

Local Listings For The Week Of March 16-22, 2013

BEN GLASS/WARNER BROS./MCT
Steve Carell stars in "The Incredible Burt Wonderstone," one of five movies Carell will be in during 2013.

Carell Kicks Off A Very Busy Year

BY MARK CARO
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TOLUCA LAKE, Calif. — Looking trim in a black windbreaker over a gray crew neck sweatshirt, Steve Carell walked into the diner near the Warner Bros. lot just like a regular guy.

OK, most actors/ celebrities walk into diners like regular folk; it's not like they're transported in on pillows. So with Carell, let's emphasize the regularness.

There's something extra unassuming about his appearance, the way he carried himself. When Samuel L. Jackson, in his trademark beret, took a seat at a booth kitty-corner from Carell minutes later, he captured attention, even if no one aside from the wait staff approached him — but a father did ask Carell to pose for a photo with his daughter, which the 50-year-old actor did, graciously.

Carrell, whose breakthrough movie, "The 40 Year Old Virgin" (2005), sprung from a sketch he developed while at The Second City, draws you in subtly; his hazel eyes projecting earnestness, his short-cropped pepper-with-salt hair augmenting the image of someone who would seem right at home in a bureaucratic office — a trick that, come to think of it, he has pulled off. He's stealth-normal.

When you watch him on screen, you never know whether things will remain calm, as they do in his dramatic roles in "Hope Springs" (where he plays counselor to Meryl Streep and Tommy Lee Jones' passion-seeking married couple) and in "Little Miss Sunshine" (his suicidal, gay Proust expert anchoring some dysfunctional family comedy), or go kablooey, as they do when he's a newscaster suddenly spouting gibberish ("Bruce Almighty," from 2003) or an office manager who can't help doing or saying the absolute wrong thing at the worst time (NBC's "The Office," which he left in 2011).

His new comedy, "The Incredible Burt Wonderstone," which opens Friday, finds Carrell exercising his funny bones as an obnoxious star magician whose act has grown stale amid the shock antics of an up-and-coming rival played by Jim Carrey (his nemesis in "Bruce Almighty"). But other sides of Carrell will be on display soon given that he has five — count 'em, five — movies coming out in 2013.

“The Way, Way Back,” directed by “The Descendants” co-writers Nat Faxon and Jim Rash, is a coming-of-age tale about a 14-year-old boy whose mom’s new jerky boyfriend is played by Carell. That’s scheduled to open in early July, as is “Despicable Me 2,” the animated sequel in which Carell reprises his character of Gru, a not-so-evil villain who adopts three girls.

Late this year will come his heaviest role yet, — as a mentally ill multimillionaire, John du Pont who kills an Olympic wrestler — in “Foxcatcher,” from “Moneyball” and “Capote” director Bennett Miller. At the other end of the spectrum is Second City veteran and writer-director Adam McKay’s “Anchorman: The Legend Continues” (due out Dec. 20), in which Carell returns as dunderheaded meteorologist Brick Tamland.

Even though he had just a supporting part in the original "Anchorman: The Legend of Ron Burgundy" (2004), Carell said he gets asked more about that movie than any of his other roles. He discussed his eagerness to do the sequel, why he won't be in "The Office" finale and much more in