

# Summer Blockbusters

It's the season for big movies and big hits—and the occasional sleeper. Here are directors living large in a selection of shots from some good old summertime films.



**HANGING OUT:** (opposite) Michael Bay looks up at Mark Wahlberg in *Transformers: Age of Extinction* (2014). The Hong Kong set took 16 weeks to build in downtown Detroit and was so large, shooting had to be adjusted to allow the downtown light rail system to pass through; (above) Todd Phillips (center) sets up a driving shot en route to Las Vegas for *The Hangover* (2009). "There is a real freedom and an energy and an aggressiveness that comes with doing an R-rated movie," Phillips said. "As a comedy director, it's where you want to be."





**SPACEMAN:** J.J. Abrams' *Star Trek Into Darkness* (2013), the 12th feature in the franchise, was the highest-grossing of all. Abrams realized on his first *Trek* film that "to do an establishing shot, you couldn't [just] show a building or a city, you had to show a planet." And he knew this film had to be even bigger.

**THE NEXT THING:** Jon Favreau (center) directs a scene with Robert Downey Jr. and Don Cheadle in *Iron Man 2* (2010). Since so much of the technology depicted in the first *Iron Man* had inspired video games, Favreau pushed the sequel further into the future so that the look wouldn't be behind the curve.



**WIZARD OF HOGWARTS:** Ten years of storytelling comes to an end as David Yates prepares Lord Voldemort (Ralph Fiennes) for his impending death in *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows: Part 2* (2011). Yates' idea for his four Potter films was to make the magic "something visceral, frightening and percussive."

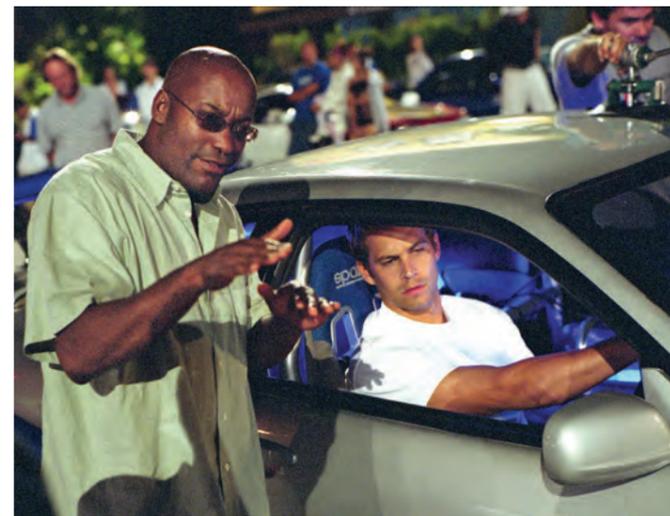


**CHILD'S PLAY:** Steven Spielberg (center) framed most of *E.T. the Extra-Terrestrial* (1982) from the perspective of 10-year-old Elliott (Henry Thomas) and the other children. He shot the film in chronological order to invoke a real response from the actors (mainly the children) when E.T. goes home at the end.





**HAUNTING:** Ivan Reitman (center) works with his cast and one of the creatures in *Ghostbusters* (1984). Reitman said, "Nobody was thinking of this as a big family franchise that was going to be the most successful comedy of all time. It just seemed like a funny movie. So I was pretty well left alone."



**CAR CULTURE:** *2 Fast 2 Furious* (2003) director John Singleton, with the late Paul Walker, admitted that he initially felt pressure in making a sequel to the original hit. "I've been basically imbued with the task of setting this up so that there's able to be a third, fourth, and fifth one, and that's a great challenge."



**VOWS:** Anne Fletcher directs Ryan Reynolds and Sandra Bullock in *The Proposal* (2008). Most of the film was set in Alaska but shot in Boston and the North Shore of Massachusetts. "I just wanted to do it with respect so the people of [Alaska] would be proud and not think we were poking fun."

PHOTOS: (TOP) COLUMBIA PICTURES/EVERETT; (BOTTOM, LEFT) UNIVERSAL PICTURES; (BOTTOM, RIGHT) WALT DISNEY PICTURES/PHOTOFEST



**HANDS-ON:** Sam Raimi (center) shooting a blue screen stunt with James Franco (right) and the villain Doc Ock (Alfred Molina) in *Spider-Man 2* (2004). Raimi intended to shoot in a 1.85:1 aspect ratio but upgraded to 2.35:1 when he realized the frame needed to be wider to fit all the action.

PHOTOS: (TOP) MELISSA MOSELEY/SONY PICTURES/PHOTOFEST; (BOTTOM, LEFT) JASON BOLAND/UNIVERSAL PICTURES; (BOTTOM, RIGHT) COLUMBIA PICTURES/PHOTOFEST



**THE REAL THING:** With *The Bourne Supremacy* (2004), Paul Greengrass, with Matt Damon, brought a documentary-style realism to the second installment of the action series by using handheld cameras and a muted color palette. He avoided computer graphics and all of the stunts were achieved practically.



**TALL TALE:** Not all summer hits are epics. Meryl Streep starred as famed chef Julia Child in Nora Ephron's *Julie & Julia* (2009). Since in real life Child was a towering 6'2", Ephron used camera and costume tricks to create the illusion of a much taller Meryl Streep, who stands only 5'6".



**NIGHT BIRD:** As he did on *Batman Begins*, Christopher Nolan directed every shot himself on *The Dark Knight* (2008) as there was no second unit. He prefers in-camera effects to CGI, such as this one of Christian Bale leaping off a building in Hong Kong. *The Dark Knight* made \$1 billion worldwide.



**STRANGERS:** Barry Sonnenfeld, with Tony Shalhoub, Tommy Lee Jones and Will Smith, set out to make *Men in Black II* (2002) more comedic than the first *Men in Black*. He compared it to a remake of *The French Connection*, but "with aliens as a comedy." It opened on the July 4 weekend and brought in more than \$87 million.



**GOOD VS. EVIL:** Guillermo del Toro originally planned to re-create versions of classic horror films like *Frankenstein*, *Dracula*, and *The Wolf Man* for *Hellboy II: The Golden Army* (2008), but ultimately the film was based more on myth and folklore. It was the first movie to be filmed at the Korda Studios in Budapest, Hungary.