

crazy in love

anton yelchin may be 'very cynical' about fame, but with his role in romantic indie drama *like crazy*, it's about to become unavoidable. by **steve cummins**. photographed by **hilary walsh**

ANTON YELCHIN LOOKS LIKE he's ready to kill me. Lips pursed, his green eyes narrowing, he scowls when I suggest that signing up to star in *Like Crazy*—a low-budget, largely improvised indie movie with an unknown director—was, on paper, a risky move. Fixing his eyes on mine, there's an intense stare as he tries to suss me out. And then, as quickly as it arrived, it's gone.

It's a telling moment. Later, as we sit back in the sunshine during an abnormally warm August day in Dublin, the 22-year-old actor (who's in Ireland to promote the horror movie *Fright Night*, in which he stars opposite Colin Farrell), will tell me that he doesn't trust people, that his core characteristic is paranoia, that he can be "very cynical" and that guilt is "a profound part" of his personality.

Such open self-analysis is at odds with other Hollywood stars of his ilk, but then there's something different about the Russian-born actor. Dressed in a green Harris Tweed sports jacket over a checked shirt and navy jeans, he's animated, candid, and talkative when faced with questions on his personal life, where others are guarded. Talk to him about his work methods—his obsessive note-taking and his ability to bring extraordinary depth to characters such as Jacob in *Like Crazy* and Porter in *The Beaver*—and he becomes even more engaged, words whizzing from his mouth and hands moving around impatiently.

It's when the conversation turns to his impending stardom, the surge in attention that roles in *Star Trek* and *Terminator Salvation* have brought him, that the

radar: anton yelchin

barriers go up. "I don't give a shit, to put it frankly," he admits. "I'm not the guy who goes to all the parties unless I really wanna get laid or something. That world is so far from what I'm interested in that it doesn't concern me."

Of interest to him or not, fame is something he'll increasingly have to deal with. *Like Crazy*, his 21st movie, is about to make him one of the most talked-about young actors on the planet. The charming romance, which follows two young lovers (Felicity Jones stars opposite him; Jennifer Lawrence has a supporting role), as their relationship is tested by long-distance separation, was a standout hit at this year's Sundance Film Festival. Winning the Grand Jury Prize, audiences wept, critics raved, and Paramount paid a reported \$4 million for the distribution rights. No surprise then that it's already attracting Oscar buzz.

"I'm really proud of that movie—like *really* proud of it," he says. "I'm proud of how the character came together because he's very shut down. To play someone so quiet is really interesting to me. It felt like a really amazing opportunity. The fact that it was an improv film just seemed extraordinary—and not a comedy, it was a drama. So the opportunity to do that, to create a character so completely and have such control over it...I really thought was amazing. I had no question in my mind that I wanted to be a part of it."

Born in 1989, in Leningrad when it was still in the Soviet Union, Yelchin moved to Los Angeles when he was just six months old. His parents, Irina Korina and Viktor Yelchin, were stars of the Leningrad Ice Ballet. They qualified for the 1972 Winter Olympics in figure-skating pairs but were barred from participating by the Soviet government because they were Jewish.

Wealthy by Soviet Union standards, they gave up everything to come to America.

"I have tremendous respect and admiration for my parents beyond anyone that I've met or will ever meet, simply because they're beautiful, strong people," Yelchin says, his eyes darting around the room. "The amount of suffering that they went through in the Soviet Union and in the kind of moral, emotional, intellectual pressure and fear of coming to a place where you don't speak a word of the language...I can't even begin to imagine what that feeling is, that fear. I almost think it's like standing in front of an abyss, and you're just like 'OK, I'm going to leap in.'"

His parents' experience has had a profound impact on the young actor. There's a sense, though, that he bears an unwanted weight of his ancestry: You get the feeling he'd love to shake the tag brought on by his "very Russian-sounding name."

"I don't think I'm so much embarrassed as just...I was born there and moved when I was six months old. So when people approach me and say, 'Oh, you're Russian,' I say, 'No, I'm American.' To say that I was molded by Russia as opposed to the 22 years that I've spent in the United States is kind of silly. I mean, I'm sure there's probably a lot of Russian things about me that are deep-seated."

Time spent reading Russian literature has helped him identify these latent traits, and one of them, his paranoia, no doubt helped him mold the character of Jacob as he delved into his tumultuous emotions, including "closeted jealousy, and suspicion that you don't want to put out in the open because that's bad."

"It's more about people...relationships with people," he continues when asked if his trust issues manifest in his working life. "I don't see reality as concrete. Not in the sense of 'Am I real or not,' but there's so many layers to what is actually happening everywhere and people's motivations. Not because of the work I do, I just mean in general, in human contact." Only on set, he says, do any misgivings he has evaporate. Movies mean everything to him. "There's only a couple of things in my life that I love," he admits. "My family, movies, and animals—there's just nothing else that interests me, other than movies. Philosophy and history, cultural theory—all of that revolves around my interests in movies. I fucking love movies."



SOUNDCHECK

future islands

on the water

THRILL JOCKEY

On the Water opens with the sound of wind chimes tinkling in the breeze, and ocean waves crash throughout. Paired with uplifting dance beats and the hints of Calypso they effectively employed on debut full-length *In Evening Air*, it's a dreamy soundscape that offsets frontman Samuel T. Herring's nicotine-stained operatics. Releasing the album at the beginning of fall only heightens the effects of the wistful, yearning songs that spin tales of unrequited love and lost youth. "Do you believe in love? Hold your tongue," Herring croons on opener "Before the Bridge" with all the diva-tude of Alison Moyet and the confronting rasp of Henry Rollins. It's these paradoxes that make *Future Islands* such a compelling proposition, and *On the Water* such a nourishing album. NATALIE SHUKUR



CAGED ANIMALS

SOUNDCHECK

caged animals

eat their own

LUCKY NUMBER

Contrary to their oh-so-indie-rock moniker, Brooklyn-based four piece Caged Animals don't seem to be holding anything back. The band's quirky, ramshackle pop music bounces from spacious and trippy to tightly wound and full of sunshine. The best tracks are also the most traditionally feel-good: "This Summer I'll Make it Up to You" is classic surf rock, filled with handclaps and rubbery distortion, and "The NJ Turnpike" is straight doo-wop built for the future. The album seems a little raw in parts, and some lyrics verge on the ludicrous—on first single and album standout "Teflon Heart," vocalist Vincent Cacchione rhymes "cinema" with "tarantula" and then croons, "you took a Zipcar to utopia/ Made me watch *Magnolia*/ Told me crazy stories partly truth and make believe"—but that only makes this weird group of animals that much more endearing. EMILY TEMPLE



BOOKMARK

tim barber

untitled photographs

OWNOW

It's important to understand two things in particular about Tim Barber, explains former *Vice* editor-in-chief Jesse Pearson, in an essay included in the first comprehensive collection of the photographer's work: "He is funny and also he is attuned to pathos," Pearson writes of Barber, who founded the online gallery *Tiny Vices* in 2005. "On a gut level, he understands the comedy-tragedy connection." It's an observation that rings true in each individual photograph, and furthermore, in the juxtaposition of each work in the collection. Flip from a trashed campsite to a newborn gasping for air to a man standing on the edge of a cliff, the camera pointed at something far away, and Barber's intimate understanding of dynamic visual storytelling is as affecting as it is clear. MALLORY RICE

suit by paul smith, shirt by thom browne.