

# ***Zombieland, Blessers and Escape Plan***

 By [Daniel Derksen](#)

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Films opening at South African films, this week, include *Zombieland: Double Tap*, *A Rainy Day In New York*, *Blessers*, *Escape Plan: The Extractors* and *Salvation*.

## **Zombieland: Double Tap**

Zombie slayers Tallahassee, Columbus, Wichita and Little Rock leave the confines of the White House to travel to Graceland in Memphis, Tenn. Along the way, they encounter other post-apocalyptic warriors and a group of survivors who find refuge in a commune.

The scrappy fighters must now rely on their wits and weapons more than ever as they soon find themselves in a relentless battle against smarter, faster and seemingly indestructible zombies.

A decade after *Zombieland* became a hit film and cult classic, the original cast including Emmy award-winner Woody Harrelson (*The Highwaymen*, TV's *True Detective*), Jesse Eisenberg (*The Social Network*, *Justice League*), Abigail Breslin (*Little Miss Sunshine*, TV's *Scream Queens*) and Academy award-winner Emma Stone (*La La Land*, Netflix's *Maniac*) reunite with veteran director Ruben Fleischer (*Venom*, TV's *Superstore*) and screenwriters Rhett

Reese and Paul Wernick – who wrote the screenplay for *Zombieland: Double Tap* with Dave Callahan.

[Read more.](#)

## A Rainy Day In New York

Woody Allen's romantic comedy tells the story of college sweethearts, Gatsby (Timothée Chalamet) and Ashleigh (Elle Fanning), whose plans for a romantic weekend together in New York City are dashed as quickly as the sunlight turns into showers.

The two are soon parted, and each has a series of chance meetings and comical adventures while on their own. Over the course of a dreamy and drizzly day in New York, Ashleigh discovers she might not be who she thought she was and Gatsby learns that while you only live once, once is enough if you find the right person.

## Blessers

Although the arrangement is nothing new, 'blesser' is a South African term for an older man who has multiple girlfriends he lavishes with gifts, in exchange for sex and companionship. In turn, the girlfriends post photos on social media of expensive shoes, clothes and piles of cash, tagging the pictures #blessed.

That's the subject at the heart of the slick and hilarious new comedy *Blessers*, by actor and director Rea Rangaka.

The film stars award-winning actor and comedian Kenneth Nkosi as a middle-aged businessman who has become accustomed to his routine, a life which includes his wife, Michelle (Sonia Mbele of *Generations* fame), his daughter Natasha (Six Nyamane), his work and fun. Caught knee-deep in the word of blessers, Jacob and his family are about to learn a few hard lessons and discover that they are perhaps not that #blessed.

*Blessers* is written by Tbo Touch, Sasa Nqabeni and Kumaran Naidu.

## **Escape Plan: The Extractors**

Sequel to *Escape Plan 2*. After security expert Ray Breslin (Sylvester Stallone) is hired to rescue the kidnapped daughter of a Hong Kong tech mogul from a formidable Latvian prison, Breslin's girlfriend is also captured.

Now he and his team must pull off a deadly rescue mission to confront their sadistic foe and save the hostages, hidden in the depths of the prison complex before time runs out.

Directed by John Herzfeld.

## **Salvation**

South African writer and director Carmen Sangion's debut feature film, *Salvation*, is no exception - the multi-narrative drama promises to be a deeply personal and emotive story, inspired by her spiritual journey and search for meaning in a disconnected world obsessed with external appearances and validation.

Set in present-day Johannesburg, the bi-lingual (English and Afrikaans) drama connects Ezra, a young man on the run from the law; Roxy, a dejected stripper; and Father Benjamin, a despairing priest, in their search for answers, acceptance and faith.

When their paths cross, they form an unlikely bond that forces them to venture out of their comfort zones to find freedom and salvation in truth and forgiveness.

With talents that include the highly-versatile Capetonian actress and model Kira Wilkinson from *Hard Copy*, *The Giver* and *Homeland*; *Flatland*, *The Endless River*, *Maze Runner: The Death Cure*'s Clayton Everston; and *Scandal* and *Generations* star Jason Willemse, the movie also aims to break the stereotypes that are commonly associated with the Coloured community by delivering an unconventional narrative and different perspective of their experience.

## **Alien**

This Halloween, experience the craftsmanship that earned the film scores of awards and cult status, when the 40th-anniversary reissue of *Alien* screens at Cinema Nouveau theatres in Rosebank, Brooklyn and V&A on 31 October 2019 at 8pm.

“In space, no one can hear you scream.” Those who know cinema, know the tagline to this 1979 cult classic, repeatedly ranked as one of the greatest films of all time. *Alien* terrified viewers with its blend of horror, sci-fi and realism, and ripped into the psyche of audiences everywhere with one of the most shocking scenes ever filmed.

After a space merchant vessel picks up a possible distress call and lands on the source moon to investigate, several crew members discover a wrecked spaceship full of eggs. When one of them is attacked by a mysterious lifeform, they soon realise that the alien's life cycle has merely begun.

Written by Dan O'Bannon and Ronald Shusett, *Alien* made director Ridley Scott a household name and brought star status

to Sigourney Weaver as Ripley, the iconic, tough-as-nails heroine. Also starring Tom Skerritt, Veronica Cartwright, Harry Dean Stanton, John Hurt and Ian Holm, *Alien* is one film that should be seen larger than life.

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## 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](http://www.writingstudio.co.za)

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