

All the films to look forward to in the new year!

By  Daniel Derksen

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The new year starts with exciting escapism for film buffs in cinemas.



Source: www.unsplash.com

6 January

A recovering opioid addict seeks revenge on the dealers responsible for selling the drugs that resulted in his fiancé's death in the action-thriller *Savage Salvation*.

After losing his fiancée to a heroin overdose, he wreaks havoc on the cartel responsible for supplying the drugs with Sheriff Church and Detective Zeppelin trying to prevent him from turning the town into a bloodbath. Directed by Randall Emmett it stars Robert De Niro, Jack Huston, John Malkovich, Quavo, and Willa Fitzgerald.

13 January

A robotics engineer at a toy company builds a life-like doll that begins to take on a life of its own in the Sci-Fi horror *M3GAN*.

Gemma, a brilliant roboticist at a toy company, uses artificial intelligence to develop M3GAN (short for Model 3 Generative Android), a lifelike doll programmed to be a child's greatest companion and a parent's greatest ally.

After unexpectedly gaining custody of her recently orphaned niece, Cady, Gemma enlists the help of the M3GAN prototype, a decision that has horrific consequences when the doll becomes self-aware and overprotective of Cady and threatens everyone who stands in her way.

This science fiction horror is directed by Gerard Johnstone from a screenplay by Akela Cooper and a story by Cooper and James Wan. The film stars Allison Williams, Violet McGraw, Ronny Chieng and Brian Jordan Alvarez.

20 January

Babylon is a historical comedy-drama of outsized ambition and outrageous excess; it traces the rise and fall of multiple characters during an era of unbridled decadence and depravity during Hollywood's transition from silent to sound films in the late 1920s.

This much anticipated epic extravaganza was written and directed by Damien Chazelle who is known for his films *Whiplash*, *La La Land* and *First Man*. It features an ensemble cast that includes Brad Pitt, Margot Robbie, Diego Calva, Jean Smart, Jovan Adepo, and Li Jun Li.

In 1955, after Emmett Till is murdered in a brutal lynching, his mother vows to expose the racism behind the attack while working to have those involved brought to justice in *Till*.

It is based on the true story of Mamie Till-Bradley, an educator and activist who pursued justice after the murder of her 14-year-old son Emmett in 1955. The film stars Danielle Deadwyler as Mamie Till-Bradley, with Jalyn Hall, Frankie Faison, Haley Bennett, and Goldberg in supporting roles.

This biographical drama is directed by Chinonye Chukwu a Nigerian-American film director best known for the drama film *Clemency*. She is the first black woman to win the U.S. Dramatic Grand Jury Prize at Sundance.

27 January

Somewhere in the dystopian Middle East, grand houses that once housed the wealthy are now homes of the city's most-dangerous criminals in *Pathaan*.

An undercover police officer, his ex-con, and others will take down the drug lord who killed his own father. This Hindi-language espionage action thriller is directed by Siddharth Anand and stars Deepika Padukone, Shah Rukh Khan, and John Abraham.

A pilot finds himself caught in a war zone after he's forced to land his commercial aircraft during a terrible storm in *Plane*. This action-thriller is directed by Jean-François Richet and features Gerard Butler, Mike Colter, Yoson An, and Tony Goldwyn.

The animated film *Mummies* follows three mummies as they end up in present-day London and embark on a journey in search of an old ring belonging to the Royal Family, stolen by the ambitious archaeologist Lord Carnaby.

It is directed by Spanish animation filmmaker Juan Jesús García Galocha, who makes his feature directorial debut after working as an art director on various projects previously including *Tad: The Lost Explorer*.

Live theatre and opera on the big screen

The world-premiere staging of *Kevin Puts's The Hours*, adapted from Michael Cunningham's acclaimed novel, which also served as the inspiration for the Oscar-winning film, arrives in cinemas in January. In her highly anticipated return to the Met Opera, soprano Renée Fleming joins soprano Kelli O'Hara and mezzo-soprano Joyce DiDonato to portray three women from different eras who grapple with their inner demons and their roles in society. Phelim McDermott, who recently created the Met's acclaimed production of Philip Glass's *Akhmat*, directs this compelling drama, and Yannick Nézet-Séguin takes the podium to conduct Puts's powerful score. Screening dates: 6, 7, 8, and 10 January.

Artists, celebrities and royalty have visited the legendary family-run Hotel Messina on the Italian Riviera. But when the owner's daughter weds a dashing young soldier, not all guests are in the mood for love in *Much Ado About Nothing*. A string of scandalous deceptions soon surrounds not only the young couple but also the adamantly single Beatrice and Benedick. Following the award-winning success of National Theatre Live's *Romeo & Juliet*, *Twelfth Night* and *Antony and Cleopatra*, director Simon Godwin returns with this irresistible comedy, captured live from the National Theatre stage. Screening dates: 21, 22, 25, and 26 January.

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

ABOUT DANIEL DERCKSEN

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

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