

## THE PREDATOR (2018)

- September 18th, 2018
- 1 hr 47 mins
- \$88 million (estimated)
- Directed by Shane Black
- Written by Fred Dekker, Shane Black
- Production company: Twentieth Century Fox, Davis Entertainment, TSG Entertainment
- Rated R for strong bloody violence, language throughout, and crude sexual references

## QUICK THOUGHTS

- Phil Svitek
- Demetri Panos

## DEVELOPMENT

- In June 2014, Fox announced a sequel which Shane Black, who also starred as supporting character Rick Hawkins in *Predator*, will direct and co-write with Fred Dekker, and John Davis will produce
- In February 2016, Black confirmed the title of the new sequel would be *The Predator*
- Shane Black has referred to the project as an event film which aims to elevate the *Predator* series: "It's an attempt to 'event-ise' the Predator again... [An attempt to] make it more mysterious."
- Black also expressed that the film would mark a return to the "intimate" scale of the original film and that the filmmakers hoped to achieve "the same sense of wonderment and newness that *Close Encounters* had when that came out."
- Black confirmed that the film is set in the present day and the titular character has upgraded armor

## WRITING (Fred Dekker, Shane Black)

- Shane Black and Fred Dekker previously worked together on writing cult horror film *The Monster Squad* (1987), and one more unproduced script titled *Shadow Company*. Black wrote the first version of this script in 1984, and it was also the first script he ever wrote. Although it was never made into a film, people loved the way Black wrote action, dialogue, and characters in the script, which is why he got more writing job offers, and this was what helped him to write his first draft of *Lethal Weapon* (1987).
  - *Shadow Company* script was written to be an action zombie horror movie, about a group of dead U.S. Special Forces soldiers, who died during the Vietnam War, and years later after their bodies are brought back, the soldiers, who were members of some secret army experiments, return to life as rotting, unstoppable zombies, who raid the armory from the Army base near the town where they were buried, and then proceed to attack the town during Christmas night, killing everybody in it, and wiping it off the map.
  - Around 1988 or 1989, after the final draft of the *Shadow Company* script was finished by Black and Dekker, it was gonna be turned into action horror film produced by Universal studio and directed by John Carpenter, with Kurt Russell in the main role as former member of the *Shadow Company* who comes to town to stop them, and with Black and Walter Hill as producers (Hill also did some

uncredited co-writing on the script). However, due to some problems in pre-production, the movie was never made. The original script by Black and Dekker did, however, gain a cult following from theirs and Carpenter's fans. Interestingly enough, some of the names of characters from *The Predator* (2018) are taken from names of characters from *Shadow Company* script, and in Black's first version of the script from 1984 the story took place during Halloween, just like big part of this film.

- Shane Black had gone on record stating he wanted this movie to be true to the spirit of the original, and for it to be R-rated, saying, "It's an odd thing. Whether Deadpool (2016) helped is an open question, but I suspect it did. I made a condition of my participation with 'Predator,' that it be the same rating as the first movie, and the first movie was rated R. In other words, I don't want to cut away every time the Predator does something violent. I was watching the American version of The Grudge (2004), which was PG-13, and I remember being so frustrated by the fact that everything that was scary in the Japanese version, they had to cut away from in the PG-13 American version."
- Davis has said of the film that he thinks it is fresh and reimagines the franchise in a "different, interesting way"
- Black has also indicated that the film would be a sequel set in present-day 2018, following the events of *Predator* and *Predator 2*, but set prior to the events of the 2010 film *Predators*
- He also mentioned that he looked for plot details set up in the previous *Predator* movies that he could retrospectively link back to with the new film
- Chief-executive-officer of 20th Century Fox Stacey Snider shared her thoughts on *The Predator* and Shane Black and Fred Dekker's script:
  - We've got a *Predator* film coming out that is unexpected and utterly fresh. I just imagined that it would take 500 hours to read the script — that it would be interior jungle, exterior more jungle and then fighting happens, but Emma [Watts] went out and recruited Shane Black. From the first page, it didn't read like a *Predator* film. It's set in suburbia. There's a little boy and his dad at the center of the action
- Writer/director Fred Dekker was born on April 9, 1959 in San Francisco, California. An avid comic book fan, monster movie buff, and film nerd from an early age, Dekker was rejected by both USC and UCLA film schools. He wound up attending UCLA as an English major instead. His fellow UCLA classmates included future screenwriters Shane Black (who collaborated with Dekker on the script for "The Monster Squad"), Ed Solomon, and Chris Matheson. One of Dekker's early projects in Hollywood was a 3-D "Godzilla" picture that sadly never panned out. Fred's first film credit was writing the story for the amusing horror comedy "House." He made his promising debut as writer/director with the terrific "Night of the Creeps," which paid affectionate homage to the blithely silly low-budget horror flicks he grew up loving as a kid. He followed this fine feature with the equally delightful tongue-in-cheek pastiche "The Monster Squad." Alas, both movies received mixed reviews from the critics and flopped at the box office, but have fortunately gone on to acquire huge cult followings. Dekker wrote five episodes of the immensely enjoyable cable TV horror anthology series "Tales from the Crypt": "Split Personality," "And All Through the House," "Lower Berth," "Only Sin Deep," and "The Thing From the Grave" (Fred directed this episode as well). He wrote the stories for the exciting revenge thriller "Ricochet" and the failed spy spoof "If Looks Could Kill." More recently Fred Dekker wrote several episodes of and served as a consulting producer on the science fiction TV show "Enterprise."

- The original ending of the script features a cameo appearance by Dutch Schaeffer (Arnold Schwarzenegger). After defeating the Super Predator, Quinn, Casey and Rory are resting when a helicopter lands, Dutch, described with a "face haunted; etched by pain", steps out and tells the three of them he has to come with them. Schwarzenegger read the script and turned the offer down.

## STORY/TOPICS

- Is bigger better?
- What's the tone? Serious or fun?
- Plot holes: predator dog?

## CAST:

- Arnold Schwarzenegger discussed with Black about returning to the film as his character after the first Predator film. But he declined the cameo due to how short the role was.
- Rapper 50 Cent also spoke of the possibility of being involved in the film but ended up dropping out.
- By September 2016, Benicio del Toro had signed on to star in the film
- The following month, Boyd Holbrook replaced del Toro, who departed due to scheduling issues
- In November 2016, Olivia Munn joined the cast
- In January 2017, Trevante Rhodes, Keegan-Michael Key, Sterling K. Brown, Thomas Jane and Jacob Tremblay joined the cast
- In March 2017, Edward James Olmos had been cast as Sanchez, a military general
  - In August 2018, Olmos announced that his role had been cut from the final film, to reduce the film's long running time, as his character wasn't integral to the plot

## BOYD HOLBROOK (Quinn McKenna)

- Emily's ex-husband, the father of Rory, and a former Army Ranger who discovers the existence of the fierce Predators but finds that no one believes they exist
- Boyd Holbrook is an American actor and fashion model. He has appeared in films such as Milk (2008), Out of the Furnace (2013), Gone Girl (2014), A Walk Among the Tombstones(2014), Run All Night (2015) and in the Netflix series Narcos.
- In 2007 Holbrook sent a screenplay to director Gus Van Sant, who was impressed enough to give him the role of Denton Smith for the movie Milk (2008).
- In 2017 he starred in the film Logan alongside Hugh Jackman

## TREVANTE RHODES (Nebraska Williams)

- a former Marine who enlists in a special Predator-hunting operation headed up by Quinn
- Trevante Rhodes was born as Trevante Nemour Rhodes. He is an actor, known for Moonlight (2016), The Predator (2018) and 12 Strong (2018)

## JACOB TREMBLAY (Rory McKenna)

- Quinn and Emily's troubled son, who has a form of autism and is bullied in school but becomes a key player in the fight against the Predators due to his preternatural ability to learn languages

- Jacob Tremblay is a Canadian actor. He made his film debut for the live-action animated film The Smurfs 2 (2013). His breakout performance was in Room (2015), for which he received critical acclaim. In 2016, Tremblay played a supporting role in the comedy film Donald Trump's The Art of the Deal: The Movie (2016), and in 2017, he starred with Jaeden Lieberher, playing brothers, in the drama The Book of Henry (2017), with Naomi Watts as their mother

#### **KEEGAN-MICHAEL KEY** (Coyle)

- a man who teams up with Quinn and Williams to fight the Predators
- Keegan-Michael Key was born in Southfield, Michigan and raised in Detroit. He was adopted as a child by a black father and a white mother. In 1989, he graduated from Shrine Catholic High School in Royal Oak, Michigan. Key attended the University of Detroit Mercy as an undergraduate and earned his Master of Fine Arts in Theater at Pennsylvania State University. While at The University of Detroit Mercy, he was a brother of Phi Kappa Theta

#### **OLIVIA MUNN** (Casey Bracket)

- a evolutionary biologist who joins the crew's mission
- Lisa Olivia Munn was born in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. Her mother, Kimberly Schmid, lived in Vietnam, and is of Chinese ancestry, while her father, Winston Barrett Munn, is from a family with deep roots in the American South. Olivia's parents divorced when she was two years old, and she was raised by her mother and stepfather, a member of the United States Air Force. Although the family departed Oklahoma and resided in many locations, she was mainly raised in Tokyo, Japan. During this time, she appeared in a number of local theater productions and later became a model in the Japanese fashion industry. When the family eventually returned to the United States, Olivia moved to Los Angeles to pursue her dream of becoming an actress. After a few small roles, her career took a very promising turn when she landed the role of Mily Acuna on the Hawaii-lensed TV series Beyond the Break (2006) and the role of Rob Schneider's receptionist in Big Stan (2007). She hosts "The Daily Nut" and the "Formula D" Podcasts on G4

#### **STERLING K BROWN** (Traeger)

- government agent and Director of the "Stargazer Project" who jails Quinn but later needs his help with fighting the Predators
- Emmy Award-winning actor Sterling K. Brown stars in NBC's Emmy and Golden Globe nominated drama series THIS IS US. For his role as Randall Pearson, Brown won an Emmy Award for Outstanding Lead Actor in a Drama Series, as well as a Golden Globe, becoming the first African American actor to win his category in the award show's 75-year history. Additionally, Brown made history by becoming the first African American actor to receive the SAG Award for Outstanding Male Actor in a Drama, and also received a SAG award alongside his cast for Outstanding Performance by an Ensemble in a Drama Series. He has also won an NAACP Image Award and Critics Choice Award, and has been nominated for a TCA Award and a Teen Choice Award. In 2016, Brown portrayed prosecutor Christopher Darden in FX's highly-rated award-winning television event series THE PEOPLE V. O.J. SIMPSON: AMERICAN CRIME STORY. He won an Emmy Award and Critics Choice Award for the role and was nominated for a Golden Globe, SAG Award and NAACP Image Award

### **THOMAS JANE (Baxley)**

- a military veteran from the Afghanistan and Iraq wars who is suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder. His character was named after Craig R. Baxley, the stunt coordinator of the 1987 film
- Thomas Jane was born on February 22, 1969 in Baltimore, Maryland, USA as Thomas Elliott. He is an actor and producer, known for Deep Blue Sea (1999), The Thin Red Line(1998) and Boogie Nights (1997). He was previously married to Patricia Arquette and Ayesha Hauer
- Shane Black wrote Thomas Jane's character Baxley with tourette's symptoms because Black has tourette's

### **DIRECTING: (Shane Black)**

- Considered one of the pioneer screenwriters of the action genre, Black made his mark with his Lethal Weapon (1987) screenplay. He also collaborated on the story of the sequel, Lethal Weapon 2 (1989). Each successive script he turned in had a higher price attached it, from The Last Boy Scout (1991) to The Long Kiss Goodnight (1996), and in between a re-write on the McTiernan/Schwarzenegger Last Action Hero (1993) script
- Uses a kidnapping as a plot device (Lethal Weapon (1987), The Last Boy Scout (1991), The Long Kiss Goodnight (1996), Iron Man 3 (2013)).
- His scripts often combine action, thriller, noir and (black) comedy elements.
- Five of his screenplays begin with the letter "L"
- Six of his screenplays are all set at Christmastime: Lethal Weapon (1987), The Last Boy Scout (1991), The Long Kiss Goodnight (1996), Kiss Kiss Bang Bang (2005), Iron Man 3(2013), and the unproduced Shadow Company.
- His screenplays usually involve a (private) detective who is (often involuntarily) paired with someone who tends to solve things less professionally, which leads to a love/hate relationship: Lethal Weapon (1987), The Last Boy Scout (1991), The Long Kiss Goodnight (1996), Kiss Kiss Bang Bang (2005) and The Nice Guys (2016).
- His screenplays often contain a scene where the hero is held at gunpoint, but is able to disarm the gunner by using some kind of distraction (e.g. The Last Boy Scout (1991), The Long Kiss Goodnight (1996) and Kiss Kiss Bang Bang (2005))

### **TRIVIA**

- When Casey Bracket (Munn) first enters the lab and is examining the recovered Predator items, one of the shelves in the background contains the Xenomorph Tail Spear from AVP: Alien vs. Predator (2004)
- When first seeing The Predator strapped to a table, Olivia Munn's character calls the creature "a beautiful motherfucker". This is a nod to the original 1987 Predator film where Arnold Schwarzenegger calls the creature "one ugly motherfucker"
- If you look closely to the school, the football field, and the barn that was filmed in this movie, you'll recognize that it's the same school, football field and barn that was used on the TV show Smallville

### **PRODUCTION/CINEMATOGRAPHY (Larry Fong)**

- Larry Fong is known for his work on Batman v Superman: Dawn of Justice (2016), Kong: Skull Island (2017) and Watchmen (2009)

- Filming was scheduled to begin in February 2017 in Vancouver, British Columbia
- On November 21, 2016, Larry Fong was confirmed to be hired as cinematographer for the film
- Black announced that filming began on February 20, 2017
- Filming wrapped on June 2, 2017
- Additional photography in Vancouver took place in March 2018
- On July 6, 2018, it was revealed the film's third act was entirely re-shot due to test screenings
- Martin Whist served as the film's production designer, while effects house Amalgamated Dynamics provided the creature effects for *The Predator*, having done so previously for the first two *Alien vs. Predator* films

#### **EDITING/VFX** (Harry B. Miller III)

- Known for *Waterworld*, *Equilibrium*, *TURN*, *Dollhouse*, *Eureka*
- Shane Black revealed that the rough cut was so dark, it was nicknamed the Night Cut and led to reshooting the third act

#### **SOUND/MUSIC** (Henry Jackman)

- Henry Jackman, born in Hillingdon, Middlesex, UK, began composing his first symphony at age six, and was an accomplished composer by age nine. He went on to study classical music at St. Paul's Cathedral Choir School, Eton College, Framlingham College and Oxford University. As a teenager, he became heavily influenced by the underground rave scene, and he began producing chart-topping dance remixes, electronica and club music soon afterwards.
- Over the next few years, Jackman built a successful career in the recording industry, not only releasing 3 acclaimed solo albums, but also co-writing, mixing, producing, and programming with a host of outstanding artists. Jackman wrote, mixed and produced albums and songs for Seal and Art of Noise. He co-wrote songs for the films *The Family Man* and *Anastasia*. He produced songs with Gary Barlow from Take That (which reached no. 3 in the UK Charts) and Justin. He programmed for artists Mike Oldfield, Marc Almond, Coolio and Kirsty McColl. He even collaborated with Andy Gardner (of Plump DJ's fame) to produce a series of Dance Remixes that topped the dance charts and were selected for Pete Tong's Essential selection.
- In 2006, Jackman's accomplishments garnered the attention of Hans Zimmer and John Powell, who soon hired Jackman to compose additional music on such films as *The Dark Knight*, *The Da Vinci Code*, *Kung Fu Panda* and the *Pirates of the Caribbean* films. Jackman's first major solo scoring gig was *Monsters and Aliens* in 2009, a family movie with a heavy action score, and began his fruitful career as one of the most sought after composers today.
- Jackman's recent film scores span across a wide range of genres, from action films to period dramas to family films, including: *Captain Phillips*, *X-Men: First Class*, *Henri 4*, *Wreck-It Ralph*, *Puss In Boots*, *Kick Ass*, *Turbo*, *This is the End*, *G.I. Joe: Retaliation*, *Abraham Lincoln Vampire Hunter*, *Man On A Ledge*, *Winnie The Pooh*, *Gulliver's Travels* and *Monsters and Aliens*

#### **PROMOTION**

- February 2016, the studio revealed a teaser image of the film, confirming the title *The Predator*
- The Predator was originally scheduled by 20th Century Fox for a March 2, 2018, release date, until the release was delayed to February 9, 2018
- It was then delayed to August 3, 2018
- In February 2018, the released date was delayed to September 14, 2018
- The film's release included IMAX theaters
- On May 10, 2018, the first trailer was released
- A television spot was released on June 9,[56] while second full trailer was released on June 26, 2018
- The third and final theatrical trailer was released on August 31, 2018
- The film's world premiere was at the Toronto International Film Festival on September 6, 2018 at the Ryerson Theatre
- Director Shane Black hired his longtime friend, Steven Wilder Striegel (known professionally as "Steve Wilder"), for a minor, un-auditioned role in *The Predator* (as well as in *Iron Man 3* and *The Nice Guys*)
  - Wilder has been a registered felony sex offender since 2010, after facing allegations that he attempted to lure a 14-year-old girl into a sexual relationship via email
  - A few days before picture lock on the film, Olivia Munn became aware of Wilder's history and approached Fox executives, insisting that the scene be removed
  - Black defended his casting decision and his friend, until later issuing a public apology and rescinding those comments amid backlash
  - Fox released a statement saying that they were unaware of Wilder's status. Co-star Sterling Brown tweeted in support of Munn, but initially most other actors on the film remained silent, releasing statements after mounting public pressure
  - Holbrook issued a statement on Monday saying he was sorry for not respond more quickly.
    - "I want to start by apologizing for this statement coming late in the current conversation," he said. "I do not take any of what has gone on lightly, and I want to speak from the most honest and genuine place possible. I have stated before, and I will state it again, I am proud of Olivia for the way that she handled a difficult and alarming situation, and I am grateful that Fox took the information seriously and took action swiftly."

## BOX OFFICE

- As of September 19, 2018, *The Predator* has grossed \$30.5 million in the United States and Canada, and \$35.7 million in other territories, for a total worldwide gross of \$66.2 million, against a production and advertising budget of \$208 million
- In the United States and Canada, *The Predator* was released alongside *White Boy Rick*, *A Simple Favor* and *Unbroken: Path to Redemption*, and was projected to gross \$25–32 million from 4,037 theaters in its opening weekend
- It made \$10.5 million on its first day, including \$2.5 million from Thursday night previews
- It went on to debut to \$24 million, finishing first at the box office but marking a lower start than the 2010 film (\$24.8 million)

## RECEPTION

- Rotten Tomatoes: 34% Tatometer, 50% Audience
- The site's critical consensus reads, "*The Predator* has violence and quips to spare, but its chaotically hollow action adds up to another missed opportunity for a franchise increasingly defined by disappointment."
- Cinemascore: C+
- IMDb: 6.1/10
- Writing for *The Hollywood Reporter*, Jordan Mintzer called the film "bigger, meaner, gorier, funnier" than previous installments, writing, "Whether the world actually needs [a sequel], and whether this reboot was necessary at all, is probably a question worth raising, but at least Black's take on it is to never take it too seriously while keeping us duly entertained."
- Brian Tallerico of *RogerEbert.com* praised the ensemble, pacing and Black's direction, writing, "Black is assisted greatly by an incredibly charismatic cast, and he knows how to use them to amplify their strengths."
- In a negative review, Dennis Harvey of *Variety* called it "an exhaustingly energetic mess in which a coherent plot and credible characters aren't even on the cluttered menu."

## SEQUELS/LEGACY

- The producer, John Davis, says that *The Predator* will set up two sequels that he hopes Shane Black will return to direct. About this, Black said: "I would love to say we've been planning a trilogy, but I take one day at a time, in motion-picture terms that's one movie at a time."