

A  
MARVEL STUDIOS  
SPECIAL PRESENTATION

# WEREWOLF BY NIGHT

Inspired by horror films of the 1930s and 1940s, Marvel Studios' chilling special presentation aims to evoke a sense of dread and the macabre, with plenty of suspense and scares along the way as we explore a new corner of the Marvel Cinematic Universe.

The eerie tale follows a secret cabal of monster hunters who—on a dark and somber night—emerge from the shadows and gather at the foreboding Bloodstone Temple following the death of their leader. In a strange and macabre memorial to the leader's life, the attendees find themselves thrust into a mysterious and deadly competition for a powerful relic—a hunt that will ultimately bring them face to face with a dangerous monster.

“Werewolf by Night” finds its origins in the Marvel comics, where the character Jack Russell first appeared in “Marvel Spotlight” #2, in February 1972. The “Werewolf by Night” series of comic books began in September 1972.

For executive producer and President of Marvel Studios Kevin Feige, putting this character from the comics in a nod to classic, black-and-white monster films of yesteryear was a unique way to set up the Special Presentation. “It’s our first ever MCU special so it had to be different—it’s a little darker, a little scarier, but still fun for fans,” says Feige.

In his directorial debut, Oscar®-winning composer and longtime Marvel Studios collaborator Michael Giacchino directs “Werewolf by Night.” Giacchino, who also composed the music for the Special Presentation, has scored such films as Marvel Studios’ “Thor: Love and Thunder” and “Doctor Strange,” as well as “Spider-Man: Homecoming,” “Spider-Man: Far from Home” and “Spider-Man: No Way Home.”

Giacchino, who admits that he is a “Werewolf by Night” comics fan (and still has all his comics), was excited to bring Jack Russell to the screen. “With my love for the Universal films of the ’30s,



the Hammer Horror films right into Sam Rami's 'Evil Dead,' 'Werewolf by Night' is a giant mashup love letter to those movies that I absolutely loved and devoured while growing up."

Giacchino has a classic approach to horror, believing, "Horror is all about what you don't know and what you think is about to happen or what you think you see or what you think you hear. I am trying to use that for us as much as possible. That was the goal from day one on this project."

He adds, "For me, some of the scariest things I saw as a kid watching old movies on 'creature double feature' were just the shadows. If you saw a shadow creep by a wall, whether it was a defined shadow of a particular creature or just an amorphous shape, that was always so much scarier than anything that you could literally show me on screen. And that's what I kept thinking about. How do we do that? How do we embrace that idea?"

It was very important to the director to bring the werewolf in at just the right time. "My whole thing was that I don't want to see him until the very end of the movie. I don't want it to be the kind of movie where you were with the werewolf from beginning to end. It should be a slow buildup to the point where you might say to yourself, 'Wait, I thought this was a werewolf movie?' And *then*, when you finally get to the werewolf, it's a whole level up."

Describing how the story fits into the MCU, Giacchino says, "I thought it would be so interesting if we did something that was one night in this character's life, not visually connected to anything else in the Marvel universe, even though it *does* exist within the Marvel Universe we know and love—this character is living at the same time as Spider-Man and Captain America—we just stay with Jack's perspective for the run of the story."

Heather Quinn and Peter Cameron wrote the teleplay for "Werewolf by Night," and Quinn is also credited with the story. For Quinn, having an opportunity to explore a new side of the MCU was "super-fun" and "exciting," but she adds, "It's also creatively challenging because you want to establish something that feels lived-in and also, at the same time, you have to walk everyone into a corner of the world and have them believe a whole world exists beyond this."

The roster of veteran executive producers on "Werewolf by Night" include Kevin Feige, Stephen Broussard, Louis D'Esposito, Victoria Alonso and Brad Winderbaum, with Brian Gay and Trevor Waterson serving as co-executive producers.

The special stars Gael García Bernal ("Mozart in the Jungle," "Y Tu Mama Tambien"), Laura Donnelly ("The Nevers," "Outlander") and Harriet Sansom Harris ("Licorice Pizza," "Hacks").

Gael García Bernal plays Jack Russell, who joins the evening as one member of a mysterious group of monster hunters, gathering after the death of their leader.

Bernal recalls his reaction when he was approached to play Jack. "I was actually very happy that the story was not about a superhero, but about a monster and about that world because I feel

that monsters are more human than superheroes,” laughs Bernal. “In a way, monsters are the sublimation of our traumas or of our taboos in a sense.”

He continues, “The character is very human, and therefore, very grounded. It’s a much more organic product of our imagination, and I love that.”

Playing such a dark character steeped in lore and, not to mention, the subject of many scary stories around the campfire, was an interesting challenge. Bernal explains, “It’s fun because Jack is very aware of what he is and what his violence does. It’s been interesting to go into that and kind of defending the character as well because it allows me to harbor ambiguities, which is perhaps the nicest thing about being an actor. You can actually engage with characters that maybe are too far away from who you are. And you can actually interpret them and have some emotional empathy. So, I love doing something like this. It’s so heightened, as well, and stylized.”

Bernal feels that viewers will be excited to see the werewolf and “all the action that he detonates” and that they will enjoy the humor. But most of all he hopes that they “connect with the humanity of these characters as well.” “I think that there are many positive things people might connect to,” he says. “The production design and aesthetic of the show are going to be quite interesting. There are a lot of things mixed in that will hopefully be an interesting kind of alchemy.”

Laura Donnelly portrays Elsa Bloodstone, who returns home following her father’s passing and finds herself in the company of monster hunters who have gathered in honor of her father.

Revealing what drew her to the project, Donnelly says, “The most exciting part about starting here and now in Marvel is that it feels like there is something brand-new happening. There are completely new avenues to explore, and also just the fact that it has a particular kind of horror and supernatural aspect was really appealing to me personally because I grew up watching a lot of old horror movies. The fact that this is Marvel’s way of kind of paying tribute to those older films was really appealing as well.”

Relating why she was attracted to the part of Elsa when she read the script, Donnelly says, “What attracted me to her story so much was this idea of what you grow up with, and what you’re told by your family, and who you are shaped to be by them, whether that’s for good or bad, and then as you get older how you come to face that and in a sense break off from those expectations and just become your own person and a fully formed adult. I think that those journeys and how coming up through your family can affect you for good and for bad was really fascinating to me. And that was really what drew me towards Elsa, and what I dug into first of all with her character.”

And what does Donnelly think viewers can look forward to? “I think what people will really enjoy with this is seeing a brand-new side to the MCU and meeting these characters who fans of the comics will know very well. It’s always exciting the first time you get to see another one of those

characters go from the page to the screen. I also think that Gael's performance in this is really beautiful, and it's given the beginning to something that I think is going to be really special."

Harriet Sansom Harris is Verussa Bloodstone, Elsa's widowed stepmother, who is dedicated to continuing her late husband Ulysses Bloodstone's crusade to protect humanity from monsters.

Describing Verussa, Harris offers, "Verussa wants to repress things that either she's afraid of in herself or that she can't control. She's very interested in control. She never had the ultimate power, her husband did, but as the widow Bloodstone she has, for the time being, a lot of power, and she's very ready to exert and exercise it."

Harris admits that she had "so much fun" making "Werewolf by Night." "It was really delightful watching a bunch of adults doing make believe. It was really cool, and I really enjoyed that everybody in the room, the crew, everybody, were using their imaginations about how we do this, and how we adapt to these circumstances. I haven't experienced that so much on other things I've shot, so that's been delightful and unexpected."

An impressive roster of talent helped to bring the "Werewolf by Night" to life, including director of photography Zoë White, ACS ("The Handmaid's Tale," "Hit & Run"), production designer Maya Shimoguchi ("Hawkeye," "Earth 2"), editor Jeffrey Ford, ACE ("Spider-Man: No Way Home," "Avengers: Endgame"), costume designer Mayes C. Rubeo ("Thor: Love and Thunder," "WandaVision") and VFX supervisor Joe Farrell ("Blackhat," "Anomalisa").

Production designer Maya Shimoguchi explains how she approached designing the sets: "From the very beginning there was a lot of talk about how the director, Michael Giacchino, wanted it to feel very film noir, with lots of shapes and shadows, so I was really looking at trying to create a richly textured environment. We landed on the idea that there were concrete forms both in the garden and in the rotunda. The rotunda has detailed concrete with lots of small patterns and then out in the garden there are blockier forms that create kind of a weird landscape where you know you're outside in some kind of a garden but it's not anything that you've seen."

She continues, "I like the idea that this whole story takes place at night, so we're just in perpetual night, and it became a fun way of thinking about werewolves and nighttime and how the shades and shadows can absorb and reveal things as you pass through them."

VFX supervisor Joe Farrell, adds, "From the old Hammer films, you get your jump-scare from what you can't see, it's what's behind, it's what's in the darkness, and the director is very much a proponent of pushing that mentality into this project. So there's a lot of dark, a lot of shadows. It is a real old-school approach to making this project, and I like it. I think it presents exciting opportunities."

Director Michael Giacchino ends with, "I loved being able to explore 'Werewolf by Night' in this really fun, retro, thirties style. I feel like it has been so unexplored, and it's time to like put something different out into the world, and let's see what happens."

***“Werewolf by Night” premieres exclusively on Disney+ on October 7.***



## **ABOUT THE CAST**

**GAEL GARCÍA BERNAL (Jack Russell)** is an award-winning actor, producer and director. He gained critical acclaim and a Golden Globe® award for Best Actor in a Comedy Series for his role in Amazon’s “Mozart in the Jungle” in 2016, with the show winning a Golden Globe for Best Comedy Series. In 2017, Bernal received another Golden Globe nomination for Best Actor in a Comedy Series for his role in the second season.

Bernal has starred in countless films, including the globally celebrated feature, Alfonso Cuarón's Academy Award®-nominated “Y Tu Mama Tambien” (And Your Mother Too) and “The Motorcycle Diaries” (Diarios de una motocicleta). Bernal received a BAFTA and Satellite Award nomination in 2005 for Best Actor for his work in “The Motorcycle Diaries.” In 2006, Bernal was recognized by BAFTA again with a nomination in the Rising Star category, acknowledging new talent in the acting industry. Other credits include “Rosewater,” “El Ardor,” “Desierto” and “Neruda.” Bernal earned Best Actor in a Foreign Language Film for his role in “Neruda” at the Palm Springs Film Festival. The film was also nominated for a 2017 Golden Globe for Best Motion Picture-Foreign Language. He also appeared in the Academy Award-winning Pixar-animated feature “Coco” and Netflix’s “The Kindergarten Teacher” (2018). Other credits include “Museo” (2018) and “The Accused” (2018).

In 2018, Bernal and his longtime friend and business partner Diego Luna launched their Mexican production house La Corriente del Golfo, which has produced projects such as the political thriller “Aquí en la Tierra” (2018), Bernal’s second feature film that he directed, “Chicuarotes” (2019) and Netflix’s “Everything Will Be Fine” (2021). Bernal is currently in production on the Hulu series “La Máquina” in which he stars and produces through his banner alongside Luna.

Bernal was most recently seen in the Netflix film “Wasp Network” (2020), Pablo Larraín’s “Ema” (2021), M. Night Shyamalan’s “Old” (2021) and the HBO limited series “Station Eleven” (2021).

Next up, Bernal is set to star in Roger Ross Williams' "Cassandro."

**LAURA DONNELLY (Elsa Bloodstone)** won Best Actress Award at the Olivier Awards and was further nominated at the Evening Standard Theatre Awards for her portrayal of Caitlin in the West End, critically acclaimed and sold-out production of Jez Butterworth's "The Ferryman," directed by Oscar®-winner Sam Mendes. The "Ferryman" was inspired by Donnelly's family history, and she completed her reprisal on Broadway at the Bernard B. Jacobs Theatre, for which she was nominated for a Tony Award®.

Donnelly currently takes on the leading role in HBO's fantasy series "The Nevers." Set in the last years of Victoria's reign in London, "The Nevers" focuses on the "Touched"—people, mostly women, who suddenly manifest abnormal abilities, some charming, some very disturbing. Among them is Amalia True (Donnelly), a mysterious, quick-fisted widow. The series also stars James Norton, Eleanor Tomlinson, Olivia Williams and Nick Frost. Season two will return in late 2022.

Since graduating from the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama, Donnelly has worked extensively in film, television and theatre. She is best known for her role of Jenny Fraser in Golden Globe®-nominated drama, "Outlander." She made her on-screen television debut in International Emmy Award®-winning series, "Sugar Rush" for Channel 4 before moving on to further roles in the BBC's hugely popular "Merlin," the ABC production of "Missing" and the BBC's "The Fall" with Jamie Dornan and Gillian Anderson. Her further credits include the ITV series "Beowulf"; BAFTA award-winning drama "Occupation"; Amazon studios fantasy drama "Britannia"; "Hex" for Sky One; and "Best" for the BBC. Her film credits include Fox Searchlight's "Tolkien," the biopic of author J.R.R. Tolkien, alongside Nicholas Hoult and Lily Collins; "The Program" with Chris O'Dowd and Jesse Plemons; "Hello Carter" alongside Jodie Whittaker; thrillers "Dread" and "Insatiable"; and comedy-drama "Right Hand Drive."

For stage, her highlights include her role as Other Woman in the hit play "The River" at both the Royal Court and on Broadway opposite Hugh Jackman, again written by Jez Butterworth. She also won acclaim for her performances in "The Wasp" at The Trafalgar Studios; "Philadelphia, Here I Come!," directed by Lyndsey Turner at the Donmar Warehouse; "Romeo and Juliet" and "A Midsummer Night's Dream," both at Regent's Park Open Air Theatre; and "Dancing at Lughnasa" at the Lyric Theatre in Belfast.

**HARRIET SANSOM HARRIS (Verussa Bloodstone)** is the recipient of the 2002 Tony and Drama Desk Awards for Featured Actress in a Musical for her performance of Mrs. Meers in "Thoroughly Modern Millie." She was also Emmy®-nominated this year for her guest performance in HBO's "Hacks."

Broadway appearances include: "It Shoulda Been You," "Cinderella," "Present Laughter," "Cry Baby: The Musical," "Old Acquaintance" and "The Man Who Came to Dinner." Film credits include "Licorice Pizza," "Baby," "Phantom Thread," "Love Is Strange," "Rampart," "Monster-in-Law," "Memento," "Nurse Betty," "Addams Family Values" and the upcoming "National Anthem" and "Jules."

TV credits include "Hollywood," "Ratched" (recurring), "Atlantic Crossing" (recurring as Eleanor Roosevelt), "American Horror Story," "Wilfred" (recurring), "Desperate Housewives" (recurring as Felicia Tillman), "Frasier" (recurring as agent Bebe Glazer), "Six Feet Under," "The X-Files," "It's All Relative" (series regular), "Union Square" (series regular), and "The Five Mrs. Buchanans" (series regular).

Other New York theater credits include "Judgment Day," "Me and My Girl" (City Center Encores), "The Low Road" (Drama League, OCC nominations), "The Roads to Home," "Little Me" (City Center Encores), "Standing On Ceremony," "Yeast Nation," "Jeffrey" (Drama Desk nomination), "Bella, Belle of Byelorussia" (Drama Desk nomination), "The Crucible," "Man and Superman," "Innocents' Crusade," "Christmas on Mars," "Rude Entertainment," and "Hamlet." Harris is a member of the Acting Company.

## **ABOUT THE DIRECTOR**

**MICHAEL GIACCHINO (Director, Music by)** has credits that feature some of the most popular and acclaimed film projects in recent history, including "The Incredibles," "Coco," "Jojo Rabbit," "Ratatouille," "Star Trek," "Jurassic World," "Rogue One: A *Star Wars* Story," "Spider Man: No Way Home," "War for the Planet of the Apes" and "The Batman." Giacchino's 2009 score for the Pixar hit "Up" earned him an Oscar®, a Golden Globe®, the BAFTA, the Broadcast Film Critics' Choice Award and two GRAMMY® Awards.

Giacchino studied filmmaking at the School of Visual Arts in NYC. After college, he landed a marketing job at Disney and began studies in music composition, first at Juilliard, and then at UCLA. He moved from marketing to producing in the newly formed Disney Interactive Division where he had the opportunity to write music for video games. After moving to DreamWorks Interactive, he was asked to score the temp track for the video game adaptation of "The Lost World: Jurassic Park." Subsequently, Steven Spielberg hired him as the composer and it became the first PlayStation game to have a live orchestral score, recorded with members of the Seattle Symphony. Giacchino went on to score numerous video games including Spielberg's "Medal of Honor" series. Giacchino's work in video games sparked the interest of J.J. Abrams, and thus began their long-standing relationship that would lead to scores for the hit television series "Alias" and "Lost," and the feature films "Mission Impossible III," the three "Star Trek" films and "Super 8."

Additional projects include collaborations with Disney Imagineering on music for Space Mountain, Star Tours (with John Williams), the Ratatouille ride in Disneyland Paris, and the Incredicoaster on Pixar Pier at California Adventure. Giacchino was the musical director of the 81st Annual Academy Awards®. His music can be heard in concert halls internationally with all three “Star Trek” films, “Ratatouille,” “Jurassic World,” “Up” and “Coco” being performed live-to-picture with a full orchestra.

In June 2018, Giacchino premiered his first work for symphony orchestra, “Voyage.” Commissioned by the National Symphony Orchestra and the Cincinnati Pops Orchestra, the piece celebrates the 60th anniversary of the founding of NASA. In July 2019, a third movement, “Advent,” was added for the 50th Anniversary of the Moon Landing. In 2019, Giacchino’s first LP of original music, “Travelogue Vol 1,” featuring his Nouvelle Modernica orchestra, described as a story in song, was released on Mondo Records. The holiday song “Christmas Number One,” written with Elyssa Samsel and Kate Anderson was recorded and performed by U.K.-based band Itchy Teeth, and released as a specialty single with Death Waltz Records.

“Werewolf by Night” marks Giacchino’s feature directing debut for Marvel, after having helmed the “Star Trek” short “Ephraim and Dot” and his own comedy short, “Monster Challenge.”

Giacchino sits on the advisory board of Education Through Music Los Angeles.