

C'mon C'mon, Ambulance and Mothering Sunday



By [Daniel Derksen](#)

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There are three new films releasing this week: *C'mon C'mon* is an ode to the relationship between adults and children, *Ambulance* is a breakneck hijack thriller, and *Mothering Sunday* explores the fragility and power of sex and love.



Woody Norman and Joaquin Phoenix in *C'mon C'mon*

C'mon C'mon

Writer-director Mike Mills' outstanding *C'mon C'mon* is a gentle yet impeccably crafted drama about coming to terms with personal trauma and historical legacies. Joaquin Phoenix delivers a superb performance as a kind-hearted radio journalist deep into a project in which he interviews children across the U.S.

Johnny (Joaquin Phoenix) and his young nephew (Woody Norman) forge a tenuous but transformational relationship when they are unexpectedly thrown together in this delicate and deeply moving story about the connections between adults and children, the past and the future.

Mills had a child in 2014 it was, for him, an instantly disorienting, then slowly revealing, transition. Mills knew he wanted to explore what was happening. But, in his typical way, his screenplay for *C'mon C'mon* became a kind of cinematic auto-fiction: a candid, highly subjective self-accounting, one that takes place inside an imagined family and pulls from myriad influences around him—the movies, music, books, and people that inspire him, as well as the rhythms and textures of the culture we all live in right now.

Mills has previously made a film inspired by his father (*Beginners*) and a film inspired by his mother (*20th Century Women*). With *C'mon C'mon*, he tells a story that is in some ways even closer to his lived experience: a story that excavates the rarely explored richness, but also the trickiness, of the adult-child relationship. At the same time, it surveys the most panoramic of themes: the idea that the future—in our personal lives and society at large—hinges on how we are able to talk to one another.

Blending sharpness and tenderness in every element—with its mix of classic black & white photography, vivid immersions into American cities, deeply felt performances, and unscripted interviews with real young Americans—*C'mon C'mon* is Mills' most cinematically playful and far-reaching story to date.

Read more [here](#).

Ambulance

Over one day across the streets of L.A., three lives will change forever. In this breakneck thriller from director-producer Michael Bay, decorated veteran Will Sharp (Yahya Abdul-Mateen), desperate for money to cover his wife's medical bills, asks for help from the one person he knows he shouldn't—his adopted brother Danny (Oscar nominee Jake Gyllenhaal). A charismatic career criminal, Danny instead offers him a score: the biggest bank heist in Los Angeles history: \$32m. But when their getaway goes spectacularly wrong, the desperate brothers hijack an ambulance with a wounded cop clinging to life and ace paramedic Cam Thompson (Eiza González) onboard.

Inspired by such modern action classics as *Die Hard* and the original *Taking of Pelham One Two Three*, and 1970s classics like *The French Connection* and *Dog Day Afternoon*, screenwriter Chris Fedak aimed for his screenplay of *Ambulance* to become the most nerve-wracking two-plus hours audiences could spend in a cinema-going from one critical situation to another with interwoven narratives.

The action in *Ambulance* takes place over one day, but it had taken five years to arrive on Bay's desk. In 2020, a worldwide pandemic derailed and delayed film releases and productions across the industry, but for filmmaker Michael Bay, it ignited one. In the fall of 2020, Bay, the visionary director of some of the biggest studio hits of all time including the *Transformers* franchise, *Armageddon*, *Bad Boys* and *Bad Boys II*, *Pearl Harbor* and *The Rock*, was on the hunt for a project that would allow his crew to do a tight shoot in Los Angeles during Covid-19 lockdown protocols.

Read more [here](#).

Mothering Sunday

On a warm spring day in 1924, housemaid and foundling Jane Fairchild (Odessa Young) finds herself alone on Mother's Day. Her employers, Mr and Mrs Niven (Colin Firth and Olivia Colman), are out and she has the rare chance to spend quality time with her secret lover, Paul (Josh O'Connor), the boy from the manor house nearby who is Jane's long-term love despite the fact that he's engaged to be married to another woman, a childhood friend and daughter of his parents' friends. But events that neither can foresee will change the course of Jane's life forever.

"The *Mothering Sunday* script fell on my lap like a little spark of pure energy visiting me from a galaxy, far, far away," says director Eva Husson, who read Alice Birch's screenplay in one day, in fragments of five or 10 minutes. "I always made sure I went back to it because I realised I had to. I finished the script in tears."

"It was a culmination of everything that I am passionate about in life: writing, sex, and pure cinema. The opportunity to bring to the big screen the story of a 'Doris Lessing-esque' writer. To explore the fragility and power of sex, love and the impact it has on a creative female artist. To do that in some sort of holy triumvirate composed of Alice Birch's impeccable writing, Elizabeth Karlsen's effortless charisma, and myself, is nothing short of an extraordinary privilege. What I found truly exciting is that the movie already existed and lived on the page," says Husson.

Read more [here](#).

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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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