

Eiffel, Bullet Train and more



By [Daniel Derksen](#)

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This week passion rouses the creation of the Eiffel Tower in *Eiffel*, an assassin battles baddies in *Bullet Train*, a dog dreams of becoming a Samurai in *Paws: The Legend Of Hank*, *Leopoldstadt* is an epic family drama and a deadly predator strikes in *Prey*.



Eiffel

When the idea for the sumptuous romance *Eiffel* dawned on director Martin Bourboulon over 20 years ago, it sparked a journey that resulted in a film that is not a biopic or a documentary, but a faithful and endearing reimagining of Gustave Eiffel' fervent passion, which grounded the creation and building of the Eiffel Tower.

Having just finished collaborating on the Statue of Liberty, Gustave Eiffel was at the high point of his career. The French government requested he create something spectacular for the "Exposition Universelle" of 1889 in Paris but Gustave Eiffel is only interested in the city's subway project. His life is turned upside-down when the great lost love from his youth reappears. Their secret affair inspired him to change the face of Paris forever when he and his team of engineers took on the insane project of erecting a 10,100-tonne, 300-meter-high iron tower in the middle of the city.

“*Eiffel* is a love story. But it is also, most especially, a declaration of love. To Paris. To cinema. To audacity,” says screenwriter Caroline Bongrand, who drafted the first screenplay 24 years ago.

“From the start, there was a clear mission in this film: that the Tower be sufficiently present on-screen to deliver something visually spectacular. We also sensed that witnessing the different phases of its construction would be even more spectacular than seeing it in its actual, completed form, “ says director Martin Bourboulon

Eiffel, a fictionalised romance between Eiffel and Adrienne Bourgès, his childhood sweetheart, was directed by Martin Bourboulon, from a screenplay crafted by Caroline Bongrand.

Read more [here](#).

Bullet Train

In *Bullet Train*, directed by David Leitch from a screenplay by Zak Olkewicz, based on the book by Kotaro Isaka, Brad Pitt stars as Ladybug, an unlucky assassin determined to do his job peacefully after one too many gigs gone off the rails. Fate, however, may have other plans, as Ladybug’s latest mission puts him on a collision course with lethal adversaries from around the globe—all with connected, yet conflicting, objectives—on the world’s fastest train.

For director David Leitch, who previously brought style and flair to such movies as *Deadpool 2*, the chance to direct a movie that was unlike any other presented an unmissable opportunity. He was attracted to the boldness and originality of *Bullet Train*: “That’s the kind of movie I like to make. It has a tone of relentless fun and snappy dialogue. But the most

important thing to me was that it had well-defined characters that gave the actors a lot to chew on. It's a fun action-thriller with crazy, bombastic characters – and it's a meditation on fate. Really.”

Read more [here](#).

Paws Of Fury: The Legend Of Hank

Hank, a loveable dog with a head full of dreams about becoming a great samurai, sets off in search of his destiny. Unfortunately for him, what he finds instead is the strange and unwelcoming town of Kakamucho.

There, he sticks out like a sore thumb, for he is a dog and everyone else is...a cat! And as we all know, cats really, REALLY don't like dogs. Desperate to please the townsfolk, Hank unwittingly becomes part of the dastardly narcissistic Ika's plans to rid Kakamucho of all its inhabitants. Just one small obstacle stands in Ika's way of world domination (okay, Kakamucho-domination) and his evil plan is to trick Hank into helping him, by driving out the townsfolk forever.

Step forward Jimbo, a once mighty samurai who has since fallen from grace, and Emiko, a feisty kitten who shares Hank's dreams. Together this mismatched trio will embark on a journey that sees them overcome prejudices and learn the true meaning of friendship.

“*Paws of Fury* is a freewheeling mash-up of east and west. An action-packed comedy featuring incredible performances from our stellar cast of hilarious characters, it also delivers a great message of inclusion and acceptance. It's sure to be a treat the whole family can enjoy, “ says director and producer Rob Minkoff.

Leopoldstadt

Leopoldstadt is an epic family drama telling the story of an Austrian-Jewish family's experience over 50 years from the turn of the century to World War II. Written by playwright Tom Stoppard, inspired by his own family history.

Regarded as 'Britain's greatest living playwright' (*Times*), Stoppard's critically acclaimed new play *Leopoldstadt* is a passionate drama of love, family and endurance.

At the beginning of the 20th century, Leopoldstadt was the old, crowded Jewish quarter of Vienna, Austria. But Hermann Merz, a factory owner and baptised Jew now married to Catholic Gretl, has moved up in the world. We follow his family's story across half a century, passing through the convulsions of war, revolution, impoverishment, annexation by Nazi Germany and the Holocaust. A company of 40 actors represent each generation of the family in this epic, but intimate play.

Filmed live on stage in London's West End, 'Tom Stoppard's masterpiece is magnificent' (*Independent*) and should not be missed.

On 6, 7, 10 and 11 August at Cinema Nouveau.

Read more [here](#).

Prey

The *Predator* franchise was launched in the late '80s and now resurfaces as the new action-thriller *Prey*, set in the Comanche Nation 300 years ago.

Prey is the story of a young woman, Naru, a fierce and highly skilled warrior. She has been raised in the shadow of some of the most legendary hunters who roam the Great Plains, so she sets out to protect her people when danger threatens her camp.

The prey she stalks, and ultimately confronts, turns out to be a highly evolved alien predator with a technically advanced arsenal, resulting in a vicious and terrifying showdown between the two adversaries.

"I cannot wait for audiences to fall into a time and place and invest in these characters the way that they would in any sports movie. That's the engine to this movie for me. I'm not an athlete, I don't play sports, I don't watch sports, but I love sports films because they are visceral, warm, hopeful, and aspirational. I love the idea that this movie could be aspirational, as well as intense and suspenseful and terrifying, " says director Dan Trachtenberg,

From 5 August on Disney+.

Read more [here](#).

Dear Evan Hansen

An adaptation of the Tony and Grammy Award-winning musical, *Dear Evan Hansen* follows a high school senior with social anxiety disorder on an unlikely journey of self-discovery and acceptance following the suicide of a fellow classmate.

Directed by Stephen Chbosky from a screenplay by Steven Levenson, it is based on the 2015 stage musical of the same name by Levenson, Benj Pasek and Justin Paul. Ben Platt plays the title role, reprising the performance that he originated on stage six years earlier. The ensemble cast also includes Kaitlyn Dever, Amandla Stenberg, Nik Dodani, Colton Ryan, Danny Pino, Julianne Moore and Amy Adams.

From 5 August on Showmax

Read more about the latest and upcoming releases [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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