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2012 SPACE ODYSSEY

An exclusive
first look at director
Ridley Scott's
upcoming *Prometheus*



EXCLUSIVE
FIRST
LOOK

RIDLEY SCOTT RETURNS TO SPACE

PROMETHEUS, director Ridley Scott's highly anticipated sci-fi thriller due next June, may or may not be a prequel to his 1979 epic *Alien*. Everyone's been keeping a tight lid on it—until now.
BY CHRIS NASHAWATY

Logan Marshall-Green, Noomi Rapace, and Michael Fassbender in what director Ridley Scott identifies as "the Ampule room"

THE TERM “EVENT MOVIE”

gets thrown around a lot these days—usually in regard to movies that end up being pretty uneventful.

But when Ridley Scott's 3-D action epic *Prometheus* opens on June 8, 2012, it will be a capital-*E* you-know-what. The 74-year-old thrice-Oscar-nominated director has made just two sci-fi films in his long career—1979's *Alien* (arguably one of the two most visionary films ever made in the genre) and 1982's *Blade Runner* (arguably the other).

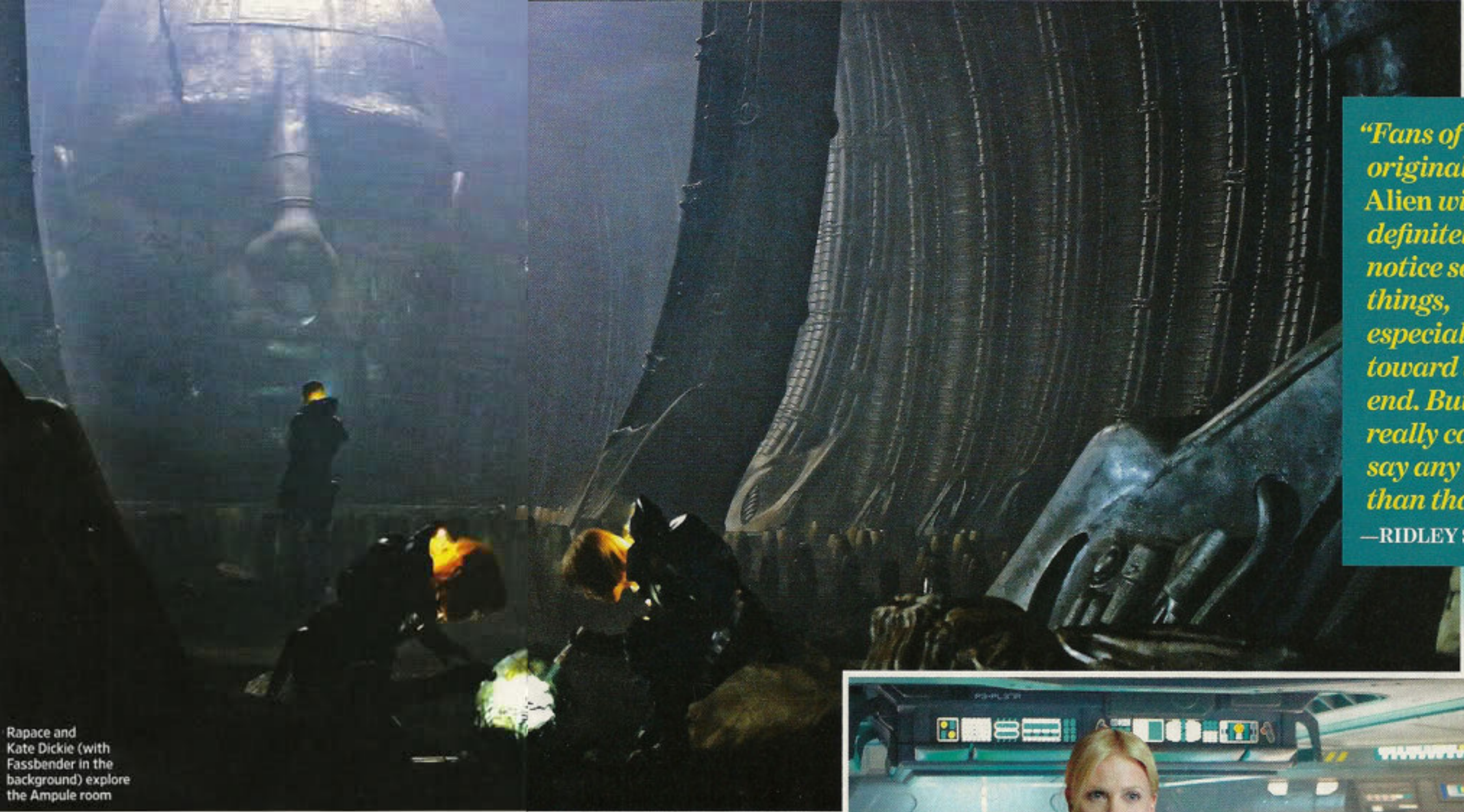
Another reason why sci-fi nerds should be getting their drool bibs ready is that the top secret 20th Century Fox film has been teased as an “*Alien* prequel”—a rumor the director and his star-studded cast don't seem keen to squash. “There may be a vague notion, some slight DNA from the original *Alien*,” says Scott, flashing a mischievous grin on the set of the film in Hekla, Iceland, last summer, when EW got an exclusive first look. “Fans of the original *Alien* will definitely notice some things, especially toward the end. But I really can't say any more than that.”

Thankfully, we can. The movie's title is a reference to Greek mythology: Prometheus stole fire from the god Zeus and gave it to mankind. For his sins, he was tied to a rock where birds pecked



Ridley Scott on the set

Rapace and Kate Dickie (with Fassbender in the background) explore the Ampule room



at his liver for eternity. Audiences shouldn't expect to see any 3-D liver-pecking in the film—the title is merely an allegory. It's also the name of the movie's spaceship. The script, written by newcomer Jon Spaihts and *Lost*'s

master of the mysterious Damon Lindelof, follows a team of scientists and deep-space explorers who get stranded on a distant planet that may hold answers to life's biggest questions, like who created us? And why are we here?

The cast includes Charlize Theron as a deep-pocketed corporate heavy from a company whose name may ring bells for *Alien* aficionados, Michael Fassbender as the crew's resident is-he-or-isn't-he-an-android (cue comparisons to Ian Holm's Ash), and, in her first Hollywood lead role, Noomi Rapace, the star of Sweden's *The Girl With the Dragon Tattoo* films, as an archaeologist-turned-interstellar badass. If that description makes her sound like a Ripley knockoff, Rapace won't complain. “Sigourney Weaver was my hero,” says Rapace. “I

remember when I first saw *Alien*, it was the first time I saw a woman that strong. I thought, Thank God, there are people making movies for me.”

Scott began shooting the \$100 million *Prometheus* back in March at Pinewood Studios in England. Then, in July, the cast and crew moved on to Iceland, where they shot the film's alien-planet exteriors on the country's haunting, nightless black-lava fields.

Keeping a lid on the hush-hush project hasn't been easy. And not all the actors are helping matters. “There's definitely a link to *Alien*,” says Fassbender. “There's creatures in it that you'll recognize, but that's only one tiny facet of what's going on. I think I should leave it at that.” Adds Theron, who, unlike Fassbender, seems to have gotten the



Charlize Theron and Idris Elba on the bridge of the *Prometheus*

don't-spill-the-beans memo, “I think people should really let go of the idea that it's an *Alien* film. It's that world, but it's not *Alien*.”

So which is it? From a marketing standpoint, *Prometheus*' connection to Scott's 1979 sci-fi classic is probably the best publicity hook the film has going for it. But all of the speculation could be a

double-edged sword, raising expectations for fans who've been itching for a new chapter in the franchise that doesn't include battles with Predators. “I think of the first *Alien* as a very well-done old-dark-house movie,” says Scott. “But this one has more on its mind. After *Avatar* raised the bar, I think this is what the genre is crying out for.” ■

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