

## THE SHALLOWS (2016)

- Rated PG-13 or bloody images, intense sequences of peril, and brief strong language
- \$17,000,000 dollar budget
- 2 hours
- Directed by Jaume Collet-Serra
- Produced by Lynn Harris and Matti Leshem
- The film was produced by Columbia Pictures, Sony Pictures

## QUICK THOUGHTS

- Phil Svitek
- Marisa Serafini
- Demetri Panos

## DEVELOPMENT

- Name changed from *In The Deep* to *The Shallows*
- “Every movie that has ever shot on water has gone over budget and over schedule. We went a bit over budget, but didn't go over schedule because we couldn't ... We had the release date and we barely made it.”- Jaume Collet-Serra
- [Louis Leterrier](#) was originally set to direct but exited the film due to creative differences and the reduction of previously told budget

## WRITING (Anthony Jaswinski)

- The screenplay for this film was featured in the 2014 Blacklist; a list of the “most liked” unmade scripts of the year by Anthony Jaswinski
- *Vanishing on 7th Street*
- He is currently executive-producing the indie-horror *Satanic* as well as the horror series “Sleep No More” for Lifetime Television
- Collet-Serra: The seagull was in the script, and it was a device. It was a device for her to talk to the seagull and explain things to the seagull. But obviously, as the movie evolved, it felt sort of too much like a device. But we kept the seagull as like a little companion. And it's just to have a couple of moments, so it doesn't become like a “Snow White” with talking to the bird. We found three seagulls that were injured. They were used to being with humans for many years
- “This story is incredibly visceral, but it's also one we can all relate to – dealing with our worst fears,” says Leshem. “What does it take to face the thing you never thought you could face? And, of course, on some level, this is a metaphor for everything that is truly challenging, but is embodied in a great white shark.”

## STORY/CAST

- **POINT OF DISCUSSION:** Simplicity of story
- **POINT OF DISCUSSION:** Setup of drama/survival
- **POINT OF DISCUSSION:** Nancy Adams' character
- **POINT OF DISCUSSION:** Shark/survival
- **POINT OF DISCUSSION:** Ending

## BLAKE LIVELY (Nancy)

- Known for *Gossip Girl*, *Age of Adaline*, *Savages*, *Green Lantern*, *The Town*, *Accepted*
- Blake Lively was born Blake Ellender Brown in Tarzana, California, to a show business family
- Her mother, [Elaine Lively](#) (née McAlpin), is an acting coach and talent manager, and her father, [Ernie Lively](#) (born Ernest Wilson Brown, Jr.), is an actor and teacher
- "It was super intimidating, which is one of the reasons I wanted to do it."
- "An isolation film is, I think, one of the greatest undertakings you can take as an actor because it's all you, and it seems like a terrible idea, and why would anyone want to watch all you for that long? Then you're going through this incredibly emotional journey and screaming, crying," the 28-year-old explains, "then add a bikini element to it all. It just seems like the worst idea ever, which is why I thought, 'Okay, I've to challenge myself, I've got to do this.' "
- "But I also wanted to work out not just for extreme vanity but because they didn't hire a stunt double until the last two weeks. So I was doing all my own stunts, not my own surfing. I did my best with surfing. We had the best junior surfer in the world surfing for me." - Lively
- In 2010, Lively spent time in the water, diving with great white sharks and conservationists which gave her a greater connection to the story. "I went diving with great white sharks in Gansbaai, South Africa," she shares. "I was face-to-face with those majestic creatures. It was incredibly eye opening, because I was always terrified of great white sharks, but being in the water with them, being within their habitat, they don't look like big, monstrous creatures – they're beautiful, peaceful and serene. That was helpful, because in this movie, I'm not thinking of the shark as an attacker – the shark is a remarkable creature, simply trying to survive. As is Nancy."
- Isabella Nichols, the #1 junior surfer in the world
- "There's a scene where I'm swimming up to the buoy and I crack my face under water and my nose is pouring blood and that was real. That happened."
- I was terrified of sharks. I never even watched *Jaws* because I was so scared of sharks.
- There were times when she was filming underwater where it was impossible for those around her to tell whether she was acting or actually couldn't breathe.
- "Blake is not only very likable, she's very tough, very smart, and very resourceful," says Collet-Serra.
- It is hard to believe that Nancy has ingenuity, given that she goes surfing -- alone -- wearing plenty of glittery bling (earrings, necklaces, bracelets, rings).
  - [NOAA Fisheries Service](#) has long offered this advice to recreational water users: "Don't wear shiny jewelry when in the water. The glisten mimics fish scale sheen and visually labels you as shark prey."

#### **Angelo Josue Lozano Corzo/ Jose Manuel Trujillo Salas (Surfers)**

- "Angelo had just won a championship in Mexico, so I Googled him, and I looked at all of his videos. In one of them, he was surfing with Yuco. I said, 'I want both of those guys,' and it really paid off – they needed not only to be great surfers, but great friends." -Collet-Serra

#### **OSCAR JAENADA (Carlos)**

- Óscar Jaenada was born on May 4, 1975 in Esplugues de Llobregat, Barcelona, Catalonia, Spain as Óscar Jaenada Gajo

- He is an actor, known for [Pirates of the Caribbean: On Stranger Tides](#) (2011), [The Losers](#) (2010) and [Cantinflas](#) (2014)

#### **BRETT CULLEN** (Father)

- Known for *Dark Knight Rises*, *Ghost Rider*, *Apollo 13*, *Red Dawn*
- When he was a teenager, he almost drowned in a surfing accident in Mexico

#### **SEDONA LEGGE** (Chloe)

- Her first role in a movie

#### **EASTER EGGS / TRIVIA / COMPARISONS**

- In the time that a viewer watches the 1 hour and 27-minute movie, about 17,125 sharks will be killed worldwide
- "The Shallows" tries to add a victim element to its great white, given that the female shark has a painful-looking hook in her mouth
- "Years ago, summer thrillers featured aliens from outer space as the bad guys, but that became too ridiculous," Marie Levine, founder and executive director of the [Shark Research Institute](#), told Discovery News. "I remember one film where the alien looked like a tomato soup can. Then such films featured ants and spiders, and now, after "Jaws," sharks are often the antagonists," she added. Jaws was a game changer that led to this whole new genre of summer thrillers
  - The Shallows" shares some uncanny similarities with [Steven Spielberg](#)'s surprise 1975 hit "Jaws" — not only thematically but also financially. Made for \$7 million, the classic shark thriller made back its production budget — nearly to the exact dollar — upon opening, too. (Of course, it went on to become the highest-grossing movie of the year all those decades ago.)
  - "To gross almost the amount of production cost in your opening weekend, it's always a good thing," said Rory Bruer, president of worldwide distribution at Sony — the studio that distributed the Columbia Pictures film.
- While sharks have extremely keen senses and can detect blood from a quarter of a mile away, blood is not necessarily a dinner bell for them
- Most experts do believe that sharks can swim 25–35 miles per hour
- The shark bites through metal, which has been reported
- In yet another scene, the shark leaps out of the water to attack, a move that has also been [documented](#)
- Debate which is better, Jaws of Deep Blue Sea? (Which is this closer to?)  
<http://www.wired.com/2016/06/deep-blue-sea-celebration/>

#### **DIRECTING** (Jaume Collet-Serra)

- *Run All Night*, *Non-Stop*, *Goal II: Living the Dream*, *Orphan*,
- Born in Sant Iscle de Vallata, a small town in the province of Barcelona, Catalonia, Spain
- "I didn't look at any other movies in the shark sub-genre because I consider this more of a survival movie," said Collet-Serra told io9. "The shark attack is the beginning and then she's stranded and trying to figure out how to get out."
- "There's so much mystery surround sharks," he said. "I wish I could go into the movie and explain all the things that we know but that's for the *Shark Week* fans. [For example] the scars on female sharks, like this one, are through sex. The male sharks have to grab them and that's why they have all the scars."

- My theory is always that if I have seen it, if it was captured on tape, even if it's just once, then I can put it in the movie," he said. Hence some of the insane things the *Shallows* shark does in the film. "Now you won't have one shark that is consistently killing so many people in one single space, that's the part that's not realistic."
- When you think shark point of view shots in movies, you think of *Jaws*. Underwater shots with a swimmer carelessly flailing around. They're terrifying and they serve that purpose in *The Shallows* too. But not why you'd think.
  - "When you [look to] the surface of the water, [that terror] has nothing to do with *Jaws*, it has to do with we never know what's underwater," Collet-Serra said. "That's why I was able to get away from having such a brightly lit movie and still keeping it scary and tense. As bright and colorful as it is on the surface, it will always be darker and murkier underneath."
  - "If [the camera] is moving and its circling, it is the shark," he said. "If it not moving, it's not the shark, because sharks can't breath if they're not moving."
- Didn't watch *Jaws* ahead of time: It's obviously a genius movie made by a genius filmmaker. But no. Because what am I going to do? What could I take from it, because the tools used back then are completely different to now. The story is completely different. You know, I am obviously not going to use a mechanical shark. I'm not even going to shoot on film. It's such a different thing that you can not compare it, even what can I gain from it.
- Collet-Serra: We determined the size based on we wanted it to be a female on the large side, but not the biggest. The biggest is like 25 (foot). This one was like 21. So big enough, but still a powerful female, because you had all these scars (from mating) and they're probably very territorial. We felt like this was Blake versus shark, it should be a female shark.
- "I think that what's important is for you—as an audience—to get sucked into the movie from a positive light, in a sense that you want to agree with the decisions that your main character does. So here in the story, you have a young woman, who's traveling alone through Mexico, hitching a ride. She gets into the water, barely talks to some surfers, and then stays there later (than the locals advise). If the beach looks like a scary beach, she's very dumb. So if it's beautiful, if the people are friendly, if it's like that, then it gives her a false sense of comfort, which is what we wanted. That doesn't mean that she's not dumb for going to look at what's going on there, because every movie needs a bad decision. But at least she's not dumb from the very beginning. Like the guy in the truck is not some scary guy."
- CS: There's a scene in this, where instead of witnessing what the shark is doing to one of its victims, we see just Blake's reaction. How did that evolve? ... Collet-Serra: It was very simple. I pushed the camera. She hit the shot. She sold it.
- "Sometimes things happen. And I was like, "Why would I cut away when she's giving it to me?" Why? This is pure filmmaking. It's like, I can cut to the guy short of acting and going like this [flails arms about, miming swimming struggle]. It's almost silly, when you can just have wonderful actors. She steals the moment from the guy, right? That's what happens in movies, you know? So it's not in the script. But she earns the close-up on the thing. You just do it and it happens very naturally. You have to realize that she does the whole scene every time. It's not like, "Okay, Blake, so now he's going to die. We're going to push into him." I'm with the crane and I'm following her and she's doing it all in her mind. And then, she goes, and I just talk to the crane guys like, "Push slowly." And it was

like, slowly, slowly, you know? And you just go there and she goes and starts tearing up. And he's like, "How am I going to cut away?" So I just keep it in the movie."

## **PRODUCTION** (Flavio Martínez Labiano)

- Stunt coordinator Glenn Ruehland notes that the production had to employ shark shields to keep real-life sharks from entering the filming area.
- THE SHARK: "It was like pink tape x's that I had to react to. We filmed in the ocean and we also filmed in a tank. They had a guy with a great white sized fin attached and he would swim around on like a little sea doo, like an underwater rocket propeller." -Lively "I came to the conclusion that the shark had to be a female," says the director. "Females are slightly bigger, and most have great scars from mating. Visually, they're scarier, as they are more protective." -Jaume Collet-Serra "I kept telling the animators to think of the shark as a big diesel truck with lots of power and torque, versus a high-revving, German-engineered car," -Scott E. Anderson (VFX Supervisor)
- The shark in the movie was mostly created via CGI, but Lively told [Entertainment Weekly](#) that "they had a guy with a great white sized fin attached and he would swim around on like a little sea doo, like an underwater rocket propeller."
- "I came to the conclusion that the shark had to be a female," Collet-Serra said. "Females are slightly bigger, and most have great scars from mating. Visually, they're scarier, as they are more protective."
- Scott E. Anderson served as the film's visual effects supervisor. "Both Jaume and Diana Ibanez, our film's visual effects producer, did a lot of research," he says. "Through Jaume's notes and our conversation, Diana and he put together research packages – moments of sharks that Jaume liked, general actions and behaviors of sharks. That really was our basis of library – little moments that Jaume liked."
- In animating the shark, Anderson's greatest challenge was to create a believable character. "The shark is very consistent in its character," he says. "Nancy wanders into its area accidentally, and interrupts the shark's world. And after the shark has wounded her, the shark just thinks of Nancy as food. It's nothing personal – the shark is just being a shark. Towards the end, when Nancy is fighting for her own survival, the shark fights back. Both of them are just doing what they need to do."
- SULLY THE BIRD: The next consideration was a CG bird. "But I said, I've never seen a good CG seagull," says Leshem. "I don't believe people can do birds very well. So one day, I was having lunch, and a few seagulls came close – close enough for me to feed them out of my hand. So I said to Jaume, 'If I can feed this seagull out of my hand, then some great animal trainer is going to be able to train them. I fed the bird and Jaume instinctively pulled out his iphone and started shooting. It was the moment of epiphany.'"
- "So we went to our animal trainer, Katie Brock-Medland, and asked, 'Have you ever trained a seagull?'" says Harris. "She is the most patient, kind, loving animal whisperer in the world – and somehow, she ended up training the seagull. It's extraordinary – we would not have the movie we have without Sully."
- "Seagulls are food-motivated – anybody who's been to a fish-and-chips shop knows that," says Brock-Medland. "So, food motivation was a good part of our training. We would feed them prawns, fish bits, mealworms – any kind of treat."
- Sully has been in rescue care for nine years
- Collet-Serra: Yeah, and one of them was a genius seagull. There were two dumb ones, and then one was a genius. And that's the seagull that's in the movie. It was just there and would react to everything

- CS: Blake suggested that the seagull was trying to run away with the movie....  
Collet-Serra: Yeah, I think it was expecting maybe a sequel or something. But you just were lucky because we had so many issues. Normally in another movie, having a seagull would be a big problem. But we had so many other problems that the seagull was the easiest thing.
- Principal photography in New South Wales, Australia
- Filmed Stages at the Village Roadshow Studios on Queensland's Gold Coast
- Labiano found the location of the beach for filming
- The film's primary location was Lord Howe Island, a small island approximately 600 nautical miles east of Sydney. Moviegoers will be drawn to the location for the same reasons Nancy is drawn to hers: it's one of the few unspoiled, undeveloped natural spots left on Earth
- "There are 350 residents and 400 beds for guests – that's it," says Harris. "There's no cellular service, very little Wi-Fi, few cars."
- Most of the island is virtually untouched forest, with many plants and animals that are found nowhere else in the world. In the surrounding turquoise waters, giant clams, sea turtles, clownfish, lionfish, tuna, kingfish, butterfly fish and the doubleheaded wrasse can all be found. "It's a UNESCO World Heritage site, it's governed by a national park, all the waters around it are governed by a marine park, and all of the people who live on the island are fifth- and sixth-generation islanders, who bring a deep and intrinsic value to everything that happens on the island. The location is really the heart and soul of the film," says Duncan Jones, the film's location manager.
- Director of Photography Simon Christidis, A.C.S. – were able to capture some amazing footage. "Simon, our underwater photographer, was amazing. He'd take the camera and shoot Angelo and Jose surfing, then in the afternoon, I'd run up to him like a little boy on Christmas to see what amazing shots he'd got. The surf sequence in the film is just incredible, and it's all to the credit of Simon and the surfers."
- "Some days the elements combined to either ruin stuff that they'd already shot, or the cast and crew were left twiddling their thumbs as they were unable to get to work."  
-Jaume Collet-Serra
- The bastard sun can change the color of the ocean, which then immediately ruined the consistency of his shots.
- "This was a beach that was a bird sanctuary. There were a million birds hatching all around us that we couldn't even disturb. And they were attacking us and what not. And then at night all of the other birds that went to get food in the morning came back and there were millions of birds hitting us in the head, like landing. So we had to get out of there, because the birds were very good at flying but not at landing. They were crashing into trucks." -Jaume Collet-Serra
- The tide would go so high that it would just expose a huge patch of sand. "So you'd start a scene and then it'd get cloudy, or the wind would pick up, or the tide was wrong, the tide changes are huge, like metres and metres of exposed beach."
- The water destroyed all our sets. Several times. The waves, the salt, the chlorine when we were in the tank.
- For one shot, a wide helicopter shot of Lively alone on the rock, it naturally meant that no one else could be around. "I got to our set – our rock and buoy – out in the middle of the ocean, and everybody left me there and went back to the shore. I'm sitting there, three or four hundred yards from shore, waiting, alone, in aggressive, rising tide for the helicopter with the camera to crest over the mountain. After a few minutes of pure

solitude, the chopper came in, did the shot, and left me alone again. There was a good thirty minutes total where it was just me, and I really felt the enormity of the situation. It was so beautiful, and also so terrifying. It was a moving experience.”

- Other filming commenced in a giant swimming pool
- “Working on land is hard enough when you’re doing action,” says stunt coordinator Glenn Ruehland, “but when you’re working on water and doing action at the same time, or working underwater and doing action, it adds a second or even third element of danger. I had a very experienced team, and we methodically went through our safe practices every morning, rehearsing with our stunt doubles, before we brought in the actors, to make sure we could get the shots that we needed.”
- Ruehland’s team worked very closely with the marine team and even the VFX team, piloting the sea bob with the fin that would both stand in for the shark during shooting and displace the water to create that effect practically

#### **EDITING** (Joel Negron)

- *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles, Pain & Gain, The Nice Guys, 21 Jump Street, Transformers: Dark of The Moon, Transformers: Revenge of the Fallen, Pearl Harbor, Armageddon, The Karate Kid (2009), The Mummy: Tomb of the Dragon Emperor.*

#### **SOUND/MUSIC** (Marco Beltrami)

- Two-time Academy Award nominated
- *Fantastic Four, True Story, The Gun Man, The November Man, Trouble With The Curve, Snowpiercer, The Giver*

#### **PROMOTION**

- Sony credits Lively’s star power with helping the opening exceed predictions. She has 9.1 million Instagram followers, after all, and 1.9 million Facebook fans
- The film capitalized on her celebrity as she did the talk show circuit along with a Marie Claire cover and an E! Instagram takeover
- “We really had great tentacles — no pun intended,” said the Sony exec with a laugh during a Sunday morning call. He cited an online blitz geared to several demographics. Marketing included a female empowerment message, customized video content on Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, YouTube and Facebook, plus a presence on sites popular with millennials: BuzzFeed, Refinery 29, Jukin and Vice
- Partnerships with sites like BuzzFeed and other social influencers amounted to 18 million fans reached around the film’s June 21 world premiere alone
- Sony credits worldwide marketing and distribution president Josh Greenstein with overseeing the campaign (also responsible for moving the release date forward a week). Ironically, the film’s successful marketing news comes less than a week after Dwight Caines’s exit from president of domestic marketing. Sony announced it is replacing Caines with Christine Birch in the role
- “The Shallows” also took advantage of the Discovery Channel’s popular annual Shark Week programming, with promotion on the channel that included Lively introducing behind-the-scenes footage
- The studio also cited thriller’s final trailer which received a 34:1 approval rating on YouTube, spurring social chatter

#### **BOX OFFICE**

- Domestic Summary
  - Opening Weekend: \$16,800,868 (#4 rank, 2,962 theaters, \$5,672 average)
- Widest Release: 2,962 theaters
- In Release: 6 days / 0.9 weeks
- *The Shallows* opened on June 24, 2016 alongside *Independence Day: Resurgence and Free State of Jones*, and was projected to gross around \$7 million from 2,800 theaters in its opening weekend, with some estimates going as high as \$11–12 million

## RECEPTION

- *The Shallows* has received generally positive reviews from critics, with Blake Lively's performance being critically praised
- IMDB: 7.2
- RT: Tomatometer 74% , Audience 64%
- The site's critical consensus reads, "Lean and solidly crafted, *The Shallows* transcends tired shark-attack tropes with nasty thrills and a powerful performance from Blake Lively."
- Cinemascore: B+
- Josh Greenstein, [Sony](#) president of worldwide marketing and distribution, saying, "We had the best reviewed new movie of the weekend and combined with a great audience response saw a fantastic result. People wanted to watch a film with quality that was original in this summer landscape."
- [Richard Roeper](#) of *The Chicago Sun-Times*, enjoyed the film, calling it an "immensely entertaining millennial B-Movie, made for summertime viewing."
- [Simon Thompson](#) of [IGN](#) gave the film a 9/10, noting, "*The Shallows* does for surfing what *The Blair Witch Project* did for camping and makes *Jaws* look like a children's tea party... Terrifyingly good."
- [Matt Zoller Seitz](#) of [Rogerebert.com](#), gave the film three stars, commending the performance of Blake Lively while adding "Lively is superb here, giving one of those hyper-focused, action-lead performances that's as much an athletic feat as an aesthetic one."
- [Steve Pulaski](#) of *The Baconation* gave the film a positive review saying, "*The Shallows* doesn't bring anything unique or amazingly new, but it works and functions on the level of making the audience uneasy and unsettled, which is about all you can ask and demand from an early-summer thriller that combines beautiful locational cinematography with overarching, almost unceasing, suspense and intrigue."
- [Staci Layne Wilson](#) of [Dread Central](#) gave the film a negative review, saying although she wanted to like it, she felt that with "Jaume Collet-Serra's sledgehammer-style direction, Anthony Jaswinski's intelligence-insulting screenplay, and Marco Beltrami's misguided musical score, *The Shallows* is impossible to endorse."

## FINAL THOUGHTS