

“We wanted to close the doors of ‘Downton Abbey’ when it felt right and natural for the storylines to come together and when the show was still being enjoyed so much by its fans.”

— Gareth Neame, on his company Carnival Films’ decision to end the British show after its upcoming sixth season



MOVIES

Scott Glenn takes a walk on the dark side in ‘The Barber’

By ERIC ALTHOFF
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

Scott Glenn has made a career out of facing the darkness. In films such as “The Silence of the Lambs,” “Vertical Limit” and “Training Day,” Mr. Glenn often has chosen roles that apply a magnifying glass to the far-off reaches of human behavior.

Perhaps it is little wonder, then, that the 74-year-old veteran of nearly 100 TV and movie roles over a 50-year career accepted the lead role of Eugene in “The Barber,” a suspense-thriller that opens Friday in the District.

“What jumped out at me when I read it, right away, was how many colors to paint with or riffs I’d have if I did this thing,” Mr. Glenn told The Washington Times from his home in Idaho. “And also what I got right away was kind of the seductive unpredictability of the story.”

“I gave the script to my wife, and I said, ‘Hey Carol, should I do this?’ Less than 20 pages in, she said, ‘You’re crazy if you don’t.’”

Eugene is a mild-mannered, small-town barber whom a mysterious young man named John (Chris Coy) believes to be a serial killer who slipped through law enforcement’s fingers decades earlier. Eugene insists he is not who John believes him to be, but the two men slowly become entangled in a web of mentoring, deception, betrayal and, ultimately, murder.

Of the twisted mentor-mentee relationship that develops, Mr. Glenn said, “What I decided was [to have my character] genuinely like this kid. And there’s a sadistic strain in me that sort of delights in twisting everything, even on him. But I think I like his company.”

Even though John has the supposed drop on — and damaging knowledge of — Eugene, Mr. Glenn said, “I know from the get-go who he is and what he is and what he’s doing,” which serves to ratchet up the tension as the film forges ahead to



ASSOCIATED PRESS

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its shocking conclusion.

Mr. Glenn said the only other time in his career when such a relationship between two characters paid off so handsomely was in the 2001 dirty cop drama “Training Day,” in which his character, Roger, is shot in his home by Denzel Washington’s character, Alonzo, who previously claimed to be Roger’s good friend.

Mr. Washington personally phoned Mr. Glenn and insisted that he play the part.

“He said, ‘You’ve got to play my oldest friend in the world, who’s white, and my entire audience, including my entire black audience, has got to really

be pissed off at me and feel really betrayed when I shoot you,’” Mr. Glenn said. “And I kind of felt that same dynamic [between Eugene and John] in this movie, too.”

Mr. Glenn is no stranger to the macabre world of serial killers, thanks to his portrayal of FBI bigwig Jack Crawford in 1991’s “Silence of the Lambs,” a film that dominated that year’s Oscars, garnering trophies for stars Jodie Foster and Anthony Hopkins, as well for director Jonathan Demme.

In researching his role with real FBI profilers, Mr. Glenn gleaned insight into serial killers. Portraying Eugene in “The Barber” brought his

research full-circle, he said.

“There were some things that I’d learned that ... weren’t really addressed in ‘The Silence of the Lambs,’ and I guess they weren’t really meant to,” Mr. Glenn said. “One of the big ones was that these ... real killers that I studied and listened to [in recorded] interviews are not Hannibal Lecter, and they’re not the guy Ted Levine played in ‘Silence of the Lambs.’ I mean [Mr. Levine’s character, Buffalo Bill,] walks into a room and everybody else walks out — he’s so scary from the get-go.”

Mr. Glenn said Hollywood has largely gotten it wrong when it comes to such twisted criminals. He maintains that what makes real-life killing addicts especially unnerving is their everydayness, the fact that they live behind a veil — what Mr. Glenn calls “the disguise of normalcy.” He points to John Wayne Gacy, a Midwesterner who performed as a clown at children’s birthday parties who killed upwards of 30 people, and Edmund Kemper, known as “the Co-ed Killer.”

“Kemper looks like some insignificant guy that you could stand next to,” Mr. Glenn said. “Ted Bundy was in fact a young Republican — really good-looking and clean-cut and well-dressed. That’s what allows these monsters to get close to people so they can hurt them.”

“And I thought this script, that nail is really kind of hit on the head. I love that about the film.”

Mr. Glenn appreciates the multiple plot twists and turns “The Barber” takes, which he says will keep the audience unnerved.

“It was almost a mystery that keeps solving itself, but the solution is alive to the audience. It keeps switching gears on the audience to the very end of the film,” he said.

He maintains that the story also keeps its characters on edge and “constantly reshuffles so that even the relationships keep changing enough so that the minute the audience feels like they’re on emotionally solid ground, two or three beats later, you look down and see, ‘Whoops, I’m still in quicksand, and I’m sinking deeper.’”



Pick of the pack

Festival Blossom Kite Festival

It seems we’ve finally seen the last of the snow this year in Washington — and with temperatures approaching 70 degrees this week, it’s a great time to get out of the house and go fly a kite. While the peak blooms are still about a week away, the National Cherry Blossom Festival is in full swing with the Blossom Kite Festival scheduled for Saturday. From 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., wind and weather permitting, kite fliers, hang gliders, paragliders and performers from around the world will take over Washington Monument grounds with soaring demonstrations and competitions. Following an opening ceremony and parade, enjoy kite ballets, tricks, and even a kite battle featuring the rokkaku, the hexagonal fighter kite from Japan. Throughout the day, you can make and fly your own kites or participate in amateur competitions for the chance to win roundtrip airfare and other prizes. This year, the organizers want to remind attendees that drones are not permitted at the event. **Saturday at the Washington Monument, 17th St. NW & Constitution Ave. 877/44-BLOOM. Web: NationalCherryBlossomFestival.org.**

Get Out

The week’s pocket picks

By SAMANTHA SAULT

DJ

James Murphy

Almost four years to the date after LCD Sound-system’s final show at Madison Square Garden, fans of the dance-punk pioneers will be glad to know that the band’s former frontman, James Murphy, will bring his signature sound to Washington this weekend. He led the New York City-based band to fame with three acclaimed albums and several Grammy nominations for songs like “Daft Punk Is Playing at My House” before splitting up in 2011. Mr. Murphy now runs the pop-punk label DFA, and occasionally spins at hip music clubs and fashion shows around the world. This Friday, fans of LCD Soundsystem, as well as fans of Mr. Murphy’s diverse influences including The Talking Heads, Daft Punk and David Bowie, will want to put on your dancing shoes for his one show at the 9:30 Club. **Friday at the 9:30 Club, 815 V St. NW. 877/435-9849. Web: 930.com.**



Concert

New Found Glory

If you remember the HFStivals at RFK Stadium in the early 2000s, you surely remember New Found Glory, the pop-punk band from Florida. Founded in 1997 during the pop-punk movement, when bands like Blink-182 and Green Day were popular on WHFS and other radio stations, New Found Glory released more than a dozen albums, including their latest, “Resurrection,” in October. On Thursday, most of the band’s original lineup will be back in the area for a concert at The Fillmore in Silver Spring, where you can expect to hear favorites like “My Friends Over You,” “Hit or Miss,” “Head on Collision,” and “All Downhill from Here.” Up-and-coming punk bands including Turnstile, from Baltimore, and Turnover, from Virginia Beach, will open the show. **Thursday at The Fillmore, 8656 Colesville Rd., Silver Spring, Md. 301/960-9999. Web: FillmoreSilverSpring.com.**

Theater

Simply Sondheim

Stephen Sondheim — the American musical theater legend who has won eight Tonys, eight Grammys, an Academy Award and a Pulitzer Prize, among other awards — celebrated another incredible milestone last month: his 85th birthday. To celebrate, Arlington’s Signature Theatre, which has worked very closely with Mr. Sondheim during his 50-year career, will debut a brand new revue of his greatest works on Thursday. Part of the theater’s 25th anniversary celebration, “Simply Sondheim” will feature favorites from “Into the Woods,” “Sweeney Todd,” “A Little Night Music,” “Follies,” and “Sunday in the Park with George,” performed by six acclaimed local actors and a 16-piece orchestra. Fans of the American Songbook will want to reserve tickets immediately, because the show will run for just two-and-a-half weeks — and you can only see it at the Signature Theatre. **Through April 19 at the Signature Theatre, 4200 Campbell Ave., Arlington, Va. 703/820-9771. Web: signature-theatre.org.**

