

## Blistering barnacles! Tintin rides again... aged 90

Jumping jellyfish! Tintin may be 90 years old yesterday, but the boy hero is about to get himself into a whole new snake pit of scrapes. Casterman, which publishes his comic book adventures, said a new film featuring the cub reporter by “Lord of the Rings” director Peter Jackson is in the pipeline, with Steven Spielberg—who made Tintin’s first Hollywood outing in 2011 — producing this time. A new Tintin book is also in the offing, the Belgian publishing house said.

Speculation is mounting that the new movie is likely to be a mix of “King Ottokar’s Sceptre”, a swashbuckling jape from 1938 that was a thinly disguised satire on Nazi Germany’s annexation of Austria the same year, and the later story, “The Calculus Affair”. Casterman’s editorial director Benoit

Mouchart said that it is part of a planned trilogy of live-action Tintin films. “There are several leads that could be taken,” he told French radio. The new film “might be a mix of ‘King Ottokar’s Sceptre’ and ‘The Calculus Affair,’” a ripping yarn of Tintin and his sidekick Captain Haddock rushing to the rescue of a kidnapped scientist.

“When there is a trilogy in Hollywood, the second movie is usually a little darker, so the theory of an episode set in Syldavia (the fictional Balkan country that features in both stories) seems quite likely,” Mouchart added. Jackson though has been tight-lipped on what adventure or adventures he would draw on for the film. “I’ve had certain times where I thought it was going to be this or that... For a while, we were going to do ‘Prisoners of the



Sun’,” he told Vox late last year.

### Unfinished work

“There’s so many good stories, and I just want to see what I feel like making. There’s so many choices, and I couldn’t tell you today which way I’m going,” he added. The

first Tintin cartoons appeared in the conservative Belgian Catholic journal “Le Petit Vingtième” on January 10, 1929. A book featuring the daring young journalist and his dog Snowy, “Tintin in the Land of the Soviets”, appeared the following year, making its creator Herge a star. — AFP

## Judge dismisses Judd harassment claim against Weinstein

Los Angeles court on Wednesday dismissed actress Ashley Judd’s sexual harassment lawsuit against disgraced Hollywood producer Harvey Weinstein—but said she can move forward with allegations he defamed her and damaged her career. US District Judge Philip Gutierrez said the law covering sexual harassment within a professional relationship did not apply to sexual advances Weinstein, 66, allegedly made toward Judd in 1997 during a meeting about potential film roles.

However, he did rule that Judd, 50, can proceed with her defamation claim against the producer, who has been accused of sexual abuse by hundreds of women and is facing criminal charges in New York. Once of the first women to accuse him, Judd claims that in 1998, Weinstein defamed her and damaged her career by telling “Lord of the Rings” director Peter Jackson that she was a “nightmare” to work with.

Gutierrez previously said in September that the law upon which Judd’s claim was based “has never before been applied to an employer’s sexual harassment of a prospective employee, and the court is not convinced that the statute was intended to cover such harassment.” —AFP



This combination of file pictures shows US actress Ashley Judd (left) and US film producer Harvey Weinstein.—AFP



In this file photo Director John Lasseter poses for a photo in front of characters from his movie “Cars” at his Hollywood Walk of Fame star presentation ceremony, in Hollywood, California. — AFP

## Ex-Disney animation chief, accused of misconduct, hired by new studio

Former Disney animation chief John Lasseter, who resigned last year after acknowledging he made staff feel uncomfortable with unwanted hugs, has landed a new job at Skydance Media, the company said Wednesday. Lasseter, famous for transforming Pixar from a small graphics department at Lucasfilm into the most successful animation studio in the world, is set to take charge of Skydance’s animation unit, founded in 2017. “John is a singular creative and executive talent whose impact on the animation industry cannot be overstated,” said the studio’s Chief Executive David Ellison.

“He was responsible for leading animation into the digital age, while telling incomparable stories that continue to inspire and entertain audiences around the globe.” Lasseter, who turns 62 this week, announced his resignation as creative director of Disney in June 2018, after he took a long leave of absence apologizing to staff who felt “disrespected and uncomfortable” because he gave “unwanted hugs.” The issues were first unearthed in an investigation by entertainment trade paper The Hollywood Reporter, which described a “pattern of alleged misconduct detailed by Disney/Pixar insiders.” —AFP

## Lady Gaga says won’t work again with singer R Kelly

Lady Gaga has vowed to remove a duet she recorded with R&B singer R.Kelly from streaming services and never collaborate with him again. Her comments, in a lengthy Instagram post late on Wednesday, followed a new television documentary in which multiple women accuse Kelly of sexual misconduct, sometimes with minors.

Kelly, 52, the Chicago singer and record producer best known for hit song “I Believe I Can Fly,” has repeatedly denied accusations in recent years of abuse, including those made in the new documentary. The Grammy-winning singer was tried and acquitted on child pornography charges in Chicago in 2008.

His attorney has not responded to Reuters requests for comment about the six-hour documentary “Surviving R.Kelly,” broadcast last week on the Lifetime channel. It features interviews with several women making on camera allegations of sexual, mental and physical abuse by Kelly, as well as interviews with some of his former managers and producers. Reuters is unable to independently verify the accusations. Gaga said she believed the women and found the documentary “absolutely horrifying.”

“I stand behind these women 1000 percent, believe them, and know they are suffering and in pain, and feel strongly that their voices should be heard and taken seriously,” she said in her Instagram posting. Gaga in 2013 released a duet with Kelly called “Do What U Want (With My Body).” “I intend to remove the song off of iTunes and other streaming platforms and will not be working with him again,” she wrote on Wednesday. —Reuters



Actress/singer Lady Gaga attends the 2019 National Board Of Review Gala at Cipriani 42nd Street. —AFP