

FANTASTIC BEASTS AND WHERE TO FIND THEM (2016)

- Released November 18th, 2016
- 2 hour 13 minutes
- \$180 million budget
- David Yates directed
- Rated PG-13 for some fantasy action violence
- Heyday Films, Warner Bros.
- Neil Blair, Tim Lewis, Rick Senat

QUICK THOUGHTS:

- Phil Svitek
- Marisa Serafini
- Juliet Vibert

DEVELOPMENT

- The book *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them* is mentioned as a school textbook in the *Harry Potter* book series, although Scamander himself does not appear in any of the books
- In 2001 Rowling published an edition of the "textbook" to be sold to raise money for the British charity Comic Relief. The book is a directory of magical creatures written with an introduction by its author Newt Scamander; it does not contain a storyline narrative. (In literature, the creation of such a long work not part of a novel's narrative storyline is known as a false document.)
- First announced in September 2013, the project marks Rowling's debut as a screenwriter
- The film sees the return of producer David Heyman, as well as writer Steve Kloves, both veterans of the *Potter* film franchise
- After Alfonso Cuarón declined involvement, Warner Bros. announced that David Yates would direct at least the first instalment of a planned trilogy

WRITING (J.K. Rowling)

- Takes place 70 years before Harry comes into being
- Rowling's first screenplay
- "More than up to the task." "You give Jo notes and then a week later you'll get a script. And I'll be like, whoa! Jo's just delivered a script-- after a week. And what she'll do is she'll kind of riff off notes and she'll create a whole new series of things within that screenplay, which take us off in all sorts of different tangents. So, she's like a sort of volcano of ideas."- Yates
- Rowling's third draft was accepted after some improvements done by Yates, Heyman, and Kloves
- J.K. Rowling has stated that this film "is neither a prequel nor a sequel to the Harry Potter series, but an extension of the wizarding world. Newt's story will start in New York, seventy years before Harry gets underway"
- In an interview with *Vulture*, Alfonso Cuarón, director of *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban* (2004) expressed interest in directing; "'Azkaban' was fun to make, and when I did it, I was invited to do the next one, but I didn't want to overstay the welcome, because it was such an experience. But now? Why not? I do have stuff that I want to do

[next], but a JK thing... They haven't called me yet! They haven't decided to invite me! Looking forward! At least to see it, because nobody's invited me"

STORY/CAST

- **POINT OF DISCUSSION:**
 - **POINT OF DISCUSSION:**
 - **POINT OF DISCUSSION:**
 - Following thousands of auditions in an open casting call, ten-year-old Faith Wood-Blagrove was chosen for the part of Modesty
 - Michael Gambon, who played Albus Dumbledore in the *Harry Potter* series was desperate to star in the spin-off
-
- Eddie Redmayne as Newt Scamander: An eccentric, introverted wizard, the future author of the textbook *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them*, and an employee at the Ministry of Magic.
 - Katherine Waterston as Porpentina "Tina" Goldstein: A down-to-earth and grounded witch and former Auror working for the Magical Congress of the United States of America (MACUSA), who longs to fight for what's right but is forced to work in an office well below her skill level.
 - Dan Fogler as Jacob Kowalski: A newly single No-Maj factory worker and aspiring baker who is exposed to the New York City magical community after he meets Newt.
 - Alison Sudol as Queenie Goldstein: Porpentina's younger sister and roommate, described as a bombshell, free-spirited and big-hearted, and is accomplished in Legilimency.
 - Colin Farrell as Percival Graves: A high-ranking Auror and the Director of Magical Security for MACUSA, who is in charge of the protection of wizards and set with the task of tracking down Newt.
 - Carmen Ejogo as President Seraphina Picquery: The President of MACUSA.
 - Ezra Miller as Credence Barebone: Mary Lou's troubled and mysterious adopted son.
 - Samantha Morton as Mary Lou Barebone: A narrow-minded No-Maj and the sinister leader of the New Salem Philanthropic Society (the NSPS, or "The Second-Salemers"), an extremist group whose goals include exposing and killing wizards and witches.
 - Ron Perlman as Gnarlack: A goblin gangster who owns a speakeasy nightclub, and comes across Newt.
 - Jon Voight as Henry Shaw, Sr.: The father of US senator Henry Shaw, Jr. and Langdon Shaw.
 - Josh Cowdery as Henry Shaw, Jr.: A US senator who holds a rally picketed by the New Salem Philanthropic Society.
 - Ronan Raftery as Langdon Shaw: The youngest of Henry Shaw, Sr.'s sons who begins to believe in magic.
 - Faith Wood-Blagrove as Modesty Barebone: A haunted young girl with the ability to see deep into people, who has an inner strength and stillness, also the youngest of Mary Lou's adopted children.
 - Jenn Murray as Chastity Barebone: The eldest of May Lou's adopted children

- Johnny Depp as Gellert Grindelwald: A Dark wizard who is one of the most dangerous wizards of all-time (second only to Voldemort) and was very close to Albus Dumbledore. "Watching him create a character is fascinating," Rowling said of Depp when speaking to MTV at the world premiere for *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them*. "It's been quite inspiring to me as the writer. I feel he's got quite an interesting approach to creating a character." Rowling praised director David Yates' casting choice, saying "the physicality is exactly right." She also likened Depp's approach to playing Grindelwald to that of Eddie Redmayne's portrayal of Newt Scamander, citing similarities in the way he "works and moves around and inhabits the character." The author said fans can expect to see plenty of Depp as Grindelwald in future *Fantastic Beasts* movies, with the actor confirmed to appear as the Dark Wizard.
- Zoë Kravitz as Leta Lestrange: The former love of Scamander at Hogwarts who betrayed his trust, leaving him bitter about her but still keeping a picture of her.

EDDIE REDMAYNE (Newton Artemis Fido "Newt" Scamander)

- Eddie Redmayne was cast in the lead role of Newt Scamander, the Wizarding World's preeminent magizoologist, in June 2015.
- Matt Smith and Nicholas Hoult were also considered
- ABOUT NEWT SCAMANDER:
 - Magizoologist and author of *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them*. Scamander developed an interest in magical creatures early in life, influenced by his mother's breeding of hippogriffs. After attending and being expelled from Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry, Scamander joined the Ministry of Magic, spending two years in the Office for House-Elf Relocation before joining the Beast Division. In 1918, he was commissioned by Augustus Worme of Obscurus Books to write *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them*. The book became a best seller, making Scamander a respected expert in the field of Magizoology. In his personal life, Scamander married Porpentina Goldstein, and fathered at least one child. By the beginning of the 1990s, Scamander was retired and living in Dorset.
 - Has written an encyclopaedia collating all the fantastic beasts in the universe. It's read by first year students at Hogwarts and in 2001, supporting Comic Relief, Rowling published a version of the textbook.

COLIN FARRELL (Percival Graves)

- ABOUT PERCIVAL GRAVES:
 - Percival Graves was an Auror, Director of Magical Security and head of MACUSA's Department of Magical Law Enforcement. Had an encyclopedic knowledge of wizarding law, and especially the ones relevant to the magical community of North America. As Director of Magical Security, he would also be highly trained and skilled with defensive charms, counter-curses and restrain criminals without attracting the attention of the non-magical population, all skills he would have employed effectively to keep the magical citizenry safe.
- Grindelwald was the wizarding world's big bad before Voldemort came along. He was friends with young Albus Dumbledore and wanted to find the Deathly Hallows and lead a

wizarding world revolution to rule muggles. He had a falling out with Dumbledore after a duel killed Dumbledore's sister

KATHERINE WATERSON (Tina)

- *Steve Jobs, Sleeping With Other People, Inherent Vice, Boardwalk Empire*
- "The day I was meant to fly to London, I had my suitcase packed and was literally rolling it out of my apartment and they called me and said they had to reschedule," she said. "The more you wait, the more the anxiety builds."

DAN FOGLER (Jacob Kowalski)

- *The Goldbergs, Secrets & Lies, Hannibal, Man Up, Take Me Home Tonight, Kung Fu Panda, Horton Hears a Who! and Mars Needs Moms.*
- Steve Zissis and Zack Pearlman were competing for role
- "I equate it to getting the golden ticket," Fogler, 40, told PEOPLE about being cast as Jacob at the film's New York premiere. "It's like Willy Wonka, like I won the lottery. It's that feeling of dreams can come true and it's real."
- He wore a homemade costume to his *Fantastic Beasts* audition. "I put a little costume together, made of what I thought Jacob would wear," the actor told *Pottermore*. "Suspenders and cut-off hobo gloves and a patchy newsboy cap. I was very furry and shaggy. So, I went in and I felt really good about the audition."

ALISON SUDAL (Queenie)

- *Dig, Transparent,*
- Alison Sudol, in her feature film debut
- Alison Sudol didn't even know that she was being called in to read for the movie. "I went for a general meeting with Fiona Weir, the casting agent, and within a few minutes she said, I'd like you to read for something, but first you have to sign a non-disclosure-agreement."
- "Fiona told me about this character, Queenie, who I play, she just described her as incredibly empathetic and kind. She is seen as a beauty, but that is not how she sees herself at all, she is very feminine and incredibly perceptive and lovely. The way we talked about Queenie, made me fall in love with this person. Then she said that she was a witch and I didn't know what was happening."
- She talks about the Rowling books offering her comfort in the way a child holds a teddy bear. "This is a wild surreal dream for me, I read all of the books. I read some of the books on tour, actually, and it's really lovely to have that sort of universe to escape to, because when you're on tour you are constantly moving from city to city and then it's all quite disorientating, and then to go to such a strong vivid world in my bunk at night is really quite lovely."
- "J.K. came to the set. . . . We all turned into children. I read every Potter book, so being part of her world is deeply thrilling."

EZRA MILLER (Credence Barebone)

- **ABOUT CREDECENCE:**
 - Credence Barebone was an American man who lived during the 20th century. He was the adopted son of Mary Lou Barebone, the leader of the New Salem Philanthropic Society, a No-Maj anti-witchcraft group.

- He was described as "troubled" and "mysterious." Shy and withdrawn, this made him far more vulnerable to the abuse that came in response to the slightest infraction of his adoptive mother's strict rules. His timid personality also made him susceptible to manipulation by Gellert Grindelwald, who took a personal interest in him
- By the time Ezra Miller was auditioning to play Credence in *Fantastic Beasts*, he had already signed on to be Flash in the DCEU. At first, Warner Bros didn't want him to play both characters due to scheduling issues, but Miller was determined to be part of both franchises

PRODUCTION/CINEMATOGRAPHY (Philippe Rousselot)

- *The Nice Guys, Beautiful Creatures, Sherlock Holmes: A Game of Shadows, Larry Crowne, Sherlock Holmes*
- Principal photography on the film commenced on 17 August 2015, at Warner Bros. Studios, Leavesden
- Several scenes were also shot on location in London.
- After two months, the production moved to St George's Hall in Liverpool, which was transformed into 1920s New York.
- Filming concluded on 28 January 2016

DIRECTING (David Yates)

- This film is directed by David Yates, the director of the last four "Harry Potter" films

SYMBOLISM/TRIVIA

- It was revealed in November 2015 that the American wizarding community in the movie does not use the word "Muggles" to refer to non-magic people but instead use their own word "No-maj", short for "no magic"
- It has been revealed that "Ilvermorny" will be the name of the American School of Witchcraft and Wizardry (referenced, but supposedly not featured in this movie), much like Hogwarts is for the UK
- 1926 the year the film is set is also the year Voldemort was born
- If you look closely in the scene where Newt is showing Jacob all the fantastic beasts he's collected for the first time, you will see a Grindylow in a bubble of water. These creatures are featured in Harry Potter and the Goblet Of Fire in the underwater task of the Triwizard Tournament
- The pendant that Graves gives to Credence is The Mark of the Deathly Hallows, the same pendant worn by Xenophilius Lovegood in Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows: Part 1(2010)
- This is the second film to feature Colin Farrell and Johnny Depp portraying two versions of the same character after *The Imaginarium of Doctor Parnassus* (2009), where the two respective actors both stepped in for Heath Ledger, after his passing
- Grindelwald is portrayed by Johnny Depp in this film, but was previously portrayed by Jamie Campbell Bower in *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows: Part 1* (2010). Depp and Bower starred together in *Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street* (2007)
- Quidditch Jokes. "Are you a seeker, Mr. Scamander?" "I'm more of a chaser, actually." Man, gotta love a good double entendre.

EDITING/VFX (Mark Day)

- A scene was filmed with a shirtless Newt Scamander, which showed off all the scars he had collected on his body during his work with dangerous animals. Eddie Redmayne had worked out considerably before filming, just for that one scene. However, unfortunately for him, the scene was deleted from the final print

SOUND/MUSIC (James Newton Howard)

- Nine-time Oscar nominee and Emmy and Grammy winner
- *The Hunger Games, Snow White and the Huntsman, Water for Elephants, The Dark Knight, Blood Diamond, The Sixth Sense, My Girl and Pretty Woman.*
- "I spent the first three months in Los Angeles creating mock-ups or demos and emailing them to David in London. Our dialogue began then. I wrote a lot of music, and then I rewrote a lot of music. Then I went to London late in June and stayed through the middle of September working with David, back and forth, rewriting again, trying different ideas and ultimately recording about nine days' worth of music at Abbey Road with an orchestra and choir."
- "It was very collaborative and went on for a long period of time. I was writing for that movie for six or seven months. David would often steer me in a direction that, when I first would hear the idea, I would say, "That's not going to work." But then I would try it and find that it very often did work. It took me down a different path and a successful path."
- "We ended up using the Hedwig theme just a tiny, tiny bit."
- "just finding sounds and orchestrations and feelings that would really describe these crazy creatures. I did quite a bit of sampling, which I always do for every score. There's one very dark creature, and I spent quite a bit of time establishing a sound design for that creature that's part of the theme."
- "I think I wrote 43 versions of the Niffler's song over seven months. Sometimes it just takes that long to get it right"
- Orchestra of 97 musicians

PROMOTION

- WB Games is set to release a "story pack" based on *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them* for the video game *Lego Dimensions*
 - The pack will include a constructible model of MACUSA, figures of Newt Scamander and a Niffler, and a six-level game campaign that adapts the film's events. The pack is set to be released on the same day as the film, alongside a "fun pack" containing figures of Tina Goldstein and a Swooping Evil. The cast of the film reprises their roles in the game
- On 4 November 2015, *Entertainment Weekly* released the first official publicity shots of the film, containing pictures of characters Newt, Tina, and Queenie, and production and filming being held in various sets designed to mirror 1920's New York City
- On 10 December 2015, it was announced that an "announcement trailer" would be released five days later, on 15 December
- Along with the one-minute trailer, a teaser poster was released
- During "A Celebration of Harry Potter" at Universal Orlando Resort in February 2016, a featurette was released showcasing several interviews with various cast and crew members, as well as the first official behind-the-scenes footage
- Rowling has also released four pieces of writing exclusively as an introduction to *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them*, titled *History of Magic in North America*. It includes information about scourers, brutal and violent magical mercenaries who played

a big role in the historic Salem witch trials of the 1600s, as well as info about various American wand makers, the role magic played in World War One, Native American magic, the foundation of MACUSA, the way No-Maj/Wizarding segregation was enforced brutally after a violent and terrifying breach of the international statute of secrecy and the institution of Rappaports Law, and life in 1920's Wizarding America, with info about Wand Permits and Prohibition

- More visual publicity for the film was released at CineEurope and VidCon on 23 June. A new featurette entitled "A New Hero" was released later in the day, and a well received test screening was held in Chicago at the end of July, with viewers praising the complex plot line, the emotion, and the darkness at the heart of the story
- A third Art-Deco/German Expressionist-style poster was revealed at Comic-Con. Interactive wand stations have appeared at both VidCon and Comic-Con conventions. A new trailer for the film was unveiled at Warner Bros.' Comic-Con Hall H panel shortly after an interview with members of the cast. A quick-to-sell-out signing took place shortly thereafter
- Rowling released a second part to her History of Magic in North America series, entitled "Ilvermorny School of Witchcraft and Wizardry," which details the founding of the preeminent American Wizarding academy and allows users to sort themselves into one of the four houses of the school. The school apparently has a very minor role in the film
- Beginning in the month of September, more news was released on the various tie-in books being released for the film. On 28 September, the final trailer for the film officially premiered via EllenTube, quickly becoming the most viewed film trailer of the year to date. Not long after, an announcement was made that a global fan event would be held in London and Los Angeles, as well as a number of other cities worldwide, on 13 October. A live Q&A was held and more new footage from the film was revealed. Visitors were treated to the first seven minutes of the film and were also invited to stay for the first film of the *Harry Potter* franchise in IMAX, the start of a marketing push that saw all 8 films return to IMAX theatres internationally for one week leading up to the release of *Fantastic Beasts*. Due to demand, the fan event was expanded to a number of other US and international locations

BOX OFFICE

- Total Lifetime Grosses
 - Domestic:
 - + Foreign:
 - = Worldwide:
- Domestic Summary
 - Opening Weekend:
 - (# rank, theaters, average)
 - % of Total Gross: 80.0%
- > View All Weekends
 - Widest Release: theaters
 - In Release: 6 days / 0.9 weeks
- Worldwide, the film is expected to earn around \$160–205 million on its opening weekend from around 64 markets in 22,000 screens
- Its box office prospects (the first film as well as the remaining four) have been compared to that of *The Hobbit* trilogy (especially the first installment), a spin-off of *The Lord of the Rings* film series and *Maleficent*

- Warner Bros. also used *Doctor Strange* to highlight the film's performance in some markets given it's a recent fall release
- In the United States and Canada, early tracking has the film grossing \$68–85 million in its opening weekend, with some estimates going as high as \$100 million
- The film was released in 4,143 theaters, of which 388 theaters were IMAX and over 3,600 are showing the film in 3D

RECEPTION

- IMDB: 8.2
- Cinemascore:
- RT: 74% Tatometer, 88% Audience
- The site's consensus reads, "*Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them* draws on *Harry Potter*'s rich mythology to deliver a spinoff that dazzles with franchise-building magic all its own."
- Peter Bradshaw of *The Guardian* gave the film five out of five stars, hailing it as "a rich, baroque, intricately detailed entertainment" and a "terrifically good-natured, unpretentious and irresistibly buoyant film."
- Mike Ryan of *Uproxx* gave the film a positive review, writing, "Newt Scamander is nothing like Harry, but it has to be this way. It all has to be different. And it is, but, again, with just enough 'sameness' to make us feel like we are at home again. I'm looking forward to wherever these movies are taking us."

SEQUEL/LEGACY

- Even back in December 2015, it seemed likely that *Fantastic Beasts 2* would probably happen, and Yates' comment -- made to us back in December, for reference -- suggests at least one more movie could come after that. That's not a huge surprise, since there's been talk of this being a trilogy since the beginning.
- *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them* franchise has expanded from three to five films, and David Yates is on board for all of them.
- "[J.K. Rowling] Plans to pen the remaining four as well. She's "putting the finishing touches" on the sequel, which Yates says "feels so different from this [first film]. Much more haunting, like a dream. What she's doing is really interesting; she's not repeating herself."

FINAL THOUGHTS