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DiCaprio tackles climate crisis in satire 'Don't Look Up'



Leonardo DiCaprio

Leonardo DiCaprio said he signed up for Netflix's star-studded film about a comet threatening to wipe out life on Earth because it is an urgent analogy for the climate crisis. The dark satire "Don't Look Up" stars DiCaprio and Jennifer Lawrence as astronomers whose warnings about imminent catastrophe fall on deaf ears in a starkly partisan and divided United States led by an incompetent president played by Meryl Streep. Fresh from attending the UN COP26 climate change summit in Glasgow, DiCaprio said Adam McKay's script solved the "next to impossible" problem of making a suspenseful film about a crisis that "evolves over a century."

"How do we as a species, as a society, as a culture, politically, deal with imminent armageddon?" DiCaprio asked a Los Angeles preview screening audience on Thursday. "He had cracked the code, so to speak, on how to bring all the insanity that we as the human race are responding to this crisis, in a two-hour format," he said. The film, also starring Ariana Grande, Cate Blanchett, Mark Rylance and Jonah Hill, hits theaters December 10 before streaming on Netflix from Christmas Eve.

McKay, whose wide-ranging career spans cult comedies "Anchorman" and "Step Brothers" and satirical works "The Big Short"

and "Vice", has become one of Hollywood's most in-demand directors. Reviews for "Don't Look Up" are under embargo, but initial reaction Thursday was effusive, with Variety's Clayton Davis predicting it will make "a seismic impact (pun intended)" on the Oscars race. DiCaprio said he hoped the film would "start to create different conversations, and more people talking about it will push the private sector and the powers that be to make massive change." But he admitted he had "not much" optimism about humanity's ability to resolve the climate crisis.

"Especially after coming back from Glasgow and seeing these commitments that

can be changed by the next wacky administration that might come in and pull out," he warned. Nearly 200 nations came together on a global deal to combat climate change after two weeks of painful negotiation, but fell short of what science says is needed to contain dangerous temperature rises. The planet has "such a limited amount of time and there's such a massive scale that needs to happen so quickly," said DiCaprio. "And if we don't do something, we know the outcome. We know the outcome." — AFP

Twin pandas born in French zoo named Yuandudu and Huanlili

Twin panda cubs born in a French zoo were on Thursday named Yuandudu and Huanlili at a ceremony attended by football star Kylian Mbappe, who has been named the animals' 'godfather'. Paris Saint-Germain star and France Mbappe and Chinese Olympic diving gold medalist Zhang Jiaqi, the 'godmother', were both at the event at the Beauval zoo in Saint-Aignan, central France. The naming of baby pandas is traditionally the prerogative of China's First Lady, but this time Peng Liyuan gave the job to the French public. "More than 122,000 French people connected to our website to choose the names, Yuandudu and Huanlili," from a number of options, zoo director Delphine Delord said. Mbappe and Zhang unveiled a commemorative plaque to mark the occasion.

"It's a great honor to be here 100 days

after the birth of our two wonders," Mbappe told the guests at the naming ceremony. "It's an honor but also a responsibility because, behind it, there is the project to protect this endangered species," he added. Panda reproduction, in captivity or in the wild, is notoriously difficult as experts say few pandas get in the mood or even know what to do when they do. Further complicating matters, the window for conception is small since female pandas are in heat only once a year for about 24-48 hours. Only around 2,000 pandas remain alive in the wild in China, although the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) removed them from the red list of endangered species in 2016. The Beauval cubs, born on August 2 and both females, are the offspring of Yuan Zi and Huan Huan who were loaned to France by China a decade ago. The panda parents also had twins back in 2017, but only one survived.

"The names Yuandudu and Huanlili are inspired by their parents' mes, Yuan Zi and Huan Huan. They evoke the wish for healthy growth for the babies and symbolise the deep ties between China and France," said Delord. Forty-five percent of the online votes were for those names, she added. — AFP



This photograph shows the panda cub twins named Yuandudu and Huanlili at The Beauval Zoo in Saint-Aignan-sur-Cher, central France. — AFP

Photographer whose images helped define 70s rock dies at 72

British music photographer Mick Rock, whose iconic images of artists including David Bowie and the Sex Pistols earned him the nickname "the man who shot the 70s", has died aged 72, his family said Friday. "It is with the heaviest of hearts that we share our beloved psychedelic renegade Mick Rock has made the Jungian journey to the other side," his family said in a message posted on his Twitter page. "He was a photographic poet—a true force of nature who spent his days doing exactly what he loved, always in his own delightfully outrageous way."



British photographer Mick Rock

"He was a mythical creature; the likes of which we shall never experience again." Johnny Marr, guitarist with British indie group The Smiths, tweeted "Goodbye for now my friend and comrade Mick Rock. The visionary poet," along with a picture of the pair. Rock was born in west London in 1948 and graduated from the prestigious Cambridge University with a degree in Medieval and Modern Languages. He developed an interest in photography while at university, shooting local gigs. Rock went on to create album covers for US rock legends Lou Reed and Iggy Pop along with country star Waylon Jennings. Other subjects included rapper Snoop Dogg, Daft Punk, Debbie Harry, Ozzie Osbourne and close friend David Bowie. —AFP

Salma Hayek receives Hollywood Walk of Fame Star

A star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame was unveiled Friday honoring Salma Hayek Pinault for a career that has included receiving a best actress Oscar nomination. Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti, Adam Sandler and Oscar-winning director Chloe Zhao will join Hayek Pinault in speaking at the 6 p.m. ceremony in front of the box office of TCL Chinese Theatre Hollywood IMAX. Hayek Pinault and Sandler appeared together in the 2010 comedy "Grown Ups" and its 2013 sequel "Grown Ups 2." Zhao directed Hayek Pinault in the recently

released Marvel film "Eternals."

Due to coronavirus protocols, there is no longer a dedicated area for fans to witness Walk of Fame ceremonies. Fans were encouraged to watch a stream of the ceremony on the Walk of Fame's website. "After the pandemic is resolved, we hopefully will go back to normalcy for our ceremonies with fan pits," Martinez said.

The star is the 2,709th since the completion of the Walk of Fame in 1961 with the first 1,558 stars. The ceremony comes five days before the release of Hayek Pinault's latest film, "House of Gucci," portraying crafty psychic Pina Auriemma, who Patrizia Reggiani (Lady Gaga) forges a dangerous alliance with after her husband, Maurizio Gucci (Adam Driver), the head of the family's fashion house, files for divorce. "Pina was a very interesting woman," Hayek Pinault said. "She's clairvoyant. A psychic. She can tell the future. When she and Patrizia meet, they immediately connect, and something that starts as a professional relationship becomes a very strong, important friendship for both of them." Roberto Bentivegna, who wrote the screenplay for the three-decade saga

of the family behind the Italian fashion empire with Becky Johnston, said Hayek Pinault "brought a real humanity to Pina, a woman who really comes to care about Patrizia."

"She could've been played her in a very cynical way as someone who is just using Patrizia for her money, Bentivegna said. "Instead, Salma and Lady Gaga developed a real chemistry, both on screen and off. It was fantastic." Born September 2, 1966 in Coatzacoalcos, in the Mexican state of Veracruz, Hayek Pinault began her career in 1988 in the Televisa telenovela "Un Nuevo Amanecer." The following year she portrayed the title role in the Televisa telenovela "Teresa" about a beautiful and intelligent young woman desperately seeking to flee from her impoverished neighborhood.

Hayek Pinault moved to the Los Angeles area in 1991, appearing in episodes of the syndicated action crime drama "Street Justice," the HBO comedy "Dream On" and the NBC comedy "Nurses" before making her film debut in the 1993 drama "Mi Vida Loca" about

young Mexicanas and Chicanas growing up in then gang-ravaged Echo Park. Hayek Pinault made her feature film debut in "Midaq Alley," a 1995 Mexican film about residents in a lower-middle class neighborhood of Mexico City.

Hayek Pinault began her collaboration with director Robert Rodriguez with the 1995 neo-Western action film "Desperado." She would later appear in his films, "From Dusk Till Dawn," "Once Upon a Time in Mexico," "Spy Kids 3-D: Game Over" and "The Faculty." Hayek Pinault received a best actress Oscar nomination in 2003 for her portrayal of Mexican artist Frida Kahlo in "Frida," which she also produced. Hayek Pinault received an outstanding guest actress in a comedy series Emmy nomination in 2007 for her recurring role of magazine editor Sofia Reyes in the ABC comedy-drama "Ugly Betty," which she also produced. Hayek Pinault also had the recurring role of nurse Elisa Pedrera on the NBC comedy "30 Rock."

—www.nbctv.com



Mexican-US actress Salma Hayek poses on her Hollywood Walk of Fame Star during the unveiling ceremony in Hollywood, California. — AFP photos



Mexican-US actress Salma Hayek (second left) reacts as her Hollywood Walk of Fame Star is unveiled, alongside US actor Adam Sandler (second right), Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti (left) and Chinese filmmaker Chloe Zhao (top second left).

Biden saves two turkeys from Thanksgiving ovens

In a light-hearted end to a drama-filled week, Joe Biden issued the traditional presidential pardon to two turkeys Friday, saving them from heading to Thanksgiving tables. "Every American wants the same thing. They want to be able to look the turkey in the eye and tell them everything's going to be OK," Biden said in a comic spin on one of his trademark phrases about showing empathy for fellow Americans. "And so folks, it's going to be OK," he said.

The two large white turkeys named Peanut Butter and Jelly won their clemency in a Rose Garden ceremony ahead of next Thursday's national Thanksgiving holiday, when families traditionally gather around tables laden with roast turkey. Biden quipped that the lucky

birds had been chosen in a "turkey presidential primary" contest "based on their temperament, appearance and, I suspect, vaccination status." Referring to the COVID vaccine booster shots that his government is encouraging Americans to take ahead of winter, he said, "instead of getting basted, these two turkeys are getting boosted." Peanut Butter and Jelly are headed next to a new life at Purdue University in Indiana.

Biden, who underwent a lengthy annual medical exam Friday, was set to fly to his family home in Delaware for the weekend and his 79th birthday on Saturday. Earlier Friday, the House of Representatives passed his huge social spending bill, which now goes to the Senate. This follows Biden's signing of a historic infrastructure package, already passed by Congress, on Monday. —AFP



US President Joe Biden pardons the turkey 'Peanut Butter' as Andrea Welp (right), turkey grower from Indiana, and Phil Seger, chairman of the National Turkey Federation, look on during the White House Thanksgiving turkey pardon in the Rose Garden of the White House in Washington, DC. — AFP photos



Turkeys, Peanut Butter and Jelly, wait for the arrival of US President Joe Biden during the White House Thanksgiving turkey pardon.