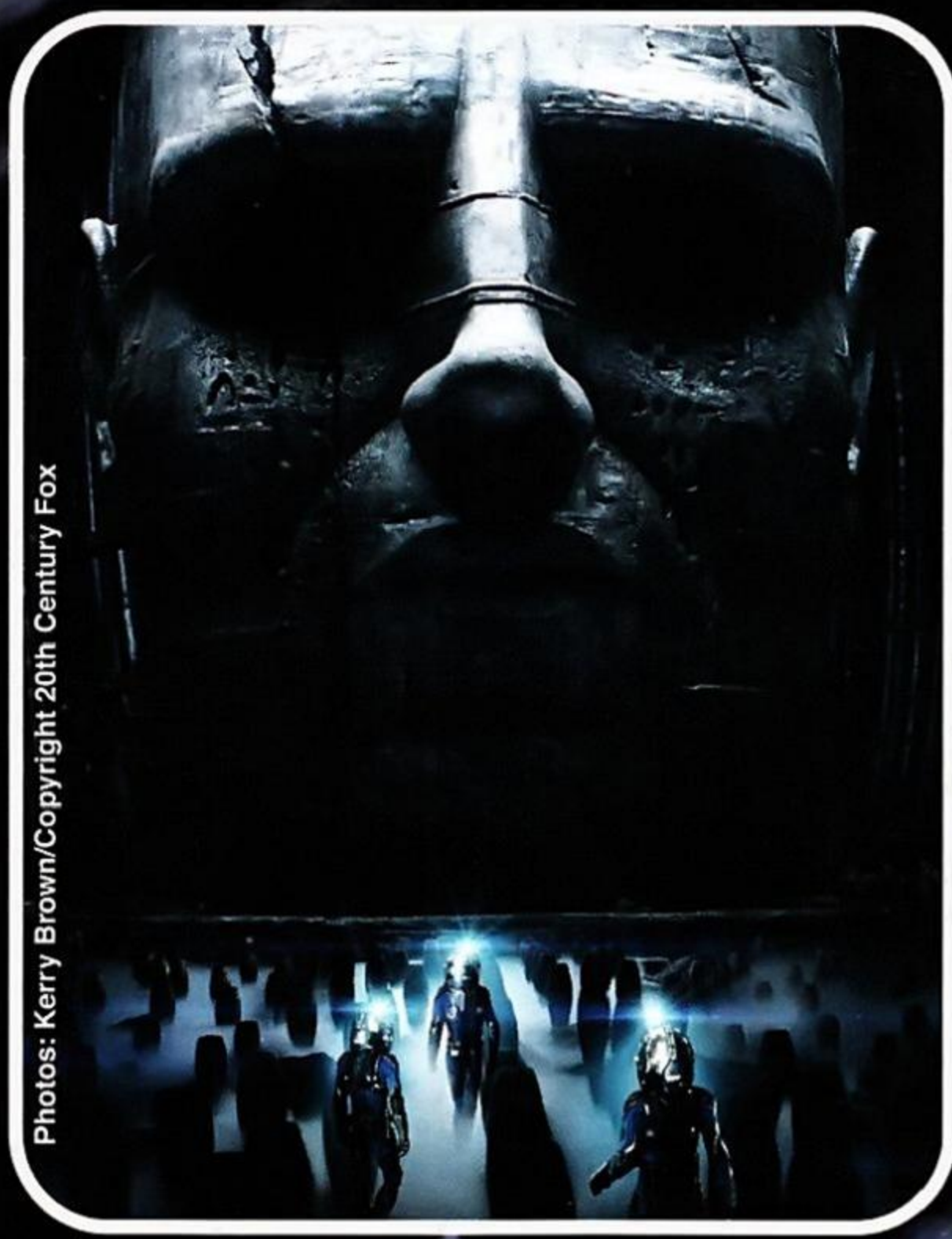


In 1979, science fiction and fantasy fans were coming down from a *Star Wars* high, and 20th Century Fox was already looking for its next big genre hit—would they have it with *Alien*, a space shocker that was without a doubt the antithesis of George Lucas' pulp fiction? They sure did. The tagline "In space no one can hear you scream" became one of the most identifiable movie-poster quotes in Hollywood history, and the film itself—elegant, bloody, atmospheric and relentlessly scary—changed the landscape of horror and sci-fi forever.

Alien's massive sensorial success was largely attributable to fledgling visionary Ridley Scott's brilliant direction, with its Hitchcockian suspense and methodology, and scriptwriters Dan O'Bannon and Ronald Shusett. Combine their efforts with H.R. Giger's iconic xenomorph design and Jerry Goldsmith's nerve-shattering score, and you have one of the best cross-genre pictures ever made. Space was no longer a mysterious land to conquer, a galactic field of dreams, but was now a gut-wrenching, terrifying place to fight for survival.

Since scaring the bejeezus out of unsuspecting moviegoers, *Alien* has spawned three sequels, numerous books, dozens of video games, cross-franchise mashups (including two mediocre *Alien vs. Predator*



Photos: Kerry Brown/Copyright 20th Century Fox

In a summer season packed with sci-fi/fantasy fare, *Prometheus* looms largest of all.

films to date) and countless imitators. In our current age of remakes and endless franchise relaunches, the rumor mill began speculating a while back about Fox's intentions for *Alien*. Many people had ambivalent reactions—it could be either a brilliant revisit or a disastrous mess. Then,

last year, word got out that Scott was not only returning to science fiction, but getting back to his roots to direct what was being buzzed about as an *Alien* prequel.

Prometheus is that film, and it is, as of this writing, heavily shrouded in mystery and speculation; 20th Century Fox reveals all the secrets when it releases the movie June 8. What we do know is that the cast includes such talents as Michael (Shame) Fassbender, Charlize (Monster) Theron, Guy (Ravenous) Pearce and, perhaps most interestingly, the beautiful Noomi Rapace, she of the original *Girl With the Dragon Tattoo* trilogy who first jumped into the Hollywood mainstream with *Sherlock Holmes: A Game of Shadows*. FANGORIA had the opportunity to sit down with Rapace, who plays archaeologist Elizabeth Shaw. Diplomatically, the actress gave us enough tempting tidbits without spilling or spoiling any details, keeping up the vigilant secrecy right to the end...

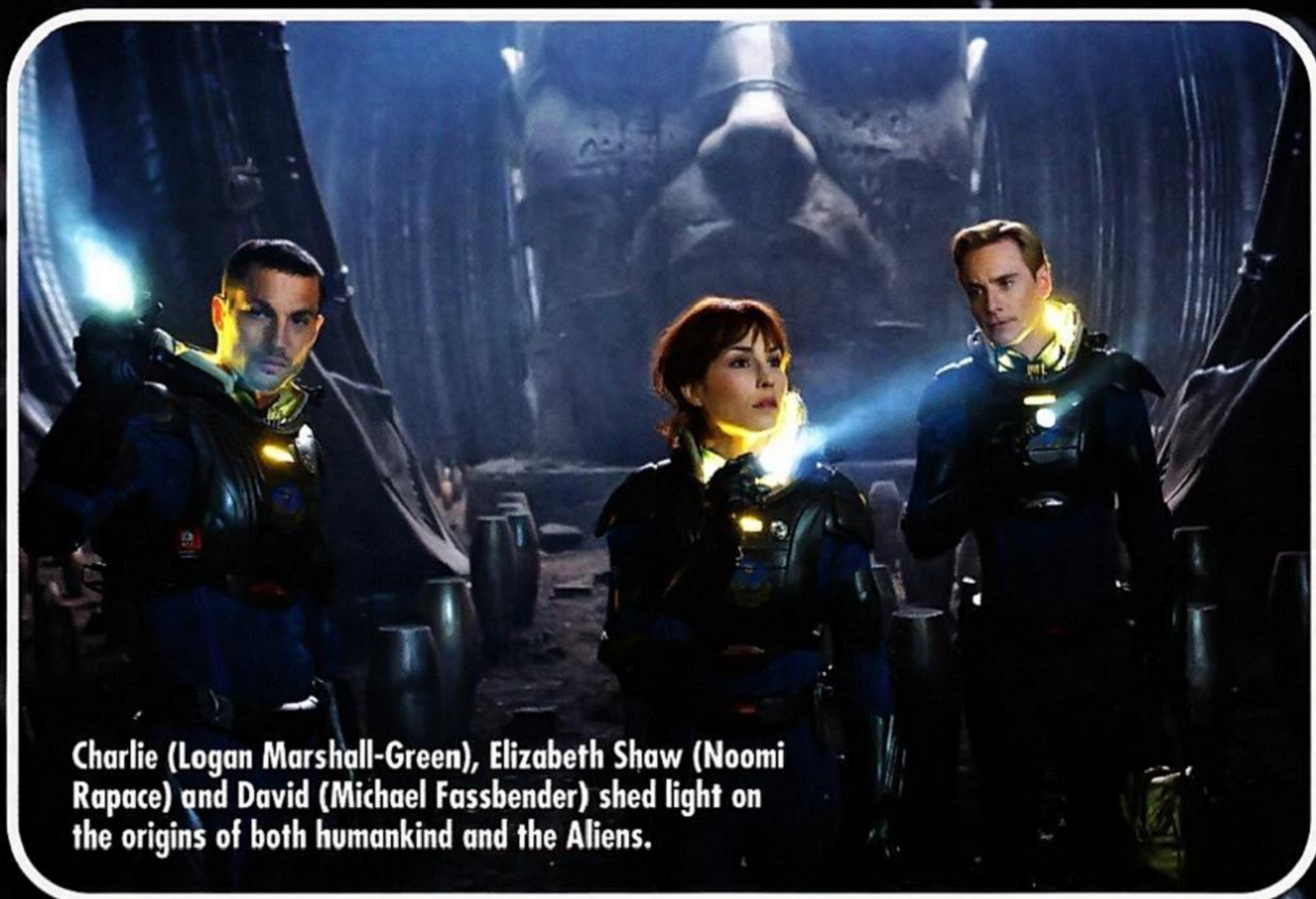
FANGORIA: First Stieg Larsson's Millennium Trilogy, then *Sherlock Holmes* and now *Prometheus*—how have you adapted to your steady rise to stardom?

NOOMI RAPACE: I don't really see myself from the outside. I don't reflect on the stardom, and becoming famous or well-known. I don't see it from that angle. I am doing the same job, and I'm trying to focus on that and not really think about everything else so much.

"You can see things from Ripley within Elizabeth... (but) you also get to know her a little more and can get a bit closer to her."

FANG: You seem to gravitate toward strong female roles like Lisbeth Salander and now Elizabeth Shaw. Do you consciously seek these out?

RAPACE: It's always more interesting and appealing to go into a character who is struggling with something, and fighting for something; someone who has goals



Charlie (Logan Marshall-Green), Elizabeth Shaw (Noomi Rapace) and David (Michael Fassbender) shed light on the origins of both humankind and the Aliens.

Noomi Rapace trades the dragon tattoo for a spacesuit in Ridley Scott's much-anticipated science fiction epic.

By JOHN NICOL

P R O M E T H E U S A C T R E S S R I S I N G

Like space itself, what goes on in *Prometheus* currently remains a mystery.



and dreams, but still has difficulties. I'm drawn to characters who have one foot on the darker side and one foot on the brighter side, who are jumping back and forth between those two different ways of living.

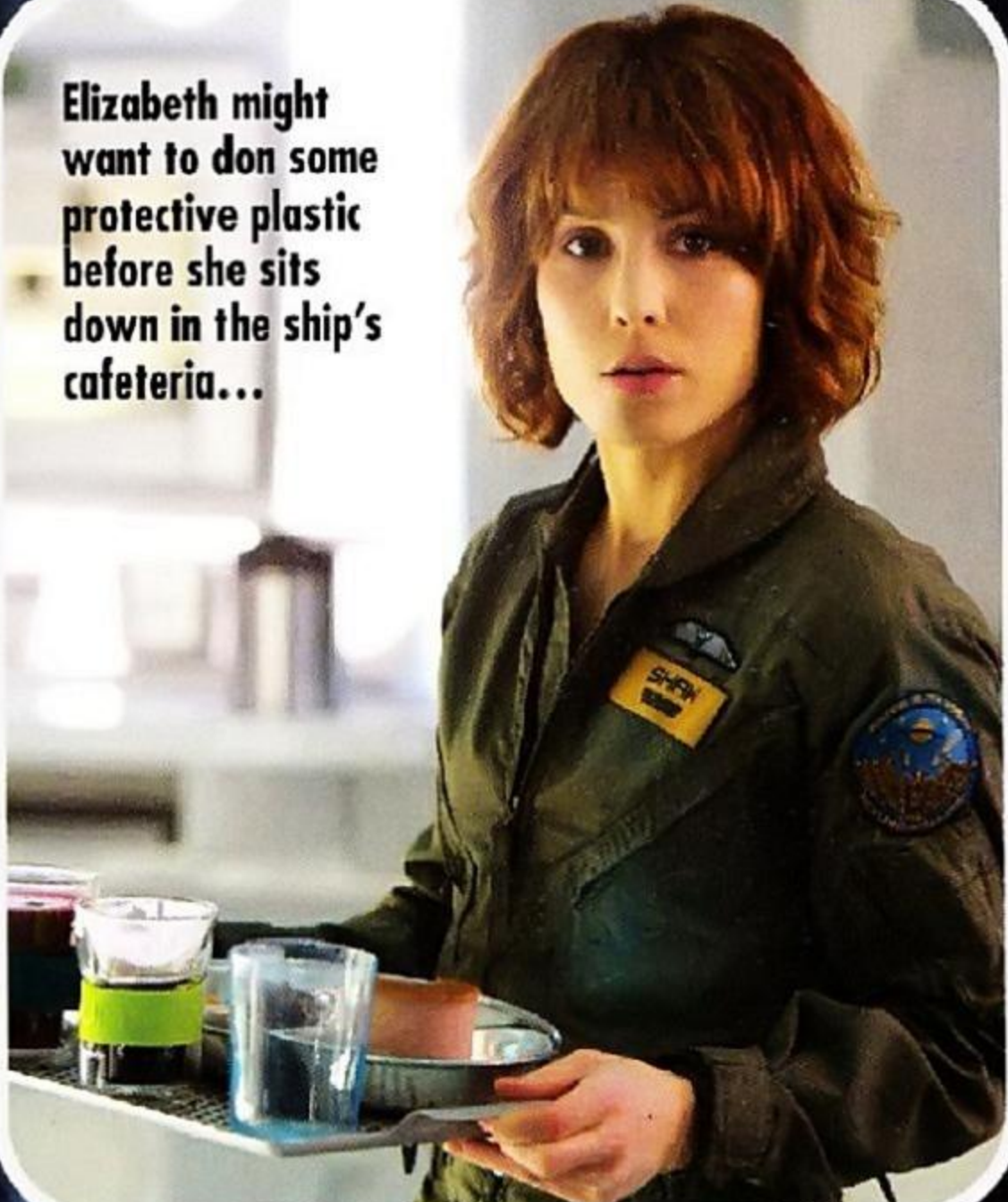
FANG: How do you feel about becoming a take-no-shit icon and a role model for other women in such an anticipated film as *Prometheus*? And what reaction have you had from your male fans?

RAPACE: I don't really feel a difference between my female and male fans. I believe the characters I've done are so much more about the humanity of it all, the overall character, the person—it's not about being a woman first, nor about being a girl and fighting back. I'm always trying to see the whole person, and not view it from a feminine perspective.

In space, amidst some very familiar-looking production design, will anyone hear Elizabeth scream?



Elizabeth might want to don some protective plastic before she sits down in the ship's cafeteria...



FANG: Have you drawn from the strengths of other cinematic heroines?

RAPACE: It's weird, because I grew up watching movies and living through them, and I always viewed male characters as my heroes, and I always saw myself in them. Of course, I had a few female heroes

Rapace almost seemed alien herself when she took on the iconic *Girl With the Dragon Tattoo* role.

Photo: Copyright Music Box Films



like Sigourney Weaver from the original *Alien*, or when I saw *The Terminator* with Linda Hamilton. So I don't see that big a difference between my female fans and my male fans; I think they all see me more as a performer. It doesn't really matter, as it's about the work and the characters.

FANG: Even though *Prometheus* isn't an outright *Alien* picture, you can't help but

"I'm more drawn to characters who have one foot on the darker side and one foot on the brighter side."

notice the similarities, especially between your role and Ripley. How are the characters similar and different?

RAPACE: I see the similarities. You can see things from Ripley within Elizabeth. I think that Elizabeth is more feminine, more of a woman—you also get to know her a little more and can get a bit closer to her, and learn what kind of life she's living as she transforms through the film. She has a relationship, and you get to know a little bit about her childhood. In the beginning she's more naive, and more of a believer, and fighting for her dreams, trying to persuade people to go on this journey and to believe. In the middle of the movie, she changes into more of a survivor and a fighter, and that instinct comes to life.

FANG: Describe your experience collabo-

rating with a legend like Ridley Scott.

RAPACE: I loved working with Ridley. It was absolutely fantastic. He's a hero and an icon and has done so many amazing and great movies, and has been working for such a long time and had an amazing life. But the weird thing is, I never felt like he was older than me. It never crossed my mind! It felt like we created something together, and we spoke the same language.

FANG: Can you elaborate on that?

RAPACE: I understood what he was after, what he wanted me to do, and I felt we communicated very well and had some kind of silent connection, way beyond age and gender and me being a woman and

him being a man. It was fantastic working with him, and it felt like he was with me in the character in every scene.

FANG: This film and its production have been shrouded in secrecy—how hard has it been to maintain that all this time?

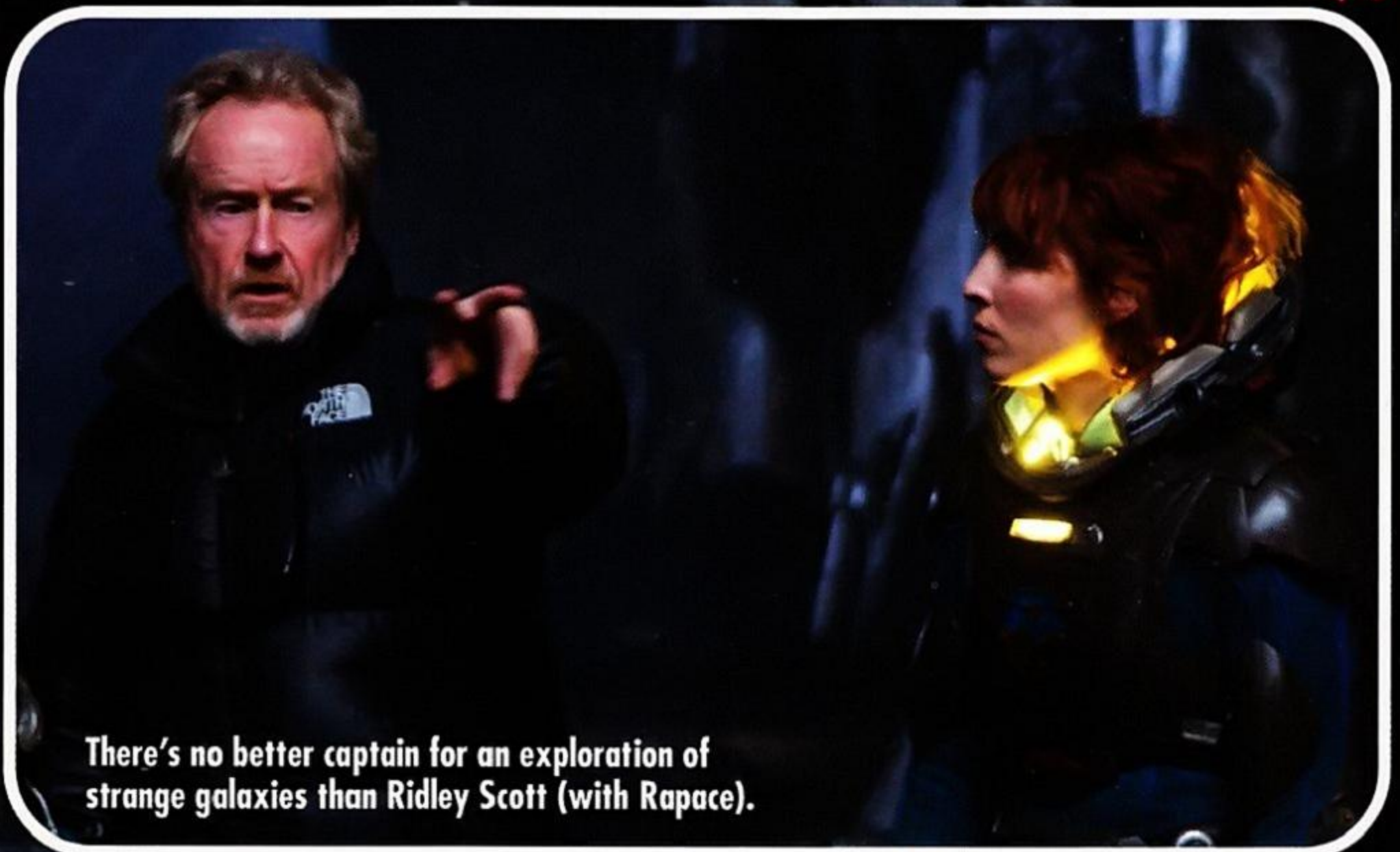
RAPACE: When I'm filming, I step into some kind of bubble. It's almost like I'm saying goodbye to the world around me for a while, and going into something else with the people I'm working with. You can share what you're doing, and what you're struggling with, with the people who are inside the same situation, and you don't have to think so much about what you can or can't say. It's harder now that I'm doing interviews, when I'm not filming anymore. I've been given so many notes and directions on what I can and can't say, but it's quite fun in a way—I like to have secrets! I enjoy trying to explain things without actually saying anything.

FANG: Are you allowed to divulge anything about what *Prometheus* is?

RAPACE: It's so much more than a science fiction movie. Some days, when I came onto the new sets and saw the rooms, and what they built—the creatures, etc.—it was amazing, and it took my breath away. It was something I'd never seen before. I think the film is going to break new ground, in a way. It kind of captures so many big things about life and being human, and explores what the purpose of life is, and who we are and where we came from, and what the next step is.

FANG: If the film is as successful as anticipated, has Scott left it open for sequels?

RAPACE: It would be a dream for me to work with him again, of course!



There's no better captain for an exploration of strange galaxies than Ridley Scott (with Rapace).

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