

## LOGAN (2017)

- Released by March 3rd, 2017
- 2 hour 17 minute
- \$97 Million budget
- James Mangold directed
- Rated R for strong brutal violence and language throughout, and for brief nudity
- Distributed by Donners' Company, Kinberg Genre, Marvel Entertainment
- Produced by Joseph M. Caracciolo Jr., Stan Lee, James Mangold, Josh McLaglen

## QUICK THOUGHTS:

- Phil Svitek
- Marisa Serafini
- Demetri Panos

## DEVELOPMENT

- In November 2013, 20th Century Fox began negotiations for another solo film starring Wolverine, with James Mangold in negotiations to write the treatment for the film, and Lauren Shuler Donner returning to produce under The Donners' Company
- At the time, Hugh Jackman neither confirmed nor denied whether he had officially signed on to reprise Logan in another film
- Later in the month, Mangold announced that the pre-production aspect of the film had not begun as of yet, nor the writing process, though he furthered this by stating, "... I would say I'm not there yet. But I have taken finger to key. Let's say that. There's been typing. And ideas. And talking amongst all the principals."
- By March 2014, a decision was made to begin shooting after Bryan Singer's *X-Men: Apocalypse* (2016), with the tentative plan to shoot it back-to-back, with producer Hutch Parker stating, "... the goal will be *X-Men: Apocalypse* for 2016, which means at the latest [filming begins] in summer 2015, and then the same thing with *Wolverine*, either before or after, but based on the script."
- According to James Mangold, this film is influenced by the crime story *The Gauntlet* (1977), and the dramas *Paper Moon* (1973), *Little Miss Sunshine* (2006) and *The Wrestler* (2008) and the Wild West stories *The Cowboys* (1972) and *Shane* (1953) (Charles and Laura watch this film as a tribute)
- It was believed that after the success of *Deadpool* (2016), 20th Century Fox decided to aim for an R rating for this film, unlike the other Wolverine movies. However, it was confirmed in an interview with X-Men producer Simon Kinberg that this was not the case, and the R rating was always going to happen

- Director James Mangold stated that the film is set in 2029 to avoid any conflict with the time line established in X-Men: Days of Future Past (2014), but that his goal was to make a stand alone film that was not bound to continuing previous storyline or setting up sequels

**WRITING** (James Mangold, Scott Frank, Michael Green)

- “Jim Mangold sent me a comic called “Old Man Logan,” and I read [writer Mark Millar’s] “Old Man Logan” and I kept saying, “Well, I’d love to do this, because this feels really, really interesting. This is out there.” And it kind of stayed in my head, and that was really all.” - Scott Frank
- “We did this manifesto in two paragraphs on page two where we declared there’s not going to be any kind of CG stuff in this.” - Frank
- "I think the key thing for me, you heard me talking about how I construct scripts, is just figuring out the key relationships and just what it’s about, what theme the whole thing is going to be about. I've got a good angle on it, but I'm not ready to talk about it yet!" Mangold

**STORY/TOPICS**

- X-Men Universe
- Final send off of Logan
- X-23’s future
- Father/son relationship
- Father/daughter relationship
- Genre tropes
- Going beyond genre -  
[https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/act-four/wp/2017/03/09/after-logan-and-ar-rival-can-we-stop-pretending-genre-movies-are-unserious/?utm\\_term=.6355252acc21](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/act-four/wp/2017/03/09/after-logan-and-ar-rival-can-we-stop-pretending-genre-movies-are-unserious/?utm_term=.6355252acc21)
- Villains
- References
- Self reference

**CAST:**

**HUGH JACKMAN** (Logan/Wolverine)

- Took a pay cut to allow movie to be R-rated
- This is the last film in which Hugh Jackman will play Wolverine. He said that having a discussion with Jerry Seinfeld played a part in retiring the character, as Jerry talked generally about how he wanted to make sure he never got to a point with his TV show where audiences were weary of seeing it anymore and

basically saying "oh, it's you again", and Jackman felt he was fortunate to have avoided this for Wolverine and wanted to ensure it never happened

- In the scenes where Charles Xavier suffers from his seizures, Hugh Jackman did not act as if he was being pushed away. Instead, he was held back by a rope pulled by two men in order to give a more realistic portrayal of being restrained
- The name Logan used as a driver "James Howlet" is his birth name in the comics. It was also being referred to it in X-men origins when Sabertooth kept calling him Jimmy
- Mangold spoke of Logan's age influencing his regenerative capabilities, which he stated may no longer produce soft skin: "... So we imagined he heals quickly, still, but it leaves a scar. The simple idea was that his body would start to get a little more ravaged with a kind of tattooing of past battles, lacerations that remain of previous conflicts."
- On the second page of the screenplay, Mangold spoke of Logan as "... he's older now and it's clear his abilities aren't what they once were. He's fading on the inside and his diminished healing factor keeps him in a constant state of chronic pain—hence booze as a painkiller."
- In 2015, Jackman requested fan input for the direction Wolverine's story should go in the next film, while seeming to confirm that the project would serve as his farewell to Logan
- To prepare for his role, Jackman ate a minimum of six meals per day, when working with trainer Mike Ryan
  - Ryan stated that an average workout session for Jackman lasts up to three hours, beginning at 4:00 a.m

### **PATRICK STEWART (Charles)**

- Patrick Stewart lost 21 pounds to play Charles Xavier as elderly and sick. Stewart claimed that he had a steady weight since he was a teenager and had never deliberately lost weight before.
- Hugh Jackman genuinely held Stewart in all the scenes of Wolverine carrying Dr. Xavier
- When Laura and Charles are watching Shane (1954), Charles mentions remembering seeing the film as a child in his hometown. This was entirely improvised by Patrick Stewart because Shane was one of the first memories he had at the cinema as a child
- Patrick Stewart recently stated on the Graham Norton Show that this would be his last appearance as Professor X
- Mangold said, "We've seen these characters in action, saving the universe. But what happens when you're in retirement and that career is over?...The really

interesting thing to me, or a place to dig that hadn't been dug, was the idea of mutants when they're no longer useful to the world, or even sure if they can do what they used to do. Their powers are diminished like all of ours are by age... Our Charles is a very sweet character in this film. I think he's always been an incredibly sweet character. With the addition of his own physical fragility in this movie, he becomes an incredibly powerful paternal figure in the movie. Logan is more of a reluctant one, I think you can easily guess."

#### **DAFNE KEEN** (Laura)

- The character X-23 debuted in the X-Men Evolution cartoon and is currently (2017) Wolverine in Marvel comics
- Feature film debut of Dafne Keen
- Mangold mentioned, "If anyone could steal a movie from [Jackman], it would be Dafne. She carries, all the time, a slight strangeness."
- Sienna Novikov served as Keen's stunt double
- In an interview with *Digital Spy*, Mangold stated, "... [Keen] was 11 years old when we were shooting. She's a remarkable kid. Her parents are actors, and she's kind of a very modern kid. Very physically capable. Incredibly gifted as an actress. I mean, it was a huge risk for Fox to allow me to make a movie where the third point of the triangle was built upon someone so young."
- Mangold stated that the worldwide search for an actress to portray Laura was one in which he was seeking "someone who was bilingual because I wanted a Latina kid – one who was between 10 and 12, and was a credible child." He later stated of Laura that: "She's an 11-year-old girl equipped with all the volatility, instability, mood swings, shadows and potential violence of our hero."

#### **BOYD HALBROOK** (Pierce)

- Holbrook said of the character, "He's an innovative engineer and he's a big fan of Wolverine. He just wants to hang out with him ... There's a lot of surprising stuff in it
- Mangold praised Holbrook's performance, saying that "[he] is just a fabulous actor. I wanted this film to feel intimate and real and truthfully acted, and I wanted very much to break away from the kind of bloated feeling I've gotten from a lot of comic-book movies."
- Reminds me of a Tom Hardy type
- *Transigen's* relentless, calculating and intense head of security, and leader of the militant Reavers

#### **STEPHEN MERCHANT** (Caliban)

- Stephen Merchant announced his participation in the film by posting an Instagram picture which showed him with a freshly-shaven bald head and having a "Wolverine 3" tagline, though the post did not mention his character's name or any other specifics about his role. Later footage and notes revealed he is a kind-hearted mutant named Caliban who is taking care of an aging and very ill Professor Charles Xavier
- On Merchant taking the role, Mangold mentioned, "I'm always interested to find the thing that looks most interesting on the actors. Stephen is a huge man. One of the things that is so wonderful filming with him for a character like this is that he's a good six inches taller than Logan, and huge over Patrick. The little kid in the movie would come up to basically his knee. So there's a wonderful sense of scale – but he has heart too."
- Caliban was previously portrayed by Tómas Lemarquis in *X-Men: Apocalypse*.

#### **DIRECTING** (James Mangold)

- Known for *Walk The Line*, *Wolverine*, *3:10 to Yuma*, *Zoo*, *Vegas*, *Kate & Leopold*
- Has stated that reason why in other superhero movies audiences don't feel there's character development is because it comes down to simple math of screen time
- Is an alumnus of the Film Division of Columbia University's School of the Arts
- "We should be writing more great roles for women, period. Another problem is that movies are generally made for 14-year-old boys and 14-year-old boys want to watch 25-year-old action heroes"
- James Mangold said that the film will have a more "human" feel relying very little on CGI and green screens

#### **PRODUCTION/CINEMATOGRAPHY** (John Mathieson)

- It's very important to get into the eyes of both of them. The tears are going to come. You don't just shoot Hugh and go, 'That was very nice. Now let's shoot Dafne.' Because they are giving it their all. They will be drained. Jim is very much a one-camera man, but I didn't even look back at him. I'm sure he got cross at me, but I think he'd agree that whatever is going to happen is going to happen. You better make sure you get it on two cameras. If you have a great performance on one side and they are doing marvelous things and you don't have the other side at the same time - a hand goes here or someone brushes hair out of someone's face - then it's very difficult to re-create that." - Mathieson
- Mangold spoke of cinematography-based **framing**, while noting that he does not necessarily think about the "comic-book" related sort, instead highlighting the variety of stylistic influences that went into *Logan*. These influences include **film**

noir framings and [classic Hollywood filmmaking](#) styles, as well as the [Germanic expressionist filmmaking](#) style of the early part of the last century, which Mangold stated has a commonality with comic-book art. Mangold highlighted "Strong foregrounds, playing things in depth: you have to make an image say more within that one image."

- Using the image of Logan at a funeral as an example of his stylistic logic, Mangold concluded by mentioning the aspects within modern filmmaking, primarily everything in close-up format. For *Logan*, his aim was to set frames that are descriptive, and evocative of [comic-book panels](#) and classical filmmaking
- In March 2015, Mangold anticipated that filming would begin "early next year." Prior to filming, the film was given the working title of *Juarez* to lower the visibility of the production
- By March 2016, Mangold was preparing to shoot in New Orleans, Louisiana, with a starting schedule of May
- Producers Kinberg, Shuler Donner and Parker choose to film in Louisiana because of its popularity as a filmmaking location, as well as its filming incentive, which includes a 40% tax credit for movie productions, but requires a minimum spend of \$300,000
- Principal photography began in New Orleans, Louisiana on May 2, 2016, although it was originally scheduled to start shooting on April 25, 2016. Other filming locations in Louisiana included the NASA Michoud Plant in New Orleans East, Amite City, Husser, the Greenlawn Cemetery in Hammond, Metairie, and the Ferriday Plaza Shopping Center. Exterior scenes were filmed along Louisiana Highway 15. A crash scene was shot on U.S. Route 425, just outside of Ferriday, Louisiana. Producers Kinberg, Shuler Donner and Parker choose to film in Ferriday because of Concordia Parish's beautiful countryside and green cornfields. Scenes were also shot at Sicily Island High School and a house in Sicily Island
- From June 14 to 28, 2016, production was scheduled to take place in [Natchez, Mississippi](#), to film a scene that required the casting of truck drivers. On July 12, 2016, production moved to its third major filming location – [New Mexico](#) – which ran through August in [Albuquerque](#), [Rio Rancho](#), [Abiquiú](#), [Tierra Amarilla](#) and [Chama](#). According to the New Mexico Film Office, production employed about 130 New Mexican crew members and two New Mexican cast members, as well as 600 extras. Scenes were shot at the Northern Meadows neighborhood of Rio Rancho, while a few miles further down King Boulevard, an elaborate set was built with a toppled water tower that was used for exterior shots. Principal photography concluded in New Mexico on August 13, 2016

## VFX/EDITING (Michael McCusker, Dirk Westervelt)

- **Post-production** began subsequent to filming closure on August 23, 2016. **Film editor Michael McCusker** described the process of going through **dailies** and breaking them down, and figuring out the structure of one scene as being "complicated". McCusker stated that the task was time consuming on the front end, but added, "I am looking at the back end experience with [Mangold] as the more important experience. I don't want to be searching for stuff for him, I want to be working towards getting the cut right."
- *Logan's* creative team went so far as to cut a flashback scene showing the complete annihilation of the X-Men
- Used digital versions of Laura and Logan:  
<http://www.cartoonbrew.com/vfx/cg-actors-logan-never-knew-149013.html>
  - Image Engine in Vancouver did renders
  - "Everyone knows Logan, for instance, and that's the biggest challenge," Image Engine visual effects supervisor Martyn Culpitt told Cartoon Brew. "We're literally looking at a real Hugh and a digital Hugh side by side in some shots."
  - "We basically had to build the whole system from scratch," said Culpitt.
  - Steps: Planning, Shooting, Scans at University of Southern California Institute for Creative Technologies (USC ICT) with 64 Facial Expressions, Building the Head, Facial Animation, Final Touches

## SYMBOLISM/TRIVIA

- Similarities to *Children of Men*
- Western references / *Shane* - "There's no living with a killing. There's no going back from one. Right or wrong, it's a brand. A brand sticks." -  
<https://theringer.com/logan-x-men-wolverine-shane-western-4c04ec80d21a#.vcv83hdz2>
- Death of Logan was foreshadowed in *Wolverine*  
(<http://www.ign.com/articles/2017/03/10/the-wolverine-foreshadowed-the-ending-of-logan>)
  - Yukio tells Logan, "I see you on your back, there's blood everywhere. You're holding your own heart in your hand." Laura is his heart
- Mangold confirmed with Deadline that on the Blu-Ray, there will be a black and white version of the film -  
<http://www.gamespot.com/articles/logans-black-and-white-version-will-be-on-the-blu-/1100-6448549/>
  - A still of Logan in black and white was posted a while ago

- “It caused such an extreme reaction, and so much appreciation for these pictures, and then people immediately wondering if the film itself was going to be in black and white, and so we are giving it a whirl, and I think the Blu-Ray will come out with a pass on it.”
- “I think it will be a very handsome black and white version of the picture.”
- The comic books that Logan flicks through in the film are not actual old issues, the artwork was created by Dan Panosian specifically for the movie
- Cut scene in reference to Jean Grey - <https://www.comicbookmovie.com/x-men/logan/jean-grey-centric-logan-deleted-scene-makes-the-x-men-universes-continuity-even-more-confusing-a149528>
- In the film's early stages of development, the character of Victor Creed (Sabretooth), Logan's mutant half brother, was meant to make an appearance with Liev Schreiber reprising his role from "X-Men Origins: Wolverine"

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

- Oscar-nominated for “The Hurt Locker,” “The Wolverine” and Oscar-nominated “3:10 to Yuma” for Mangold.
- A “random interaction” with “a fan” on social media led Mangold to reveal that Cliff Martinez has been replaced with [Beltrami]
  - Cliff Martinez was originally the composer but withdrew after six months of work at the end of 2016. His replacement, Marco Beltrami had only about less than six weeks to produce his replacement score
- “I knew it was going to be tricky because the visuals were going to lead and the music played more of a textural role,” Beltrami told IndieWire. “Jim didn’t want a [traditional] thematic score — he wanted an emotionally supportive score. So there was a delicate balance, and I experimented with some unique instruments for it.”
- “The Old Man Logan” Theme- Hammond organ, glass harmonica, and drum kits.
- 70s vibe that incorporates the western and the road picture
- Laura’s theme- organ and glass harmonica to musically unite her with Logan. simple two-note repetition recurs several times,
- Xavier- Horse scene- Beltrami used a harmonic guitar, which lent a soft, supernatural aura.
- For the villainous Reavers and the X-24 super Wolverine clone, Beltrami created a low, menacing synthetic sound. An inversion of the same low interval was used for Logan and Laura during their fighting scenes.

### **PROMOTION**

- Advertised as Jackman’s last Wolverine portrayal



- The trailer includes the Nine Inch Nails song "Hurt" performed by Johnny Cash. James Mangold, this film's director, directed the Johnny Cash biopic, *Walk the Line* (2005). When asked why he chose the song for the trailer he said "It was to set itself apart from other superhero movies". He has revealed that *Logan* will have a more "human" feel to it as it focuses on an old and hurting Logan in the future where the mutants are dying off
- The "Red Band Trailer" was actually a unofficially released trailer with the added bonus of a grainy clip of Wolverine/Logan stabbing a man in the head. The grainy clip was a small clip that was still being filmed with no polished and fully rendered CGI
- In April 2016, Fox decided not to showcase its upcoming movie releases, including *Logan*, at Hall H at [San Diego Comic-Con](#), as the studio felt it could not prevent the piracy of custom trailers and exclusive footage routinely screened for fans in attendance
- On October 20, 2016, 20th Century Fox released a 90-second [teaser trailer](#) to promote *Logan*, following a 6-second [sneak peek](#) the prior day. Later that day, 20th Century Fox released an international red band version of the trailer, featuring slightly more graphic violence than the original
- [Empire Magazine](#) chose the trailer as the best trailer of the year
- Aaron Couch praised the trailer, and stated, "If *Logan* delivers on the promise of this trailer, it will be a true rarity in modern superhero movie making."

## BOX OFFICE

- Total Lifetime Grosses (As of March 8):\$109,866,229
- Domestic: \$109,866,229
  - + Foreign: \$190,782,945
  - = Worldwide: \$300,649,174
- Domestic Summary
  - Opening Weekend: \$88,411,916
  - (#1 rank, 4,071 theaters, \$21,717 average)
  - 80.5% of Total Gross: %
- > View All Weekends
  - Widest Release: 4,071 theaters
  - In Release: 6 days / 0.9 weeks
- Opening at 4,071 theaters in the United States, this film is the widest opening R-rated release in cinema history
- *Logan* earned \$9.5 million from Thursday night previews, which began at 7 pm. This marked the second biggest previews in the *X-Men* franchise, behind only *Deadpool's* \$12.7 million.

- On its opening day, the film scored the biggest R-rated March opening, with \$33.1 million (breaking *300*'s record), as well as the third biggest R-rated debut after *Deadpool* (\$47.3 million) and *The Matrix Reloaded* (\$37.5 million).
- Earning a total of \$88.4 million during its opening weekend, the film scored the biggest *Wolverine* movie opening, the biggest R-rated March opening, the fourth biggest March opening, the fifth-largest *X-Men* opening, and the fifth biggest R-rated opening overall (ninth in terms of inflation adjusted).
- It is also the biggest R-rated opening weekend that did not take place on a holiday. Approximately 8.2% of the total ticket sales came from Canada, with premium large formats comprising \$12.3 million (15%) from 558 screens, and IMAX comprising \$10 million (12%) of the film's total opening weekend
- Males comprised a bulk of the audience demographic during its opening weekend, with 63%, while females comprised 37%, with 83% of the audience being between 18 and 44 years of age

## RECEPTION

- IMDB: 8.7
- Cinemascore: A-
- RT: 92% Tatometer, 94% Audience
- A.A. Dowd of *The A.V. Club* gave the film an 'A-', and said "[the film] manages to deliver the visceral goods, all the hardcore Wolverine action its fans could desire, while still functioning as a surprisingly thoughtful, even poignant drama—a terrific movie, no 'comic-book' qualifier required."
- On the other hand, *Anthony Lane* of *The New Yorker* reacted negatively, saying "If ever there was a time to hang up [Hugh Jackman]'s claws, that time is now."
- *Stephanie Zacharek* of *Time* magazine said, "The grim side of human nature is all over James Mangold's *Logan*. But that doesn't necessarily make it a good movie."

## SEQUEL/LEGACY

- Dafne Keen stated she is open to a spin-off  
<http://screenrant.com/x-23-creator-logan-movie-spinoff/>
- If there is a new Wolverine, Hugh Jackman will help cast him  
<http://screenrant.com/hugh-jackman-wolverine-actor-recast/>
- Ryan Reynolds has been begging Hugh Jackman to do a *Deadpool/Wolverine* movie but in February, Hugh said *Deadpool* didn't need him
  - Ryan stated it would not only be a great movie, but really fun to work with Hugh who is a great guy

- Forbes wrote an article on the value of a “final chapter”, which is interesting because it ends an era, while allows a franchise to continue - <https://www.forbes.com/sites/scottmendelson/2017/03/08/logan-and-resident-evil-show-the-value-of-a-series-finale/#15f211507621>
- Hugh Jackman stated that while he doesn't doubt that the character of Logan will be eventually rebooted with a new actor, he has hopes for X-23 becoming the new "Wolverine" of the franchise
- **FACES OF LOGAN VIDEO -** <http://video-cdn.variety.com/previews/eoueiOop-CJLIAI9y>

## **FINAL THOUGHTS**