

Boss Baby and grown-up drama

In *Die Rebellie* Van Lafras Verwey, Tobie Cronje plays an outcast who could never accept the realities of life. *Boss Baby* is a hilariously universal animated story about how a new baby's arrival impacts a family. *Gallows Road* explores how tragedy, heartbreak and the choices that we make impact our lives and those around us in unimaginable ways. Charlize Theron takes on the role of a humanitarian who finds love amidst a political/social revolution in war-torn Liberia in *The Last Face*. Matthew McConaughey plays a prospector desperate for a luck break who sets off on an amazing journey to find gold in the uncharted jungle of Indonesia in *Gold*. And Sonya Yoncheva reprises her widely praised interpretation of one of opera's most beloved heroines, the tragic courtesan Violetta, in the Met Opera's *La Traviata*.



By [Daniel Dercksen](#) 7 Apr 2017

Boss Baby

From the studio that brought us *Shrek*, *Kung Fu Panda* and *Madagascar*, comes DreamWorks Animation's hilarious family comedy about how a new baby's arrival impacts a family, told from the point of view of a delightfully unreliable narrator - a wildly imaginative seven-year-old named Tim. The most unusual Boss Baby arrives to Tim's home in a taxi, wearing a suit, carrying a brief case and speaking with the voice and wit of Alec Baldwin. The sibling rivalry between the two brothers is reluctantly cast aside when Tim discovers that Boss Baby is actually a spy on a secret undercover mission, and only he can help. An outrageous adventure ensues as the pint-sized partners prepare to thwart a dastardly plot involving an epic battle between puppies and babies.

Inspired by the bestselling picture book by Marla Frazee, this riotous comedy for all ages features the voices of Alec Baldwin as Boss Baby, Steve Buscemi as the villainous Francis E. Francis, Jimmy Kimmel and Lisa Kudrow as Tim and Boss Baby's unsuspecting parents, Miles Bakshi as Tim, and Tobey Maguire as the film's narrator.

For director Tom McGrath, who is best known for helming DreamWorks' three *Madagascar* blockbusters and the 2010 superhero villain fantasy *Megamind*, *Boss Baby* is a very personal story. He remembers how the book struck a chord with him when he first came across it.

"Marla's book really grabbed my attention. It was this really charming board book, about 30 pages long, and I didn't even know how popular it was. But it reminded me of my childhood, and my own family dynamic, which instantly kicked my imagination into wild overdrive thinking about how cool it would be to expand it into a feature-length film."

For screenwriter Michael McCullers (Mr. Peabody and Sherman, Baby Mama, Austin Powers movies), inventing the story from a worried seven-year-old's perspective was a breakthrough moment in the creative journey of the film. "That's the emotional core of the story," he explains. "We realised that there haven't been many children's movies that have addressed the feelings that come with getting a new brother or sister. It's really one of the first elemental family dynamics. It's about sharing love and getting over the jealousy that inevitably comes about. In a way, both parents and children will easily relate to the film's situation, because we've all experienced these issues in our own families in one way or another — without the bossy baby in the suit, of course."

Gold

Kenny Wells (Matthew McConaughey), a prospector desperate for a lucky break, teams up with a similarly eager geologist (Edgar Ramirez) and sets off on an amazing journey to find gold in the uncharted jungle of Indonesia. Getting the gold was hard but keeping it is even more difficult, sparking an adventure through the most powerful boardrooms of Wall Street.

Directed by Academy Award winner Stephen Gaghan (Syriana, Traffic), the screenplay was written by Patrick Massett and John Zinman (Friday Night Lights).

Gold is a film that resonates on different levels. It's about the desire for achievement, about self-worth, about trust, about the intoxication of success, about the idea that big money changes people, and it's a love story.

Matthew McConaughey believes the film presents a lasting perspective on Americana. "The movie explores respect, brotherhood, faithfulness, what a man will do to keep the dream alive, pride, loyalty, the little man getting away with it, the underdog winning, the underdog stickin' it to the big man who's been trying to stick it to him, and the loser who wins. It's a great American story about the ways America was built," declares McConaughey. In fact, "It could be a real American classic. It has mystery, drama, a lot of humour, a lot of humanity along the way, and a story that you probably never heard of most likely."

For Bryce Dallas Howard, the film contains enduring themes. "Gold is an allegorical tale of greed and success and misguided dreams. It's an important story in many ways," she proposes. "There's twists and turns and this kind of iconic character at the centre of it, but even though it has all of those elements and all those plates spinning, it goes so much deeper than that. When I read this film, I thought immediately of Ibsen and Chekov and Arthur Miller, playwrights who deal with really who human beings are, what they're up against, and what it takes to keep being who they are in the midst of whatever they're dealing with."

Gallows Road

Bob Collins (Ernie Hudson) has it all: a loving wife, two children who adore him and a younger brother and business partner

Seth (Marcus Mauldin). God is good to Bob and life is happy. Bob and Seth are just one day away from making their dream of opening an antique store come true. This is not just any antique store, but one previously owned by the sheriff's brother who has two wayward sons, Snake and Matty. Trouble begins. Jake Knight (Bill McAdams Jr) is a man searching for a purpose, unsure of his role both as a husband and a father. He has a beautiful wife and two children yet he chooses to spend most of his time with the "brotherhood", Snake and Matty. This choice causes Jake to get off course and head down the wrong road. One of his only hopes and saving grace is his boss Frank (Kevin Sorbo) who is a good friend offering him steady work at the stables and spiritual advice. But more often than not, Jake's search seems to end at the bottom of a bottle. An unthinkable crime draws these men together, changing their lives forever – turning one from the light while speeding the other towards darkness. Frank, not knowing Jake's circumstances, tries to counsel him, while Snake, protected by his uncle, is determined to finish what he started. Things begin to change when innocence enters. Jake's daughter Puck, and Seth's son Bay meet on a dirt road. They go fishing together and form an inseparable bond. Their friendship and God's protection become a force to reckon with as the tension escalates.

Set in the rustic backdrop of rural Texas, Gallows Road explores how tragedy, heartbreak and the choices that we make impact our lives and those around us in unimaginable ways. As a family man withdraws from the world to overcome his agonising loss, another man struggles with the unbearable guilt of his role in the crime.

The Last Face

The Last Face centres around a love affair between Dr. Wren Petersen (Academy Award winner Charlize Theron), the director of an international aid organisation and Dr. Miguel Leon (Academy Award winner Javier Bardem), a relief-aid doctor.

Set against the devastating backdrop of war-torn Liberia, Miguel and Wren must find a way to keep their relationship alive under extraordinarily difficult conditions battling their mutual passion for the value of life matched by the intensity of their diametrically opposed opinions on how best to solve the conflict that surrounds them.

Directed by two-time Academy Award winner Sean Penn, *The Last Face* also stars Primetime Emmy nominee Jared Harris and celebrated French actors Jean Reno and Adèle Exarchopoulos.

The Last Face is brought to the screen by a group of filmmakers and actors who coincidentally all happen to be humanitarians in their own right and unquestionably this resonance was their motivation to work with the very difficult material. It is not a didactic documentary, or war story. At the centre of this mayhem is the extraordinary love of two individuals that have made their lives a career in humanising the human condition, and how they keep their love alive in the atrocities that their work takes them to.

La Traviata

Opera lovers are in for a treat when the next production from the current Met: Live in HD season – Giuseppe Verdi's famous opera *La Traviata* – releases on the big screen at Nouveau and select Ster-Kinekor cinemas nationally from Saturday, 8 April for limited screenings.

Sonya Yoncheva reprises her widely praised interpretation of one of opera's most beloved heroines, the tragic courtesan Violetta, a role in which she triumphed on the Met stage in 2015. Playing opposite her is Michael Fabiano as her lover, Alfredo, with Thomas Hampson in one of his most acclaimed Met roles as Alfredo's protective father, Giorgio Germont.

La Traviata is based on the play *La Dame aux Camélias*, which was adapted from the novel with the same title written by Alexandre Dumas, known frequently in English as *Camille*. The opera premiered at La Fenice on 6 March 1853 and received mostly negative reviews due to the casting of soprano Fanny Salvini-Donatelli as Violetta. At the time, although she was an acclaimed singer, she was considered too old for the role at the age of 38 and too heavy to play a young woman dying of consumption.

Screening times for *La Traviata* at Nouveau (Rosebank Mall, JHB; Brooklyn Mall, PTA; SK Gateway Commercial, DBN; and V&A Waterfront, CT) and select Ster-Kinekor cinemas are as follows: 8 April at 5pm; 9 April at 2.30pm; 11 and 19 April at 11.30am; and 18 April at 6pm. The running time is 2-hours and 33-minutes, including an interval.

For more information and to make bookings for *La Traviata*, part of The Met: Live in HD season, go to www.sterkinekor.co

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ABOUT DANIEL DERCKSEN

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