

# News+Notes



## NEXT UP FOR DEADPOOL'S LIVE WIRE

What's in the pipeline for the box office bigwig



### CRIMINAL

In this thriller (out April 15), Reynolds plays a CIA agent whose memories are implanted into a dangerous felon (Kevin Costner).

### HITMAN'S BODYGUARD

Reynolds is hired to protect an assassin (Samuel L. Jackson) in this action pic, which starts filming in London in April.

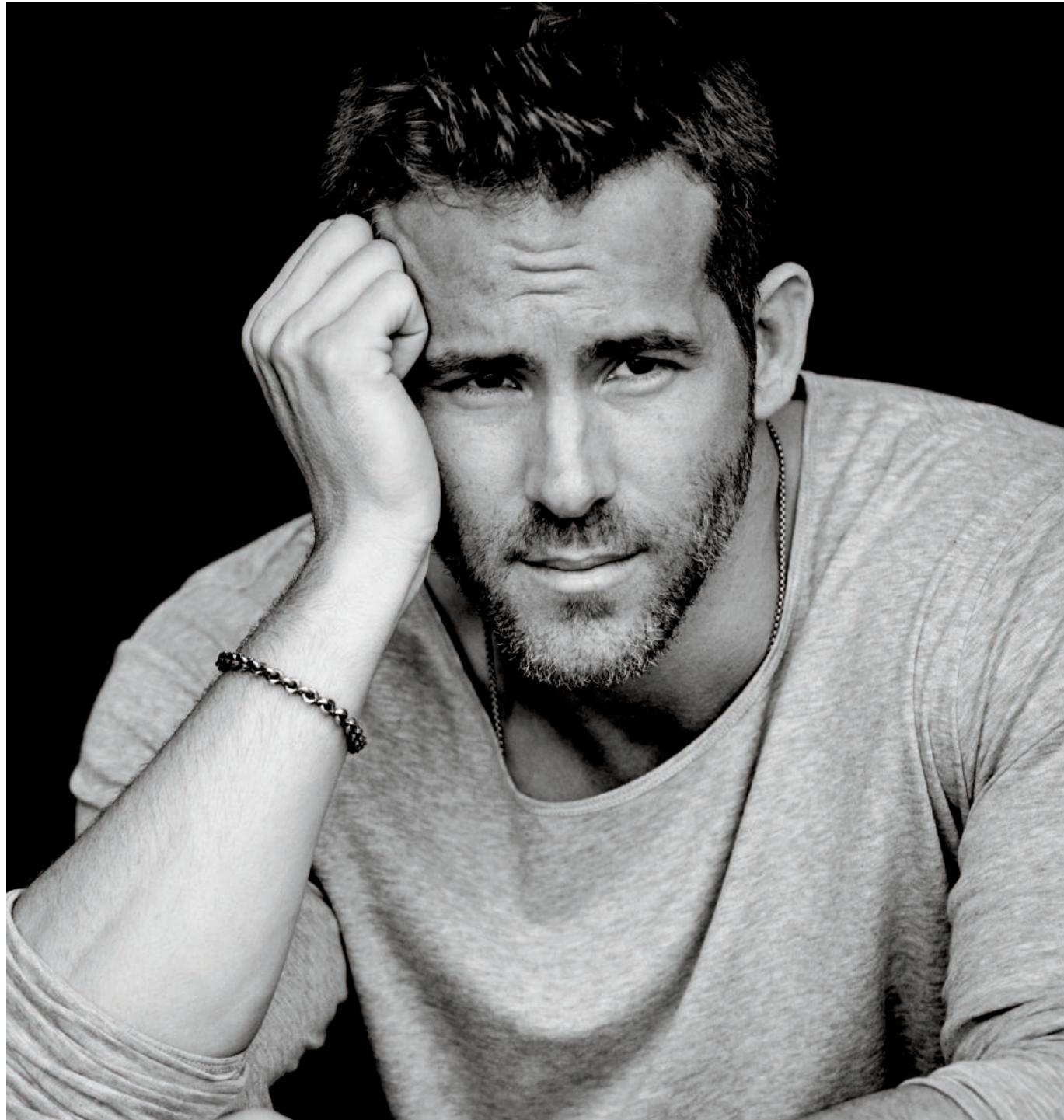


### THE CROODS 2

Reynolds returns to voice a brainy cave-boy in this sequel (due next year) to the 2013 Best Animated Feature Oscar nominee.

### LIFE

*Deadpool* writers Rhett Reese and Paul Wernick will reunite with their star for this suspenseful story about a mission to Mars, now in preproduction.



REYNOLDS: MATTHEW BROOKES/TRUNK ARCHIVE; DEADPOOL: DAVID DOLSEN; THE CROODS: DREAMWORKS ANIMATION

## WELCOME TO THE RYAN REYNOLDS RENAISSANCE

*Deadpool*'s wild success has catapulted its hardworking leading man to new Hollywood heights. **By Joe McGovern**

**THE FIRST TIME** Ryan Reynolds attempted to carry a superhero movie, it didn't go well. *Green Lantern* (2011) arrived as a big-budget bomb, one that effectively torpedoed its star's tight-wearing credentials and called into question his headliner bona fides. Despite obvious talent, loads of charm, and abs so defined you could play sudoku on them, Reynolds never managed to become a full-fledged A-lister. Then came *Deadpool*.

The raunchy adventure starring the charismatic Canadian as an unhinged motormouth in red spandex opened to \$132 million, a milestone for an R-rated film. *Deadpool* now stands as the biggest debut ever for Fox (yes, bigger than *Avatar* or *Star Wars: Episode III—Revenge of the Sith*) and a career best for Reynolds. A sequel, no surprise, is already in the works. "Obviously we want to make another one," says producer Simon Kinberg. And they plan to up the ante. "Ryan, most of all, is very aware that we need to do radical things and feel as outrageous and provocative in a sequel as we did in this one."

That stratospheric success is a plump cherry on top of the loaded sundae for the film's 39-year-old actor and producer, who fought for 11 years to play scarred assassin Wade Wilson, a cult favorite for Marvel Comics fans. Much like Robert Downey Jr. after 2008's *Iron Man*, Reynolds is more bankable now—after more than 20 years in the business—than at any time in his career, and it's all thanks to a masked weirdo previously

unknown to mainstream audiences. "Ryan was born to play Deadpool," says the film's co-writer Rhett Reese. "But I think Deadpool was also born to play Ryan."

The character's brash, bratty humor does seem to dovetail with Reynolds' own—in a 2011 EW article, the actor recalled arriving in Hollywood "armed with only \$600 and a rape whistle." Kinberg likens Reynolds to Cary Grant for his "incredible ironic presence." Adds co-writer Paul Wernick: "Being able to laugh at himself is one of Ryan's greatest gifts."

Although *Deadpool* appeared on screen before—Reynolds played a neutered version in 2009's *X-Men Origins: Wolverine*—this more ribald interpretation gave the actor a means to gleefully channel his comedic id. He's turned in oddball appearances to promote the movie, filming testicular-cancer PSAs in costume and even posting a NSFW in-character response to a petition for *Deadpool* to host *SNL*. (The upshot? Don't expect that to happen anytime soon.)

He's got plenty to keep him busy anyway. Screenwriters Wernick and Reese hope to present Reynolds with a draft for the sequel in the next few weeks, while the success of this one is still upending conventional wisdom about what comic-book movies should be. There's now talk that the next *Wolverine* movie, due from Fox next year, might be R-rated, and some are even calling for Reynolds to reprise his role as *Green Lantern*. Under that mask, *Deadpool* is surely smirking with satisfaction.