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Future



Richard Edwards meets
JURASSIC WORLD star
Chris Pratt and director
Colin Trevorrow, who are
trying to recapture the magic
(and science) of the original
movie two decades on

WHEN WILL PEOPLE

ever learn? The original Jurassic Park may have been doomed to failure, a living parable of the dangers of mankind messing around with nature, yet something – hubris, greed, the need for a blockbuster sequel – made reopening the prehistoric theme park inevitable. And besides, what are the chances of fossilised lightning striking twice?

Now, 22 years after the original movie and 14 years since the franchise's last outing in *Jurassic Park III*, something really has survived. *Jurassic World* sees the series returning to Isla Nublar, the tropical island that was the setting of Steven Spielberg's first bout of carnivore carnage, and finds a fully functioning mega-theme park, complete with all the usual fast food concessions and some very special attractions – think of a Disney World where Mickey Mouse and Goofy would rather hunt and kill you than pose for a photo.

For director Colin Trevorrow, returning to the original island after two movies set at test site Isla Sorna was something of a no-brainer. "I felt that the sequels to the first movie had to operate off a different equation than the first one did, and that was to their disadvantage," he tells *SFX* on the Universal lot in Los Angeles. "The equation of the first movie was, you're going to a place that I guarantee is perfectly safe, yet it turns out it's a horrifying nightmare. The second and third one, you're going to a place that you expect to be a horrifying nightmare and sure enough it is. To me, changing that equation made it difficult to recapture the feeling of the original, so with this movie, a fundamental similarity is that equation. It allows everything to rest on something that will set up a ball that we could spike.

"After that it was about finding a story and a set of themes and characters that I felt could be as indelible as the ones from the first movie. And I do not say that lightly – that is an extremely high bar to set, but if you're going to have the balls to do a *Jurassic Park* movie, you'd better set your bar there or go home."



TAKING RISKS

If that sounds like fighting talk, Trevorrow's desire to do it the right way might just be the reason his take on the movie would be the one to get the greenlight. *Jurassic Park IV* has been languishing in Development Hell for years – pretty much since *Jurassic Park III* opened – and Trevorrow, fresh off breakout indie time-travel drama *Safety Not Guaranteed*, decided to abandon previous drafts when he came on board.

"I read the draft that was the most recent, and it wasn't something that I understood, I didn't know how to direct it," he recalls. "I said, 'I'm not going to do a good job with this, I don't know what it is.' So I asked Steven [Spielberg] if I could bring in my writing partner Derek Connolly and if we could take a stab at writing a different movie using some of

"Strange, these things looked so safe... and cool. Actually, mostly just cool."



the ideas that Steven had had 10–12 years ago and given to all these writers. He said okay."

Writing the script at night, Trevorrow would use his days to work with the storyboard artists and pre-visualisation boffins to design sequences that would wow Spielberg, effectively the benefactor of the *Jurassic* franchise.

"It was a very college kid move on our part, but I didn't have a choice," says Trevorrow. "My worst possible nightmare is not to lose the

opportunity of making a *Jurassic Park* movie; it's to make a *bad Jurassic Park* movie. One of the first things I said to Steven and Frank [Marshall, producer] when we sat down is, 'Look if this thing is terrible, the two of you continue to be legends. I will never be heard from again.'"

With Spielberg wooed and Trevorrow given the keys to the park, a new threat (with big sharp pointy teeth) reared its ugly head: when Spielberg had unleashed computer-generated ➔

"If you're going to have the balls to do a *Jurassic Park* movie, you'd better set your bar high or go home"





TAKE PRATT

The Guardians Of The Galaxy star is walking with dinosaurs



This time last year, Chris Pratt was still best known as the dweeby but loveable Andy Dwyer in TV's *Parks And Recreation*. A strict exercise regime, a six-pack and a *Guardians Of The Galaxy* later, he's the most sought after action star in Hollywood, soon to be seen in *The Magnificent Seven* and (rumour klaxon!) maybe even as a rebooted Indiana Jones. "I feel like I went from being a guy that big people at movie studios didn't know, to a guy who, if you put me in your movie and it doesn't do well, you probably won't get fired because you'll be like, 'Well, I hired Chris Pratt. What else was I supposed to do?' So that's changed a little bit."

How big a deal for you was *Jurassic Park* when it first came out?

☞ A huge deal. I was 13. I saw it in the theatre twice, opening weekend. A huge fan. And I felt like I learned a lot about science watching that movie. Michael Crichton does that well with his books. All the exposition is not boring. Like when they talk about DNA and gene sequencing, you walk away from that movie thinking, "Wow, I know a lot about that now. I can probably make a dinosaur!" [laughs]

How would you describe your character, Owen Grady?

☞ I wouldn't call him a park ranger. He works at the park, but kind of on the outskirts in a facility that's

researching animal behaviour with Raptors. He's not part of the show or the spectacle of the park. He's just doing some research on this island that's being funded by Jurassic World headquarters. He doesn't really fully believe in the research they want him to do, but at the same time, he needs their funding.

Is he sceptical about Jurassic World?

☞ Yeah, he's a little bit of an Ian Malcolm. He has a strong understanding of our precarious position in the natural order of things as human beings. He is sceptical of trying to manipulate nature for our own entertainment. But he's interested in these animals because, well, they're dinosaurs, and he gets to work with them.

Did you do any prep talking to guys who work with dangerous animals?

☞ I did, yeah. That was a jumping off point. I was trying to figure out what animal would be closest to a Raptor. Obviously no one will ever know because we're not going to ever animate Raptors – for god's sake, if you have the thought, just watch *Jurassic Park*, it's not a good idea! – but I sort of zeroed in on dolphins and grizzly bears, because they're both problem solvers. I worked with a guy named Randy Miller at Predators In Action. He trains tigers and grizzly bears for film, and he really helped me zero in on how you treat an animal that's a problem solver; the training techniques that work best with that type of animal.

After *Guardians*, working with co-stars that aren't there must be old hat?

☞ Yeah. It's a skill I guess you can polish, but it's really not all that different from acting with somebody that is there. I think the biggest thing you learn is that you're not alone in building a performance. In many ways, you have to submit to the process and understand that it's not just your responsibility. It's your job to not be a bad actor. Really, "Understand that you're a prop sometimes" is the best advice you can give to an actor who does these big budget production blockbuster-type things. There are also moments where you're going to breathe your own spirit and life into a character, that no one else can ever do, and it's those moments you have to act.



scaly hell in the original movie, we were in true change-the-future-of-cinema territory. How could Trevorrow ever hope to emulate that wow factor when the entire world believes a raccoon can talk?

"The way we did it is we kind of made the movie about that," Trevorrow explains. "One of the first lines you hear is, 'No one's impressed by a dinosaur anymore.' In context of the world we're living in, that's the case of the park, people have been coming here for a while. They've seen this before and their question is, 'What have you got for us next?' So the corporation decides that they're going to create something bigger and badder with more teeth [more on that later...], hoping that people will be endlessly entertained by them just upping the ante. That's kind of what we do with movies. We felt we should face the movie's biggest hurdle head on. I hope when people watch the movie they'll realise that there is plenty of reason to be in awe and to be thrilled."



BIGGER AND BETTER

The dinosaurs themselves will be a mix of familiar faces like the T-rex and Velociraptors, and newcomers. There's Trevorrow's favourite dino, the club-tailed, armoured Ankylosaurus, "which has a great action sequence"; the Dimorphodon, "a new kind of flying reptile that has the head of a Raptor with wings, and is just nasty"; and the series' first water-dwelling dino – the Mosasaurus seen leaping out of a SeaWorld-like attraction to swallow a great white shark whole in the trailer. "There's been an evolution in the way the park has been getting DNA, and they aren't totally reliant on mosquitoes anymore. There's iron in the blood and bones that's preserved the DNA – it's a technology where we're right on the cusp of potentially finding some really amazing finds at the moment. It allowed us to expand the breadth of what dinosaurs we could use without having to answer the question, 'How the hell does a mosquito bite an underwater reptile?'"

But the biggest, baddest resident of Jurassic World has never walked on planet Earth. The Indominus Rex is a bespoke genetic construct designed for the theme park, and its creation has proved somewhat controversial in the blogosphere.

"To me it was about corporate excess," says Trevorrow. "The movie's about excess in general, our lack of humility and our ability to remake our mistakes when there's money on the table. The Indominus Rex came from an idea that Steven had long before I was involved. He just wanted a very vicious dinosaur that broke loose and was threatening the park."

"In the draft that I read," Trevorrow continues, "it was claimed that they found a new dinosaur. It was presented as if it was a real dinosaur, but it wasn't. That actually broke a rule for me – *Jurassic Park* was always based on real palaeontology, they didn't just make up dinosaurs. They may have adjusted the



look of some of them, but they didn't create them out of whole new cloth. So I felt like the only way to have something that was a new dinosaur was if we made the fact that we created it part of the story.

"A hybrid animal is something that we're really familiar with," he goes on. "Lots of people have dogs that have been cross-bred. And not only did Michael Crichton talk about it in the books, but all of the dinosaurs were hybrid. They *all* had frog DNA in them. To

me it didn't feel like as much of a leap as it did to – at least on their initial reaction – some of the fans."

As you'll have seen in the trailers, the I-Rex is rather more formidable than its tiny-armed cousin the T-Rex. It hunts for sport, and even gets its dino brethren communicating with each other. "It allows us to take a bunch of attributes from a bunch of different dinosaurs, and that's our big new sci-fi purchase that we're asking people to buy," Trevorrow admits. ➔

"I hope when people watch the movie they'll realise that there is plenty of reason to be in awe and to be thrilled"



THE BRYCE IS RIGHT

Bryce Dallas Howard is the woman at the helm of Jurassic World



How does your character, Claire Dearing, fit into *Jurassic World*?

☞ She basically runs the park. Where we start with this film, it's John Hammond's dream come to life. It's a fully functional operational park that is working. Her responsibility is to make sure that basically the first film doesn't happen and to keep up with the times and to have it be profitable and all of that. She's sort of Holly Hunter-esque from *Broadcast News*. She's Type A and not entirely self aware, but has moments of clarity, for sure, and is kind of funny, though it's at her expense. She has a lot of gravitas and power and drive and her humanity emerges in unexpected moments. She's a really multi-dimensional, layered, complex lady that gets to be part of this spectacle.

What's Claire's relationship with Owen like?

☞ The way Chris and I talked about it was *Romancing The Stone*. It's a little like that. We also reference *It Happened One Night* and those '40s classic bantery character dynamics where it's two people from two different perspectives and two different walks of life who need to team up together. It starts off with tension, then turns into romantic tension, and then they ultimately become a team. It was so fun to play. It just felt so classic. There were lots of opportunities for humour. My gosh, it was Chris Pratt! It was a blast.

Did you have to do any homework on dinosaurs?

☞ Listen, I have an eight-year-old son, so dinosaurs are part of our day-to-day life! The funny part is, always in reading books to him and whatnot, I'm just terrible in the pronunciation of these dinosaur names. He, from a very young age, was always correcting me. So finally I felt in a way I've been preparing for this the last six years of my life reading dinosaur books to my son.

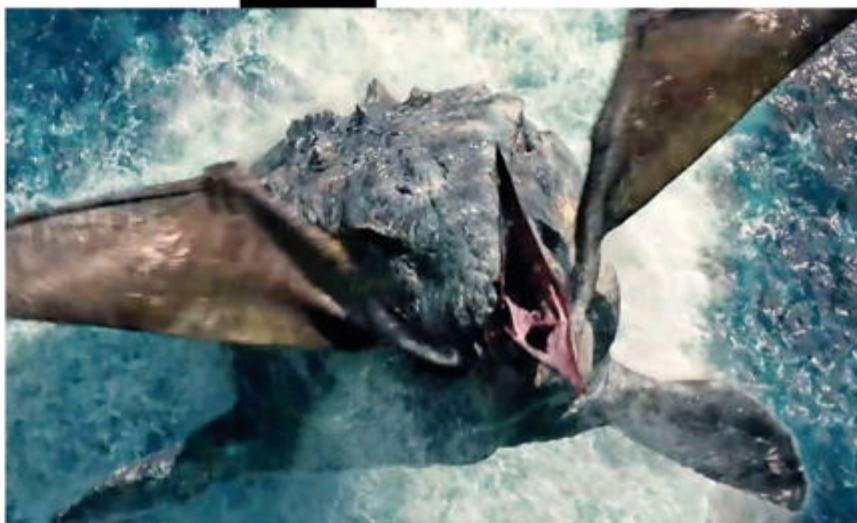
He must have been so impressed you were going to work with dinosaurs.

☞ Oh my gosh, it was very exciting for both my children, but it has certainly been the source of some nightmares for my daughter, where she's like, "I don't want any dinosaurs to come into my room tonight!" At the beginning, you got a kick out of saying, "I'm working with dinosaurs." And then I think my daughter took that too seriously, and now I'm trying to undo that trauma [laughs].

You can do it! Fly, little bird, fly!



Aren't you guys standing a little close to those bars?



"It's every bit as much of a leap as resurrecting dinosaurs in the first place – which is a fantasy idea that has slowly crept closer and closer to reality as the years have gone by."

One recent scientific development we won't be seeing in *Jurassic World*, however, is the now commonly accepted theory that many dinosaurs had feathers.

"Steven tried having dinosaurs with feathers in his TV show, *Terra Nova*, and it didn't satisfy him emotionally," explains Trevorrow. "To me, it also didn't necessarily fit with the canon, because the book made very clear that these dinosaurs were already different from what they could look like. We use a bit of dialogue in *Jurassic World* from the first book where Dr Wu [a returning BD Wong] says, 'If the genetic code were pure, a lot of them would look quite different. But that's not what you asked for. You asked for more teeth.'"



THE NEW BATCH

Where the previous sequels brought back at least one of the original movie's stars, *Jurassic World* goes for a roster of newbies – aside from genetics genius Wu, who had a tiny role in *Jurassic Park*, and whose fate was left unexplained. "His fame has turned him into someone whose ambitions have gone far beyond what is safe or wise," says Trevorrow.

"It's not necessarily about bringing the characters back," he continues. "I think when you go back to your old school and you see your old classroom or touch the railings, that is very sentimental and warm. When you see your old teacher, sometimes they can make you very sad and make you feel like you're on a slow march towards death [laughs] and then internalise your own ageing process. Though all the actors from the first film look fantastic," he laughs. "That's not my point!"

The human dino-fodder this time out includes Vincent D'Onofrio's security chief Vic Hoskins, Bryce Dallas Howard's park manager Claire Dearing, and Hollywood's man of the moment, Chris Pratt, in the lead role of dinosaur expert Owen Grady.

"He wasn't Star-Lord when we cast him, and I didn't see *Guardians Of The Galaxy* until the last week of production, after Pratt had already left the shoot, so it literally couldn't have anything to do with the casting," says Trevorrow. "But I knew that Chris, having met him, had all of the pieces to be the character. He was a great hero and certainly is great looking and funny and can emote and be part of a romantic pairing. But the one thing that really sold me on the

Nope, we can't see the Indiana Jones thing at all.



WIN!

A complete set of Lego Jurassic World up for grabs

It's not just the computer geniuses at ILM who get to create scenes from *Jurassic World*, you know. Lego's new *Jurassic World* range features characters and dinosaurs from the movie, and we have a full set* to give away.

To stand a chance of winning, head to www.futurecompetitions.com/jurassiclego and answer this question:

Which character caused the computer systems to shut down in the original *Jurassic Park*?

- a. Dennis Nedry
- b. John Hammond
- c. Donald Gennaro

Competition is open from Wednesday 27 May until midnight on Tuesday 23 June 2015.

For terms and conditions, see www.futurecompetitions.com/jurassiclego.

idea was I knew that this character had to be the type of person who could have a kind of relationship with animals that most people on the planet could not. I watched this video of a guy in Africa who was able to lie in a field of lions and cuddle with them like they were cats. He was very much like Chris Pratt. I felt like, "That's a vicious predator animal whisperer and I buy this."

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They came to see dinosaurs, they got to see dinosaurs. What are they complaining about?

Despite the reptiles at his disposal – and the fact that *Jurassic World* has some 20,000 visitors – Trevorrow insists that making us believe in these characters is key.

"What we're going to care about most are the lives of the people we know. You can raise the numbers and have chaotic dinosaur attacks on large crowds of people, but even those sequences boil down to how the characters we know are operating within the context of that giant attack. I think once you've seen mass destruction without characters once, it's hard to watch it again. We don't really leave those characters. We have this all happen around them.

"In the end, this movie boils down to a group of people we hopefully love, and a couple of dinosaurs – and that's it."

***Jurassic World* opens on Thursday 11 June.**

* PICTURES SHOWN DO NOT REPRESENT ENTIRE RANGE.