

## Cave album and film reveal raw pain of son's death

Australian alternative rocker Nick Cave yesterday released the first album since the death of his teenage son last year, with an accompanying documentary laying bare his trauma. Arthur Cave died after falling from a cliff in his hometown of Brighton, south England in July 2015, as his singer father was recording with his band "Nick Cave and the Bad Seeds" for the album "Skeleton Tree". Following the accident, Cave called in film director Andrew Dominik to film the remaining sessions and capture some of the singer's poetry and philosophical reflections.

The resulting black-and-white 3D film, "One More Time With Feeling", premiered to the public in cinemas worldwide on Thursday, including at a showing in the intimate surroundings of the Curzon Cinema in Victoria. "It affected me in a way I don't understand," Cave said of his 15-year-old son's death. "I don't have any handle on anything, it's frightening." The film begins in the studio with the recording of the album's first track, "Jesus Alone," a

hypnotically intense scene-setter driven by Cave's spirit-summoning vocals.

Cave's lyrics continue to deal with dark religious imagery and death, common throughout his previous 15 albums with the Bad Seeds, uniting the celestial with the mundane and the poetic with the profane. But Cave admitted that a new-found "helplessness" had taken over, heard most



Nick Cave

clearly on album track "I Need You," whose uplifting piano chords and melody mask the bleak refrain "nothing really matters".

### 'Anxiety, anguish and dread'

The 58-year-old also talked about becoming "diminished" in older age, particularly during a studio session in which he worries about forgetting chords and losing his voice. The theme of loss runs throughout the album, and is heard starkly in the line "all the things we love, we love, we lose" on the apocalyptic "Anthocene", while title track "Skeleton Tree" laments a modern world where "nothing is for free". The former "Birthday Party" singer also revealed on camera feelings of "anxiety, anguish and dread" since the accident. "You have to renegotiate your position in the world, you change from a known person into an unknown person, overnight," he explained, adding he would never normally have allowed cameras to follow him around.

Cave doesn't mention the death of his son in the album, but directly broaches the issue of mortality on "Girl in Amber", whose sustained strings are overlaid by Tom Waits-sounding vocals. His son's name is mentioned only a handful of times during the film, although his death is poignantly explored through interviews with Cave's wife Susie and the appearance of Arthur's twin Earl.

However, there are moments of lightness and dark humor in both the film and the album, particularly through the bright piano on "Rings of Saturn", and the lullaby vocals on "Distant Sky". But the singer told director Dominik that relief was temporary. "Time is elastic," he said. "We can go away from the event but at some point the elastic snaps and we always come back to it." — AFP



Chris Pratt, from left, Denzel Washington and Antoine Fuqua participate in "The Magnificent Seven" press conference on day 1 of the Toronto International Film Festival at the TIFF Bell Lightbox.

## Denzel, Fuqua debut a more modern 'Magnificent Seven'

The 41st Toronto International Film Festival got underway Thursday with Antoine Fuqua's remake of "The Magnificent Seven," an old-school Western with more modern faces. The film's Thursday night premiere kicked off North America's largest film festival, which is set to unspool some 300 films over the next 10 days. On tap are premieres of many of the fall's top films, including the Los Angeles musical "La La Land," the oil rig explosion docudrama "Deepwater Horizon" and Oliver Stone's "Snowden."

"The Magnificent Seven," starring Denzel Washington and Chris Pratt, is a remake of the John Sturges' 1960 Western, which itself was a remake of Kurosawa's "Seven Samurai." For Fuqua, who grew up loving Westerns, it was important for him to cast a diverse group of actors to welcome moviegoers to a genre not known for inclusiveness. "For me, being black, I didn't see anyone that really looked like me," Fuqua said in an interview. "But I still loved the Westerns

because as a kid, I wasn't identifying color. I was just identifying my heroes, John Wayne and those guys."

In Fuqua's "Magnificent Seven," the hero is unquestionably Washington, who plays a fearsome black-clad bounty hunter. It's the actor's first Western, and if nothing else, "The Magnificent Seven" unites one of today's true movie stars with Hollywood's most iconic, if somewhat out of favor, genres. "I had a vision of him on that horse," said Fuqua, whose "Training Day" and "The Equalizer" starred Washington. "That's what made it fun for me. Right away, when we were talking about the different cast members, I said, 'You know, I'd love to see Denzel on a horse.' Everybody in the room got quiet. They said, 'Do you think he'll do it?' I said, 'Well, I'll fly to New York and find out.'"

Speaking to reporters Thursday, Washington said he never saw Sturges' film, but he did watch "Seven Samurai." "I didn't know how it would help me," said Washington. "It allowed me to do whatever I wanted to do instead of trying to not

do what maybe somebody else did." For Fuqua, watching the Western morph over time, particularly with Sergio Leone's spaghetti Westerns, was what most enthralled him: "I fell in love with them watching them change." He hopes his film - which also stars Ethan Hawke, Byung-hun Lee, Manuel Garcia-Rulfo and Vincent D'Onofrio - helps open up the genre to others, and more accurately reflects the diversity of the Old West.

"People say, 'Oh, Westerns are hard to sell.' Well, they're hard to sell if everybody in the Western looks one way," says Fuqua. "You're not going to get the Asian market excited about it if all the Chinese guy does is work on the railroad. And I won't get black people to see it if it is the slaves. Even white people get tired of seeing the same guy over and over as well. Everyone wants something to make it fresh. It's a great genre and I thought it was dying for no good reason." "I hoping if this is successful, we'll get to see more Westerns - more diverse and interesting Westerns," he said. — AP

## Ukraine names Kiev as Eurovision 2017 host city

Ukraine announced yesterday that Kiev would host the Eurovision 2017 song contest after its singer Jamala won this year's competition. After a month-long battle between three semifinalists - Kiev, Odessa and Dnipro - the National Television Company of Ukraine (NTU) lifted the veil of secrecy at a press conference that had been rescheduled several times. "Kiev was selected to be the host city of the Eurovision 2017", NTU chief Zurab Alasania announced. Jamala won with a tribute to her Tatar people's deportation from Russian-annexed Crimea in 1944 - a song that incensed Russia. Culture Minister Yevgen Nyshchuk said security concerns influenced the jury, who gave 19 votes to Kiev, two to the Black Sea port of Odessa, but none to Dnipro, which is less than 100 kilometers (60 miles) from Ukraine's eastern war zone.

"The issue of security in Trans-Dniester affected Odessa, and its proximity to the frontline affected Dnipro," Nyshchuk said. Trans-Dniester is a pro-Russian breakaway region of Ukraine's southwestern neighbor, Moldova. Cash-strapped Ukraine



Representatives of Organizing Committee of "Eurovision-2017" in Ukraine Zurab Alasania (left), Head of the Ukrainian National Television Company, and Minister of Culture of Ukraine Yevhen Nyshchuk give a press conference in Kiev. — AFP

intends to spend at least 1.2 billion hryvnias (\$45 million, 33 million euros) on the show itself and to upgrade the Kiev arena at which the globally-televised event will be held. — AFP