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STYLING: TOMMY HILGREN  
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SHIRT: BURTON; TIE: BURTON

# Stand Up, Mr Nice Guy

Star of two forthcoming Hollywood blockbusters, CHRIS PRATT could have been a wrestler, a shot putter, a businessman or a comedian. He tells JOE ZOGERS about his path to Tinseltown

PHOTOGRAPHY: ELAENOR HETERAS; STYLING: TOMMY HILGREN; HAIR: ANDREW COBBEN; MAKEUP: J. GARRANA; SHIRT: BURTON; TIE: BURTON; ARTISTS: GROOMING: LAUREN HILL; ART: BFF/COO



**I**M BITTING WITH Chris Pratt at one of the outdoor tables of a bakery in the edge of Beverly Hills when a black Cadillac cruises to a screeching halt on the opposite side of the street. The driver rolls down his tinted window, flashes a smile of recognition and says, "Chris! God

miss you, but I'm a good person! And just drives off like your normal fan excitement, even for Hollywood. Then again, Pratt isn't your normal comic star. An American baseball manager once quipped that "nice guys finish last" — a quote since updated to many different words of ilk, including athletes. Pratt is living proof that the opposite can also be true. In a business where backstabbing and sleazy behavior is par for the course, Pratt has ascended to the top by being a nice guy who everyone wants to work with rather than a jerk they're willing to tolerate.

He's not your normal Hollywood interview either. His amuck dab on time at the bakery, riling up by teased rather than with an entourage or driver. The questions flow both ways — Pratt seems just as curious about me as I am about him. And rather than rushing off when the interview concludes, he invites me to stick around for lunch. It's a cliché to say, but he really does flout boyish enthusiasm, as well as genuine gratitude for the success he has achieved this far and a refreshingly humble attitude about the huge roles ahead.

After years of laboring in the shadows — and paying his dues in marginal roles — Pratt is on

the verge of mega-stardom as the lead in the upcoming blockbuster *Guardians of the Galaxy* and *Jurassic World*, the latter sequel spun from Marvel Comics. *Guardians* is slated to make its worldwide debut in August. The fourth in Stephen Spielberg's much-adored dinosaur series, *Jurassic* shoots this summer on location in Hawaii with global release next year.

Pratt first gained traction as deeply conflicted Manager Bright Abbott in the American TV drama *Dawson's Creek* (2002-2006). After a brief stint on *The O.C.*, he snagged a recurring role as the blundering but beloved jacker Andy Dwyer on *Parks and Recreation*. At that point he could have settled for a Broadway-worshipping but hapless career in TV. He's quite satisfied with that fate. Pratt kept pushing the boundaries of his acting ability. He breathetrough music in 2011 with *Minefield*, an acclaimed (and Academy Award-nominated) sports flick in which Pratt also alongside Brad Pitt and Jonah Hill. A year later, he drew rave reviews for his turn as a US Navy SEAL hunting Osama bin Laden in another Oscar darling, the action drama *Zerovater* Theory.

And the role is set to continue. Pratt reportedly landed a multi-movie deal with Warner to appear in three more superhero films, plus comedies in others. *Raiders of the Lost Ark* was recently picked up for a seventh season. And he's earning gigs in other mediums — playing Obi-Wan Kenobi in the *Star Wars* video game and Emmet Brickowski in the *Lego Movie* video game.

Sometimes along the way he managed to meet, fall head over heels for, and eventually marry Anna Faris, the comedic actor who made a name for herself in the *Scrubs* movie franchise. Lost in Translation, and a new US sitcom called *Men, Women & Dogs* was born in 2012.

**DOES IT FEEL LIKE YOU'RE RIDING THE COAST OF A HUGE WAVE?**

I don't know I've been lucky. It's been about 15 years that I've been the crest of a very exciting wave. The volume has been turned up to 10 for like a decade now. My family's expectations were very low. I think. None of us was from Hollywood and I'd booked a *Cliff* TV commercial they were like, "Holy shit! That's so cool." They've been very enthusiastic about each time and I've taken

to get to this point. If you'd have shown me head-butted into this when I was 20 years old I wouldn't have been able to cope. Every small step and accomplishment along the way has led me to a place where I can still actually fuck and be pretty level-headed.

**DO YOU'RE NOT FEARED OUT ABOUT RISKING TO CAREER A \$200-MILLION MOVIE?**

Actually two in a row — \$200 million each. Maybe even half a billion dollars. I guess not really. There's being really nervous. Look, if it was like an original idea of mine, that I'd written the script and said, "Hey, I need to make this movie for you know, nine figures, I would be like, "Oh my God! This has got to work." But Marvel has got great properties. *Jurassic* Park is a great property. I don't feel like I'm flying the plane, it's like I'm a passenger, basically.

**TELL ME A LITTLE ABOUT *PARKS AND RECREATION* AND *GUARDIANS OF THE GALAXY*.**

It's an epic space story that takes place in the far reaches of the galaxy. The first incarnation of the comic book was out in the '70s and there have been a lot of themes as regards the galaxy. This one, from what I understand, is based mostly on the version created by Dan Abnett and Andy Lanning (in 2008) which included the characters Star-Lord, Gamora, Rocket Raccoon, and Drax the Destroyer. It's a space adventure with a ragtag squad coming together for a greater good, but also a bit of a heist, prison-break movie. I can't really think of anything like that that I've seen, and it's going to be cutting edge.

**THESE ARE A LOT OF REALLY GOOD PEOPLE IN THIS MOVIE WITH YOU —**

JACKET AND SUIT: JOHN VARVATOS; GLASSES: JONAS LINDVALL/ARNE





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*"I was certain if I went  
in and auditioned, they  
would tell me I was too  
fat to get the role"*

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**BRADLEY COOPER, VIN DIESEL, ZOE SIZEMAN, GLENN CLOSE, JOHN C. REILLY. REALLY GREAT CO-STAR.**  
It's a testament to Marvel and the company they keep that so many great actors are willing to come in and work on one of these movies. The central core cast is really great, and also the supporting cast. They cast a wide net and fit each role perfectly. But that's what happens with Marvel, just like in the comic books, the way they weave their stories.

**HOW DO YOU GET INVOLVED IN THE MOVIE?**

It was this weird mutant thing because at the time I didn't really know what I wanted to do next. Most of the recognition I'd get from fans on the internet would come from *Parks and Recreation*, and the majority of people saw me as a character actor, more bumbling, a bit of an idiot. You know, comedy first. But on my résumé from the TV show, I've been able to do supporting roles in dramatic things which were a bit different from *Parks and Recreation*. So I didn't know exactly what I wanted to do next. But having done *Zero Dark Thirty* and *Monestad*, these two movies in which I changed myself physically, I knew that opportunities were opening up to work with great film-makers and actually do great movies.

The first time I heard about *Guardians of the Galaxy* I didn't think I was right for the role. I was operating a little bit out of character because I was certain that if I went in and auditioned, they would tell me I was too fat to get the role. So much of what you do in a Marvel movie is just prep work with your body.

**DO YOU BLEW THE WHOLE THING OFF AT FIRST?**

I wasn't very interested and

directed James Gunn wasn't interested in me. I hadn't seen *Zero Dark Thirty* yet, so I didn't know what that movie was going to be like and how my image as an actor was going to change because of that movie. Then I saw *Zero Dark Thirty* and I was like, "Wow! There was some aggressive action-star decisions and for the first time I started to think that I could be an action hero. Which was crazy - and the most proud I've ever felt."

I love action, but I told my manager that if I was going to do action, I wanted to bring something new. I want to bring some comedy to the role. Not funny one-liners. And not an unlikely hero - the guy punches another guy and hurts his hand because he's such a weakling. But generally funny. I told my manager we should think about properties like that or potentially write something ourselves, create our own action comedy. And she said, "What about *Guardians of the Galaxy*? It's kind of like that. I know the property but I didn't know about the character and I didn't know which of these several incarnations of the character it would be. I just knew it was set in space. So I thought maybe it's worth auditioning. That's the very long version of how it first came about."

**AND THEN YOU LANDED AN OTHER MAJOR ROLE IN *JARVIS*. HOW?**

Colin Trevorrow directed a film called *Daddy* for Fox. *Guardians* starring *Parks and Recreation* who plays my TV wife. So he was on my radar and I was on his radar. I read the original movies and then I heard they were making *Jarvis* world and they want to meet me and I was like "Great! Let's go talk about this." There was no script - all of this stuff is so under lock and key nowadays. I just sat down with Colin and about 10 minutes into it I was like, "I am going to do this movie!"

We're shooting in Hawaii and I knew in about a week, My wife and baby are going to come with me. Which is great because I spent the whole *Guardians of the Galaxy* shoot away from them - about six months in London, which was tough.

**HAWAII IS WHERE YOUR MOVIE CAREER ACTUALLY STARTED.**

Yeah, it will be exactly 14 years to the day since I showed up from Hawaii that I'm going back to there to make the film. My Mom thought I was playing a prank on her. I called her and left a message "Mom, I'm going to LA to be in a movie."

I met the director and she's cast me in this movie. Call me back. I didn't have a phone at the time I had to leave messages and someone would call my friend. I didn't even have a house I lived in and I lived in a van.

**DO THE STORIES IN THERE YOU WERE WAITING TABLES AT BONA FIDE SUPER COOL. DID HAWAII AND THE DANCE CHOREO OFFERED YOU A JOB? DID YOU THINK YOU WAS ACTING?**  
She just said, "You're cute. Do you act?" I was like, "Fuck yeah, put me in a movie."

**HAD YOU DONE ANY ACTING BEFORE THAT?**

I'd done maybe these plays since high school and several plays growing up. I did theatre in community college. I did a theatre class and I did a guitar class. And I did stand-up comedy. I always wanted to be an actor, but I had zero avenues to get in.

**WHERE WAS THE LAST TIME YOU DID STAND-UP?**

About eight or nine years ago. I did some open-mike nights in LA. If I hadn't started booking work, it's sure I'd have pursued it more.

**WHAT'S THE QUALITY TO HONORING PERFORMING IN FRONT OF PEOPLE?**

I won outstanding actor as a sixth grader for my role as the villain in an original one-act melodrama. But my brother was the first in our family to do a play. He was in second grade and I was either in kindergarten or hadn't started school. I saw his perform as *Boo Bear* in this Christmas special during the time we lived in Alaska, and I remember my mom crying watching his perform. He brought down the house, he was so good. I remember thinking the coolest thing you could do is get on stage and perform. So every time a play

JACKET: BILLY STEIN  
T-SHIRT: JOHN THORNTON CO.  
JEANS: L'ETAT D'ART  
SHIRT: L'ETAT D'ART



JUST THE BEST OF HIM: CHRIS PRATT'S  
 SNEAKY SEX-UP SOULNESS —  
 AND HOW HE GAINED THE  
 ROCKY BOYFAT CALIBER



## "I spent at least a year of my life pretending to be Jim Carrey"

would come up, I'd audition for it. Basically anything my brother did I wanted to do. He was like my idol. He's my inspiration. I was the last of our brother class and the leading class was in charge of all our assemblies, and with my brother we'd perform these song-and-dance numbers, like "Glee" or Michael Jackson's "Thriller," or sketches we ripped off from *Jim Carrey* or *Saturday Night Live*. Jim Carrey was my hero growing up. I spent at least a year of my life pretending to be Jim Carrey.

**YOU WERE ALSO A PRETTY GOOD ATHLETE.**

Athletics was the biggest part of my upbringing. I played football, basketball, wrestling and track. I did a lot of it. I thought I'd go to college for football, but then I just got into shows and my football coach was the throwing coach, and I got really good at shot put.

**BUT YOU ACCIDENTALLY GOT SHIPPED TO HAWAII?**

Yeah, really ironic when I had to pay bills. I didn't have money for college, so because a door-to-door salesman for two years, selling orange car stickers in Washington State, it was one of these schemes that if you worked really hard, one day you could open your own office. And I worked really hard and opened my own office in Colorado when I was about 19. Took that on for about six or seven months, and then just lost my ass. My mom had to fly me home. Nonetheless, I learned skills about rejection and it trained me for this destiny I had to come to Hollywood. One of my best friends had been living in Hawaii since high school. He heard that I'd moved back to my hometown. He bought me a one-way ticket to Hawaii and said, "Come hang out on

the beach with us. And so I did. I met Rae Dawn Chong a year later and came to Hollywood.

**THAT WOULD BE MORE OR LESS CHASING AND ACTING. BUT THEN YOU GOT YOUR BIG BREAK IN EVERWOOD.**

It's very proud of it. There was really good acting and great people. It was a very good example of a melodrama and a story that connects really hard to emotional relationships. On the surface, if you broadened it, it could sound cheesy. And with the wrong execution, it could have been cheesy. But because the acting, all of the writing, was all very earnest I think it worked. You had these young kids dealing with their parents, but you also had these parents dealing with their kids. Depending on who you see, you can essentially see the point of view of either.

**HOW CLOSE WAS GROWING UP IN REAL-LIFE LAKE STEVEN, WASHINGTON TO GROWING UP IN THE FICTIONAL TOWN IN EVERWOOD?**

Not too dissimilar. They're both small towns. I played a character, Bright Abbott, who had money, though. His dad was a doctor, his mom was the mayor. There were kids like Abbott where I grew up, but I wasn't one of them. But they weren't too dissimilar. Small town, family oriented.

**YOUR WIFE GREW UP IN A SIMILAR TOWN NOT FAR AWAY FROM LAKE STEVEN. HOW DID YOU MEET MISS ANNA?**

We met at a table read for a movie we were doing together called *Take Me Home Tonight*. Actually I first "met" her watching *Sassy Movie*. I was a huge fan of the *Wayans* brothers and I loved *Living Color*. So when *Sassy Movie* came out, I was a big fan. That's how I first became aware of Anna.

**DID YOU HAVE THE IDEA FOR RED TENT?**

I thought she was really funny, which is rare for beautiful women. But I wasn't until I met her that I got the idea for her. It's funny, because when I looked the movie, I immediately Googled her. I knew her face from *Sassy Movie*, but I didn't know what her name was. So it was like, "Oh my God! It's that girl." Then I found out she was from Edmonds, Washington, which is 20 minutes from where I grew up. And so the day of the table

read, I wore a *Seattle Seahawks* shirt. And she said, "Why are you wearing a *Seahawks* shirt? Are you a fan?" I was like, "Yeah, I'm from Seattle." Really funny. I ended up telling her after we'd been married a couple of years and she said, "You tricked me!" We did the movie together, then because friends and then over time fell in love.

**HOW DID YOU END UP GETTING MARRIED IN BALI?**

Our friends had a really magical wedding there and everyone else went home and we extended our trip by a couple of weeks and we thought maybe we should just do it here. It wasn't completely spontaneous, because we'd been engaged for a long time. But that's how it happened. It was at the *Four Seasons* in Ubud. It was really romantic. Just the two of us. Just what we wanted to do. They give us a beautiful service and a local Hindu priest did a really amazing ceremony.

**I HEAR YOU HAVE A "BUDHA ROOM" IN YOUR HOME.**

We do have a *Budha* room. We do really love a *Budha* room. But we do have an altar, with a big ark hung up over the fireplace.

**JUST THE HEAD?**

Yeah, just the head, not the whole body. Our sanctuary room. My wife likes to collect weird things and hide them. Little birds, cats, whatever strikes her fancy. We also have little *Budhas* around the house. We like clutter, but in a good way. We were just talking about getting someone to help us organize. We're both kind of hoarders, but she's a little worse than me.

**TIME FOR AN INTERVIEW?**

No. Not quite yet. It's not what I