

New releases and the Garden Route International Film Festival!

By  Daniel Dercksen

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A retired schoolteacher yearns for some adventure, some human connection, and some sex in *Good Luck To You*, *Leo Grande*, The God Of Thunder embarks on a harrowing cosmic adventure in *Thor: Love and Thunder*, the Bolshoi Ballet's *Spartacus* promises a tour de force for balletomanes and film buffs can enjoy a feast of films at the 4th Garden Route International Film Festival in Mossel Bay.



Good Luck To You, Leo Grande

Emma Thompson stirs up some heated controversy as a retired schoolteacher, who is yearning for some adventure, some human connection and some sex. Good sex. Whilst her husband Robert provided a home, a family, and something resembling a life, good sex was never on offer. But he's gone now, and Nancy has a plan: she will find adventure with a sex worker named Leo Grande (Daryl McCormack).

In an anonymous hotel room, Nancy greets Leo. He looks every bit as good as his picture, but what Nancy wasn't expecting was conversation. Leo has a view on everything, and though he may not always tell the truth, Nancy finds she likes him. And he likes her. With growing sexual confidence, Nancy starts to relax. Over the course of their rendezvous, the power dynamics shift and their well-worn masks begin to slip.

Ultimately, the filmmakers hope that audiences enjoy themselves watching this film.

Says playwright and novelist Katy Brand, “I guess like anyone who writes a film you want people to, to laugh, to feel a bit moved, to have something to think about and then to leave uplifted.”

Daryl McCormack echoes Brand’s sentiments about bringing joy to the audience. He says, “I hope that they’ll have a laugh. I hope that they really enjoy what we can bring to each other as humans, just humour and kindness and an endeavour to understand one another.”

Emma Thompson says, “How do you experience pleasure? Do you allow yourself to experience pleasure, and if you don’t then why not? Where do you carry your shame and why are you ashamed? Why are pain and pleasure and shame so inextricably linked? These are conversations that live with everyone, in all cultures, across all borders.”

“*Good Luck To You, Leo Grande* is a reminder that someone unlikely might free you from your own limitations in a small but significant way. And that the search for intimacy and connection can be powerful, brave and necessary,” says director Sophie Hyde.

Read more [here](#).

Thor: Love and Thunder

The God of Thunder (Chris Hemsworth) embarks on a journey, unlike anything he’s ever faced — one of self-discovery. But his efforts are interrupted by a galactic killer known as Gorr the God Butcher, who seeks the extinction of the gods. To combat the threat, Thor enlists the help of King Valkyrie, Korg and his ex-girlfriend Jane Foster (Natalie Portman), who — to Thor’s surprise — inexplicably wields his magical hammer, Mjolnir, as the Mighty Thor. Together, they venture out on a harrowing cosmic adventure to uncover the mystery of the God Butcher’s vengeance and stop him before it’s too late.

Directed by Taika Waititi from a screenplay by Waititi and Jennifer Kaytin Robinson.

“What sets this movie apart is that, at its heart, it’s a love story,” says producer Brian Chapek. “We’ve seen Thor grow so much over the years. After the events of *Avengers: Endgame*, we started to see cracks in his armour. He started to feel some ownership over all the people he’s lost in his life.”

“One of the cool things about Marvel films is this ability to embrace various genres within a single film,” says filmmaker Taika Waititi. “It keeps audiences guessing, and the characters within these different genres then feel different all the time. When we came up with *Thor: Love and Thunder*, we knew the fans would really freak out about it, and it really does suggest a lot of what the film is about.”

“I don’t think it’s far-fetched to expect a change in a character like Thor,” says Waititi. “He’s been around for a long time, so there’s time for him to go through different phases. I was relieved when I knew how high he was testing in the *Ragnarok* screenings, but it was also a sense of pride that we’d managed to reinvent this character in a way that made the film do well but also made people want to see more of him.”

Read more [here](#).



GRIFF
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International
Film Festival

Bolshoi Ballet’s *Spartacus*

Huge in scale and spectacular in effect, the Bolshoi Ballet’s *Spartacus* is a true tour de force, set to Aram Khachaturian’s superb score. With an incredible display of might from the four leading dancers to the entire corps de ballet and its passionate pas de deux, *Spartacus* is the ultimate spectacle of virtuosity and lyricism born at the Bolshoi Theatre.

In Imperial Rome led by Crassus, Spartacus and his wife Phrygia are reduced to slavery and are separated by slave dealers. His love for her and his desire for freedom lead him to revolt against the Roman army with the help of the other captives. With the Bolshoi Principals, Soloists and Corps de Ballet. At Cinema Nouveau on 9, 10, 13 and 14 July.

For more information and to book tickets, go [here](#).

The 4th Garden Route International Film Festival

Film buffs can enjoy a feast of films at the 4th Garden Route International Film Festival in Mossel Bay, offering virtual screenings from 4 – 17 July, and screenings at the Diaz hotel from 12 – 16 July.

This Independent International Film Festival offers the best in international and independent films from around the globe.

“We want to connect people to the experiences of others, to revel in great stories, and to create experiences designed for film lovers. It’s a celebration of film’s power to delight and transform – to inspire, provoke, and connect us to our community and the world,” says festival director Patrick Walton.

Visit the website [here](#).

Read more about the latest and upcoming films [here](#).

ABOUT DANIEL DERCKSEN

Daniel Dercksen has been a contributor for Lifestyle since 2012. As the driving force behind the successful independent training initiative The Writing Studio and a published film and theatre journalist of 40 years, teaching workshops in creative writing, playwriting and screenwriting throughout South Africa and internationally the past 22 years. Visit www.writingstudio.co.za

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