

15 big screen trends



By [Daniel Dercksen](#)

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Daniel Dercksen gives his top 15 international and local big screen film trends for the year ahead.

Real-life exploitations

Real-life stories on the big screen this year explore the scandals of an ex-Olympic-class skier who ran the world's most exclusive high-stakes poker game in *Molly's Game*; hockey player Eric LeMarque is trapped in a snowstorm in *6 Below*; figure skater Tonya Hardin causes uproar in *I, Tonya*; a filmmaker and underdog's work ethic is questionable in *The Disaster Artist*; and *Bohemian Rhapsody* chronicles the years leading up to Queen's legendary appearance at the Live Aid concert in 1985.

Kidnappings

All The Money In The World follows the kidnapping of 16-year-old John Paul Getty III and the desperate attempt by his devoted mother to convince his billionaire grandfather to pay the ransom; *15:70 To Paris* takes us into the real-life terrorist attack on Thalys train #9364 bound for Paris; and *7 Days In Entebbe* tells the true story of one of the most daring hostage rescues in history.

Politics

Steven Spielberg brings us a thrilling drama about the unlikely partnership of the first female publisher of The Washington Post; *Mark Felt: The Man Who Brought Down The White House* is a true life spy thriller that looks at the investigation which led them to the Watergate scandal; Denzel Washington stars as a driven, idealistic defense attorney whose life is upended when his mentor dies in *Roman J. Israel, Esq.*; Winston Churchill faces *The Darkest Hour*, and U.S. Special Forces are sent to Afghanistan right after the September 11 attacks to take down the Taliban and its al-Qaida allies in *12 Strong*.

Local trends

South African films strike a personal chord this year with *Inxeba (The Wound)*, an exploration of tradition and sexuality set amid the Xhosa rights of passage into manhood; *Raaiselkind* investigates the death nine-year-old autistic boy who is found dead in the bath tub; *Zulu Wedding* pays loving tribute to the richness of African culture; *Asinamali* looks at the hardship of prison life is told through the experiences of the inmates; *Catching Feelings* is a dark South African romantic comedy which follows an urbane young academic and his journalist wife as their lives get turned upside down when a celebrated and hedonistic older writer moves into their Johannesburg home with them; *Five Fingers For Marseilles* is a Western-inspired tale of an outlaw who seeks redemption; *Meerkat Maantuig* features a fearful young hypochondriac with an overactive imagination; *Susters* tells of three sisters who reconnect after the death of their mother; and *Wonderlus* looks at what happens when a wedding ends in shambles and a group of friends and enemies have to piece together what happened the previous night. There's also *Thys En Trix*, *Nommer 37*, *Stroomop*, and *Die Ellen Pakkies Storie*.

Trendy gnomes

House gnomes are the only ones who can protect a town in *Gnome Alone* and the legendary Sherlock Gnomes has to solve the mystery of missing garden gnomes.

Animals in action

A solitary Rottweiler police dog goes undercover in *Show Dogs*; a military combat dog saves lives in Iraq in *Megan Leavey*;

Peter Rabbit is a mischievous and adventurous hero with attitude; Dinos rebel in *Jurassic World: Fallen Kingdom*; *Isle of Dogs* follows a boy's odyssey in search of his dog; and a miniature horse has three days to fulfill his lifelong dream of earning a spot on Santa's team in *Elliot: Littlest Reindeer*; and *Goodbye Christopher Robin* explores the creation of Winnie The Pooh.

Love rules

A wife devotes her life to her disabled husband in *Breathe*; a teenage Italian boy falls in love with an older man in *Call Me By Your Name*; teenage romance blossoms in *Midnight Sun*, *Everyday*, and *Ladybird*; old couples rekindle their relationships in *Hampstead* and *The Leisure Seeker*; a young man falls in love with an older woman in *Film Stars Don't Die In Liverpool*; and *Fifty Shades Freed* is the third and final installment of the erotic romance between Christian and Anna.

Biblical trends

Rooney Mara plays Mary Magdalene in an authentic and humanistic portrait of one of the most enigmatic and misunderstood spiritual figures in history; and *Paul, Apostle Of Christ* follows the epic story of the man who went from persecutor of the church to a follower of Christ.

Monster mania

A woman falls under the spell of a mysterious, scaled creature in *The Shape Of Water*; an evil witch turns a happy family into a *Monster Family*; Natalie Portman encounters dangerous creatures in *Annihilation*; Anne Hatheway is drawn to a giant creature in *Colossal*; and Dracula and his clan return in *Hotel Transylvania 3*.

Remakes

Classics get a makeover in *Death Wish*, *Papillon*, *A Star Is Born*, *Predator*, *Scarface*, *Robin Hood*, *Mary Queen Of Scots*, *Halloween* and *The Grinch*.

Sequels

It's a bumper year with a feast of sequels: *Maze Runner: The Death Cure*, *Cloverfield Movie*, *Pacific Rim Uprising*, *Deadpool 2*, *Oceans Eight*, *The Incredibles 2*, *Mamma Mia: Here We Go Again!*, *Mission: Impossible 6*, *Equalizer 2*, *Johnny English 3*, and *Jungle Book Origins*.

Looking at the past

History is revived in *Alpha*, where a young hunter finds himself broken and tames a lone wolf during the Ice Age; activist and director Ai Weiwei captures the global refugee crisis in *Human Flow*; and *Early Man* is set at the dawn of time.

Art

An American writer and art-lover James Lord is asked by his friend, the world-renowned artist Alberto Giacometti to pose for *The Final Portrait*; and *Loving Vincent* is an animated drama film about the life of painter Vincent van Gogh.

Superhero worship

Cinephiles need superheroes and this year there's loads of action with *Black Panther*, *Avengers: Infinity War (Part I)*, *The New Mutants*, *Tomb Raider*, *Ant-Man & The Wasp*, *Alita: Battle Angel*, *X-Men: Dark Phoenix*, *Spider-Man: Into The Spider-Verse*, *Aquaman*, and *Bumblebee*.

Looking to the future

Downsizing imagines what might happen if, as a solution to over-population, scientists discover how to shrink humans to 13 cm; a mysterious astral traveller's journey to a planet that possesses all of the evil in the universe in *A Wrinkle In Time*, and *Ready Player One* explores an expansive virtual reality universe.

Read more about these trendy films at www.writingstudio.co.za

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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