

2020 upcoming film release highlights

 By [Daniel Dercksen](#)

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Now that everyone has binged on streamings in cyberspace, let's take a look at the real world of cinemas and take a peek at highlights of upcoming film releases of 2020.

In writer-director Christopher Nolan much anticipated *Tenet* (14 August) a man fights for the survival of the entire world, and journeys through a twilight world of international espionage on a mission that will unfold in something beyond real-time. Not time travel. Inversion. It stars John David Washington, Robert Pattinson, Elizabeth Debicki, Dimple Kapadia, Aaron Taylor-Johnson, Clémence Poésy, Michael Caine and Kenneth Branagh.

Acclaimed filmmaker Niki Caro brings the epic tale of China's legendary warrior to life in Disney's *Mulan* (21 August), in which a fearless young woman risks everything out of love for her family and her country to become one of the greatest warriors China has ever known.

Masquerading as a man, she is tested every step of the way and must harness her inner-strength and embrace her true potential. It is an epic journey that will transform her into an honoured warrior and earn her the respect of a grateful nation and a proud father. It features a celebrated international cast that includes Yifei Liu as Mulan; Donnie Yen as Commander Tung; Jason Scott Lee as Böri Khan; Yoson An as Cheng Honghui; with Gong Li as Xianniang and Jet Li as the Emperor.

Following the deadly events at home, the Abbott family (Emily Blunt, Millicent Simmonds, Noah Jupe) must now face the terrors of the outside world as they continue their fight for survival in silence in *A Quiet Place: Part II* (4 September). Forced to venture into the unknown, they quickly realise that the creatures that hunt by sound are not the only threats that lurk beyond the sand path. This sequel to *A Quiet Place* (2018) is written and directed by John Krasinski.

Set in the dazzling world of the LA music scene comes *The High Note* (25 September), the story of Grace Davis (Tracee Ellis Ross), a superstar whose talent, and ego, have reached unbelievable heights. Maggie (Dakota Johnson) is Grace's overworked personal assistant who's stuck running errands but still aspires to her childhood dream of becoming a music producer. When Grace's manager (Ice Cube) presents her with a choice that could alter the course of her career, Maggie and Grace come up with a plan that could change their lives forever. Directed by Nisha Ganatra (*Late Night*) from a screenplay by Flora Greeson.

Gal Gadot returns as Diana Prince and comes into conflict with the Soviet Union during the Cold War in the 1980s and finds a formidable foe by the name of the Cheetah in *Wonder Woman 1984* (2 October). This superhero film based on the DC Comics character Wonder Woman is a sequel to 2017's *Wonder Woman* and is directed by Patty Jenkins, who wrote it with Geoff Johns and David Callaham from a story written by Johns and Jenkins. It also stars Chris Pine, Kristen Wiig, Pedro Pascal, Connie Nielsen and Robin Wright in supporting roles. It is the fourth live-action theatrical film featuring the title character, following *Batman v Superman: Dawn of Justice* (2016), *Wonder Woman* and *Justice League* (2017); it will be the second full-length feature film centred around the character.

Kenneth Branagh directs and stars in the mystery thriller *Death On The Nile* (9 October), following Poirot, a world-renowned detective, on a vacation in Egypt and becoming involved in a love triangle gone murderously bad. Based on the 1937 novel of the same name by Agatha Christie, it is a sequel to 2017's *Murder on the Orient Express* and also stars Gal Gadot, Letitia Wright, Armie Hammer, Annette Bening, Dawn French, Jennifer Saunders and Russell Brand.

The psychological thriller *Unhinged* (9 October) takes something we've all experienced – road rage – to an unpredictable and terrifying conclusion. Rachel (Caren Pistorius) is running late getting to work when she crosses paths with a stranger (Russell Crowe) at a traffic light. Soon, Rachel finds herself and everyone she loves the target of a man who feels invisible and is looking to make one last mark upon the world by teaching her a series of deadly lessons. What follows is a dangerous game of cat and mouse that proves you never know who you're driving next to.

Following the events of *Captain America: Civil War* (2016), Scarlett Johansson returns as Natasha Romanoff and finds herself alone and forced to confront her past in *Black Widow* (6 November), a superhero film based on the Marvel Comics character of the same name. Produced by Marvel Studios and distributed by Walt Disney Studios Motion Pictures, it is intended to be the 24th film in the Marvel Cinematic Universe (MCU) and is directed by Cate Shortland.

In *No Time To Die* (27 Nov) James Bond has left active service and is enjoying a tranquil life in Jamaica. His peace is short-lived when his old friend Felix Leiter from the CIA turns up asking for help. The mission to rescue a kidnapped scientist turns out to be far more treacherous than expected, leading Bond onto the trail of a mysterious villain armed with dangerous new technology. This spy film is directed by Cary Joji Fukunaga and the 25th instalment in the James Bond series. The film features Daniel Craig in his fifth outing as the MI6 agent James Bond. Ralph Fiennes, Naomie Harris, Ben Whishaw, Rory Kinnear, Jeffrey Wright, Léa Seydoux and Christoph Waltz reprise their roles from previous films, with Rami Malek, Ana de Armas, Lashana Lynch, David Dencik, Dali Benssalah and Billy Magnussen joining the cast.

Steven Spielberg directs his first musical, *West Side Story* (18 December). Ansel Elgort and Rachel Zegler star as the star-crossed lovers, Tony and Maria, despite having affiliations with rival street gangs, the white Jets and Puerto Rican Sharks, they fall in love in 1950s New York City. Exploring forbidden love, and the rivalry between the Jets and the Sharks, two teenage street gangs of different ethnic backgrounds, this romantic musical film is an adaptation of the Broadway musical of the same name by Arthur Laurents, Leonard Bernstein and Stephen Sondheim. The film's screenplay is expected to hew more closely to the Broadway script than to the 1961 film adaptation directed by Robert Wise and Jerome Robbins.

Paul Atreides leads nomadic tribes in a battle to control the desert planet Arrakis in the epic science fiction film *Dune* (18 December), directed by Denis Villeneuve. It is the first of a planned two-part adaptation of the 1965 novel of the same name by Frank Herbert and will cover roughly the first half of the book. The film stars an ensemble cast including Timothée Chalamet, Rebecca Ferguson, Oscar Isaac, Josh Brolin, Stellan Skarsgård, Dave Bautista, Zendaya, David Dastmalchian, Stephen McKinley Henderson, Charlotte Rampling, Jason Momoa and Javier Bardem.

In *Top Gun: Maverick* (25 December) Pete 'Maverick' Mitchell mentors a new generation of US Navy fighter pilots. This action drama directed by Joseph Kosinski is the sequel to *Top Gun* (1986), with Tom Cruise and Val Kilmer reprising their roles from the first film.

On the local front

Toorbos (25 September) explores the Afrikaner feminine, through her fragility and power, this magical realist period drama, set in South Africa's Knysna forest of the 1930s, follows the free-spirited Karoliena as she is coaxed into marriage to a townsman and has to navigate the realities of progress, oppression of society, denying her true self, love and war back to her own personal freedom. An accomplished and assured feature from novelist Rene Van Rooyen, who adapted renowned writer Dalene Matthee's 2003 best-selling novel. It stars Elani Dekker and Stiaan Smith in the lead roles as Karoliena Kapp and Johannes Stander, respectively.

In *Material 2* (2 October) we follow the Kaif family as they balance family values and personal choices, whilst bringing in elements of comedic satire. It stars Riaad Moosa, Joey Rasdien, Denise Newman.

Questioning issues of race, class and gender, *Flatland* (30 October) is a portrait of femininity set against the backdrop of hostile frontier land, that interrogates what it means to be a woman today – in South Africa and the world at large. Directed by Jenna Bass and starring Faith Baloyi, Nicole Fortuin and Izel Bezuidenhout. The unique, contemporary drama, which opened Berlin Film Festival's Panorama section at the beginning of 2019, is a journey of self-discovery for three different but equally trapped women – a pregnant teenager, a young bride and a middle-aged cop – played out against the backdrop of the Karoo.

On the horror front

The Conjuring: The Devil Made Me Do It (11 September) is a chilling story of terror, murder and unknown evil that starts with a fight for the soul of a young boy, then takes paranormal investigators Ed and Lorraine Warren (Patrick Wilson and Vera Farniga) beyond anything they'd ever seen before. *Candyman* (30 October) is a 'spiritual sequel' to the 1992 film, with a new Candyman returning to the neighbourhood where the legend began.

For more information and dates on upcoming releases [keep an eye on this page](#) as titles are subject to change.

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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