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Biography

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Melanie Griffith

**The
Queen Mum**

A Century of Grace

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Hepburn**

An American Original

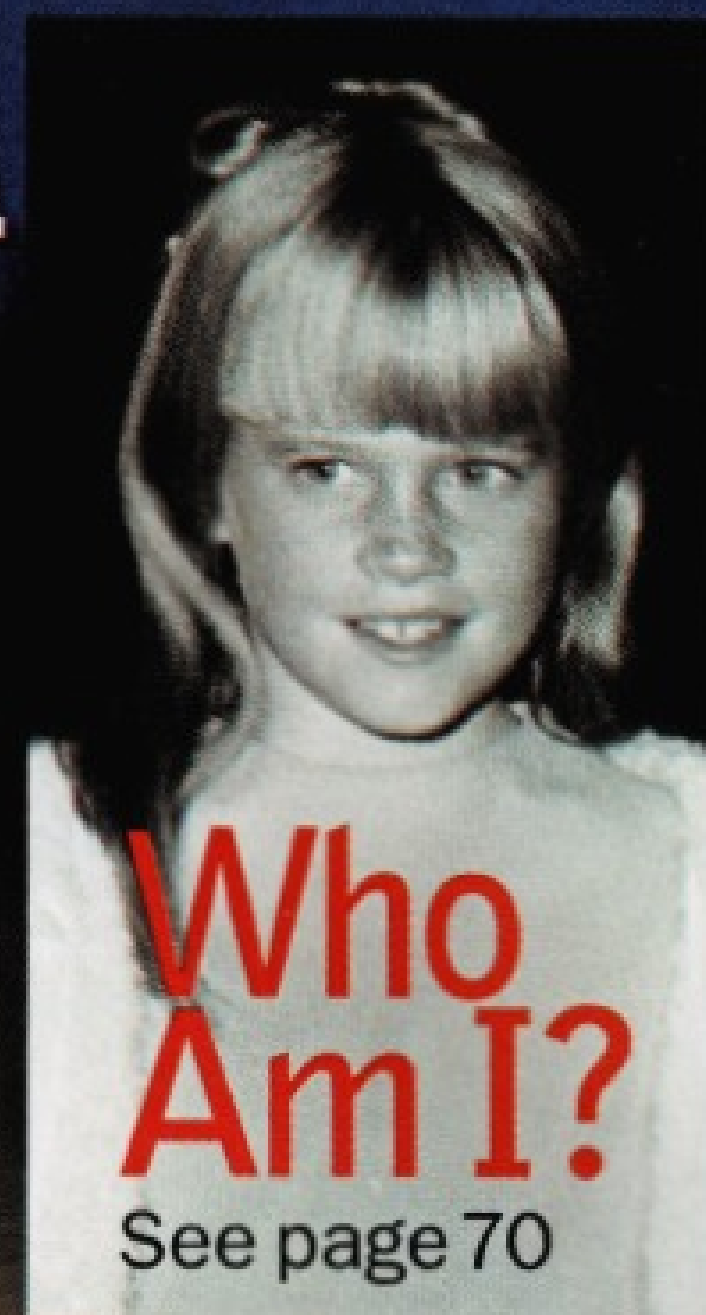
**Charles
Darwin**

and the Magical Galapagos

What Your

Handwriting

Reveals About You



EXCLUSIVE!

The Devil and

Brendan Fraser

"My great-grandfather was a Canadian Mounted Policeman—I would have regretted not making a mountie movie if I had the chance."

BRENDAN FRASER, ON WHY HE MADE *DUDLEY DO-RIGHT*

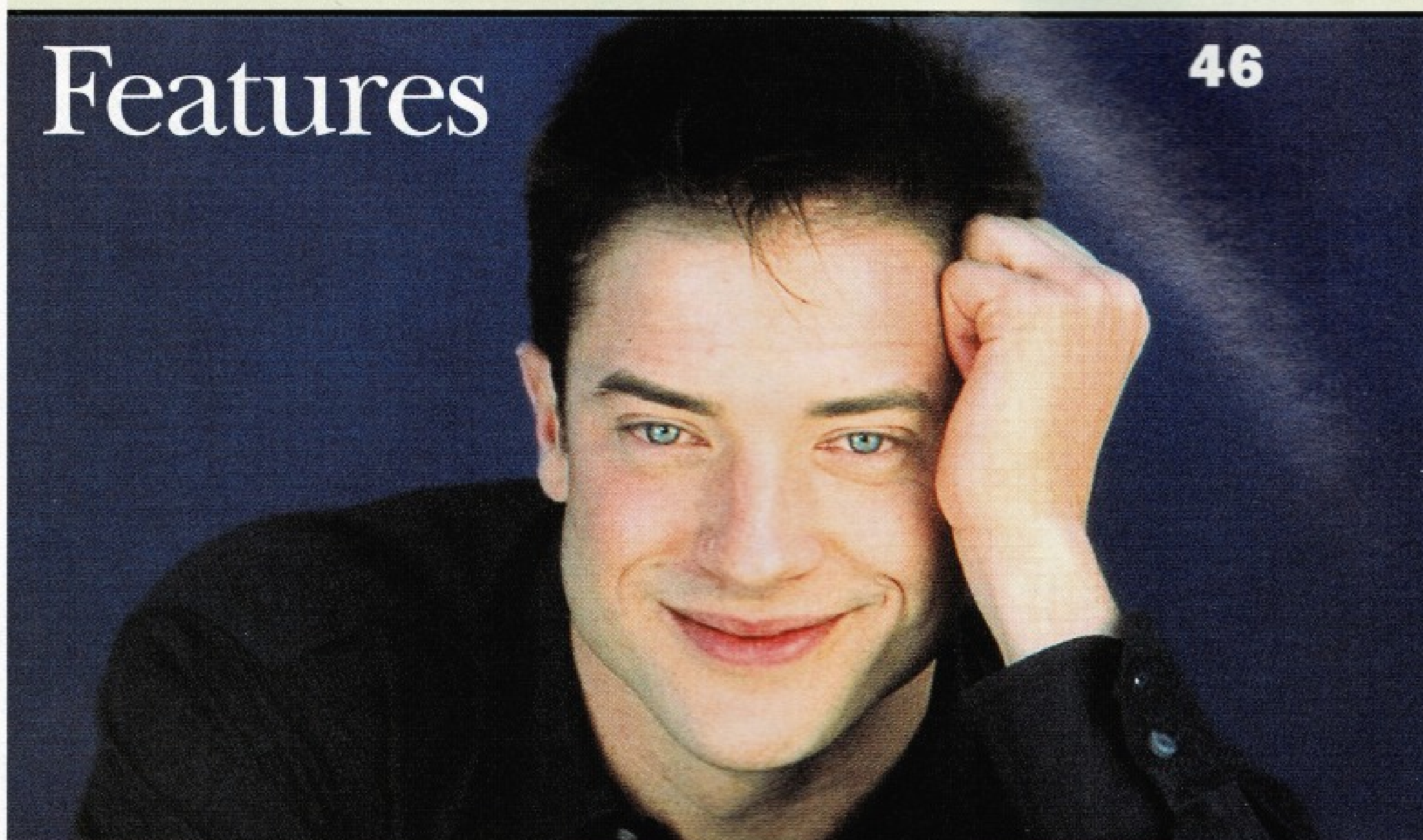
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He's been George of the Jungle, Dudley Do-Right, and the stalwart hero who defeats the Mummy. But in *Bedazzled*, **BRENDAN FRASER** takes on an entirely different kind of role: a drone-like computer worker who sells his soul to the Devil. And playing the seven characters that result? "Great fun and a great challenge," says the genial star. *By Alexander Wohl*

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What could be more appealing on these sizzling summer days than lounging around the swimming pool? Especially if you're a well-toned Hollywood star anxious to show off your physique and fashionable swimsuit. *Biography Magazine* takes you on a poolside tour for a look at celebs past and present ready to take the plunge.

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Queen Elizabeth's mother—known universally and affectionately to her subjects as the "QUEEN MUM"—symbolizes Britain's best and most noble attributes. Now, as she turns 100, this beloved member of the royal family is being honored with everything from special stamps to outdoor pageants. *By Dorothy Rompalske*

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The Devil and Brendan Fraser

BY ALEXANDER WOHL

It is a bit jarring to see a movie hero to millions of 6 to 12-year-olds sporting long hair, tattoos, and purple fingernails, gyrating and singing a heavy metal rock song at the Grand Olympic Auditorium in downtown Los Angeles. And yet, there is Brendan Fraser, the star of *George of the Jungle* and *Dudley Do-Right*, leering, swearing, making obscene gestures, and apparently smoking illicit substances. As it turns out, however, Fraser's display of debauchery does not mark a sudden shift in the personality of a movie actor known for his gentleness, intelligence, and good looks; it's merely Fraser shooting a scene for *Bedazzled*, a new movie due to be released this month, and the most recent film in an eclectic and diverse career that has brought this talented and self-effacing actor to the brink of superstardom.

Degenerate rock star" is just one of seven roles that Fraser plays in *Bedazzled*, a remake of the 1967 film that originally starred Dudley Moore and Peter Cook. The story depicts Fraser as a dronish computer worker who sells his soul to the devil (Elizabeth Hurley) in exchange for seven wishes so that he can get his dream girl (played by Frances O'Connor). In the film—what writer/director Harold Ramis calls seven little films—Fraser also has the opportunity to play a drug lord, a genius, and a 7' 9" basketball star, among other characters. Ramis, whose credits include *Analyze This* and *Groundhog Day*, calls his leading man a "skillful, gifted actor." He explains, "I knew from his previous work that Fraser could go very broad and also be subtle and serious, as well as dashing and heroic. He manages to combine his vulnerability with his hunksiness. He can be completely goofy without compromising his dreamboat quality or his dignity."

It is a quality that leaves many suggesting that he is set to take up Harrison Ford's mantle. And with the box office success of last summer's *The Mummy*, which followed the unexpected success of *George of the Jungle*, and the \$12.5 million paycheck he reportedly received for the sequel to *The Mummy*, Fraser is looking more and more like the *Indiana Jones* star every day.

In the nine years since the 31-year-old Fraser came to Hollywood, he has made nearly 30 movies, encompassing everything from comedy to drama. He has worked alongside a wide range of actors, from Adam Sandler and Steve Buscemi (*Airheads*, 1994), to Albert Brooks, in the underrated comedy *The Scout* (1994), to Shirley MacLaine (*Mrs. Winterbourne*, 1996), and Sir Ian McKellen, who won an Oscar nomination for his role opposite Fraser in *Gods and Monsters* (1998). This November he is set to star in *Monkeybone*, an adventure which blends live action and animation, and he is already on his way back to North Africa to film the sequel to *The Mummy*.

The return to the desert will be just the latest adventure in a cosmopolitan life that began in Indianapolis, where he was born on December 3, 1968, to Canadian parents Peter and Carol. Fraser has not stopped moving since. Brendan and his three older brothers spent most of their youth living in Canada and Europe, and resettled in a different country every three or four years to accommodate his father's work with the Canadian Foreign Service. As a result, Fraser attended a variety of schools in Holland, London, Seattle, Ottawa, and



The Mummy (1999) was a monster at the box office, reeling in more than any of Fraser's other films



Fraser takes on roles "from the sublime to the ridiculous," including *Blast from the Past* (1999)



With Pauly Shore and Sean Astin in the very successful, very idiotic *Encino Man*



In *Gods and Monsters*, a radical departure for him. "Careers I admire are built on diversity," he says

Toronto. "Growing up, there wasn't much television to watch, and when there was, it was often old black and white silent movies, like Buster Keaton," he recalls. From an early age Fraser grew to appreciate these silent comedians as well as the circus clowns whom he was frequently taken to see on school outings. "I saw a lot of physical comedy, which is probably how I learned to appreciate it. It didn't have to be in English for me to get the joke."

It was in England, where he was first ex-

posed to the vibrant London theater scene, when the acting bug really bit. By the time he got to high school—back in Toronto at Upper Canada College boarding school—he had his first working connection to the theater as a stage manager and ticket seller. At age 18, he enrolled at the Actors' Conservatory at Seattle's Cornish College of the Arts. There he performed Shakespeare and other classical productions in local theaters. Among the early influences in his career at the time was the actor, pantomimist, and



Fraser as Dudley Do-Right. He got his appreciation for physical comedy from Buster Keaton movies



In 1994's *Airheads*, a wild-maned Fraser teamed up with Steve Buscemi and Adam Sandler

clown Bill Irwin. "I used to see him perform in Seattle," recalls Fraser. "To my mind, he embodied everything that was talent and creativity. You couldn't categorize what he did or who he was."

Although Fraser was awarded a scholarship to attend graduate school at Southern Methodist University, he never made it there. Instead he used his mother's car to drive down the coast and seek his fortune in Hollywood. He didn't have long to wait. Beginning with a single line in a film that never

Comic Relief

Brendan Fraser has starred in two film adaptations of cartoon shows, *George of the Jungle* and *Dudley Do-Right*. Other actors who have used the cartoon and comic strip genres to showcase their talents are listed below:

1 POPEYE (1980) Robert Altman directed Robin Williams as the leafy-green-loving sailor man

2 ANNIE (1982) 11-year-old Aileen Quinn worked with Albert Finney, Carol Burnett, Bernadette Peters, and Tim Curry in this film adaptation of the Broadway play based on the *Little Orphan Annie* comic strip

3 BATMAN (1989) Michael Keaton (and later Val Kilmer and George Clooney) played the lead in the films based on the comic created in 1939

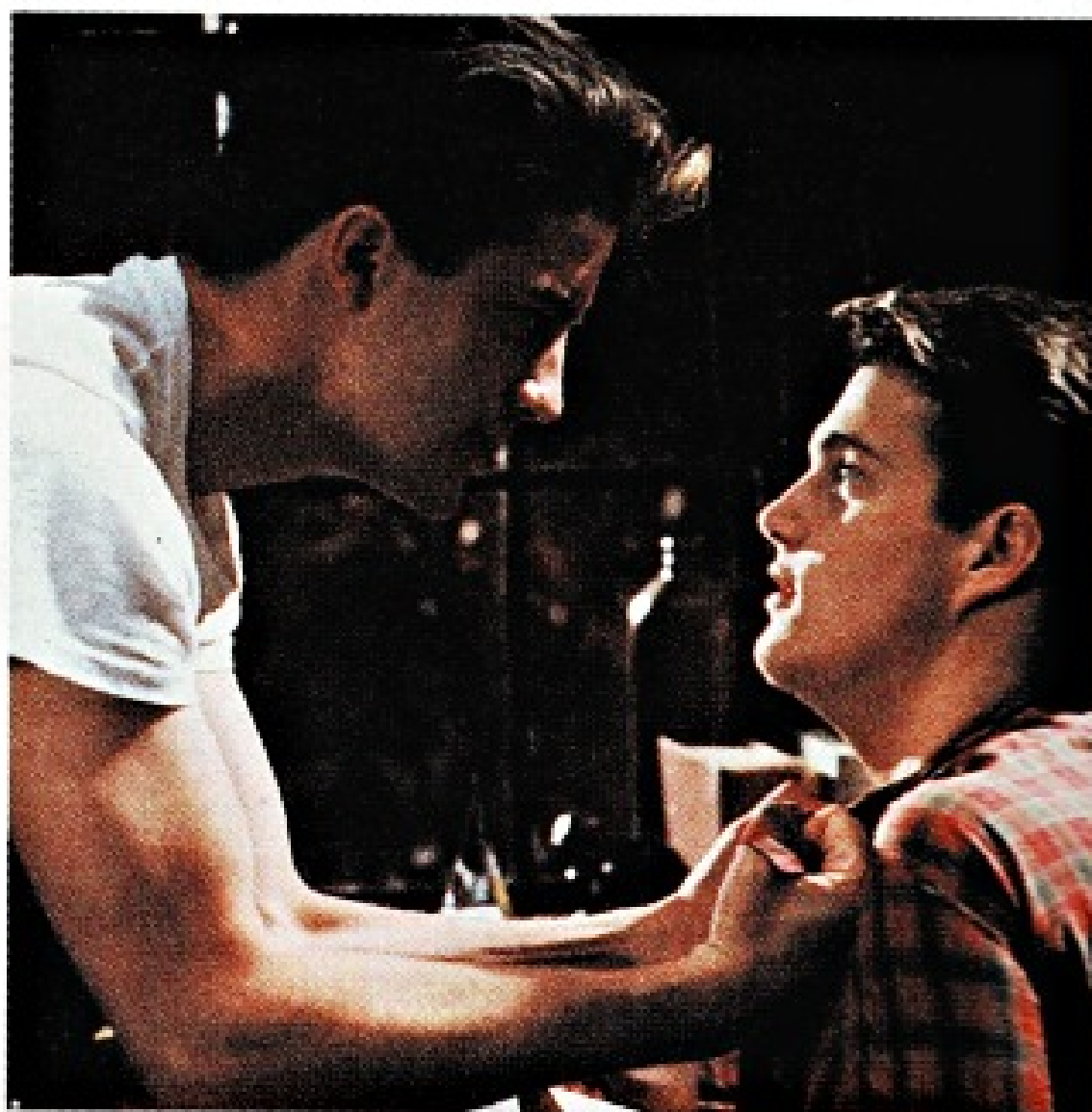
4 DICK TRACY (1990) With Warren Beatty directing and in the lead role, the square-jawed, trench coated detective came to life

5 DENNIS THE MENACE (1993) Mason Gamble as Dennis pesters Mr. Wilson (Walter Matthau)

6 THE FLINTSTONES (1994) John Goodman as film's first Yabba-Dabba-Do-ing caveman

7 THE SHADOW (1994) The Shadow, a character based on the comic strip from the 1930s, is portrayed by Alec Baldwin

8 THE ADVENTURES OF ROCKY & BULLWINKLE (2000) Robert De Niro as Fearless Leader in the remake of the sophisticated children's cartoon



With Chris O'Donnell in 1994's *School Ties*, which also starred Matt Damon and Ben Affleck



With MacLaine in *Mrs. Winterbourne*; Fraser played a millionaire—and his twin brother

made it to theaters and small roles in two made-for-TV movies, Fraser's career quickly took off. Within a year he was starring in two feature films of vastly different styles. In the first of these movies, *School Ties*, he was part of an ensemble cast, which included up-and-comers Matt Damon, Ben Affleck, and Chris O'Donnell. The critically praised drama about anti-Semitism at a private prep school allowed Fraser to call upon his own horrific hazing experiences at a boarding school, which included being dragged from his bed

at age 13, and thrown in the trunk of a car.

Acting alongside the likes of future stars Damon and Affleck was a heady experience for the young actor, and Fraser recalls how impressed he was by their abilities even then. "I thought, 'I'm never going to be able to do that,'" he said last year. "It was movie acting, and I came from the theater. All I knew came from a book by Michael Caine about tuning it down for the movies." But Fraser more than held his own. Not long after *School Ties* came *Encino*

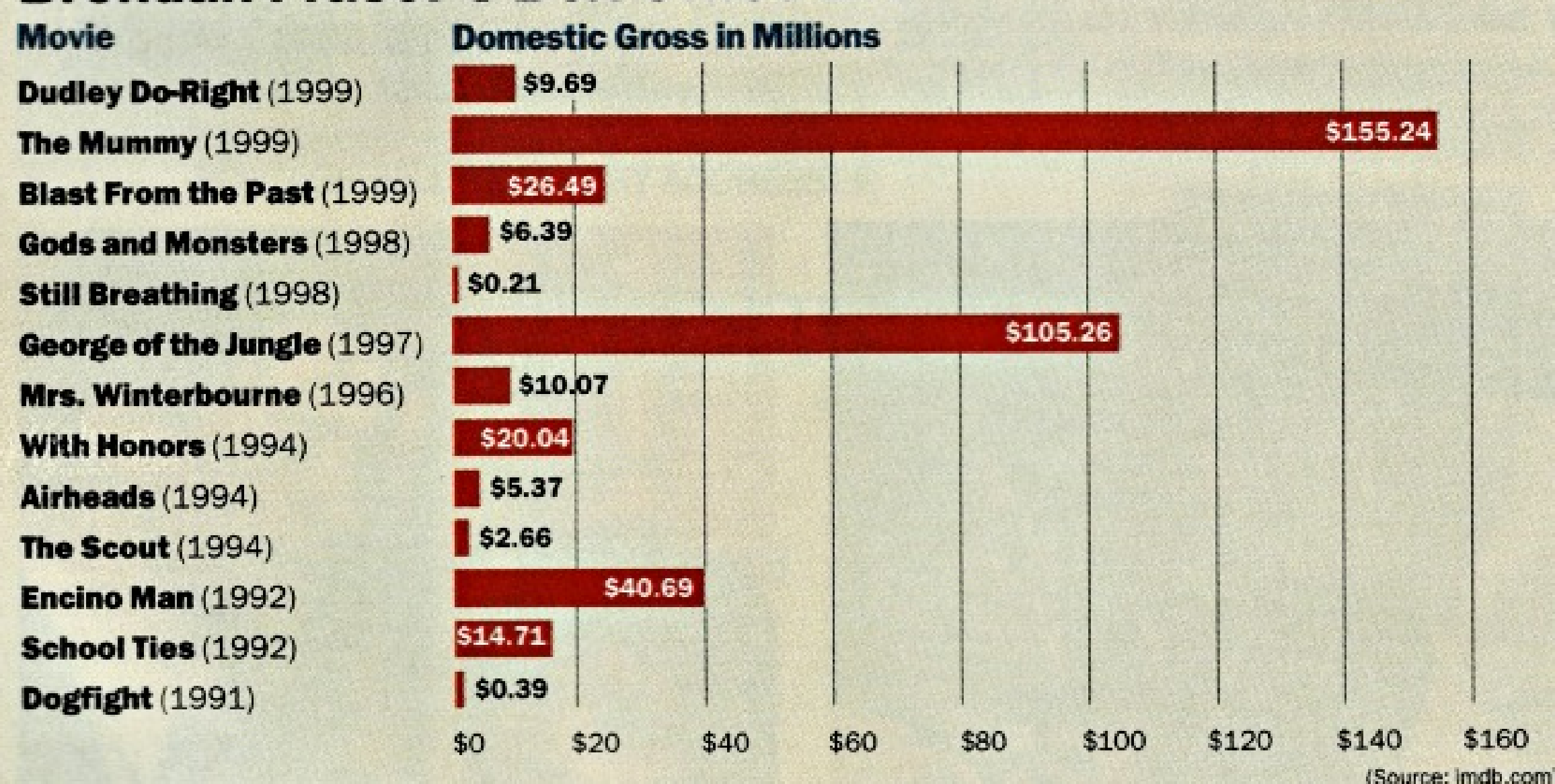


In *George of the Jungle*. "[Fraser] can be completely goofy without compromising his dreamboat quality or his dignity," notes *Bedazzled* director Harold Ramis



Fraser attends the *Dudley Do-Right* premiere in 1999 with his wife, Afton Smith Fraser

Brendan Fraser's Box Office Bio



Man, a mindless but enjoyable film in which Fraser plays a frozen caveman who is unearthed by two teenagers, one of whom is the goofy Pauly Shore. Although in hindsight *Encino Man* might not have been the most obvious career choice for the theater-trained Fraser, it demonstrated that he had range.

"I was 23 and had just finished *School Ties*, and I was fighting against doing *Encino Man*," he recalls. "But I was happy to be working at that time and to be honest, I was thinking more about paying the rent. I also realized that the careers I admire are built on diversity. Starting off you need to have a calling card that will say 'I can do this and I can do that'—extremes from the sublime to the ridiculous."

That attitude came in handy for *George of the Jungle*, the 1997 live action version of the 1960s Jay Ward cartoon. Although intended primarily for younger viewers, the writing, as well as Fraser's portrayal of the Tarzan-like character, was done so adults also found the movie entertaining. The success of *George* helped spur the development of a number of live action adaptations of cartoons. And it also certainly didn't hurt the popularity of Disney's animated *Tarzan* movie. Jokes the actor, "Frankly, I think Disney stole my look for their animation."

Fraser followed *George* with another adaptation of a Jay Ward cartoon—about the Canadian mountie Dudley Do-Right. This time, his choice was largely person-

al—his great-grandfather had been a Canadian Mounted Policeman. "As an old man I would have regretted not making a mountie movie if I had the chance," he notes in a comment that reflects not only his enthusiasm for his profession, but also his interest in the world beyond movies. This broader world view is supported by his obvious intelligence, and is on display whether he is discussing literature or his collection of Polaroid cameras or the "subjective qualities of black and white images." It is an engaging rather than off-putting quality, in part because it is so understated and in part because it complements his general graciousness.

He is effusive when speaking about his wife of two years, Afton Smith Fraser, named after the Robert Burns poem "Afton Water," a former actress whom he met at a party when her dog ran up to him and began sniffing around. He smiles when asked about her description in the media as a former actress. "The press refuses to let that go, but that's not a world she is in now. She has immense knowledge of the craft and she's so incredibly well read. Maybe in the future she'll go into producing." He continues: "We don't meddle in one another's artistic endeavors, but we are supportive of one another. We're a very young couple and we're trying to have a life, to settle into who we are towards one another. I think that she will definitely surprise me delightfully in the years to come with the professional choices that she chooses to make."

Fraser himself seems to have no doubt that he has made the right choices, even if they weren't the traditional way that success

(Continued on page 114)

the letter she had written him in the earliest days of their marriage, urging him to remember Jesus. Finally, not long before he died, he wrote across it, "When I am dead, know that many times I have kissed & cried [sic] over this."

He died of a heart attack on April 19, 1882. His death attracted major notice, his theory of evolution by then widely accepted. In his obituary, the London *Standard* noted that "true Christians can accept the main scientific facts of Evolution just as they do of Astronomy and Geology, without any prejudice to more ancient and cherished beliefs."

Darwin had wanted to be buried in Downe, but the scientific community saw it differently. Charles Darwin, the man who had suffered such personal anguish over his belief in evolution, the man who had once described himself as a murderer, was buried in Westminster Abbey, just beneath the monument to that other great British scientist, Sir Isaac Newton. ●

MELISSA BURDICK HARMON IS *BIOGRAPHY MAGAZINE'S* TRAVEL EDITOR.

Bart Baggett from page 91

since those who seek him out tend to believe in the merits of his work. "If it's not your bag, it's not your bag," he says matter-of-factly. "All I know is I get daily e-mails from people thanking me for helping them."

A longtime fan of the self-improvement movement (his favorite book is *Illusions* by Richard Bach, and his cat's name is CP, for *Celestine Prophecy*, a bestselling spiritual/adventure book), Baggett recently began teaching handwriting analysis as a self-help tool. After reading scientific research, he suspected that handwriting analysis could work in reverse. In other words, not only could you determine personality traits by examining handwriting, you could actually alter certain traits by changing the way you write. He calls the practice grapho-therapy.

Baggett began testing it out on himself several years ago. He stopped looping his d stem and started crossing his t-bar up high, and credits it with improving his self-esteem and making him less sensitive to criticism. Traits he hasn't altered include his pointed t-bars ("those indicate my sarcastic sense of humor"), his pointy m's and n's ("I'm intelligent, quick thinking, and highly analytical"), and his curvy lowercase g ("I'm a fluid thinker").

Does he admit to any negative traits? "I have sloppy writing and a bouncy baseline," he says, "which shows I'm a bit disorganized. And my worst trait is my lack of attention to detail. I often forget to dot my i's." ●

CHRISTINA FRANK INTERVIEWED CRIMINOLOGIST PARK

DIETZ FOR BIOGRAPHY MAGAZINE'S JUNE ISSUE.

Queen Mum from page 68

now complete and the young mother and duchess was content. Her life featured a predictable routine of family affairs and official functions, until January 20, 1936—the day King George V died. The ascension of King Edward VIII, and his subsequent abdication in order to marry Wallis Simpson, changed her world forever. Only a year and a half later, on May 12, 1937—the date originally designated as coronation day for Edward VIII—Albert would replace his older brother on the throne and be crowned King George VI.

Judging by the important leadership role the new monarch and his steadfast wife would play during World War II, the replacement was a fortuitous one for England. Nevertheless, the crisis placed an enormous strain on the entire royal family. Palace insiders have long reported that Queen Elizabeth was so angered by the abdication that she became the major force behind the lifelong royal ostracism of the Duke and Duchess of Windsor. Never able to overcome her hatred of Wallis Simpson, Elizabeth even blamed Mrs. Simpson for her husband's relatively young death on February 6, 1952, at the age of 56. Staunchly against divorce, she is said to have also advocated the harsh treatment that both Sarah, Duchess of York, and Princess Diana received from the Palace when their royal marriages fell apart.

In 1952, after the ascension of her daughter, Queen Elizabeth II, to the throne, Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother moved from Buckingham Palace to nearby Clarence House, still her main residence today. After a prolonged period of mourning, the Queen Mother returned to her duties and has become, over the years, the cornerstone of her family. She frequently offers advice to younger generations of royal offspring, with Prince Charles among those who turn to her often for counsel.

The Queen Mum, as the public affectionately calls her, also has a down-to-earth side. She's well known to enjoy a cool tumbler of gin and tonic, and her favorite pastime, which she indulges in frequently, is betting on horse races. Like all members of the monarchy, she has her detractors, those who claim her tippling and fondness for the ponies are actually addictions to alcohol and gambling. And others still who insist that her beatific smile hides a calculating personality capable of elitist, even racist behavior.

The majority of her subjects, however, consider the Queen Mother a national treasure. They turn out to see her in great numbers and worry about her health (news that she was suf-

fering a bout of flu this past January, for instance, led to panicked rumors of her death). Though in recent years she's undergone two hip replacements, throat surgery, and a cataract operation, Buckingham Palace has assured her subjects that the Queen Mother is approaching her 100th birthday in good health. Her best known concession to advancing years is her flashy "Queen Mum mobile," the golf cart painted in the blue and gold stripes of her horse racing colors, that she now turns to for help with her public walkabouts.

While Queen Elizabeth II organized last June's mammoth royal bash to celebrate all the milestone birthdays occurring in her family this year (the Queen Mum's 100th, Princess Margaret's 70th, Princess Anne's 50th, Prince Andrew's 40th, and Prince William's 18th), there are plenty of special commemorations planned in sole honor of the Queen Mother. Among them, the issuing of special stamps and coins, and a special birthday service at St. Paul's Cathedral.

Perhaps most fitting of all, however, will be an outdoor pageant featuring the pipes and drums of the British army's distinguished Black Watch regiment, of which Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother has been colonel-in-chief for over 60 years. This event perhaps more than any other calls to mind the World War II years, the era in which the Queen Mother's bravery and dedication to duty first won her the love and respect of her subjects—a devotion that endures to this day. ●

DOROTHY ROMPALSKE IS A CONTRIBUTING EDITOR OF THIS MAGAZINE.

Brendan Fraser from page 50

is measured in Hollywood. "I'm always looking to make small discoveries and maintain a sense of availability to learn and to be challenged and to find a way to put that into whatever role I'm going to play next. I know that without making diverse choices I probably won't be able to maintain my interest, and once my interest goes away there's no reason in doing it any more."

Given this strategy, along with his engaging persona on and off the screen, it seems unlikely that Fraser's interest will fade any time in the near future—good news for movie fans of all ages. ●

ALEXANDER WOHL IS A CONTRIBUTING EDITOR OF THIS MAGAZINE.

Galapagos: Interiors from page 109

FOOD GUIDE: Wovenseed belt, from Ecuador, El Museo Del Barrio gift shop, 212-831-7272, Ext. 29. Textile. Tucker Robbins, 212-366-4427 or tuckerrobbins.com.
INTERIORS GUIDE: "Spinnaker" twin sleeper/love seat, \$1199; "Potomac" chair, \$799; "Soho" coffee table, \$499; "New Harvest" nesting tables (on both sides of