

# **BLADE RUNNER**

## **2049**

From Oscar®-nominated director Denis Villeneuve (“Arrival”) comes Alcon Entertainment’s “Blade Runner 2049,” the much-anticipated follow-up to the acclaimed film “Blade Runner.”

Thirty years after the events of the first film, a new blade runner, LAPD Officer K, unearths a long-buried secret that has the potential to plunge what’s left of society into chaos. K’s discovery leads him on a quest to find Rick Deckard, a former LAPD blade runner who has been missing for three decades.

“Blade Runner 2049” stars Oscar® nominees Ryan Gosling (“La La Land”) as K, and Harrison Ford (the “Star Wars” films, “Witness”), reprising the role of Rick Deckard. The ensemble cast also includes Ana de Armas (“War Dogs”), Sylvia Hoeks (“Renegades”), Robin Wright (“Wonder Woman”), Mackenzie Davis (“The Martian”), Carla Juri (“Brimstone”), Lennie James (“The Walking Dead”), with Dave Bautista (the “Guardians of the Galaxy” films) and Oscar® winner Jared Leto (“Dallas Buyers Club”).

“Blade Runner 2049” was produced by Oscar® nominees Andrew A. Kosove & Broderick Johnson (“The Blind Side”) and Bud Yorkin & Cynthia Sikes Yorkin. Multiple Oscar® nominee Ridley Scott (“The Martian,” “Gladiator”), who directed the first “Blade Runner,” served as an executive producer, together with Tim Gamble, Frank Giustra, Yale Badik, Val Hill, and Bill Carraro.

Denis Villeneuve directed the film from a screenplay by Hampton Fancher and Michael Green, story by Fancher, based on characters from the novel *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep* by Philip K. Dick.

“Blade Runner 2049” marks the third collaboration between Villeneuve and director of photography Roger Deakins, following “Sicario” and “Prisoners,” for which Deakins received two of his 13 Oscar® nominations. The behind-the-scenes creative team also includes Oscar®-winning production designer Dennis Gassner (“Bugsy,” “Spectre,” “Into the Woods”), Oscar®-nominated editor Joe Walker (“12 Years a Slave,” “Sicario”), and costume designer Renée April

("Sicario," "Arrival"). The music is composed by Oscar® winner Hans Zimmer ("Dunkirk," "The Lion King") and Benjamin Wallfisch ("IT," "Annabelle: Creation").

Alcon Media Group presents, in association with Columbia Pictures, a Ridley Scott/Alcon Entertainment/Bud Yorkin production, in association with Torridon Films and 16:14 Entertainment, a Denis Villeneuve film. Opening in 2D and 3D in select theatres and IMAX, "Blade Runner 2049" will be distributed domestically by Warner Bros. Pictures, a Warner Bros. Entertainment Company, and internationally by Sony Pictures Entertainment.

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## **ABOUT THE PRODUCTION**

*I had your job once...*

"What defines a human being?" That is the question posed by director Denis Villeneuve. And the surprising answers suggested in his new film, "Blade Runner 2049," challenge people's notions of who we are...and where we are headed.

It's not the first time the value—and values—of humanity have been questioned.

Thirty-five years ago, the groundbreaking futuristic film "Blade Runner" hit theatre screens for the first time. Directed by the legendary Ridley Scott and based on the Philip K. Dick novel *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?*, the movie thrust audiences into a dystopian future unlike anything they had ever experienced.

Back then, no one could have imagined how "Blade Runner" would go on to reverberate through modern culture, pioneering what became an entirely new genre: neo-noir cyberpunk. Today, Scott's visionary masterpiece is heralded as one of the best and most important motion pictures of all time, but its impact has gone beyond filmdom, to television, music, art, fashion, and even university courses.

Now, after more than three decades, "Blade Runner 2049" returns us to the world that has enthralled generations of fans in a film that is at once a long-awaited follow-up and a much-anticipated standalone moviegoing experience.

Villeneuve, who counts himself among the original film's devotees, says, "I vividly remember seeing 'Blade Runner' for the first time and being stunned by what I think is amongst the most powerful openings in the history of cinema—flying over the Los Angeles of 2019, and

seeing that landscape of oil factories. Ridley Scott presented such a strong image of what could be our future that was at the same time so seductive and so frightening.

“Aesthetically, ‘Blade Runner’ was a revolution,” he continues, “blending two genres that, at first glance, don’t go together—science fiction and film noir. It was something never seen before, and it deeply influenced me. It was part of my film education even before I knew I would become a filmmaker.”

Scott says that even, with all of its difficulties, he could never have predicted how iconic one of his earliest major features would come to be. “You don’t think about that when you’re in the midst of it,” he comments, “but I knew for sure we had made something really special.”

In the time since, however, it became apparent that Scott’s film *had* predicted a range of societal concerns that have grown ever-more prevalent. And with our planet now on the cusp of when “Blade Runner” was set, it seems more revelatory, and more relevant, than ever—foreshadowing issues of urban decay, climate change, genetic engineering, overpopulation, the divides of social and economic strata and more.

Harrison Ford turned the movie’s central character of Rick Deckard into one of his most indelible onscreen portraits. Returning to the role, he offers, “It certainly was prescient in many ways. I think as technology developed and people began to see some of the issues the film talked about play out in real life, there was even more reason to accept the themes that ‘Blade Runner’ dealt with.”

Ryan Gosling, who plays the role of an LAPD detective called K in “Blade Runner 2049,” remarks, “The original film is haunting; it’s hard to shake. It asks you to question your idea of what it means to be human. It makes you question your ability to recognize the hero from the villain. It’s a nightmarish vision of the future that’s somehow grounded and feels possible, and yet it’s presented in this romantic, dreamlike way that sticks with you. Time has proven its specialness.”

Producer Andrew A. Kosove agrees. “‘Blade Runner’ was ahead of its time in so many ways. With its thought-provoking narrative and signature visual design—which Ridley Scott brilliantly conceived—the movie permeated our culture and changed our perceptions about the role of technology and about our future. I think that’s why it is so revered.”

That reverence understandably gave Kosove and his Alcon partner, producer Broderick Johnson, pause when they were approached about the possibility of a new “Blade Runner” film. Johnson confirms, “We definitely had to think about taking on such an ambitious project, but we both loved the original so we decided we had to go for it.”

The idea of filming a new chapter of the “Blade Runner” story had come to Alcon through producer Bud Yorkin, who had been on the producing team of the original film, and his wife, producer Cynthia Sikes Yorkin. She relates, “It was a dream of Bud’s for many years to continue the story and I was so happy to support him in that pursuit. Unfortunately, he passed away before he could see the completion of the film, but it was a wonderful gift for him to know it was going to be done. And Andrew and Broderick were so respectful of Bud and involved us in every aspect of the production from the beginning. They poured their hearts into this project, and I couldn’t have asked for better partners to realize this dream of ours.”

The initial step forward was to go back to the source. Kosove explains, “The most important thing was for me and Broderick to go to London to meet with Ridley Scott.”

“Ridley was really excited about the prospect of a new film,” Johnson adds, “and said he had ideas that he had been gestating for years...thinking about how they could be developed within the original mythology.”

Scott, who came on board as an executive producer, affirms, “‘Blade Runner’ was always meant to be a standalone feature, but we knew even then there was more story to tell than the two hours would allow.”

Scott reached out to screenwriter Hampton Fancher, who had co-written the screenplay of the original “Blade Runner.” Fancher recounts, “It was serendipity because I had literally just finished a short story set in the ‘Blade Runner’ universe. I read Ridley just the first paragraph and it was obvious what it was. All he said was, ‘Can you come to London?’ So that’s how it started.”

Picking up the story, Scott notes, “Hampton didn’t end up writing a conventional script; he wrote a novella, still with his beautiful style of dialogue. Then we brought in Michael Green to turn it into a screenplay, and it evolved from there.”

When the chance to work within the “Blade Runner” mythology came to Green, “I couldn’t say ‘yes’ loud enough or fast enough,” says the self-described avid fan of the original. “Hampton and Ridley had formed the DNA of what a new ‘Blade Runner’ film might be, and then I had the incredible opportunity to flesh out those story elements. There are so many fascinating themes that run through the first film, and one of them is about quantity of life. Among the themes we wanted to explore in ‘Blade Runner 2049’ was *quality* of life. In both movies, there are humans and there are replicants, and though they look very much the same, they’re considered very different because one is born and one is created. And the innate difference between them is someone born is believed to have a soul. But what is the nature of a soul...and is it uniquely human?”

Denis Villeneuve recalls that when he was presented with the completed screenplay, “I was so moved. The amount of trust Alcon had in me, to put this film in my hands...it was one of the greatest compliments of my career.”

Having worked with Villeneuve on the hit drama “Prisoners,” the producers were fully aware of the skills he could bring to the table. “Denis is an amazing filmmaker with a total command of everything he wants to accomplish,” Johnson states. “We knew he would be perfect for this film, not only because of his ability to guide the performances, but also to generate tension and atmosphere, which is strong in all his films. That was essential to making ‘Blade Runner 2049’ because the real magic of the film is its tension, its narrative, and its character-based drama. Denis is one of the best at capturing all of that.”

Villeneuve reveals he had one caveat before agreeing to helm the film. “I needed Ridley Scott’s blessing. That was my only condition.” He needn’t have worried; Scott did more than give his blessing. “He said to me exactly what I needed to hear,” notes the director, “which was that I had total freedom, but if I ever needed him, I could call; he would be available any time. And, in fact, every time I needed him, he was there. I will always be grateful to him.”

In conceiving the overall look of the film, Villeneuve wanted to remain faithful to the spirit of the original. He remarks, “My goal was to honor the film noir aesthetic of the first movie while giving the new film its own identity.”

To that end, the filmmakers emphasize that, while “Blade Runner 2049” follows on the original, it can very much stand on its own. “Even if you’ve never seen the first film, you will have no problem understanding the story,” Yorkin states. “The way it’s written and presented, you can absolutely be very entertained and absorbed in the drama without necessarily knowing everything that came before.”

The filmmakers also had to imagine conditions on the planet three decades hence. Villeneuve clarifies, “‘Blade Runner’ was set in 2019, and it was prophetic in some ways, but we already know our 2019 will be quite different from that. So we made the decision to create our own 2049—to propel the movie into its foreseeable future. The world of ‘Blade Runner 2049’ is an extension of ‘Blade Runner’; it is *not* an extension of reality.”

Out of that understanding, he continues, “came a lot of decisions about design. We saw in ‘Blade Runner’ that nature was collapsing, so in 30 years’ time, Earth is dealing with even more severe climate conditions and that translates to everything from architecture to vehicles to clothing.”

To achieve his vision, Villeneuve teamed behind the camera with cinematographer Roger Deakins, production designer Dennis Gassner, and costume designer Renee April. “We

shared a strong artistic bond because we were all committed to the same idea of honoring what came before,” Villeneuve comments.

“The cast was also very passionate about the project,” he adds, “and I would say the movie owes a lot to all of them, but especially Ryan Gosling and Harrison Ford. They contributed many great ideas and both were my muses on set.”

Gosling and Ford have equal praise for their director. Ford offers, “Denis is a quiet and thoughtful and extremely intelligent guy who takes the time necessary to come up with answers for himself. I found him a great intellectual partner on the film.”

“From my first conversation with Denis, I immediately felt confident,” says Gosling. “All of his instincts were about grounding the film...making it feel truthful. He had a great respect for the original, but he never seemed to allow it to intimidate him. He used his admiration and turned it into inspiration, and I think, as a result, he inspired all of us to do the same.”

Joining Gosling and Ford in the main cast were Ana de Armas as Joi, K’s best friend, confidante and love interest; Sylvia Hoeks as Luv, who works for replicant creator Niander Wallace and is fiercely loyal to him; Robin Wright as K’s boss, LAPD Lieutenant Joshi; Mackenzie Davis as Mariette, a mysterious “doxie” who takes an interest in K; Lennie James as Mr. Cotton, who watches over hundreds of abandoned children and young people and may have answers for K; Dave Bautista as a protein farmer named Sapper Morton; and Jared Leto as the brilliant Niander Wallace, who sees replicants as necessary for the survival of humanity...but he can only make so many.

Filming on “Blade Runner 2049” was accomplished entirely in Hungary, with the production taking up all six soundstages and the backlot at Origo Studios in Budapest; three soundstages at Korda Studios in Etyek; and a number of other locations around the country.

As much as possible, the filmmaking team eschewed CGI and green screens in favor of capturing the action in-camera on practical sets. Villeneuve expounds, “I love to work with real sets, with real objects. It was very important to me to build a world that is tangible around me and the actors so they are living in the setting we’ve created instead of just trying to imagine it.”

For the cast, stepping into the physical environment had the desired result. Gosling attests, “It was incredible to have those sets because, as actors, you can really focus on the internal world of your character since the external world has been so fully realized.”

“It’s like you have this fantastic world around you, but you are always at a human level,” Villeneuve adds. “‘Blade Runner 2049’ is a very intimate story told with a lot of scope.”

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