

Between Takes

Michelle Monaghan

The spunky star with a dirty sense of humour...



Lady in red: Monaghan is wooed by her bessie mate in *Made Of Honor*.

HERE AND NOW Since making a funky splash with *Kiss Kiss Bang Bang*, Michelle Monaghan has been paired with a succession of colossal co-stars: Tom Cruise (*Mission: Impossible III*), Ben Stiller (*The Heartbreak Kid*), Shia LaBeouf (freshly-wrapped conspiracy thriller *Eagle Eye*). This month, she crops up as Patrick Dempsey's about-to-be-wed best friend in *Made Of Honor*. "Sometimes I see one of my co-stars on the television," she says, "and actually forget that I've worked with them."

Was *Made Of Honor* a blast to make?

Well, we travelled making the film and, you know, I love to act but travelling is my absolute favourite thing to do. On this film we got to shoot in LA, New York and my new favourite place, the Isle of Skye. It was like something out of a fairytale! I know that sounds silly but it was so magical: wildflowers and rolling hills and scotch!

You indulged in the local tippie, then?

I thought it would have been sacriligious not to! Yeah, there were several days after filming that Patrick and I indulged along with the crew. My favourite was Bunnahabhain.

We hear you have a saucy sense of humour. Know any good dirty jokes?

Yes. Why did the blonde go to church?

Why?

'Cos she heard there was a guy there hung like this. [Stretches out arms and laughs hysterically]. That's a pretty good one, right? You know, honestly, I'm the worst joke-teller you could ever meet. I like to laugh at them but, by God, I'm just shocking at telling them. Except for that one!

You won a Total Film Readers Award for *Kiss Kiss Bang Bang*...

Yeah, I remember that! You guys made me feel like a million bucks!

So, it completely changed your life, obviously?

No! But it really meant a lot to me, it really did.

Our reviewer compared your performance in *Kiss Kiss Bang Bang* to the no-nonsense women in Howard Hawks' movies. Did he get carried away?

I appreciate that comparison. I really try to vary my film roles but that's something that appeals to me, to play strong, independent roles. I just finished another role that I'm extraordinarily proud of in a film called *Trucker* – it's right up there with *Kiss Kiss Bang Bang* for me. I produced it. I play a truck driver and I got my licence to drive an 18-wheeler. Those are the roles that I'm drawn to so I think the comparison holds up.

Does growing up in a small town in Iowa give you a strong moral grounding or is that just a cliché?

I grew up in a small community of people who were very supportive and looked after each other. There's a lot to be said for the compassion that one experiences in smaller areas. Basically, if your neighbour's going through a problem then you're going through the problem as well.

Admit it: you couldn't wait to get out of there!

Yeah, you know, I was always a little ambitious. I grew up watching the news every single night going, "Wow, look at those buildings! Where the hell is that? I want to go there!" And, shit, I still watch the news every night and go, "Oh my God, I want to go there!"

And you were class president in high school...

I was but, come on dude, there were only 39 of us, so the percentages were pretty high that I was gonna get elected! [laughs]

You're pretty cheerful. Has that helped you in the industry?

I don't have too much to complain about! Unless you give me a good reason not to be, I'm going to be in a good mood. I think it does help. I don't really get down about too many things. Modelling helped me deal with rejection very early on and that just carried over into acting.

So you can keep a smile on your face when you're cut out of *Syriana* and *Constantine*?

The thing for me at that part of my life was getting a paycheck. I was like, "Are you going to take my paycheck back? No? Well shit, they can

'My new favourite place is the Isle of Skye. It's so magical!'

do whatever they want... I don't give a shit about my showreel right now, I just got to pay my rent!"

What's your relationship to Shia LaBeouf in *Eagle Eye*?

I play a single mom who's inadvertently caught up in a plot to assassinate some people and he is as well. So we're brought together under extreme circumstances and we're trying to get out of this dire situation. There's no romantic relationship.

Is that a relief for your husband?

God, I wish I could make my husband jealous! He's just not like that.

Does anything put you in a bad mood? When does the drama queen in you come out?

[Laughs] Usually on film! I've got to get it out of my system. I'm emotional and sensitive and I like to feel things. And I like that I can do it on film. For every romantic comedy I've got to do two dramas. It's in there just dying to get out!

What are you doing now?

I'm going to go on vacation and just chill out for a while. I'm going over to Ecuador with seven friends. We're going to check out the Amazon and hopefully not run into any FARC guerrillas...

Made Of Honor opens on 2 May and is reviewed this issue.

TAKE TOO! For more exclusive *Between Takes* star interviews, head to www.totalfilm.com/betweentakes

BUZZ CUTS

A-list news. In tiny chunks.



● **CHERYL HINES** (Larry David's missus in *Curb Your Enthusiasm*) has signed up for *The Ugly Truth*, a romcom starring Katherine Heigl and Gerard Butler. Frankly, we don't hold much hope.

● Screenwriter **WILLIAM MONAHAN** (*The Departed*) has signed up to scribble some words for a movie about drug dealer Jim Keene, who traded a term in the slammer for a spell undercover in a madhouse for serial killers. No news on any other news.

● Buzz mate and star of *Total Film's* recent Red Carpet Preview **NEIL MARSHALL** ain't kicking it back post-*Doomsday*. He's making *Drive* – a film about a Hollywood stuntman (most likely played by Hugh Jackman) who moonlights as a wanted getaway driver.



WORDS: MATT MUELLER. PICTURE CREDITS: VINCENT LIGNIER/CORBIS OUTLINE

