

Kidnapping, Hustling, Motherhood and Angels



By [Daniel Derksen](#)

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There are seven new films released this week: A hustler is recruited by the CIA to run one of the biggest covert operations in U.S. history in *American Made*; a big shot Wall Street broker is forced to help the kidnappers evade the police chief in exchange for his son's life in *First Kill*; Marvel's *The Inhumans* explores the never-before-told epic adventure of the titular race from the Marvel comics; a relationships expert is forced to unveil a painful truth about his past when he falls in love in *The Bounce Back*; a young street magician uses his sleight of hand to find his kidnapped sister in *Sleight*; in comedy *Fun Mom Dinner*, four moms realise they have more in common than motherhood and men; and in Part 2 of the NT Live *Angels In America*, New Yorkers grapple with life and death, love and sex, and heaven and hell.

American Made

Tom Cruise and his *Edge of Tomorrow* director, Doug Liman, reteam for a new 1980s smuggler film, *American Made*.

In this international escapade based on the outrageous (and real) exploits of a hustler and pilot, unexpectedly recruited by the CIA to run one of the biggest covert operations in U.S. history. Smuggler. Informant. Patriot. One of the wealthiest men in 1980s America is someone you've never heard of. With his devilish swagger and zest for life, TWA pilot Barry Seal (Cruise) is the hero of his sleepy Southern town.

Much to the surprise of his wife, Lucy (Sarah Wright Olsen, *Walk of Shame*), the charming entrepreneur has gone from a well-respected TWA pilot to a key figure in one of the greatest scandals in modern history. Little could they grasp that what started out as transporting contraband would lead to Barry's help in building an army and funding a war.

Once the hotshot airman gets caught up in a shadowy division of the government—running crates of AK-47s and kilos of cocaine—he makes a fortune as a key player in the Iran-contra affair. From trading arms for hostages to training forces of Central and South American kingpins, Barry becomes an improbable hero working against the system. So, how does he sleep at night? It's all legal if you do it for the good guys.

The film is from a screenplay by Gary Spinelli (*Stash House*).

Liman, who refers to the film as “a fun lie based on a true story,” offers that he has long appreciated stories of improbable heroes working against the system.

“Barry Seal took the government, and our country, for an unbelievable ride. Interpreting his story has the makings for an entertaining film that is equal parts satire, suspense and comedy—and always surprising,” says Liman.

Liman loved the fact that, while so many films have been made about people being run over by the government, Seal’s story was one of someone “who screwed over the White House. Barry is a zealot-like character who really did cross paths with so many household names from the ’80s—ranging from Ronald Reagan and Manuel Noriega to Bill Clinton and Oliver North.”

Cruise admits that he gravitated toward this wild story because he’d never met a character like this one. He shares: “Mark Twain’s one of my favourite writers, and I think he informed the tone of Gary’s writing. Barry Seal lived in a very unique time that we’ll never have again in aviation, or in history. He had this incredibly adventurous life, and one that is just beyond belief. He was a character walking through history. It was just too outrageous to believe, and in this day and age, it’s something that will never happen again.”

First Kill

In this action-thriller, Hayden Christensen (Will) plays a big shot Wall Street broker who tries to reconnect with his son Danny (Ty Shelton), and takes his family on a hunting trip to the cabin where he grew up.

The trip takes a deadly turn when they go hunting and stumble upon several robbers and witness the murder of one of the criminals. After becoming entangled in a bank heist gone bad, which results in the kidnapping of Danny, Will is forced to help the kidnappers evade the police chief, Howell (Bruce Willis) and recover the stolen loot in exchange for his son’s life.

It is directed by Steven C. Miller (*Motel Hell*, *Silent Night*) and written by Nick Gordon.

Marvel's The Inhumans

Marvel's *The Inhumans* will premiere in IMAX theaters on 1 September before its official premiere on ABC television on 29 September.

For the uninitiated, Inhumans — first introduced in the pages of *Fantastic Four* in 1965 before headlining their own title in 1975 — are a race of hybrid alien-human super beings who've undergone a transformative "terrigenesis," a process that unlocks sometimes strange, but uniquely powerful gifts.

It explores the never-before-told epic adventure of the titular race from the Marvel comics, including Black Bolt, the enigmatic, commanding king of the Inhumans, with a voice so powerful that the slightest whisper can destroy a city.

Executive producers on the series are Scott Buck—who previously worked on the Marvel series *Iron Fist*—and Jeph Loeb, Marvel's head of television. Jim Chory—who has worked on *Daredevil*, *Jessica Jones* and the upcoming *Defenders* series among several other Marvel shows—also executive produces.

Roel Reine directs the first two episodes that is screened as a film on 1 September.

The Bounce Back

Father, author and relationships expert, Matthew Taylor (Shemar Moore) is on a whirlwind book tour promoting his new best seller, *The Bounce Back*. He's got it all figured out until he meets the acerbic Kristin Peralta (Nadine Velazquez), a talk show circuit therapist who's convinced he's nothing but a charlatan. Matthew's life is turned upside down when he inadvertently falls for Kristin and has to face the painful truth of his past relationship. Directed by Youssef Delara.

Sleight

After his mother's death, a young street magician (Jacob Latimore) turns to dealing drugs at parties to support his little sister in *Sleight*. When she is kidnapped by his supplier, he uses his sleight of hand and keen intelligence to find her.

This ambitious genre mash-up is directed by J.D. Dillard, written by Dillard and Alex Theurer and stars Jacob Latimore, Seychelle Gabriel, Dulé Hill, Storm Reid, Sasheer Zamata and Michael Villar.

Full Mom Dinner

In comedy *Fun Mom Dinner*, four moms whose only common ground is their kids' preschool class, decide to get together for a harmless "fun mom dinner." The night begins as a disaster, but the combination of alcohol, karaoke, and a cute bartender, leads to an unforgettable night where these seemingly different women realise they have more in common than motherhood and men.

Deftly infusing zany hijinks with real feeling, director Alethea Jones and writer Julie Rudd deliver a riotous comedy that spares no rods and spoils no children.

The titular moms (Katie Aselton, Toni Collette, Molly Shannon, and Bridget Everett) make a truly formidable ensemble, dispensing dick jokes and tearful revelations with equal aplomb. Together, they prove that “mom” is more than a dirty word—it’s a badge of honour.

Angels in America Part Two: Perestroika

Marianne Elliott’s production of Tony Kushner’s stageplay *Angels in America* forms part of the NT Live Season.

Part Two: Perestroika, picks up right where *Millennium Approaches* left off. Prior is in his bed with the angel hovering over him. He tells the angel to go away. The first act also reconnects with the play’s other characters. Hannah, Joe’s mother, takes care of poor Harper, who’s having a really hard time with the fact that Joe left her for a man. Roy Cohn, dying of AIDS, checks into a hospital to meet his new nurse, Belize. And Joe and Louis finally consummate their relationship.

This new staging of Tony Kushner’s multi-award winning two-part play, *Angels in America: A Gay Fantasia on National Themes*, is directed by Olivier and Tony award winning director Marianne Elliott (*The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time* and *War Horse*).

Angels in America Part Two: Perestroika releases on Saturday, 2 September also for four screenings only on 2, 6, 7 September at 7.30pm and on 3 September at 2.30pm. The running time of Part 2 is 4 hours and 20 minutes, both including two 15 minute intervals.

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