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# JESSICA CHASTAIN

**HOT ACTRESS**

*The big screen's most wanted newcomer is an ethereally beautiful California girl – who still drives a '97 Toyota*

JESSICA CHASTAIN HAS STARRED IN six films this year, including Terrence Malick's Palme d'Or-winning meditation *The Tree of Life* (as Brad Pitt's wife); the Nazi-hunting thriller *The Debt* (as Helen Mirren's younger Mossad-agent self); and the summer blockbuster *The Help* (as a social outcast who befriends her black maid in 1960s Mississippi). Her résumé is bursting, in other words – and yet she still drives a 14-year-old Toyota, calls her mom before she makes major purchases (like she did with her car), rides the subway and works out at the local gym.

"I'm not going to be the girl with the private yoga instructor at my house," she says. "I don't want anyone to think, 'Oh, she's famous, she's different than me.'" Still, Chastain, who had a sturdy, down-to-earth upbringing in Northern California with four siblings, a vegan-chef mom and a firefighter dad, can't deny her ubiquity: "I feel like I'm everywhere. But my personal life hasn't changed. I think only three people have come up to me in the past six months.

Which is too bad, because I love to meet people. I wouldn't be mean to them."

Pre-2011 – a year *The New York Times* has dubbed "the Jessica Chastain film festival" – the L.A.-based actress, a Juilliard grad who has shot 11 films since 2006, spent four years convincing her family that she was actually employed.

**"I'M NOT SOME NAIVE 20-YEAR-OLD CLINGING TO THIS AMAZING YEAR," SAYS CHASTAIN.**

"I'd go home for Thanksgiving, and everyone would ask, 'When's your movie coming out?'" the 30-year-old recalls. "It was frustrating, but the lag was good for my career. Directors hadn't seen my work, so I could go into auditions and not carry the baggage of past performances."

Those who have worked with her could not be more lavish with their praise. "She's a celestial talent," says Al Pacino, who cast

Chastain in his film version of *Salome*. Adds Helen Mirren, "She's an amazing actress and an utterly lovely person. She reminded me of myself at her age, serious, eager and committed to doing good work above all." And *Help* director Tate Taylor calls her a "treasure to have on the set."

This winter, Chastain will appear in the Depression-era crime drama *The Wettest County in the World* and an adaptation of Shakespeare's *Coriolanus*. And she's booked for the foreseeable future: In 2012, she'll star on Broadway (the show's title hasn't been announced) and play a punk-band bassist in the horror film *Mamá*; come 2013, she'll star in an as-yet-untitled sci-fi epic opposite Tom Cruise.

And though Chastain, who's now filming *Mamá*, routinely logs four hours of sleep – every day starts with a 5:30 a.m. workout – she's reveling in the attention: "I know this is all gonna go away. I'm not some naive 20-year-old trying to cling to this amazing year. Because a year like this... it's just not normal." NICOLE FREHSÉE

**HOT DICAPRIO**

## CHLOË MORETZ

Proof that Chloë Grace Moretz, 14, has ascended to Hollywood's uppermost echelons: She calls Martin Scorsese "Marty." "Working with Marty was a dream," she says of her turn in Scorsese's forthcoming *Hugo*. "He made me so comfortable." After breakout roles in *Kick-Ass* and *Let Me In*, Moretz has rocketed to the A list (she just wrapped a Tim Burton movie), thanks to beyond-her-years chops. "I choose parts that are scary and different," she says. "Everything I do, I try and stretch my emotional capability. Doing anything else would be boring."

JONAH WEINER



## NICOLAS WINDING REFN

**HOT DIRECTOR**

*This Danish genre auteur is taking Hollywood one sleek, splattery movie at a time*

NICOLAS WINDING REFN IS A dark, slightly camp European director given to dark, slightly camp European pronouncements. For instance: "Art is violent," he intones in his steely Danish accent. "Art should penetrate you." This philosophy will surprise no one who saw *Drive*, the Ryan Gosling action vehicle for which Refn won Best Director at Cannes, in which a boot penetrates a skull, like, a hundred times. Refn willingly cops to aestheticizing the sight of, say, a head exploding into a pulpy red supernova: "I shoot the images that arouse me." He's about to

Refn with his new muse, Ryan Gosling



start his next movie, *Only God Forgives*, starring Gosling, his budding muse ("It's as though we have a telepathic connection"), and they're also set to remake *Logan's Run*, featuring a budget "bigger than I've ever imagined, times a billion." That could buy a lot of fake blood. Refn chuckles: "It could." J.W.