonathan Jakubowicz's "Hands of Stone" opposite Edgar Ramirez and Robert De Niro, and Todd Phillips' "War Dogs" alongside Miles Teller and Jonah Hill.

de Armas made her feature film debut in "Una Rosa De Francia" for the Cuban Institute of Cinematography. Her additional Spanish credits include: "Por Un Punado De Besos," "Faraday," "Blind Alley" and "Sex, Party & Lies."

ANJELICA HUSTON – 'THE DIRECTOR'

Academy Award®-winning actress (*Prizzi's Honor*, Actress in a Supporting Role, 1985) and director Anjelica Huston continues her family's legacy in film, which began with her grandfather, actor Walter Huston, and her father, actor and director John Huston. In *BALLERINA*, Huston reprises her role as "The Director," the head of the Ruska Roma crime organization.

She was recently seen in the BBC's limited series, "Towards Zero," alongside Matthew Rhys, Oliver Jackson-Cohen, Ella Lily Hyland, and Mimi Keene. Directed by Sam Yates and based on Agatha Christie's novel of the same name, the murder mystery takes place in England in 1936, as a toxic love triangle ensues while a troubled detective attempts to solve a web of lies before another victim meets their fate.

Throughout her career, Huston has received a multitude of awards for her work, including many honors from the National Society of Film Critics, two Independent Spirit Awards, the Los Angeles and New York Film Critics Circle Awards and an honor from Women in Film.

Huston received a Best Supporting Actress Oscar® for her role as Maerose Prizzi in the black comedy *Prizzi's Honor*, starring opposite Jack Nicholson and Kathleen Turner. In 2005, Huston received a Golden Globe® for her role in HBO's original movie *Iron Jawed Angels*, in which she starred opposite Hilary Swank and Julia Ormond.

Other film credits include memorable turns in Summit's feature film *50/50*, alongside Joseph Gordon-Levitt and Seth Rogen as well as numerous collaborations with Wes Anderson, including *The Royal Tenenbaums* and the 2021 film *The French Dispatch*. Additional credits include Frances Ford Coppola's *Gardens of Stone*, Woody Allen's *Manhattan Murder Mystery* and *Crimes and Misdemeanors*, Paul Mazursky's *Enemies: A Love Story*, Nic Roeg's *The Witches*, Stephen Frears' *The Grifters*, Barry Sonnenfeld's *Addams Family* and *Addams Family Values*. Recent credits include Lionsgate's *John Wick: Chapter 3 — Parabellum* with Keanu Reeves and Halle Berry and *Waiting for Anya*, based on the novel by Sir Michael Morpurgo opposite Noah Schnapp and Jean Reno.

Her directorial debut was an unflinching adaptation of Dorothy Allison's best-selling memoir, *Bastard Out of Carolina*, which garnered Huston critical acclaim. She received an Emmy® Award nomination and a Directors Guild Award nomination for her work on the controversial drama. Huston directed, produced and starred in *Agnes Browne*, which was presented at the 2000 Cannes Film Festival.

Huston starred as Broadway producer Eileen Rand in the Golden Globe®-nominated television series "Smash" on NBC. Huston's other television credits include Robert Ludlum's "Covert One: The Hades Factor," a recurring role on Showtime's original series "Huff," an Emmy®-nominated guest-starring role on "Medium," Lifetime's "The Watcher in The Woods," "Angie Tribeca" on TBS, and a recurring role on Amazon's acclaimed series "Transparent." Huston received additional Emmy® nominations for her performances in "Buffalo Girls," "Lonesome Dove," "Family Pictures," and "The Mists of Avalon." She has contributed voices to Disney's *Tinker Bell* franchise, the Fox animated series "American Dad," Netflix's animated series "BoJack Horseman," "All Hail King Julien," Guillermo Del Toro's "Troll Hunters," and "Star Wars: Visions." She also voiced the role of "Deirta" in Amazon's new adult animated series "Mighty Nein."

Huston serves on the Board of Directors at University of Galway's John Huston School of Film and Digital Media. She is a member of the Film Foundation's Artists Rights Council, an Ambassador for the California Arts Council, a member of the Save the Chimps Advisory Council, and serves on the Honorary Board of Directors for PETA.

Huston is also a New York Times best-selling author. Her memoir *A Story Lately Told: Coming of Age in Ireland, London, and New York* was published by Scribner in November

2013. *A Story Lately Told* ends as she launches her Hollywood life. The second part of her story—*Watch Me*—opens in Los Angeles in 1973 and was published in November 2014.

GABRIEL BYRNE – ‘THE CHANCELLOR’

LANCE REDDICK – ‘CHARON’

Lance Reddick, known for the *John Wick* franchise and HBO’s “The Wire,” also starred in 20th Century’s remake of *White Men Can’t Jump*, Netflix’s *Shirley* and *The Caine Mutiny Court-Martial* from Paramount Global and Showtime.

Reddick starred in Netflix’s “Resident Evil” series and was a regular on Prime Video’s “Bosch” throughout its seven-season run. Along with “The Wire,” where he played Baltimore Police Col. Cedric Daniels, his TV credits included regular roles on “Fringe” and Comedy Central’s “Corporate” and recurring parts on “American Horror Story,” “Oz,” and “Lost.” He earned a SAG Award® nomination in 2021 as part of the ensemble for Regina King’s film *One Night in Miami*.

The actor’s distinctive voice also led to work in video games (*Destiny 2*, *Horizon Zero Dawn*) and animation (Netflix’s “Paradise PD” and “Castlevania”).

CATALINA SANDINO MORENO – ‘LENA’

Catalina Sandino Moreno is a renowned Colombian actress, born in Bogotá, Colombia, whose career has earned her international acclaim. She gained widespread recognition for her Oscar®-nominated performance in *Maria Full of Grace* (2004), making history as the first Colombian actress to receive such a prestigious nomination. With a versatile career spanning both film and television, Moreno continues to captivate audiences with her powerful performances across a variety of genres.

Moreno’s television career has been equally impressive. She rose to prominence with her role as the female lead in the horror series “From” (2022–present). As Tabitha, a mother searching for her missing son in a mysterious and terrifying town, Moreno’s performance has been lauded for its emotional depth and complexity. As the series heads into its fourth season, she has solidified her place as a standout performer in the genre, earning praise from both critics and fans for her ability to portray a character with vulnerability, resilience, and strength. “From” has become a fan-favorite and critical success, and Moreno’s portrayal of Tabitha has been a key factor in its success.

Moreno is also well-known for her role in “The Affair” (2015–2019), where she portrayed Luisa Leon in 29 episodes. Her character was intricately involved in the emotional and complex narrative of the series, which delved into the aftermath of extramarital affairs and the psychological effects on everyone involved. Moreno’s performance across multiple seasons earned her significant recognition, and she remained a consistent part of the series, appearing in numerous pivotal episodes from Season 2 to the final Season 5.

Additionally, Moreno starred in “American Gothic” (2016), a crime drama series where she played Christina Morales in six episodes. The show revolves around a prominent Boston family grappling with a legacy of dark secrets and the possibility that one of their own may be connected to a notorious serial killer. Moreno’s role as Christina Morales was integral to the show’s complex narrative, further showcasing her ability to navigate intense and mysterious story lines.

Moreno will appear in *RIP*, an upcoming film for Netflix, in which a team of Miami police officers stumble upon millions of dollars in cash in a derelict stash house—an unexpected discovery that causes trust among the officers to unravel. As outside forces learn about the seizure, the officers' loyalty is put to the test, and everything is called into question. The film is being produced by Artists Equity, the artist-led studio founded by Ben Affleck and Matt Damon, and is written and directed by Joe Carnahan.

In film, Moreno has showcased her remarkable talent in several high-profile projects. She starred alongside Joel Kinnaman in the action thriller *Silent Night* (2023), portraying the character of Saya Godlock. She also delivered a standout performance in *A Most Violent Year* (2014), alongside Oscar Isaac and Jessica Chastain, in a tense narrative set in 1980s New York. Her other notable film credits include *Love in the Time of Cholera* (2007), *Che* (2008), *A Stranger in Paradise* (2013), *Medeas* (2013), and *The Quarry* (2020). Additionally, Moreno has appeared in *Paris, Je T'aime* (2006), *Incarnations* (2008), *Rage* (2009), and *The Godmother* (2020).

Throughout her career, Moreno has garnered various accolades for her exceptional work. Her Oscar® nomination for *Maria Full of Grace* remains one of her most significant achievements, marking a milestone for both her and Colombian cinema. She has also received nominations and awards from several film festivals and critics' circles, including the Imagen Foundation Awards, the Almería Western Film Festival, and the Miami International Film Festival. Her work in both film and television continues to be recognized by industry professionals and audiences alike, as she remains one of the most versatile and talented actresses in contemporary cinema and television.

NORMAN REEDUS – 'DANIEL PINE'

Multi-hyphenate artist Norman Reedus has been amassing a career over decades that covers all artistic mediums including actor, photographer, director, and artist. As of recent, he has expanded his breadth of work to include *The New York Times* best-selling author, publisher, restaurateur, and entrepreneur. He has quickly built one of the most expansive, fan-inclusive brands in and out of Hollywood.

Most recently, Reedus reprised his role as the fan-favorite crossbow-wielding Daryl Dixon, in the second season of "The Walking Dead: Daryl Dixon," an AMC spin-off from the eleven-season run of "The Walking Dead." Reedus will once again star as Dixon in Season 3, which is set to be released this fall.

Reedus will return to host Season 7 of AMC's unscripted series "Ride with Norman Reedus," for which he also serves as an Executive Producer. Each hour-long episode follows Reedus and a friend touring a different city via motorcycle, checking out bike shops, tattoo parlors, bars and local restaurants frequented by the chopper enthusiasts.

Reedus is currently in production on Darren Aronofsky's terrifying new genre film *Pendulum*. Reedus will play the friend of a young couple (Joseph Gordon-Levitt and Phoebe Dynevor) who ushers them to a remote New Mexico retreat after a traumatic event, where they must determine if the group's unconventional spiritual practices offer genuine healing or mask a terrifying truth that threatens to consume them all.

His production banner, bigbaldhead Productions, has a first-look deal with AMC and is developing several projects. Additionally, he has a publishing deal and imprint at Blackstone Publishing, which released his first novel in 2022, *The Ravaged*, and went on to premiere on *The New York Times* Bestseller list.

Reedus is well-known for playing the role of Murphy MacManus in the cult movie *Boondock Saints*. He stars opposite Sean Patrick Flanery and Willem Dafoe; and starred opposite Flanery again in the sequel, *Boondock Saints 2: All Saints Day*. He is currently in pre-production on the universe expansion of the franchise, in which he will also star and executive produce.

Recent film credits include Jeff Nichols' *The Bikeriders*, alongside Tom Hardy, Austin Butler, and Jodie Comer; John Hillcoat's ensemble cop drama *Triple Nine*, with Casey Affleck, Woody Harrelson, Chiwetel Ejiofor, Kate Winslet, Anthony Mackie and Aaron Paul; as well as Fabienne Berthaud's *Sky*, an independent French film in which he starred opposite Diane Kruger, Lena Dunham, and Joshua Jackson. Additional film credits include Robert Kirkman's sci-fi thriller *Air*; the indie drama *Sunlight Jr* from Laurie Collyer which premiered at the 2013 Tribeca Film Festival and also starred Naomi Watts and Matt Dillon; the Robert Redford-directed feature *The Conspirator*, which chronicles the trial after the assassination of Abraham Lincoln; the sci-fi feature thriller *Pandorum*, with Dennis Quaid and Ben Foster; Darnell Martin's *Cadillac Records* opposite Adrien Brody, Jeffrey Wright and Beyonce Knowles; *Six Ways to Sunday*, *8mm*, *Beat*, *Deuces Wild*, *Blade 2*, *Gossip*, *The Ballad of Bettie Page*, and *American Gangster*.

He is also the lead of the highly successful video game franchise, *Death Stranding*, from director Hideo Kojima. The first game was released in 2019 and in January of 2024, they released a Director's Cut of the game.

Reedus is also an accomplished photographer as well as a director, having directed three short films. In October 2013, he released *The Sun's Coming Up... Like a Big Bald Head: Photographs by Norman Reedus*, a book of his photography. As a follow-up to that, he released a second photography book in 2020, *Portraits from the Woods*. Currently, Reedus has his first solo New York exhibition show titled *In Transit* at The Gallery at Soho Grand until May 18, 2025. This photography exhibition features Reedus's dark, moody, and cinematic photographs of New York City.

IAN McSHANE – 'WINSTON'

A natural at portraying complex villains, anti-heroes, and charming heavies, Ian McShane is a classically trained, award-winning actor who has grabbed attention and acclaim from audiences and critics around the world with his unforgettable repertoire of scoundrels, kings, mobsters, and thugs.

McShane reprises his role as the beloved Winston in *BALLERINA*, the newest film in the John Wick universe, opposite Ana de Armas (and reuniting with Keanu Reeves), directed by Len Wiseman. He has played the suave and charming owner of the assassins-only Tribeca hotel in *John Wick*, *John Wick: Chapter 2*, *John Wick: Chapter 3 — Parabellum*, and *John Wick: Chapter 4*, all directed by Chad Stahelski, and all of which have had enormous box office success.

McShane will also next be seen opposite Orlando Bloom and Bryce Dallas Howard in the Prime Video UK crime-comedy *Deep Cover*, directed by Tom Kingsley.

In 2024, McShane starred in and executive produced IFC Films' *American Star*, written by Nacho Faerna and directed by Gonzalo López-Gallego. McShane plays Wilson, an assassin on assignment for one last hit (when his target is delayed, he is not only drawn to the exotic place he is sent but to the people he meets while there), about which the *Daily Beast's* Nick Shager wrote: "*American Star* proves Ian McShane may just be the coolest actor there is."

On television, McShane not only starred in but also executive produced the hit STARZ series, "American Gods," the TV adaptation of the 2001 novel of the same name. McShane can be seen as Mr. Wednesday, a shifty, silver-tongued conman, who masked his true identity — that of the Norse god of war, Odin, who's assembling a team of elders to bring down the new false idols. McShane himself describes the series as "like nothing else I've seen on television."

It's a comment that also befits McShane's critically acclaimed role of the charismatic, menacing, and lawless 19th century brothel-and-barkeep, Al Swearengen, in the profound and profane HBO western series "Deadwood," which ran for just 36 episodes over three seasons from 2004–2006. For his work on the series' second season, McShane won the 2005 Golden Globe® Award for Best Actor in a Television Drama (in addition to Primetime Emmy® and Screen Actors Guild Award® nominations as Outstanding Lead Dramatic Actor). He also received the Television Critics Association Award for Individual Achievement in Drama for his work in the show's debut season (with a second nomination in 2005).

It is a role and performance the *New York Times* dubbed "one of the most interesting villains on television." An online poll called McShane's Swearengen a more compelling onscreen gangster over the likes of Tony Soprano and Michael Corleone. After a 12-year hiatus from portraying maybe his most iconic character ("It was the most satisfyingly creative three years of my professional career," he says), McShane reprised the unforgettable rogue when HBO resurrected the 1870s western in a two-hour telefilm, *Deadwood: The Movie*, nominated for the Primetime Emmy® for Outstanding Television Movie.

At an age when many successful thespians turn to cameo appearances and character parts, McShane's busy career (which dates back to 1962) also includes three very different starring roles on the big screen. He was seen alongside David Harbour in Neil Marshall's reimagined comic book epic, *Hellboy*. McShane also co-starred with Gary Carr in the Dan Pritzker drama, *Bolden*, the biopic of musician Buddy Bolden, the father of jazz and a key figure in the development of ragtime music (McShane portrays Bolden's nemesis, Judge Perry).

Years before his triumphant role in "Deadwood," McShane had compiled a long and diverse career on both British and American television. He produced and starred in the acclaimed series "Lovejoy" for the BBC (and A&E in the U.S.), directing several episodes during the show's lengthy run. The popular Sunday night drama (which attracted 18 million viewers weekly during its run from 1990–1994) saw McShane in the title role of an irresistible, roguish Suffolk antiques dealer. He would reunite with the BBC by producing and starring in the darker and more serious drama, "Madson."

He collected a second Golden Globe® nomination for Best Actor in a Miniseries for his portrayal of the scheming Waleran Bigod in STARZ's Primetime Emmy®-nominated "Pillars

of the Earth.” The production, which originated on the U.K.’s Channel 4, was based on Ken Follett’s bestselling historic novel about the building of a 12th-century cathedral during the time known as “The Anarchy” after King Henry I had lost his only son in the White Ship disaster of 1120. It’s a character McShane says “would fit into the Vatican.”

He is also well-known to TV audiences for his roles in FX’s “American Horror Story,” Showtime’s “Ray Donovan,” ITV’s “Dr. Thorne,” and HBO’s juggernaut, “Game of Thrones” (McShane recounts, “I loved the character and did it because my three grandkids — big fans of the show — wouldn’t have forgiven me if I hadn’t”). McShane also starred in the short-lived NBC drama, “Kings,” a show (inspired by The Book of Samuel) he calls “far too revolutionary for network television.”

Other notable small-screen roles include his appearance in David Wolper’s landmark miniseries “Roots” (as the British cockfighting aficionado), “Whose Life Is it Anyway?,” Heathcliff in the 1967 miniseries “Wuthering Heights,” and Harold Pinter’s Primetime Emmy®-winning “The Caretaker.” McShane has also played a variety of real-life subjects like Sejanus in the miniseries “A.D.,” the title role of Masterpiece Theater’s “Disraeli: Portrait of a Romantic,” and Judas in NBC’s “Jesus of Nazareth,” directed by Franco Zeffirelli.

McShane, who shows no signs of slowing down in a career now entrenched in its sixth decade (“Acting is the only business where the older you get, the parts and the pay get better!”), began his career during Britain’s New Wave Cinema of the early 1960s. He landed his first lead role in the 1962 English feature *The Wild and the Willing*, which also starred another acting upstart and fellow Brit, McShane’s lifelong friend, the late John Hurt. McShane later revealed that he had ditched class at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art to audition for the role.

Since that 1962 motion picture debut, McShane has enjoyed a fabulous run of character roles such as the sinister Cockney mobster, Teddy Bass, opposite Ray Winstone and Ben Kingsley in *Sexy Beast*; the infamous pirate, Blackbeard, alongside Johnny Depp and Penelope Cruz in *Pirates of the Caribbean: On Stranger Tides*; and Richard Burton’s bisexual partner, Wolfie, in the 1971 heist film, *Villain*. He gave Hayley Mills her first onscreen kiss as a smoldering gypsy in 1965’s *Sky West and Crooked*; was part of the stellar ensemble cast (James Mason, James Coburn, Dyan Cannon) in the Stephen Sondheim-Anthony Perkins scripted big screen mystery, *The Last of Sheila*; and played a retired sheriff with a violent past opposite Patrick Wilson in the gritty drama, *The Hollow Point*.

Other film credits include Guy Hamilton’s all-star WWII epic, *The Battle of Britain*; the romantic comedy *If It’s Tuesday; This Must Be Belgium*; *Pottersville*; *Hercules*; *Snow White and the Huntsman*; *Jawbone* (reuniting with fellow Brit Ray Winstone in both); *Jack the Giant Slayer*; Woody Allen’s *Scoop*; Rodrigo Garcia’s indie drama *Nine Lives* (Gotham Award nominee for Best Ensemble Performance); and the darkly perverse crime-drama, *44 Inch Chest*, a film in which McShane not only starred, but also produced.

While also making his professional theatre debut in 1962 (*Infanticide in the House of Fred August*, Arts Theatre, London), McShane appeared onstage in the original 1965 production of Joe Orton’s *Loot*. Two years later, he starred alongside Ian McKellen and Judi Dench in the hit stage play, *The Promise*, a production that transferred to Broadway in 1967 (with Eileen Atkins replacing Dench). He would return to Broadway one more time forty years later

(2008), starring in the 40th anniversary staging of Harold Pinter's *The Homecoming*, for which he shared a Drama Desk Award as Best Cast Ensemble.

McShane also returned to the West End boards in 2000, charming audiences as the seductive, sex-obsessed Darryl Van Horne while making his musical stage debut in Cameron Mackintosh's *The Witches of Eastwick*, an adaptation of the 1987 film. At the esteemed Matrix Theatre in Los Angeles, he appeared in Harold Pinter's *Betrayal*, and John Osborne's *Inadmissible Evidence*, earning a pair of Los Angeles Drama Critics Circle Awards for Lead Performance in the process. He also starred in the world premiere of Larry Atlas's *Yield of the Long Bond*.

In addition to his work in front of the camera, McShane is also well-known for his voiceover work, with his low, distinctive baritone on display in a variety of projects. Most recently he reprised his role of the sinister Tai Lung, the snow leopard adept at martial arts, in *Kung Fu Panda 4* (he voiced the fan-favorite character in the original *Kung Fu Panda*, for which he was an Annie Award nominee). He voiced the eccentric magician, Mr. Bobinsky, in Henry Selick's award-nominated *Coraline*, and created the notorious Captain Hook in *Shrek the Third*. He also narrated Grace Jones's 1985 album, *Slave to the Rhythm*, succumbing to producer Trevor Horn's request to take the job because, per Horn, "Orson Welles was dead, and I needed a voice." The album sold over a million copies worldwide. In the virtual reality domain, he recently lent his voice to the award-winning VR animated short *Age of Sail* in the role of the elderly sailor, William Avery, adrift alone in the North Atlantic.

After almost sixty years entertaining audiences across the performance spectrum, McShane admits he did not set out for a career in the footlights while growing up in Manchester, England (he was actually born in Blackburn). It was by unexpected circumstances after McShane broke his leg playing soccer that he ended up performing in the school play production of *Cyrano de Bergerac* where he met his life-long friend and teacher, Leslie Ryder. Before he knew it, he auditioned for the Royal Academy of Arts, where he was accepted and then left a term early to appear in the film, *The Wild and The Willing*.

McShane never looked back.

KEANU REEVES – 'JOHN WICK' / EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

Keanu Reeves is one of Hollywood's most sought-after leading men, with a worldwide box office total of over \$4.5 billion. As a remarkably eclectic actor, Reeves has made an indelible mark on the world of entertainment through the diverse roles he has played. He most recently returned to the big screen in *John Wick: Chapter 4*, the highest-grossing film of the series, which earned \$440 million worldwide and resulted in the franchise grossing over a billion dollars. He was last seen in the third installment of the hit *Sonic the Hedgehog 3* as the character Shadow. He can next be seen on the big screen in the fall of 2025 in *Good Fortune*, starring opposite Seth Rogen and Aziz Ansari (who also directed the film).

Reeves will make his Broadway debut in Samuel Beckett's play *Waiting for Godot* (directed by Jamie Lloyd), premiering in fall 2025. He will play Estragon and Alex Winter, an actor and costar with Reeves in the *Bill & Ted* franchise, will play Vladimir.

Reeves made his comic book-writing debut in 2021 with *BRZRKR*, a twelve-issue and graphic novel limited series distributed through BOOM! Studios, which quickly became the highest-selling original comic book series debut in over 25 years and the highest-funded

comic book Kickstarter of all time. *The Book of Elsewhere* is the first novel by Reeves, written in collaboration with acclaimed, award-winning author China Miéville. Set in the world of the *BRZRKR* comic series, *The Book of Elsewhere* follows an immortal warrior on a multi-millennia-long quest to discover the key to his immortality. The book was published by Del Rey, an imprint of the Random House Publishing Group, on July 23, 2024, and received huge critical acclaim, debuting at number three on *The New York Times* Best Seller list, as well as *The Sunday Times* Best Seller list in the UK.

Reeves's other recent projects include the docuseries "Brawn: The Impossible Formula 1 Story"; the video game *Cyberpunk 2077*; feature films *John Wick: Chapter 3 — Parabellum*, *Always Be My Maybe*, and lending his voice to the animated character Duke Caboom in Disney Pixar's *Toy Story 4*. Additional projects include reprising his iconic action role as Neo in *The Matrix Resurrections* in December 2021, and appearing alongside Alex Winter in the long-awaited film *Bill & Ted Face the Music*. In 2013, Reeves starred in — and made his directorial debut with — the Tai Chi action film *Man of Tai Chi*, and also starred the same year in *47 Ronin*. In 2012, the Reeves-produced documentary *Side by Side* made its debut to critical acclaim, premiering at the Berlin International Film Festival. In the film, directed by Chris Kenneally, Reeves interviewed some of Hollywood's major directors including James Cameron, David Fincher, David Lynch, George Lucas, Danny Boyle, Martin Scorsese, Christopher Nolan, Steven Soderbergh, Lars Von Trier, and the Wachowskis.

Reeves's list of credits include: *The Bad Batch*, the blockbuster *The Matrix* trilogy, *Speed*, *Generation Um*, *Henry's Crime* (which he both starred in and produced), *The Private Lives of Pippa Lee* (written and directed by Rebecca Miller, appearing in a supporting role opposite Robin Wright), *The Day the Earth Stood Still* (starring opposite Jennifer Connelly), the cop-thriller *Street Kings* (opposite Forest Whitaker), *The Lake House* (starring opposite Sandra Bullock), and *A Scanner Darkly*. Reeves also starred in *Constantine* (opposite Rachel Weisz), *Thumbsucker*, and *Something's Gotta Give* (opposite Jack Nicholson and Diane Keaton). Other film credits include: *Destination Wedding*, *To the Bone*, *Knock, Knock, Siberia*, *Replicas*, *Exposed*, *The Neon Demon*, *The Whole Truth*, *Hardball*, *The Gift* (opposite Cate Blanchett, and for which he received critical acclaim), *Sweet November*, *The Replacements*, *A Walk in the Clouds*, the hit thriller *The Devil's Advocate* (opposite Al Pacino and Charlize Theron), *Little Buddha*, and *Much Ado About Nothing* (opposite Denzel Washington, Emma Thompson, and Michael Keaton). Reeves also starred in *Bram Stoker's Dracula*, *My Own Private Idaho*, *Point Break*, *Bill & Ted's Excellent Adventure*, and its sequel, *Bill & Ted's Bogus Journey*.

Raised in Toronto, Reeves performed in various local theater productions and on television before relocating to Los Angeles. His first widely acclaimed role was in Tim Hunter's *River's Edge*. He then starred in Marisa Silver's *Permanent Record*, and with Amy Madigan and Fred Ward in *The Prince of Pennsylvania*. He was also cast as Le Chevalier Danceny in Stephen Frears's highly praised *Dangerous Liaisons*, alongside Glenn Close, John Malkovich, and Michelle Pfeiffer. Reeves joined other outstanding casts that year, appearing in Ron Howard's comedy *Parenthood* and Lawrence Kasdan's *I Love You to Death*. Audiences saw Reeves for the first time as the romantic lead opposite Barbara Hershey in Jon Amiel's *Tune in Tomorrow*, also starring Peter Falk. His additional credits include Tri-Star's sci-fi thriller *Johnny Mnemonic*, Andrew Davis's action film *Chain Reaction*, and the dark comedy *Feeling Minnesota*, directed by Steve Baigelman for New Line Cinema.

SHARON DUNCAN-BREWSTER – 'NOGI'

Sharon Duncan-Brewster's outstanding skills as an actress are reflected in the diverse range of theater, television, and film credits she has acquired over the years. Most recently, she was seen in the blockbuster film *Dune* for Warner Bros., playing the role of Dr Liet Kynes; *Enola Holmes* on Netflix; and as Tula Quik in Sky's drama series "Intergalactic."

Her theater credits include: *Victory Condition* (Royal Court Theater), *Meet Me at Dawn* (The Traverse Theater), *The Almighty Sometimes* (Manchester Royal Exchange), *Swallow* (Traverse Theater), *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Liverpool Everyman), and the series *Not Black and White* at The Tricycle Theatre.

Television credits include: "Sex Education" (Netflix), "Years & Years" (BBC), "The Long Song" (BBC), "Top Boy" (Channel 4), "The Bible" (History Channel), "Cucumber" (Channel 4), "The Mimic" (Channel 4), "Bad Girls" (ITV), "Doctor Who" (BBC,) and "Eastenders" (BBC).

Other film credits include *The Intent 2: The Come Up*, *Rogue One: A Star Wars Story* (Disney/Lucas films), and *Three and Out* (Rovinge).

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FILMMAKER BIOGRAPHIES

LEN WISEMAN – DIRECTOR

Len Wiseman began his career working in the art department for blockbuster movies such as *MEN IN BLACK* and *INDEPENDENCE DAY*. Today, as founder of production banner Sketch Films and successful executive producer and director on award-winning films and TV series, Wiseman continues to make his mark on the entertainment industry as a powerful storyteller.

Upcoming, Wiseman will debut his highly anticipated film *BALLERINA* for Lionsgate, which will be released on June 6, 2025. The film is an action spinoff of the lucrative *JOHN WICK* franchise and follows a young assassin named Eve Macarro, played by Oscar nominee Ana de Armas, who seeks revenge against the people who killed her family. Keanu Reeves will be reprising his role as John Wick after a box office success with *JOHN WICK: CHAPTER 4*. The film also stars Norman Reedus and Lance Reddick.

He is perhaps best known for his *UNDERWORLD* film series, with five films spanning across thirteen years. In 2003, he created and directed the film *UNDERWORLD*, starring Kate Beckinsale, Scott Speedman, and Michael Sheen. The film was released by Screen Gems and received a Teen Choice Award nomination for Choice Thriller Movie as well as a Saturn Award nomination for Best Horror Film.

Following this, he directed and wrote the 2006 sequel *UNDERWORLD: EVOLUTION* and served as a producer through Sketch Films and writer for Patrick Tatopoulos' *UNDERWORLD: RISE OF THE LYCANS*, *UNDERWORLD: AWAKENING*, and *UNDERWORLD: BLOOD WARS*.

In 2019, Wiseman executive produced the drama series and directed the pilot episode of the live-action drama *SWAMP THING*, which debuted on May 31, 2019, on the new DC Universe SVOD platform. The series follows 'Abby Arcane' (Crystal Reed), who returns

home to Marais, Louisiana to investigate a deadly swamp-borne virus, only to discover the dark, terrifying mysteries of the swamp.

In 2017, Wiseman executive produced THE GIFTED, which premiered on FOX on October 2. The series marked Marvel's expansion into the television landscape and follows an ordinary suburban family whose lives change forever when they discover their children have developed mutant powers. That same year,

Wiseman executive produced APB through Sketch Films, starring Justin Kirk and Natalie Martinez. The series, which premiered on FOX on September 16, follows a tech billionaire who purchases a troubled police precinct after witnessing a violent crime and reboots it as a private police force. Wiseman also directed the pilot episode.

In 2016, Wiseman executive produced LUCIFER as well as directed the series' pilot episode. The series, which premiered on FOX on January 25, chronicles 'Lucifer Morningstar' (Tom Ellis), the Devil, who abandons Hell for Los Angeles, where he runs his own nightclub and becomes a consultant to the LAPD.

The series received several award nominations, including a Teen Choice Award nomination for Choice TV Breakout Show and a People's Choice Award nomination for Favorite TV Crime Drama. Prior, Wiseman created, wrote, and produced the FOX series SLEEPY HOLLOW under his Sketch Films banner, as well as directed the pilot episode. Over its four seasons, the series was nominated for multiple awards, including a Television Critics Association Award nomination for Outstanding New Program, several Teen Choice Award nominations, as well as a People's Choice nomination for Favorite New TV Drama.

In 2012, he directed sci-fi thriller TOTAL RECALL, which was released by Columbia Pictures on August 3 and stars Colin Farrell, Jessica Biel, and Kate Beckinsale. On the small screen, Wiseman directed and executive produced the pilot episode of the 2010's remake of the classic series HAWAII FIVE-0, which debuted on CBS on September 20. In addition to his work in film and TV, Wiseman has directed numerous commercials and has directed music videos for artists including Rufus Wainwright, Megadeth, En Vogue, Static X, and Brooke Allison. In 2002, he received a Best Art Direction nomination for Quarashi's "Stick 'Em Up" at the MTV Video Music Awards and a Best Director nomination for Rufus Wainwright's "Across the Universe" at the Music Video Production Association (MVPA) Awards.

In 2009, Wiseman founded the Los Angeles-based production company Sketch Films, which has produced several films and series since its inception and has multiple projects in development.

Wiseman directed the fourth instalment of the DIE HARD series, LIVE FREE OR DIE HARD, starring Bruce Willis, which was released by 20th Century Fox on June 22, 2007, and was the most successful at the box office of all the installments.

BASIL IWANYK – PRODUCER

Basil Iwanyk is the founder of Thunder Road Films, one of the most prolific and respected independent film companies in Hollywood. Founded in 2003, Thunder Road's films have

been nominated for Academy Awards®, Golden Globes®, Producers Guild Awards, Writers Guild Awards, Directors Guild Awards, and AFI Awards.

Thunder Road has produced numerous films including the *John Wick* franchise, *The Town*, *Wind River*, the *Sicario* franchise, *A Star Is Born*, *Monkey Man*, *Silent Night*, *Bruised*, *Greenland*, the *Clash of the Titans* franchise, *A Private War*, *Hotel Mumbai*, and many more.

Thunder Road's upcoming films include the Ric Roman Waugh and Gerard Butler sequel *Greenland: Migration*; David Mackenzie's *Relay*, starring Riz Ahmed, Lily James, and Sam Worthington; Bryan Fuller's *Dust Bunny*, starring Mads Mikkelsen and Sigourney Weaver; James Madigan's action-comedy *Fight or Flight* starring Josh Hartnett; and horror film *Arachnid* directed by Ángel Gómez Hernández starring Matilda Lutz.

Up next, Iwanyk is producing Marc Webb's supernatural action-thriller *Day Drinker*, starring Johnny Depp, Penelope Cruz, and Madelyn Cline; as well as Elegance Bratton's true-life crime-thriller *By Any Means* starring Mark Wahlberg and Yahya Abdul-Mateen II.

Basil currently resides in Spring Lake, New Jersey, with his wife and three sons. He recently opened the bookstore, Thunder Road Books, in his hometown.

ERICA LEE – PRODUCER

Born in NYC, Erica Lee graduated with honors from Florida State University with a degree in communications and immediately entered the entertainment industry with an internship at NBC Studios in Burbank. Following her internship, she began working at Creative Artists Agency as an assistant in the talent department. A twenty-year veteran of Thunder Road, Erica started as the assistant to Chairman Basil Iwanyk. Now President of Production and Partner, she has produced some of the company's most successful films, including all four installments of the *John Wick* franchise; Taylor Sheridan's chilling *Wind River*; the critically acclaimed *Sicario*, directed by Oscar® nominee Denis Villeneuve, starring Emily Blunt, Josh Brolin and Benicio del Toro; as well as the Stefano Sollima-directed sequel, *Sicario: Day of the Soldado*. She is dedicated to showcasing female-driven content and empowering female creatives in the heavily male-dominated space of the action-thriller genre.

Erica has also shepherded development on such titles as *A Star Is Born*, *We Are Marshall*, *Brooklyn's Finest*, *The Town*, *The Expendables* franchise, *Clash of the Titans* and its sequel, *Wrath of the Titans*. She executive produced Oscar® nominee Matthew Heineman's gripping narrative debut, *A Private War*; Andrea Di Stefano's *The Informer*, starring Rosamund Pike and Joel Kinnaman; Alfonso Gomez-Rejon's *The Current War*, starring Benedict Cumberbatch and Michael Shannon; and Ric Roman Waugh's *Kandahar* starring Gerard Butler.

Her most recent titles include James Madigan's *Fight or Flight*, starring Josh Hartnett; Dev Patel's directorial debut, the revenge-thriller *Monkey Man*; Mouly Surya's *Trigger Warning* starring Jessica Alba for Netflix; Jim Strouse's romantic comedy *Love Again*, starring Priyanka Chopra-Jonas and Sam Heughan, featuring original music by Celine Dion; and John Woo's heralded U.S. action film return, *Silent Night*, starring Joel Kinnaman; as well as the *Wick* world television series, "The Continental."

She is also in active production on several films: Marc Webb's *Day Drinker*, starring Johnny Depp and Madeline Cline; Elegance Bratton's *By Any Means* starring Mark Wahlberg and Yahya Abdul-Mateen II; Jeff Wadlow's *The Devil's Mouth* starring Kathryn Newton and Lana Condor.

Erica is in post-production on Lionsgate's *Dust Bunny*, starring Mads Mikkelsen and Sigourney Weaver, and *Greenland: Migration*, the sequel to *Greenland*, starring Gerald Butler.

CHAD STAHELSKI – PRODUCER

Chad Stahelski is known as one of the busiest filmmakers working in Hollywood today. His most recent film in theaters was *John Wick: Chapter 4*, the latest in the record-breaking box-office franchise, which Lionsgate released on March 24, 2023. Chad is the director and a producer of the film, which stars Keanu Reeves, Donnie Yen, Bill Skarsgård, Hiroyuki Sanada, Shamier Anderson, Rina Sawayama, Ian McShane, Lance Reddick, and Laurence Fishburne.

Chad made his directorial debut with 2014's *John Wick*. That box-office and critical success was followed by 2017's *John Wick: Chapter 2*, with Chad again at the helm. *John Wick: Chapter 3 — Parabellum*, which Lionsgate released in 2019, continued the saga with Reeves and a cast including Halle Berry, Laurence Fishburne, Mark Dacascos, Asia Kate Dillon, Lance Reddick, Jason Mantzoukas, Anjelica Huston, and Ian McShane. Continuing his work in the *John Wick* universe, Chad is the executive producer on the prequel television series "The Continental" for Peacock, as well as the upcoming film spin-off, *Ballerina*. To date, the *John Wick* franchise has earned over \$1 billion at the global box office.

Through his production company, 87Eleven Entertainment, Chad produced the vampire-thriller *Day Shift* for Netflix. Jamie Foxx, Dave Franco, Karla Souza, Meagan Good, Natasha Liu Bordizzo, Oliver Masucci, Snoop Dogg, Steve Howey, Scott Adkins, and Zion Broadnax starred in the 2022 film. Additional credits for Chad include *The Matrix Resurrections* (Warner Bros.) as an actor and executive producing Halle Berry's *Bruised* (Netflix). Film projects in development with 87Eleven Entertainment include *Highlander* (Amazon/MGM) with Henry Cavill; *Ghost of Tsushima* (Sony/PlayStation), based on the action-adventure game set in feudal Japan; an adaptation of the popular *Black Samurai* novels (Netflix); and an adaptation of Trevanian's *Shibumi* (Warner Bros.), all with an eye for Chad to direct and produce. Additionally, the company is developing *Man from Nowhere* (New Line); an untitled *John Wick/Caine* spin-off, to be directed by Donnie Yen; and *Karoshi* (Lionsgate), to be written and directed by Takashi Doscher, with Cynthia Erivo, Teo Yoo, and Isabel May set to star. On the television front, 87Eleven is developing "Project Nemesis" (Sony TV), an untitled Scot Harvath project (Sony TV), and "John Wick: Under the High Table" (Lionsgate TV).

Chad comes from a martial arts background and entered the film field at the age of 24 as a stunt double on *The Crow*, where he doubled for the late Brandon Lee. The greatest break for Chad as a stunt man came when he doubled for Keanu Reeves in *The Matrix*. From there, he moved on to fight choreography, stunt coordinating, and second-unit directing. He's worked on titles including *Wild Wild West*, *The Replacements*, *The Matrix Reloaded*, *The Matrix Revolutions*, *Van Helsing*, *Constantine*, *xXx: State of the Union*, and *300*. He also worked as second-unit director on *Captain America: Civil War*, *The Hunger Games*, *The Hunger Games: Catching Fire*, *Sherlock Holmes: A Game of Shadows*, *The Brothers*

Grimsby, Hitman: Agent 47, Escape Plan, After Earth, The Expendables 2, Safe, and Ninja Assassin.