

Daniel Edward Janelle Kathryn Leslie Jessica Madelyn with Kate and
CRAIG NORTON MONÆ HAHN ODOM JR. HENWICK CLINE HUDSON BAUTISTA

A RIAN JOHNSON WHODUNNIT

Glass Onion

a
Knives Out
mystery



NETFLIX PRESENTS A T-STREET PRODUCTION A RIAN JOHNSON FILM DANIEL CRAIG "GLASS ONION: A KNIVES OUT MYSTERY" EDWARD NORTON
JANELLE MONÆ KATHRYN HAHN LESLIE ODOM JR. JESSICA HENWICK MADELYN CLINE WITH KATE HUDSON AND DAVE BAUTISTA CASTING BY MARY VERNIEU, CSA BRET HOWE
CO-PRODUCERS NIKOS KARAMIGIOS LEOPOLD HUGHES COSTUME DESIGNER JENNY EAGAN MUSIC BY NATHAN JOHNSON FILM EDITOR BOB DUCSAY, ACE PRODUCTION DESIGNER RICK HEINRICHS DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY STEVE YEDLIN, ASC
EXECUTIVE PRODUCER TOM KARNOWSKI PRODUCED BY RAM BERGMAN, P.G.A. RIAN JOHNSON, P.G.A. WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY RIAN JOHNSON

ONE WEEK ONLY THEATRICAL SNEAK PREVIEW NOVEMBER 23

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NETFLIX

Glass Onion

a
Knives Out
mystery



GLASS ONION: A KNIVES OUT MYSTERY
DEBUTS IN SELECT THEATERS FOR ONE WEEK
ONLY ON NOVEMBER 23, 2022 AND
ON NETFLIX GLOBALLY DECEMBER 23, 2022



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KEY INFORMATION

NETFLIX RELEASE DATE: Dec. 23, 2022

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DIRECTOR: Rian Johnson

WRITTEN BY: Rian Johnson

PRODUCERS: Ram Bergman, Rian Johnson

CO-PRODUCERS: Nikos Karamigios, Leopold Hughes

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Tom Karnowski

DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY: Steve Yedlin

PRODUCTION DESIGNER: Rick Heinrichs

COSTUME DESIGNER: Jenny Eagan

EDITOR: Bob Ducsay

COMPOSER: Nathan Johnson

VISUAL EFFECTS SUPERVISOR: Giles Harding

SUPERVISING SOUND EDITOR: Matthew Wood

SUPERVISING SOUND EDITOR/SOUND DESIGNER: Josh Gold

STARRING: Daniel Craig, Edward Norton, Janelle Monáe, Kathryn Hahn, Leslie Odom Jr., Jessica Henwick, Madelyn Cline with Kate Hudson and Dave Bautista

LOGLINE

In the follow up to Rian Johnson's *Knives Out*, Detective Benoit Blanc travels to Greece to peel back the layers of a mystery involving a new cast of colorful suspects.

OFFICIAL SYNOPSIS

Benoit Blanc returns to peel back the layers in a new Rian Johnson whodunit. This fresh adventure finds the intrepid detective at a lavish private estate on a Greek island, but how and why he comes to be there is only the first of many puzzles. Blanc soon meets a distinctly disparate group of friends gathering at the invitation of billionaire Miles Bron for their yearly reunion. Among those on the guest list are Miles' former business partner Andi Brand, current Connecticut governor Claire Debella, cutting-edge scientist Lionel Toussaint, fashion designer and former model Birdie Jay and her conscientious assistant Peg, and influencer Duke Cody and his sidekick girlfriend Whiskey. As in all the best murder mysteries, each character harbors their own secrets, lies and motivations. When someone turns up dead, everyone is a suspect. Returning to the franchise he began, Academy Award-nominated filmmaker Rian Johnson writes and directs *Glass Onion: A Knives Out Mystery* and assembles another all-star cast that includes a returning Daniel Craig alongside Edward Norton, Janelle Monáe, Kathryn Hahn, Leslie Odom Jr., Jessica Henwick, Madelyn Cline with Kate Hudson and Dave Bautista.



THE GAME IS AFOOT: HEART OF *GLASS*

Just like the characters they play, the members of the A-list ensemble assembled for *Glass Onion: A Knives Out Mystery* weren't exactly sure what they were getting into when they signed on, only that it was going to be exciting to try and follow up writer-director Rian Johnson's smash 2019 hit *Knives Out*.

Trading the autumnal New England suburbs for the sultry Greek isles and fractious family for fraught frenemies, the cast — Edward Norton, Janelle Monáe, Kate Hudson, Dave Bautista, Kathryn Hahn, Leslie Odom Jr., Jessica Henwick, Madelyn Cline and Daniel Craig, returning as super sleuth Benoit Blanc — had complete faith in Johnson based on their love of the first film, which he also wrote and directed, receiving an Academy Award nomination for Best Original Screenplay.

Both viewers and critics loved the twisty mystery and that rapturous audience included the entirety of the cast of *Glass Onion*.

For Craig, a return to Blanc's fastidious fashion and plummy drawl was practically a fait accompli before the first film was finished. Or at least he hoped it was. "We talked about it during *Knives Out*, but you're in the hands of the film gods, really," he says. "You're thinking, 'Well, this is a really great experience, we'd love to repeat this. But who knows how this film's going to do?' But it worked out brilliantly. We knew it was a lovely film, but we didn't know it was going to be so successful. And that was when really the serious conversation started about where we were going to go."

Geographically, the answer was Greece. Situationally, the answer was a weekend gathering of a group of friends with shared interdependencies, memories, secrets, and lies.

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"All of them are under the thumb of this tech billionaire," says Johnson, a whodunit aficionado and lifelong Agatha Christie admirer. "He invites them to his private island for a murder mystery game. Then things go wrong." With the bright setting, colorful characters and heightened stakes, Johnson says, "It did end up being quite fun because it was a little bigger and a little broader."

Bubbled together on location first in Greece and subsequently Belgrade, the actors formed a tight bond that Norton likened to a summer repertory theatre troupe.

"A lot of that spirit of silliness and mirth and satire and physical comedy that comes across was really because we were having a great time," says Norton.

"It was just a delight, because Rian's casting is always spot on, and you get wonderful people," says Craig. "We were just so lucky on both movies to have such a dream cast come in, and so funny. And everybody just tuned in to what the tone of the film was."

That camaraderie benefitted their screen work as the actors endeavored to raise each other's games and banded together to ensure everyone got a full commitment when they'd have to go round-robin to get their individual close-up coverage done.

"It's such an honor to see excellent work happen," says Hudson of the actors cheering each other on. "Daniel had one of those moments that we all were doing high kicks for."

"That doesn't happen all the time," points out Bautista. "I am a student of this game, and so I knew that I was going to get an education here. I was more than happy to just sit, especially during other people's closeups, and watch, and learn, and pick up different things in their processes."

It resulted in a comical scene of the cast crowding around a single mark: "If you turned the camera around," says Hahn, "you would just see eight or nine other actors smushed together as close as possible." Adds Henwick, "You just got over personal boundaries really quickly."

That closeness extended to their personal connections. On weekends, the cast would gather to play the murder mystery game Mafia. Says Henwick with a laugh, "Because there were so many of us, the games would take three hours and we'd all get more and more progressively drunk, it was hilarious. It's so like a group of actors to say, in our free time, 'Let's perform!'" They went all in, says Madelyn Cline, "We would go to the local vintage store and get costumes so we would actually play these characters, and they would turn into dance parties." (Who was the best amateur sleuth? Monáe, who has hosted murder mystery games for years, says "I was pretty good at figuring out the little details." And the worst? Bautista confesses, "I was horrible. My strategy in Mafia was just to kill everybody and play stupid. Process of elimination.")

"Leslie taught us all how to play chess, some more successfully than others," reports Hahn. "Sometimes Edward would play the guitar. Kate would make us amazing smoothies with her magical powders, with collagen."

Concludes Odom, "If you ever get invited to a space that Rian Johnson is in charge of populating, just say yes."

"It did feel like capturing lightning in a bottle again, in terms of the group," says Johnson. "It did absolutely feel similar to the first movie, where it felt like, 'Oh, wow. This is a really special group of people who are coming together and genuinely having a great time working together.' That doesn't always happen."



"This is a film everyone will have a really great time dissecting, looking at the clues and laughing," says Monáe, of what she hopes people take away from *Glass Onion*. "The joy that we had making this film, I hope that transfers over to audiences."

As much fun as they had, the actors also appreciate that the film has something to say under the surface. Says Hudson, "There's the fun and the exuberance and the wish fulfillment of the location but underneath is a really interesting story about power dynamics between people and how we all vie for that sense of control and power. And so, I think this is quite layered."

Norton agrees, adding, "Because Rian is such a good writer, he balances a contemporary satire of social dynamics that are happening in the world without bludgeoning you with anything."

Ultimately everyone involved relished the mystery. "I just love when it's done well in movies," says Craig, a fan of the form. "It's hard to be surprised by films sometimes. I feel like the language of movies when it's reinvented well, it works so brilliantly, because people are surprised. And that I think is what we've been aiming for with this. Rian's done a pretty great job on that, and knowing that you're in the hands of a good filmmaker when you're watching a film is always much more relaxing. And I feel like when you're watching Rian Johnson movies, you feel like that. I love them."

Norton believes that the Queen of Mystery herself would approve. "I think if Agatha Christie were to sit through these, she'd laugh and cheer heartily."

PEELING BACK THE LAYERS: A CONVERSATION WITH WRITER-DIRECTOR- PRODUCER — RIAN JOHNSON —

How soon after the first film, or perhaps while making the first film, did you realize you wanted to make another?

While we were making the first film, Daniel and I just openly discussed it: "If this is something that people like, wouldn't it be fun to make more?" It really felt like we were doing our own version of this genre that he and I both adored, but we really had no idea whether people would respond to it. It's been such a pleasant surprise. The idea was always that this seems like something where we could do something very fun and unique every single time. For a long while to come, we could keep making these in a way that feels creatively satisfying to us, and never feels like we're repeating ourselves.

Once the film did so well and you decided to do another, how soon did you think, "Oh, no. How am I going to top that?"

Pretty immediately. Once you put a movie out there and people get a hold of it, it's a strange alchemy that happens where it very quickly becomes something else outside of you, to the point where you forgot how you pulled it off. It was a little bit scary. I've never done a follow-up to one of my own movies before.

For me, Agatha Christie is the bedrock of this genre that I grew up reading and becoming most familiar with. This is something that she would do every single time. It wasn't just that each story was set in a different place or that it had different types of characters. Oftentimes, it was a genre that she was pairing along with the whodunit, whether it's a Gothic romance or a slasher movie with *And Then There Were None* or a spy movie or a serial killer thriller with *The A.B.C. Murders*. Every single time, she found a way into it that felt unique and fresh, and you could tell it was challenging her creatively. When you get to the end, you see what got her excited about writing the book. Oftentimes, it was a completely novel approach to the storytelling. So I just committed to that. Immediately, when I started working on *Glass Onion*, it didn't feel like, "Boy, how do I top *Knives Out*?" because it was so different. It just became, "How do I execute this new thing as well as I can?"



When it comes to mysteries and whodunits there are those creators that want you to figure out their mystery, and then there are people who want to surprise you. You seem to be in the surprise category. You don't want people sitting there trying to figure it out. You just want them to enjoy it. Right?

Absolutely. The reality is I think this is also what's successful about Agatha Christie's stuff as well. The phrase I kept coming back to and talking about the first movie is, "It's a roller coaster and not a crossword puzzle." It's a common mistake in writing whodunits, thinking that you're making a crossword puzzle, and that the fun is that the audience is actually going to analyze all this and figure it out. I know when I'm reading or watching a whodunit, I always let go of the notion of figuring it out about a third of the way through.

“It's a roller coaster and not a crossword puzzle.”

pulled through emotionally? Are you on a ride with them with this story? Then the revelation of it all coming together and the whodunit, and the fact that it is all layered in there, is part of the fun of the genre. But in a way, it can't be the spine that actually is supporting the body of the whole thing. You just need a good story.

People just need to let the roller coaster take them. It's interesting, though, because you said you give up about a third of the way through. So are you trying to figure it out for the first third? Because you know there is part of the audience that wants to figure it out even though you might want them to just enjoy the fun of the ride.

Always. It's impossible not to, because that's what you're presented with. You're like, "Oh, I bet they did it. Oh, wait. No, I guess they didn't do it. I guess *they* did it. No. Oh, it's obvious they want us to think this, but it's actually *that*." Then that thought process gets kicked out, and you're just like, "Okay. I have no idea. Let's see what happens here." I think that's part of the joy of it, coming into it

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with the notion that you can figure it out. Also, it's important to me to play fair with the audience. If you go back and watch it a second time, knowing what the solution is, everything is there, and everything is in plain sight. It is all there to piece together.

What's the process for figuring out the steps of the mystery?

It was similar to *Knives Out*, in that the first thing that I came up with was a very conceptual, story-based structure of, "Huh, it would be interesting to try a murder mystery where this happened, and then this happened, and thus it had this effect on the audience," in a very wonky, structural, theoretical type way. That was the beginning of it. Then, at the same time, similar to the first movie, I had been turning over in my head stuff that I was thinking about in the news and in the world and just in my life.

One thing about *Knives Out* and about the series going forward is that they're always set in the current moment. So there will always be an element of them that's engaging with the culture. That means whatever's on everyone's mind right now is also what these movies are going to be engaging with as well as what's bubbling in my head. It's when the concept of the structure, what's emotionally resonant to me and the idea for a specific mystery fuse together. Then you're off to the races.

You leave wintry, sweater-weather New England, for this completely opposite tropical experience. Was setting the film in Greece partially about subverting the setting of the first film?

A large part of it for me was just that I was writing it during the lockdown of 2020, and I wanted to be on a beach vacation more than anything. [Laughs] I don't know if it's subversion, but there was definitely a feeling of it being fun to plant a very clear flag that this is not just going to be the first movie redone, that we are going to go different places. We're going to have different vibes. We're going to take you to a whole different deal every time. So in that way, showing that to the audience really clearly with the second movie made a lot of sense.

You also widen the lens tonally with more humor and a brighter sensibility.

Yeah, the tone is bigger. The humor is probably a little bigger and broader. For me, the tone really made sense once I realized who the players were going to be, not in terms of the actors, but in terms of the characters. If you have a character who is a billionaire tech guy like Miles Bron, where it just seems like every new thing that breaks in the news about these guys, you're just like, "That can't be real," there's a larger than life element to him. That very naturally led all the other characters to come up a little bit more to his level. They're all performing as politicians or rockstar scientists or fashion magnates or YouTube influencers. I mean, they're all going to be slightly more elevated as characters because that's what they would all be in real life.

What we're talking about through the whole movie, in a way, is this almost circus-like environment of lies we're in right now. All of that's to say that the tone was driven by the nature of the characters that populated this story. It did end up being quite fun.

In that vein there is some crossover thematically with the first film regarding greed, corruption, and power dynamics that could read as social satire. You're not wagging fingers at anyone but points are being made.

Yes, the moment you set something like this in the present-day and allow yourself to have the characters talk about what the characters would be talking about, the whole thing naturally is going to be about stuff that's in the air right now. Similar to the first one, I want this first and foremost to be entertainment. It's not a lecture. But hopefully, there is stuff to chew on in there. All of that is very intentional.

What would you say is different about Benoit Blanc this time?

I think Blanc has a more central role in this movie. You definitely get to know him a little bit better. In the first one, because of the way it was structured, Marta, Ana de Armas's character, was very much the protagonist. In a big way, Blanc was the threat. He was almost the antagonist in terms of just the story structure, because you were worried, even as they got closer, that he was going to catch her, and he was going to have to turn her over at the end. So, in that way, Blanc was always outside of the sphere of our protagonist and was a little bit more of an enigma in the first movie. Whereas, in this one, Blanc gets this invitation to come to this island. We're very much meeting these people and getting into this world through his eyes. He's a more central character. Because we're taking on his perspective in the beginning of it and taking in this whole world, he's a bit more the lens that we're seeing everything through in this one.

Daniel seems to relish this role and its fun quirks, what was it like to reteam?

So much of why I'm so into making these is that they just do bring me an intense amount of joy. Working with Daniel in this genre and having fun with it and the humor, getting to work with a new group of actors every time — everything about it just brings me happiness.



The cast seemed to really enjoy the experience working together. How did you know that these people would mesh so well?

It's kind of luck. I mean, you try to, when you're casting, think about, well, we're also kind of throwing a dinner party here, so you try and invite people that you like or that you think are going to work well together. But the reality is you never know. You're also, at the end of the day, just trying to get the actors that are most right for each individual part. So you also just throw the dice and hold your breath. Luckily, for this, we got a great group that really meshed. You can feel we had a really good time together in that way.

There is a lot happening in the film. How do you tie the various tonal strands together? Does it come naturally as you're moving through the story? Or is there an intentional thing that you need to do to find that balance?

I find it is really just feeling it out. The only barometer that you have is just "Does this feel right?" I think even with big moments, whether they're huge punchlines or big physical things, you can still tell when you're watching them whether they feel honest or not, even if they're completely unrealistic. It is a very fuzzy thing that you feel your way out through the production.

Where you end up making your real choices is in the edit. That's a piece of it that isn't talked about much, but that's really where you end up sculpting the tone of it. I mean, you have to get it all in the zone and try different things when you're shooting. But then the place where it's going to really live or die is when you're choosing which takes to use. You're choosing what things to lose, what things to include. That's where you have to be really conscious of "Does it feel like it is all contained within the same spectrum of the movie?"

In terms of music, you've got some fun needle drops from David Bowie to Little River Band, not to mention your compelling score.

I mean, the needle drops in it are really just songs I was listening to while we were out in Greece. It's just stuff that makes me happy.

With the score, I worked with Nathan Johnson, who's my cousin. I've been making movies with him since we were 10 years old. He's done all my movies. This was fun because with *Knives Out*, it was a very chamber music, sharp strings-type score. With this we drew a lot of inspiration from Nino Rota's score for *Death on the Nile*. We wanted it to be big and expansive and romantic and lush. I'm so proud of Nathan with his score. I think he really dialed it in.

What sparked the idea for the Glass Onion motif? Did it start with the Beatles song?

No. I was imagining that we have this billionaire character Miles Bron. It's going to be on this private island. There's some structure or mansion that he's built on it. At the same time, I'm always fishing for something fun that Blanc can grab onto as an overwrought metaphor that he can beat to death. And also, thinking about the story and how part of the game that the mystery is playing is that it points out at the end that this is not an intricate, hidden thing. This is all in plain sight from the very start. So the idea of glass came to me, something that's clear.

I'll be very honest. I literally got out my iPhone and searched my music library with the word glass thinking "There's got to be some good glass songs." I was like, "Oh, is it a glass fortress? Is it a glass castle? Is it a glass man?" The first thing that came up, because I'm a huge Beatles fan, was "Glass Onion." I was like, "Oh, that's going to be good." It was also the perfect metaphor for giving Blanc something to chew on, which is exactly the game we're playing with the audience. So when I landed on the song, it was like, "Ah, there you go."



CHARACTER DESCRIPTIONS

WATCHING THE DETECTIVE

Benoit Blanc (DANIEL CRAIG)

Possibly the world's greatest detective? Certainly the best dressed. Stir crazy without a case, Blanc accepts an unexpected invitation to attend the annual gathering of the friends of flamboyant multi-hyphenate billionaire disruptor Miles Bron, on his remote Greek island. What starts as a murder mystery dinner party parlor game soon turns into something much more interesting for Blanc.

On enjoying Benoit Blanc

"I just sort of keyed into the character. When I read the first script, I thought, 'Oh, I've seen this guy. I think I know who he is.' It's great writing, so that makes life so much easier. I'm playing around with levels in this movie. I mean, there are reasons for his enthusiasm at times, he's with this crazy group of people, and he needs to unlock them. Therefore his attitude towards them and how he treats them is important, because there's a great many egos in the room, and he needs to massage these egos, so he can uncover these people and find out who they are. And at the end of the day, who the guilty party is."

On Blanc's own mysterious aura

"By his very nature, he has to be enigmatic to an extent, because I think if we know too much about him, then the part of his technique as a detective to disarm people goes away a bit. We don't really know who he is, and the people that he interacts with don't really know who he is. We've got to walk that fine line a little bit. So we did get into a little bit more in this film, but hopefully not too much, just enough to tease his personal life and make it a bit more interesting."

On relocating Benoit's drawl

"As soon as I knew that we were going to go in the summer, I started working on it again once a week. And then when I got the script, two or three times a week. I just didn't want it to become this sort of pastiche of the first movie. Even though this atmosphere was more heightened than the first movie, I wanted it to be grounded in reality."

Janelle says: "He was such a giving scene partner, super supportive and complimentary — and very fun. When he goes into that Southern drawl, that accent gets me every time. And then he'll turn it off just like that and he's back in his British accent. But the fun of this whole film was not so much what we did on screen, but our bond off screen. I got a chance to really know Daniel as a human being. I know he was very happy that I took this role and wanted me to know that. It was really, really sweet just to know that I had his full support."

THE UNUSUAL SUSPECTS

Miles Bron (EDWARD NORTON)

Billionaire entrepreneur-philanthropist-disruptor and co-founder of companies under the banner of Alpha, ranging from online media to retail to manufacturing. Brash and confident, he is generous to his longtime friends, backing them all to realize their potential in their different fields. In return, he expects their loyalty. Their extravagant annual reunion is always devised, hosted and funded by Miles, this year at his expansive villa on his private Greek island.



On his larger-than-life character

"People tend to take themselves seriously, even if the piece is silly. But Rian is so smart and writes in ways that when you're about to settle into a reductive view of a character, he opens up a door and shows you a little piece of it to widen the view. Miles has his excesses. He has his absurd things that he says. You can sort of see why everyone might have a reason to want him dead. *[Laughs]*

But then, just as you're getting to that place where you're sort of confused about how these people connect, Rian will take you back and show you what the roots of the relationships are and actually create moments where you can't begrudge why they love him. And you see that Miles really did bring them all together. There was a period where they were lifting each other and loved each other. By making sure you see a little of that and feel a little of that, it puts just the right amount of stakes in what is, without a doubt, a comedy that gets hilariously broad."

On how much fun it was negotiating the space and the script with his co-stars

"It really was like a dance troupe. You get into this zone, almost like an orchestra that's played the same piece over and over again. You know you're going to have to do it a lot of times, and you know that everybody's going to wait their turn for the little moments that Rian needs to grab from each person. It's always a little bit of a test of how much you've come together as a group, because I think when everybody is genuinely amused and delighted by the work of the others, it helps sustain the necessary endurance to do stuff like that. And I know it sounds silly to talk about endurance making a movie, but when you do stuff like that, it's a jigsaw puzzle over a long period of time. Keeping it fresh and keeping the energy up and sharp over many, many takes becomes the challenge. It was good fun. The whole thing had a great spirit around it."

Dave Bautista says: "Watching Edward work, he brings a different level of intensity. He's one of the most intense actors I've ever watched. He's just so dialed in and so focused. Every word that comes out of his mouth he says with such meaning and such determination. I feel like it would take 50 cups of coffee for me to be that intense, and that focused, and that dialed in, but he's just like that naturally."

Cassandra "Andi" Brand (JANELLE MONÁE)

A brilliant mind, Andi co-founded Alpha with Miles way back when the gang of unknowns hung out at the Glass Onion bar in New York City.

On wanting to work with Rian

"The universe must have heard me saying how much I really wanted to work with Rian Johnson. I had seen a film he made called *Looper* that really left an impression on me. It had me thinking about what I would do if my past self had to go and kill my future self. That concept really inspired me as a writer and as a storyteller and made me want to work with Rian whenever I had the opportunity. So when he reached out and wanted to talk to me about this film and after reading the script, I was like, 'Hell yeah!'"

On how they would describe their character

"Andi is top of her class, innovative, a thinker, a leader, a type-A personality, fashionable, driven CEO, Fortune 500 — you know, a boss-ass bitch."

On the most enjoyable aspect of playing their character

"I loved how honest she was with Miles and the people around her. She was never afraid to tell him the truth and stand up to him. She's in the tech field, and that field is predominantly white cisgender men controlling things. She would get in those rooms and not be afraid to say her ideas, speak her mind and say no. I loved the heart that she had, and I loved how she stayed her authentic self."

Daniel says: "Janelle and I had a lot of fun playing, because the characters couldn't be more different so there was always this fun little bit of conflict between the two of them. They're not quite sure how to deal with each other, at least at the beginning. And that's always fun. But actually the relationship is quite meaningful and emotional, which is also very satisfying to play."

Claire Debella (KATHRYN HAHN)

The NPR tote bag-carrying Governor of Connecticut is running for Senate as an independent candidate. Married with two children, she met her husband Devon at Greenpeace.

On her character

"In the script Claire just made me laugh. She was just a really fun nut to crack and something that I haven't really been able to do before. All the characters in this are such instruments. They play such specific notes and I loved the notes that she gets to play."

The top layer is, her intentions are good. She is running for Senate on a very clear and clean platform. And then you realize that, of course, in order to get those things, she needs other things, and those might not be as ethically clear."

On balancing the many tones of the film from slapstick to drama

"That's my jam. That's what I love to do the most as an actor, to do all of these different things in one fell swoop and to have a playground on which to do it, which was the script."

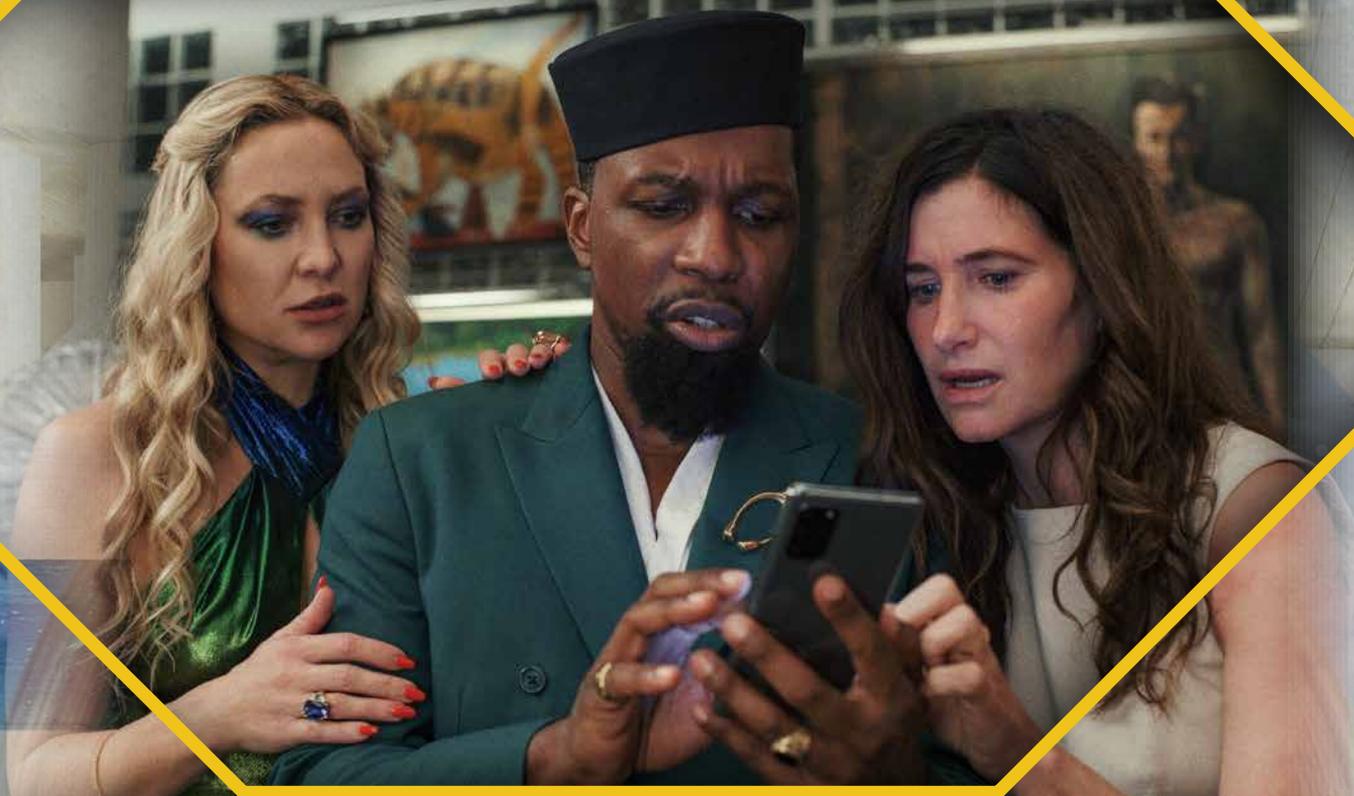
A lot of it, of course, is just trust in our captain Rian and taking his lead. We had a lot of faith and trust in him. He operated also as a little bit of an emotional conductor, bending us towards different emotions. We did a lot of versions of different things so that he would have a lot to play with in terms of creating the final product, because there's a lot of nuance in the ways in which everything could go. I'm sure that the editor had a lot of fun with Rian in trying to calibrate the end."

It was also about watching Daniel who had been through it before. Just watching his foot on the emotional gas as it were, was a real help, I think for the rest of us too, because he knew exactly where it would live and he had the tone dialed in as well."

On how she hopes people feel when they watch *Glass Onion*

"I would love it if everyone just felt a big, fun, cathartic, "Whew!" I just want people to feel fully nourished and satisfied, and all those amazing feelings you have after seeing something that's a complete package in terms of a filmgoing experience."

Edward says: "She's just a comedic genius. And sometimes for whatever reason, I don't know why, Claire's stuff would sometimes end up being the last one in the circle. We'd go around for each person and you'd think, 'Okay. We've now all done this 10 times in each angle. We're on about the 60th or 70th run of this bit.' And Kathryn would just put everybody on the floor, because once the focus turned on her, she would find these new layers."



Lionel Toussaint (LESLIE ODOM JR.)

A world-renowned — and stylish — scientist who runs Miles' aerospace company, Alpha Cosmos, Lionel is a logical-but-self-preserving strategic thinker.

On joining the cast

"There was interest from Rian and the team and the only thing that was required was a meeting with Rian to see if we vibed. And who doesn't vibe with Rian? He's the nicest guy I've ever met in the business. He just wanted me to know that he was open to collaboration about Lionel and he wanted to have a conversation with whoever he brought on board. I read the script, and I liked it very much so I sent him some images.

In watching the first film, I just noticed that Rian had a real desire to hold as many people as possible from this incredible ensemble that he built in the frame at once. I just felt that if I could bring anything to Lionel, I wanted to bring him a performance that would be worthy to hold his space in the frame. So I sent Rian images of how I thought Lionel might comport himself. Even though he's a scientist, I don't think he's vanilla — and Rian was open to that."

On Lionel being something of a proxy for viewers as the most grounded character

"I just thought that Lionel was going to bring that skepticism that might be similar to some of the people in our audience. Lionel's in there, he's questioning everything, but his stakes are way high because there's subtext in there that I'm playing about who he is and where he's come from. But there's a lot on the line for Lionel professionally.

There's a lot that Miles dangles in front of everybody. Everybody that's invited to this weekend, Miles dangles, obviously financial opportunities, things that are important to our families at home, career opportunities. And I think everyone's grown tired of the whims of our pal Miles. And so that tension leads to the unfolding on film."

On working with the cast and Rian during the early days of lockdown

"We all felt so grateful to be back at work and to be making something again and Greece and Belgrade were wonderful. I found an old journal from probably almost a decade ago and even then I was saying that I felt so lucky to be a part of a profession that allows me to see the world. I'd never been to Greece!"

I wanted to be in this business. I didn't know if I was going to be a PA or an AD or pulling the curtain backstage at Broadway shows. It really didn't matter to me. I just wanted to be a part of this world because it brought me so much joy. So, a Rian Johnson set in that moment felt like a wonderful reminder, personally, of my beginnings and why I got started on this crazy road in the first place."

Rian says: "I had been a fan of Leslie's forever, since I first saw *Hamilton*. With Lionel, I was looking for somebody to take it and really bring it to life on the screen. There's so much elevated stuff in the cast. He's such a skilled actor. I knew that Leslie would take the part, make it very distinct, but also grounded in a way that was a very much needed flavor in the stew. It needs at least one solid thing for you to put your foot down on in it."

Birdie Jay (KATE HUDSON)

Once an iconic model twenty years earlier, the exuberant Birdie has reinvented herself as a leading fashion designer of an athleisure brand.

On her initial reaction to the script

"My first thought was how exciting this movie was as a second film in a series. I immediately loved how it removed itself from the pressure of being the second film, just based on how Rian structured this murder mystery. It couldn't be in a more different environment. Rian is such a brilliant director and writer so I know that he knew very well what he was doing, but I was really excited about that because it felt fresh. And then reading *Birdie*, I fell in love with this fashionista who is just larger than life, and also she's quite complicated. There's a lot of layers to Birdie, even though on the surface, you might not think so. And I just thought what a great character to be able to play, inside of this really twisty power dynamic murder mystery."

On balancing tones

"There's so many pieces that go into that. I think for Birdie, she was really on the page. My hope was that my character would honor what it read like on the page. Because she really was just so hilarious throughout this piece, while also being such a complicated character. And all of the things that Birdie brings to the table in this friend dynamic."

On the disparate characters

"Each character is a puzzle in and of themselves, almost like the theme of the film, which is so great. Everybody has something to reveal."

"There's also the fun of having that safety net of Rian being the writer and director, where you can really play. You can try different things. I think it's important when you're doing a murder mystery to lean into different emotional takes. With this type of film, you sometimes need more of something in the editing room than you might have thought while filming, so it was really fun to be able to play like that with Rian."

Rian says: "Kate's explanation of how she plays the character, she said Birdie understands every third word. I thought that was so good. From the first time she came in and read for it, it was all there. I just let her run with it. It was really, really fun to see. What's the old adage? In order to play a really good drunk, you have to play it sober. In order to play someone who only understands every third word, you have to be incredibly intelligent. So much of the wild humor in the character is calibrated by her. She's got incredible comic chops. Having been a fan of hers for years, it was really fun to see her just completely cut loose with this and take it to town."

Duke Cody (DAVE BAUTISTA)

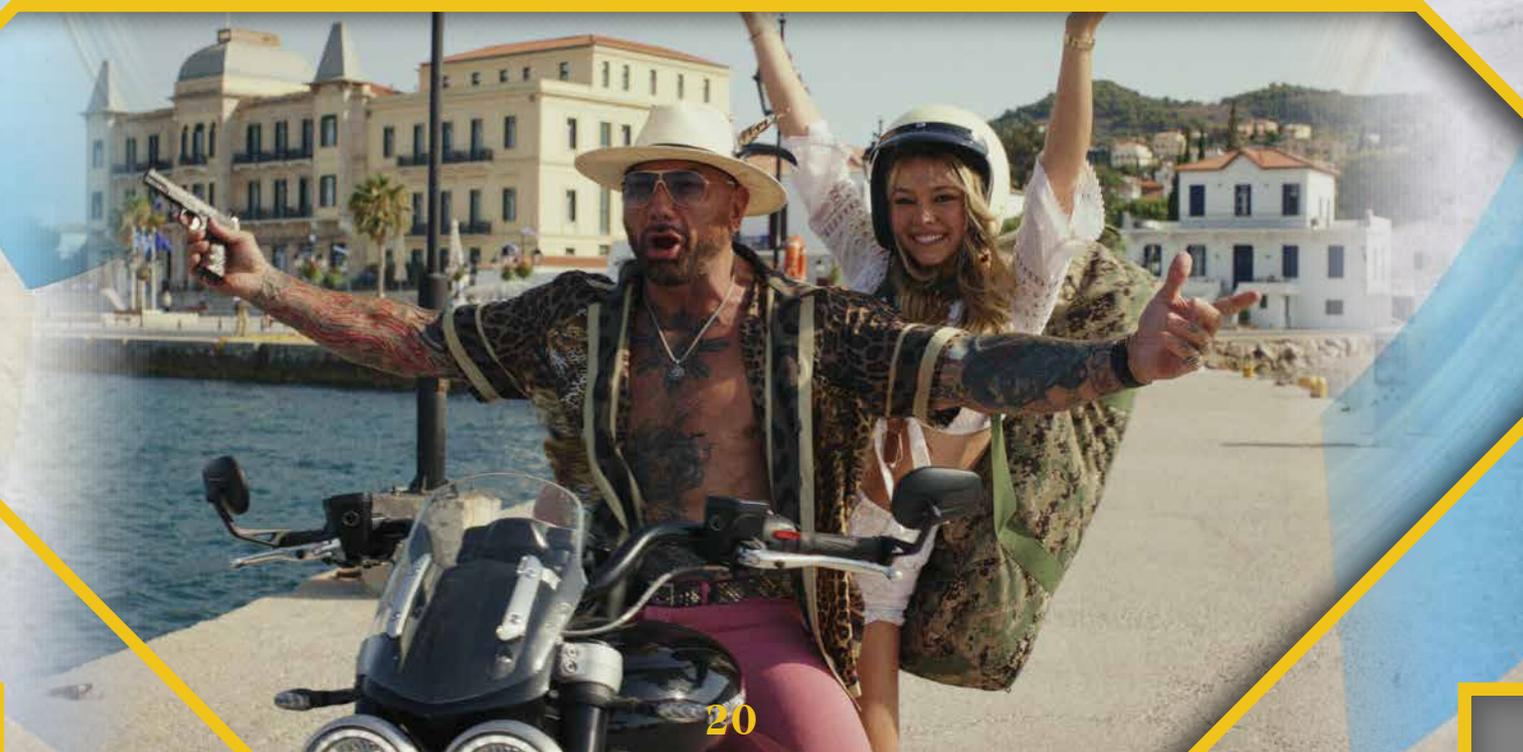
A musclebound YouTube influencer who peddles his wares with the help of his girlfriend and sidekick Whiskey.

On his character

"I've always had this huge chip on my shoulder since I left wrestling to prove myself as an actor, not just an athlete who went into acting to become a movie star, or look for that next spotlight. I really just fell in love with acting and always want to stretch. I was excited because the first film and this one are so character driven. Duke was such a great character for me to play. It would give me that opportunity to display some chops because Duke couldn't have been any more opposite than myself."

On calibrating the various tones of the film

"I was told very early in my career by Zoe Saldña, 'Be very particular about the directors you work with.' I took that to heart big time. I've pursued good directors because — in athlete's terms — I'm very coachable. If I have the right coach, I know that they can get me to where I want to be. I look at it like that, and so that's what I did. I depended on Rian to guide me through these scenes. Because, again, Duke is a stretch for me, but if he could tell me what he wants, what he wants me to relay, then I can give it to him, or at least that's the challenge for me and hopefully, I can deliver him a game-winning performance."



On the variety in the cast:

"It's really great because all these characters are so different. You'd be hard-pressed to say that anybody was really stealing scenes because everybody was just so present. You can't help but just stare at everybody doing their things. If you watch it over and over, you're probably going to notice something different from each person."

Rian says: "I've been watching him for a while. I really believe, even beyond the scope of this movie, that guy has skills. I feel like somebody's going to give him a real dramatic part someday and look like a genius, because I think Dave's incredibly talented. He's a really sensitive human being, and he brings all of that to the performances. I think he has layers and depth that we're going to see in the coming years."

Peg (JESSICA HENWICK)

Birdie Jay's long-suffering assistant, minder, social media manager, adviser, and troubleshooter.

On her character

"Peg is at the end of her tether. She has been working for Birdie for quite some time. In my head, it's been like 10 years. Every year she says, 'This is the last year,' but she just can't seem to get herself out of that. They have this almost familial relationship at this stage. They love each other and hate each other. And poor Peg, I think she understands Birdie better than everyone and Birdie really drops her guard around her. And so Peg sees that Birdie does have a good heart and does try to help her to the best of her ability. But it's just so tough because Birdie does not make it easy to help her.

I think she's also probably the most 'normal.' This is a group of people who can say ridiculous things like, "Well, I was on my yacht last week," and Peg is the only one who knows well enough to roll her eyes at the casualness of that statement."

On being impressed by all of her castmates

"Daniel and Edward are two heavyweights. It was pretty incredible. They have very, very different processes, but they're equally mesmerizing when they turn it on. Again, that was part of the reason why I signed on: I thought, "How often am I going to have this opportunity?" It was across the board. I'm a huge fan of everyone. Leslie, oh my gosh, *Hamilton*? Kathryn is the funniest actor on set and Kate's just magical. Madelyn and I became good friends. Dave was perfectly cast as Duke. Rian is very good at assembling a great group of people."

On Working with Rian

"He really lets you lead. He's very much an actor's director. However, he also has a specific vision. He likes every frame to be very rich and so he'll often stack four or five characters in a single shot, so that there's all this depth. So it's all very specifically choreographed. But within that time, when you're on camera, he's really letting you take the reins and run."

Rian says: "We needed somebody to be a foil for Kate. Jess completely dove into that, down to her wardrobe. She very much came up with the idea that, as an act of rebellion, Peg dresses in the least fashionable clothes possible. But her comic sensibilities are so great. Also, Jess is a

filmmaker herself. So it was also really fun just having her hang out at the monitor with me and watch the process and talk to her about it. It's great to work with an actor who's also a filmmaker. You can do the nerdy sidebar talk about what you're doing with the camera."

Whiskey (MADELYN CLINE)

Duke's young, gorgeous girlfriend and influencer sidekick.

On being the youngest member of this impressive ensemble

"To say it was intimidating would be the understatement of the year. I was so incredibly nervous, but everybody was just so wonderful and lovely. I felt like I was in a bit of a masterclass watching them work and being directed by Rian who was also just so lovely and giving of time and energy. The way that he was able to move with each and every cast member and be so specific and present with us was just such a gift. I was talking with Edward about it when we were on set. The whole experience almost felt like taking a vacation. Of course I still showed up to work sweating bullets every single day." *[Laughs]*

On her character

"I usually describe Whiskey as a young influencer wannabe-type. I would definitely say that she's a gold digger and she's a social climber. But she's also not vapid by any means. I think in her own way, she's playing her own character.

When I first sat down to read the script, I was like, 'Okay, I know who this is. I've met this girl a million times.' She's very much that type. And then as I got to reading, I realized Rian wanted there to be nuance and he wrote her with nuance. She's a good person but she has her own motivations. There was a way to soften her a little bit and make her more human. She's also the youngest in the group besides Peg, so I think there's also a sense of her youth coming through. I remember during our second or third week in Greece, we were getting into the groove and it was the beginning of the film so Whiskey's facade was in full effect. The mask hadn't slipped yet, so I was also playing dumb. It was so fun.

On the joy of outlandish characters and comedy

"As a cast, we all really leaned into the caricatures of these people. We really embraced that and the humor in these characters being hilariously shitty people. And I really, really enjoyed that. We definitely emphasized it a little bit more than the first movie, which I think is fun because while *Glass Onion* is *A Knives Out Mystery*, it is its own entity with its own characters. You've still got Benoit and it's the same universe, but it's its own thing.

Rian says: "It was obviously really important to me that that character had something going on underneath everything. That's one of the pleasures of Whiskey, knowing that like the rest of the group in the movie, people in the audience will be dismissing her as one thing and then getting a little bit more of a glimpse of what she's actually about. Madelyn is so talented and smart and funny. I feel like every single moment that she has on screen, she would bring some idea to it that would surprise me."



THE BRAINS OF THE OUTFIT: COSTUME DESIGNER — JENNY EAGAN —

Like much of the crew, having worked on *Knives Out*, Eagan knew she was in for a challenge as well as a treat devising looks for the large ensemble. Charged with helping tell the story sartorially, she met with each actor and on *Glass Onion*, everyone had thoughts on their characters' style.

"These are really incredible actors," says Eagan. "They really know and get into their characters. I just give them that push to get there, to find those places. I love when they come back and say, 'What about this?' And then you make it even better. Benoit has a hat, for instance. It was this little bucket hat. But we made it much smaller in the crown and shorter. The little tweaks and touches here and there are what make them great. For Benoit it was really about keeping it in the vein of old world, old Hollywood. He's a well traveled guy. He probably watches a lot of old movies."

The big question of course is what will be the buzzy breakout wardrobe choice this time, a la Chris Evans' cable knit sweater from the first film? There are several options, from a colorful, flowy gown in which Kate Hudson's Birdie Jay positively sparkles to an itsy bitsy teeny weenie bikini bottom sported by Dave Bautista's Duke. But Benoit Blanc's quirky-but-elegant, striped two-piece bathing suit may take top prize.

"I didn't know what to do with that because we knew he would wear a shirt. But what kind of shirt does Benoit Blanc wear?" Eagan recalls musing. "He's not really a tank top kind of guy, so what do we do with that? I just happened to be at a tailor that we work with, and going back years and years, his father used to make Frank Sinatra's Palm Springs swimming pool outfits for him and he said, 'Oh, yeah, we still have the pattern.' I saw this fabric that was so bold, and I was like, 'Daniel, now we're going to go for it.'"

Craig was up for it, feeling very particular about what Blanc would favor. "I feel like he's a man who cares about what he looks like. When Jenny and I got together talking about the costumes, my references were *To Catch a Thief* and *Monsieur Hulot's Holiday*. Those were my anchor points. There's a humor, hopefully, in what he wears. But also something that's sort of an homage to those sorts of movies, Cary Grant and Jacques Tati."

Kate Hudson and Janelle Monáe knew they won the costume lottery with their characters' very upscale chic looks.

"It was fun for us because in real life we love our clothes too," says Hudson. "Every time we'd go on set, I'd be like, 'Ooh,' she'd be like, 'Ooh.'"

"Jenny and I had so much fun," she continues. "You can't go far enough with Birdie. We could just pile it on. It's been a while since I've been able to put on a costume that brought my character to life, and the second I put on Jenny's it immediately brought me right to Birdie."

In a suitcase full of chic clothes, her colorful dinner dress stood out.

"We made that," says Eagan. "Rian had the idea that the reveal would be her doing the twirl, almost like an illusion. It's almost like a visual effect in and of itself when she does her spin, like the rainbow's going in circles. Then Kate just plays it so well. It's such a simple dress. The pattern is so simple, but she's like, 'Oh, I just threw this thing on for dinner.'"

"It was such an honor to work with Jenny," says Monáe. "She has great taste and she gave me a lot to play with. We knew that Andi had to have taste. We wanted to make sure that when you saw her, you were like, 'Ooh, I want her closet!'"

"Janelle is one of the most beautiful women I've ever seen in person," reports Eagan. "At the beginning of the film, when she steps out of the car and gets on the boat, there was just something about that red fabric. That is my favorite outfit in the whole movie. There was something very calculated about Andi. So I wanted everything to have a bit of a geometrical kind of feel to it — it was like putting a puzzle piece together all the time. So everything of hers has either a square or there's a lot of squares and circles."

"For Miles, Edward Norton had very specific ideas because he knows guys like his character in real life," says Eagan. "It's like he's too rich, so it doesn't matter. But it's still really expensive. It could be a rag around his waist, but it probably costs thousands of dollars."

Norton loved his wardrobe and everyone else's. "There are so many laughs in the costumes alone on this movie," he says. "My stuff is muted compared to Kate Hudson and Dave. There's a certain scene where Dave shows up at the pool, and the first time I saw the Polaroids, I really just fell down laughing. He's so funny."

Of Duke's barely there Speedo Eagan says, "Dave is the sweetest, kindest, most gentle soul. He was actually the first person I fit. I can't remember if it was scripted as Speedo or not, but it was definitely revealing. And I was like, 'It's got to be a Speedo. And it's got to be animal print.' What's the farthest we can go without being obnoxious? And then I found the matching sarong and Crocs. Dave was a little nervous, but he just went for it."

Bautista admits, "You wouldn't think I'd be self-conscious, because I've wrestled in front of half the world in almost less, but I was still self-conscious." Luckily, he says, one castmate in particular boosted his confidence. "It was Kathryn Hahn who kept cheering me on, she was like, 'Just own it! You look great! You worked hard, show it off!'"

Madelyn Cline loved the choices for Whiskey, Duke's partner in influencing, and the cast overall. "I can't say enough about our costume department," she says. "On one of the first days, Rian saw all of us in the same place as we were all walking out onto the beach and just started laughing hysterically because everybody was all there. You looked at everyone's costumes and you knew exactly who they were."

Eagan believes the pieces reveal Whiskey's constant calculations of how to negotiate the arena with this formidable group of people. "She's definitely got her sights set on something. So first, she's playing Duke's game when we meet her, but she's been down this road before. So she ups the level. And then they have the shot of her coming out of the water. It's somewhat sophisticated, but

it's still revealing. That little dress she wears to the party — some would suggest that a woman who dresses like that only wants one thing, but she's so smart that it's also that play on everybody else. You can wear whatever you

“I can't say enough about our costume department. You looked at everyone's costumes and you knew exactly who they were.”

— Madelyn Cline

want, it doesn't mean you are one way or the other. That's why I love that character so much. For me it was about helping her play those men everywhere she went."

Hahn, playing the least fashion-forward character in the film, jokes that it won't be the men's swimwear that turns heads but her more functionally drab attire. "I don't know. I think my visor is going to be a hit," she says with a laugh. "My beige dress is definitely going to pop out."

"By the end of the movie, I think she literally wanted to kill me," says Eagan with a sheepish grin. "That was the character. I don't think there's anybody on the planet who could have played it as well as she did, just that boring beige all the time." Says Hahn, "I just had to embrace it and find the joy. The visor was pretty fantastic."

Even Leslie Odom's scientist got to have more swag. "I think that's what he wanted to play on: does every scientist have to be this nerd?" says Eagan. The answer? "Of course not. Just because you're highly intelligent and studying all sorts of stuff doesn't mean you can't have style, and we wanted there to be some cultural direction to it. There was a lot of play in that for him — and the hats in particular were really fun. Leslie really loves clothes. So that was really fun."

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"Even though he's a scientist, Lionel has style," says Odom. "He's someone who travels. He's someone who dates. And, these days, in our workspace, it's not about blending in anymore, it's really about bringing our individuality into these spaces. If you went to Morocco for the summer and you got a really cool bracelet, or you got that really cool jacket, we want to see it and it makes the work environment richer."

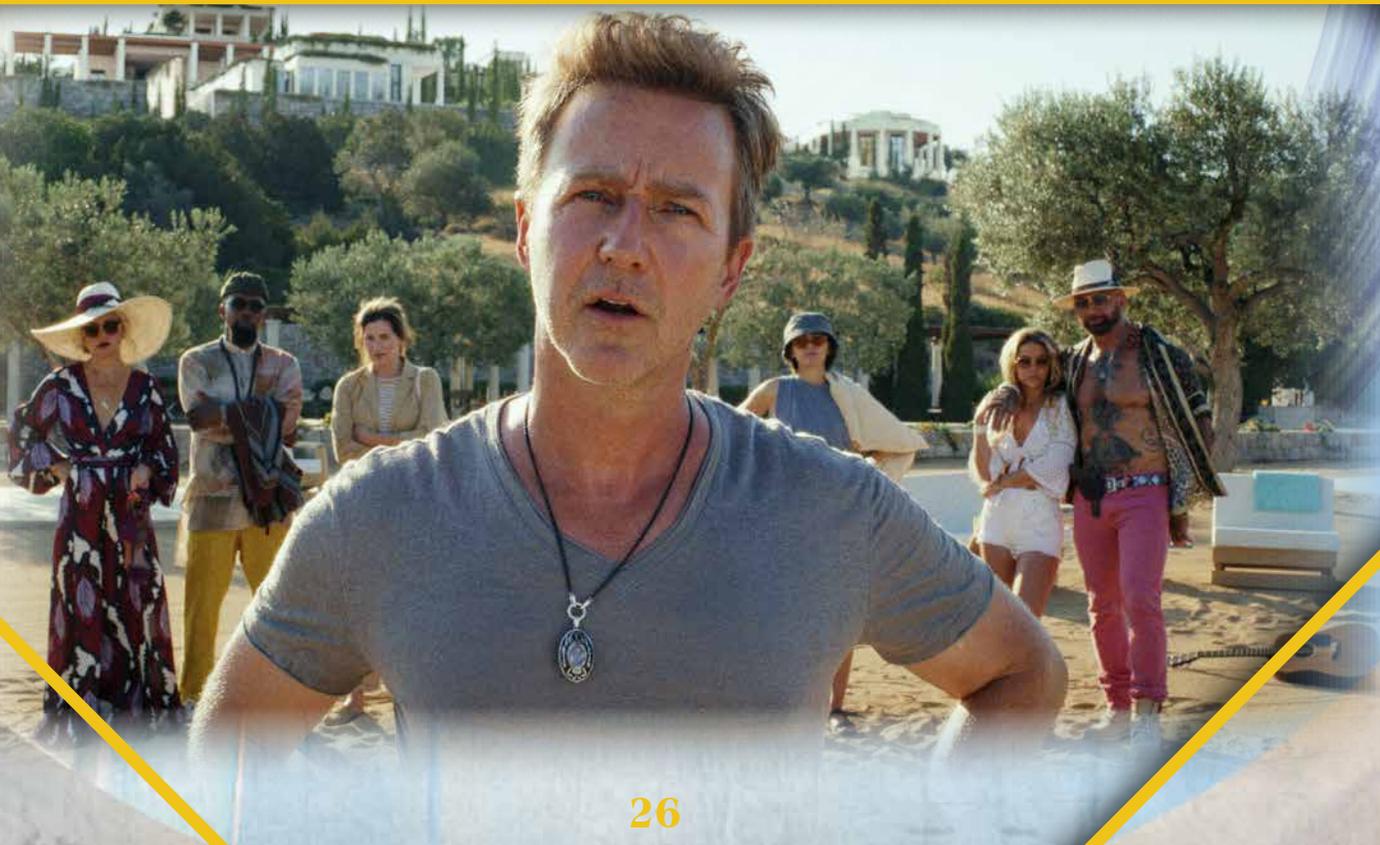
Jessica Henwick landed somewhere between hipster and no style. "I said I wanted Peg's outfit to feel like it almost could have been cool," she says of her sweat shorts and sandals casualness. "Except it's not. It's just slightly off the mark every time. Peg definitely didn't pack for an Instagram-ready holiday. She's the one who takes the photos of Birdie."

"The fanny pack with the cutoff shorts, the Texas, everybody in Williamsburg is wearing that—her exact outfit," says Eagan with a laugh. "She played it so well too, like she couldn't care less. Everything in her world was just so annoying. And everything she wore was kind of her blanket that she took everywhere with her."

She also had the highest comfort factor. "We're all pretty much stuck in the same two outfits, the entire film," says Henwick. "It was the most comfortable costume I've had in a really long time."

"There's something special about Rian," says Eagan of the director. "He knows this genre so well, but it can be difficult in my position, to come in because you feel like he's told that story visually in his own mind already. So you're trying to dig deep. But what is so special about him, and in the most amazing way, is even though it's very much on the page and specific, he really gives kudos and credit and space to explore. He's never a no. It's always, 'Well, let's see.' I just adore working with him."

"I'm not sure the costumes won't, pound for pound, end up with the highest batting average of laughs in the whole movie," says Norton.





GLASS HOUSES: PRODUCTION DESIGNER — RICK HEINRICHS —

Oscar-winning production designer Rick Heinrichs had to draw many disparate arrows from his quiver when crafting the look of *Glass Onion*.

From the outlandish atrium and Glass Onion office in Miles Bron's lavish villa to Benoit Blanc's bathtub in his New York City apartment to a YouTube influencer garage, he had a huge canvas.

Fortunately, he had an ideal fellow artist to work with in writer-director Rian Johnson, with whom he had previously collaborated on *The Last Jedi*. "It felt identical in the work process," says Heinrichs. "Rian is a very collaborative director. He also writes his films, and that's very unusual. I honor the fact that the director is not just helping us push the sets and the camera around, but also is the one coming up with the idea in the first place. He's the one who knows what it's all about, who I actually can go to and bounce ideas off his own much more innate sense of what's right and what isn't right."

One element that everyone agreed should be so wrong it was right was the interior of billionaire Miles Bron's home.

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"One question from the beginning was 'Is it a literal glass onion, or is it a dome where if Miles pointed at it and said 'it's a glass onion,' You'd believe that? We definitely had to find the Goldilocks zone of whatever that was, but it really was a case of Rian pushing for something that was representative of Miles as a character. To me it was like Miles' big head, this inflated sense of himself."

That celebration of self-grandeur was evident in every nook and cranny of the atrium where much of the film is set.

"Something that grew in conviction with Rian is that it needed to house an art collection which was going to show that Miles is projecting himself as someone wealthy enough to have all this famous art by famous artists," he says of works by the likes of Francis Bacon. "It also has an odd glass art collection, which was a whole other challenge for us. The whole dining area was a part of the atrium as well, where they have the big mural with Kanye West painted on it as well, which was a way of Miles saying look who he's friends with. And then, of course, the portrait of Miles himself. Our inspiration there was Lucian Freud, an amazing painter who we worked into the whole milieu of the other artists that we included. We came up with this idea of Miles having hired him, because he has a recognizable style, a famous artist to paint him. So his wealth, his projection of being a bad-boy disruptor, his inflated ego and his desire to impress people was all part of that."

Heinrichs was able to draw on his erstwhile career as a sculptor to create dozens of the ornate glass tchotchkes.

"These were all one-off, bespoke glass sculptures," he says. "To make those, I drew them up and sent one of my art directors up to Prague where they have a whole valley full of glass-making artists where they get the silica up to a certain temperature and keep turning it and then actually manipulate it into these shapes. Learning about processes like that is one of the reasons I love working in the motion picture industry, because I would never have learned about it otherwise. I became so intimately involved with it, literally watching things going in and out of the oven. You've only got about three minutes to work with it. Everybody had to be right there. It was a little tense at times, but it came out great."

If audiences enjoy Heinrichs' work as much as the cast did, *Glass Onion* will be in good shape.

"It was amazing how they were able to make Miles' house match exactly who he is," says Janelle Monáe. "It was like, 'Oh my god, of course he would pick these specific paintings to have in his house.' They killed it. The house in Greece was already just incredible on its own but when we showed up we were just wowed."

"It was one of the most comfortable places I've ever been in my life," says Bautista. "When we were not shooting, it felt like a five-star resort and then it was beautiful. You're walking around looking at the art and knowing they're not the real pieces of art, but still it was so incredible to see. They had this Basquiat hanging on the wall that I was just so fixated on it. I just wanted to steal it. I was really upset because I think I tried to buy a few of the pieces and they said that they had to destroy them when they were done filming. I did offer up some money though."

One cast member was so transfixed she had a bit of a mishap. "I was so distracted at one point I put my arm in one of the glass sculptures and it got stuck," recalls Madelyn Cline with a laugh. "I just wanted to walk around and touch everything. I felt like I was a kid in a museum, just fascinated by the level of detail in all the pieces."

STAR MAN: CINEMATOGRAPHER STEVE YEDLIN

Director of photography Steve Yedlin has been working with Rian Johnson since they were teenagers. (The first short film they worked on — “a silly little chase scene” — was called, *Hey Lady, You Dropped Your Wallet*). It’s safe to say having worked on all of his films, the pair have a comfortable rhythm.

“We don’t really spend a lot of time talking about references or big overview philosophical stuff,” says Yedlin. “We roll up our sleeves and get down to the business of designing the specific shots. That’s not to say that means there’s no flexibility when it comes to shooting. But it means the flexibility is all in the right places, so all the resources of time, and thought, and of course, money, are going into Rian’s actual concept for the movie.”

While some director-cinematographer collaborators have specific visual tics or signatures, Johnson and Yedlin’s continuity is more a matter of approach.

“Rian and I do have a style,” says Yedlin. “But it doesn’t come from us imposing a rule. Like, ‘Hey, let’s always do this or that photographic trick.’ It comes from principles: How do you think about it? We don’t have to say, ‘Hey, let’s do a different style this time.’ It’s automatically going to have a different style because of the fact that it’s sun-baked Greece, and not overcast, wintry, New England.”

While the exterior view of Miles’s “Glass Onion” office is VFX, the interior is “a real set,” he says. “It’s just not a set that’s on the roof of a building in Greece,” he says with a laugh “But we really lit it to be that. We lit it with a big light on a crane, to replicate the sun sweeping in there.” And for the nighttime look, they employed faceted glass. “We talked with the art department and production design about those chandeliers, and really having something that when you see reflections of it, and it is multiplied, it feels like a big field of stars. That was definitely something we worked on together.”

Among the other challenges, the lighthouse effect proved a puzzle, says Yedlin. “That was a really fun project,” he recalls. “Figuring out ‘How do we do this?’ We wanted to have really, really sharp shadows. Rian had said he had basically zero interest in it being realistic; he really wanted it to be highly theatrical, like a really sharp sweep on and sweep off.” Through a series of trial and error with timing mechanisms, lamp heads, remote controls and motors, they achieved the desired effect. “It really felt like doing an old school film noir.”

— MYSTERY MUSIC: — COMPOSER NATHAN JOHNSON

Like many of his fellow craftspeople, composer Nathan Johnson has worked on several Rian Johnson films. In fact, he may be the director's longest-standing collaborator since the cousins have been working together since they were kids holding premieres for their creations in the family's basement. "When everyone else was on their summer vacation, we would be making a movie or making music together," says Johnson, a multi-faceted artist who has also worked as a director, producer, editor and visual artist with collaborators as varied as Guillermo del Toro and the indie pop band Lucius.

That lengthy relationship pays off creatively says Johnson, who also composed music for *Brick*, *The Brothers Bloom*, *Looper*, and *Knives Out*.

"It's amazing, it feels really consistent," he says of their process which includes an early heads up. "With Rian's stuff, he tells me what he is working on while he's writing it, he sends me the script when he is finished, and so I start thinking about stuff really early on." Johnson then heads to set with concepts the pair has discussed along the way. "I have a travel rig and I move to wherever we're shooting. I'm on set during the days and then I'm writing in the evenings, so not only is that awesome, but I also got to spend the summer in Greece."

He began by figuring out how to deploy Benoit Blanc's musical theme from the first film in this new iteration and then worked on devising motifs for the new setting and characters.



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There are no rules to the process and Johnson doesn't have a "signature" style, instead letting each story suggest the right soundscapes.

"I'll spend all day long giving credit to Rian, because he is amazing and also the best person, but he is so good about creating ideas for our palette and working with me on what that's going to be. It's almost like he makes a sandbox on one film," says Johnson, "and then lets me loose to play in this whole new sandbox for the next film. I just love that way of working."

For this next Benoit Blanc story in Greece, Johnson says the directive was "'This is a fun adventure, we want to feel excited. This is a big thing.' So, the title theme really encapsulates that bold, somewhat old school feel of *off-to-Europe!* We need to feel that excitement that we're gallivanting around the world, and at the same time, later in the movie, we need to feel the tension, we need to actually feel like there is danger for these people. We need to feel the connection to the characters, the sadness when a character we care about loses something, and then hopefully, by the end, we tie it all up and it's almost like singing the chorus again when we hear that main theme."

In addition to larger themes, Johnson also designed melodic signatures for members of the ensemble.

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"I really write from a character-based perspective," says Johnson of his approach. "As a composer, I feel like that's where my heart wants to go. Often I will have motifs for characters. One of

the things that's really fun about that is you get to weave those themes together musically, which is what we're doing on screen, weaving these characters together."

"This is under the surface stuff, it's not stuff that I expect an audience is going to recognize the first or even third time," he says of something like the musical figure that accompanies Monae's character Andi — a repeating arpeggio. "But to me, it's a really helpful way to think about it. I feel like ultimately my job is not to write my opus, it's to try the best I can to get inside Rian's brain and help tell the story that he's trying to tell and hopefully, that's what happens working with character-based thematic material."

For the disruptors as a group, Johnson explains he came up with a leitmotif that could be expressed in different ways for each of them but employed the same dramatic, ascending melody. "So, when we hear it for Birdie, she's sitting by the pool and thinking back, and it's a much prettier, more wistful version of it, and then that comes back in a much darker way when the lights go out in the house."

He's excited for audiences to experience this new world. "I love that it's not a rehash of the first movie, it's a totally new thing, which I feel is so rare. I hope people get to inhabit this world that they loved, but see a whole other corner of it."



CUTTING *GLASS*: EDITOR BOB DUCSAY

Veteran editor Bob Ducsay (*Catch Me if You Can*, *Godzilla*) was very excited when he heard about *Glass Onion: A Knives Out Mystery*.

"I was thrilled at the opportunity to hang out once again with Benoit Blanc," says Ducsay of the charming detective indelibly essayed by Daniel Craig. "I truly love the character, so to be able to spend more time with your movie friend is a pretty great thing."

He also got to spend time with many of his other movie friends as another one of Rian Johnson's go-to collaborators. *Glass Onion* marks Ducsay's fourth at bat following *Knives Out*, *Star Wars: The Last Jedi* and *Looper*.

As a mystery fan — a Columbo enthusiast in particular — he enjoyed following up the first film with this new canvas. "I absolutely love mystery movies but Rian's obsession is a whole extra level," says Ducsay. "He has such an intricate understanding of how they work and how to make this perfect Swiss watch of a screenplay to draw people in while sometimes subverting the conventions and tropes of the murder mystery, but often really honoring them, as well."

Ducsay headed out on location to observe shooting, cut together scenes and discuss progress from his vantage point and from the overall mission of "How bold can we be?"

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While mysteries, comedies, action films and dramas all have inherent components— and *Glass Onion* encompasses so many genres— the editor notes he didn't take a programmatic approach to the pacing of the material.

"The process has more to do with the nature of Rian as a filmmaker than a specific genre," says Ducsay. "If you're an aficionado, you understand certain tropes and you understand the setup and how they work and that we're giving you information. But I think the way the pace works out, it has a lot more to do with the cleverness of the storytelling, number one. And number two, you have to be entertaining which goes to Rian's comment that this is a roller coaster ride, not a crossword puzzle."

"So much of it is really driven by the script," says Ducsay of editing. "Then also, frankly, the movie teaches me, as I'm putting it together, what the movie needs. You really just let the movie speak to you. The thing about editing is it's hard to discuss because it's a little bit abstract. There are things that I do that come from experience, but there's a huge part of what I do that is just from gut."

With this remarkable cast Ducsay had his work cut out for him given how funny everyone was and some big laughs ended up on the cutting room floor. "Everybody's absolutely fantastic," he says. "I will make a comparison to the first cast only in that we went from one delight to another. It's a different group of people and with different skill sets, serving different needs and characters. Across the board, I mean, one of the things that makes my job an absolute delight is working with great actors and to a person, there's not a weak link in either cast. It was another embarrassment of riches."

Ultimately, Ducsay says, Johnson along with all the cast and crew wanted to make sure they made a film that would both meet and exceed the audience's expectations given how well *Knives Out* performed. "It is scary when people love things," says Ducsay. "They have a lot of opinions of how they should work, and you need to be able to deliver for them, and hopefully we did."

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GO ON LOCATION: FUN FACTS

THE POSEIDONION GRAND HOTEL, SPETSES GREECE.

The island of Spetses, in the Aegean Sea, two hours from Athens by Hydrofoil, features in the film as the seaside port where Benoit Blanc meets the friends, ready to embark on Miles' yacht to his island.

The production was based in the Poseidonion Grand Hotel on the waterfront, the terrace and outside the hotel, facing onto the sea — and the hotel jetty appears as the dock for Miles' yacht.

The hotel was built in the late 19th century by an island native, Sotirios Anargiros, and is now a popular vacation spot for Greeks and international travelers, who enjoy the island's secret beaches and the lack of cars. In addition, it plays host to the annual Aegean Film Festival, along with nearby islands of Poros and Hydra. And could there be a clue in the name PoseidONION?

MILES' YACHT THE AQUARIUS

The superyacht Aquarius serves as Miles' yacht, transporting the friends from the nearby port (the island of Spetses) to his private island — in the story a two-hour journey.

The Aquarius is the first superyacht (46 meters long) to be built from wood, and has won awards for design, winning the 2017 award for "World's Most Prestigious Yacht."

Captain Ali Goksoy, who advised on the practical features which make the yacht so luxurious and memorable for guests, also played the role of Mr. Andino, the captain of Miles' yacht.

He utters the mysterious incantation, "Peet cha chite."

MILES' VILLA

Co-producer Leopold Hughes was tasked with scouting for the villa, the central location of the film's action. His brief from director Rian Johnson: It must be magnificent, with interesting architecture, and be surrounded by space.

The fictional villa is located on a fictional island. Realizing that such a villa on an otherwise deserted island would be impractical for a film crew of around 300 people with all of the truckloads of equipment and facilities required to service the production, they searched for a building that looked out over space and the sea.

Leo visited properties in Europe and serendipitously landed on Villa 20, near to Porto Heli, on the Argolis Gulf, in the Greek Peloponnese.

Part of the exclusive Amanzoe resort — the private villa spreads down a steep hill on six levels, as a series of pavilions, featuring marble and columns reminiscent of ancient Greek columns; an homage but not a pastiche, in their elegance.

The owners of the villa had designed and built it with architect Edward Tuttle, known for an architectural style that fits in with the natural surroundings, as with the original Aman Hotel in Phuket, Thailand.

The property tumbles down the hill, so that guest suites, kitchens and deep pools provided the perfect setting for the many intrigues playing out in the script.

The owners also owned the land adjacent to their property, to avoid any possible building ruining the views, and so the vista stretches in front over empty land to the deep blue of the Aegean Sea and an assortment of islands beyond that seem uninhabited.

The beach far below was Miles' landing stage, where he greets his guests on arrival. The villa has been naturally landscaped into the environment, with many mature olive trees, hedges of lavender and rosemary, and a fragrant herb garden, all featuring in the film.

Within the grounds are many large sculptures of granite and metal, commissioned by the owner from the artists she knew around Europe. The production redressed the villa's elegant suites to fit each character — colorful for Birdie, masculine and serious for Lionel, beige for Clare, etc. Some more "obvious" art has been added to the grounds, in keeping with Miles' extravagant taste.

The villa and its gleaming Glass Onion atrium — the exterior of which was CGI — also required the largest component of VFX work of any location in the film. A combination of light detection and ranging (Lidar), texture photography, photogrammetry, drones and helicopters were all deployed to capture the villa and its surroundings. Says VFX Producer Tim Keene, "In total 1,094 scans of the villa were taken with a pair of Faro 3D laser scanners, hundreds of 360 roundshot photoscans, and several days of scheduled drone work."

THE GLASS ONION & ATRIUM

Perched above the villa is the Glass Onion, so named in memory of the bar where Miles and his fellow disruptors used to hang out, hatching the schemes which eventually made him the billionaire he is today.



While the long shots were VFX, the actual practical structure was 20 meters high, built entirely of glass panels. The Onion was made in the UK. The assembly was so intricate that it had to be put together in the UK, to ensure it all fit together, then disassembled and shipped to a studio in Serbia, where it was reassembled for the film.

The interior atrium of Miles' villa has none of the elegance and restraint of the exterior. Miles has collected expensive art. Around his walls he has hung examples of modern art, including a huge painting of himself.

(A Francis Bacon painting hangs behind Benoit Blanc as he tastes his first tamale. Remember that Craig played George Dyer, the lover of Francis Bacon, in John Maybury's biopic of the painter *Love Is The Devil*.)

Further examples of Miles' taste are shown in the glass piano, the glass suit of armor and the many glass ornaments on pedestals.

EXTENDING THE INVITE

Miles' elaborate invitation to the weekend is a compendium of puzzles to be solved to uncover the details of the invitation to his villa in Greece.

The clues include: A stereogram; A chessboard set-up for Fool's Mate; Tic Tac Toe; A compass; A music box that plays Bach's "Little Fugue in G Minor"; A Fibonacci Sequence; And the number 47, the atomic number for silver.