

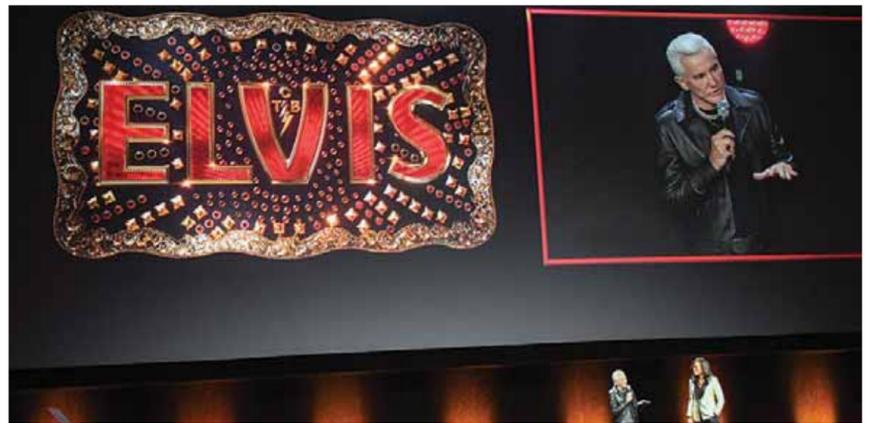
US actor Dwayne "The Rock" Johnson receives the "Entertainment Icon of the Decade Award" onstage during the Warner Bros Pictures "The Big Picture" presentation during CinemaCon 2022.



(From left) British actress Helen Mirren, US actors Jack Dylan Grazer, Asher Angel and Zachary Levi and US actress Aisha Tyler speak onstage during the Warner Bros Pictures "The Big Picture" presentation during CinemaCon 2022.



Australian Producer/Director James Wan and US actress Aisha Tyler (right) speak onstage during the Warner Bros Pictures "The Big Picture" presentation during CinemaCon 2022.



Australian director Baz Luhrmann speaks onstage during the Warner Bros Pictures "The Big Picture" presentation during CinemaCon 2022.

The Rock brings superheroes to CinemaCon as 'Elvis' returns to Vegas

Dwayne "The Rock" Johnson topped a superhero-packed bill as Warner Bros presented its upcoming slate of blockbusters at CinemaCon on Tuesday, while Baz Luhrmann's "Elvis" graced the Las Vegas casino stage at the movie industry summit. Johnson-Hollywood's top-grossing actor-appeared unannounced to promote his upcoming DC film "Black Adam" at the annual gathering, where Warner bosses also confirmed a sequel to Robert Pattinson's "The Batman" is on the way.



US actress Quintessa Swindell speaks onstage during the Warner Bros Pictures "The Big Picture" presentation during CinemaCon.

Further superhero sequels "Shazam! Fury of the Gods" and "Aquaman and the Lost Kingdom," as well as new standalone film "The Flash," were also presented to movie theater executives and managers, who gather each year at Caesars Palace casino to be courted by Hollywood's top studios and A-listers. Johnson described his character in "Black Adam" as "the Dirty Harry of the superhero world," with



US actress Aisha Tyler speaks onstage during the Warner Bros Pictures "The Big Picture" presentation during CinemaCon 2022.

ambiguous morals.

"Heroes don't kill people," says one villain in never-before-seen footage, to which Black Adam replies: "Well I do." Warner and Johnson are banking on "Black Adam"-out in October-becoming a major draw for their DC superhero film universe, which has grossed billions without reaching the heights of the rival and record-breaking Marvel films such as "Avengers: Endgame." Johnson surprised attendees by pretending to speak from Hawaii via video, before suddenly appearing in the Caesars Palace ballroom.

'The original superhero'

Beyond the superhero fare, which dominates modern megaplexes, Baz Luhrmann took the stage to discuss "Elvis." Luhrmann called the film-out in June, starring Austin

Butler as Elvis Presley and Tom Hanks as his domineering manager-as less a biopic and more the tale of "America in the 1950s, 60s and 70s."

"At the center of culture, for the good, the bad and the ugly, is the figure Elvis Presley," said Luhrmann, describing the music icon as "the original superhero." "What this movie is about is America in those three epochs: Elvis the rebel, Elvis the highest paid actor in Hollywood and Elvis the living legend, the icon, trapped in that hotel not 10 minutes from here," he told the Las Vegas crowd.

Early footage was shown from "Wonka"-starring Timothee Chalamet as Roald Dahl's chocolatier before he opened his factory-and Olivia Wilde's "Don't Worry Darling," a twisty thriller inspired by mind-bending movies such as "The Truman



US actor Noah Centineo speaks onstage during the Warner Bros Pictures "The Big Picture" presentation during CinemaCon 2022.

Show" and "Inception," out in September.

Bowie and body horror

Earlier Tuesday, an experimental new David Bowie documentary featuring never-before-seen footage and the late music superstar's own narration was previewed by indie studio Neon. "Moonage Daydream" will premiere at next month's glitzy Cannes film festival before hitting theaters in September. It is the first film to be approved by Bowie's estate, which gave director Brett Morgen access to thousands of hours of archives. "Bowie cannot be defined. He can be experienced," said Morgen.

"We've crafted 'Moonage Daydream' to be a unique cinematic theatrical experience-to offer audiences that which they can't get from a book or an article." Neither

biopic nor traditional documentary, the film blends Bowie's songs, concert clips, extensive fan footage and a series of surreal, trippy and abstract images.

Neon also previewed "Crimes of the Future" from David Cronenberg, the director of "Crash" and "The Fly," who pioneered the "body horror" genre. The film starring Kristen Stewart, Viggo Mortenson and Lea Seydoux imagines a world in which humans are forced to speed up their evolution with grisly organ transplants and body modifications to survive their changing environment. Cronenberg told AFP the film, which will also premiere at Cannes, was "a difficult film maybe, an extreme film, an unusual film." CinemaCon runs until Thursday. —AFP

Veteran Hong Kong actor found dead in quarantine hotel

Kenneth Tsang, a stalwart of the "Golden Age" of Cantonese cinema, was found dead in a Hong Kong hotel room on Wednesday while undergoing mandatory quarantine after returning from overseas, local media reported. Tsang, 87, was discovered by staff in a quarantine hotel two days after returning from Singapore, multiple outlets including Now News, the South China Morning Post and Oriental Daily said.

In an incident report, police said they were informed a "body" had been found by hotel staff around noon (0400 GMT). The deceased was an 87-year-old male surnamed Tsang, the incident report said. For Hong Kongers and fans of Cantonese cinema, Tsang was a household name thanks to a career that spanned six decades with

more than 200 acting credits listed on film database IMDB. He was also the face of a Hong Kong hair dye brand for four decades.



File photo shows Hong Kong actor Kenneth Tsang smiling as he walks down the red carpet at the 31st Hong Kong Film Awards. — AFP

While he began acting in earnest in the 1960s, many of his most memorable roles came during the golden period of Hong Kong cinema in the 1980s and 1990s with films like The Killer, Supercop, Peking Opera Blues and Once A Thief. He was also one of the few Hong Kong stars of that era to cross into Hollywood with supporting roles, mostly villains, in movies like The Replacement Killers, Die Another Day-a James Bond film-Anna and The King

and Memoirs of A Geisha.

In what may well prove to be his last interview, Tsang told the Sin Chew Daily he had completed a two-week trip to Malaysia and had flown back to Hong Kong via Singapore. He described relishing time spent solo travelling after being looked after by others for almost all previous trips in his life. "I will quarantine if I must," Tsang told the Chinese language Malaysian newspaper which ran a photo of the actor beaming as he held a piece of durian fruit.

Like China, Hong Kong has stuck to a strict zero-COVID strategy that has kept borders mostly closed throughout the pandemic with compulsory quarantine in designated hotels for returning residents. For much of last year, people had to complete 21-days in quarantine although it has more recently been reduced to seven days. Last week Hong Kong lifted a ban on non-residents flying to the city that had been in place for two years. However, the return of widespread tourism or frictionless business travel in the short term future is unlikely. Airlines are only flying a handful of routes to Hong Kong compared to before the pandemic and carriers that bring in more than five coronavirus cases face a five-day ban on that route under current rules. — AFP

British DJ Tim Westwood accused of sexual misconduct

Several women have accused veteran British hip-hop DJ Tim Westwood of predatory sexual behavior or groping, allegations which the radio and former TV presenter on Tuesday strenuously denied. Three women told the BBC and the Guardian newspaper that the former BBC Radio 1 DJ, 64, had abused his position in the music industry to exploit them sexually. Two of the women say they agreed to come to London to discuss their musical

aspirations but were driven to Westwood's flat where he initiated unwanted and unexpected sex.

One of the women was 19 at the time, when Westwood was 53. Another woman who was already in an R&B group said she was subjected to unwanted sex when she met the DJ when she was 17. Four other women accuse the DJ, who was an early champion of hip-hop in the UK, of touching them inappropriately while posing for photographs at events where Westwood was performing. A representative for Westwood said in a statement that the DJ "strongly denies all allegations of inappropriate behavior. "In a career that has spanned 40 years, there have never been any complaints made against him officially or unofficially. —AFP

