

Shemar Moore: 'The Bounce Back' Interview

By Kam Williams
For The Skanner News

Shemar Franklin Moore was born in Oakland, California on April 20, 1970 to an African American father and a mother of Irish and French-Canadian extraction. Shemar spent his early years abroad with his single mom in Denmark and Bahrain until the two returned from the exotic locales in 1977.

They settled in Palo Alto, where he graduated from Henry Gunn High School before studying Communications and Theater at Santa Clara University. While still in school, he started modeling on the side to help

pay the bills.

Since college, Shemar has flourished both as an actor and as a fashion model. He's probably best known for playing Derek Morgan on the TV-series "Criminal Minds" for 11 seasons and for the 8 years he spent prior to that as Malcolm Winters on the popular soap opera, "The Young and the Restless."

Here, he talks about starring opposite Nadine Velazquez and Bill Bellamy in the big screen release, "The Bounce Back."

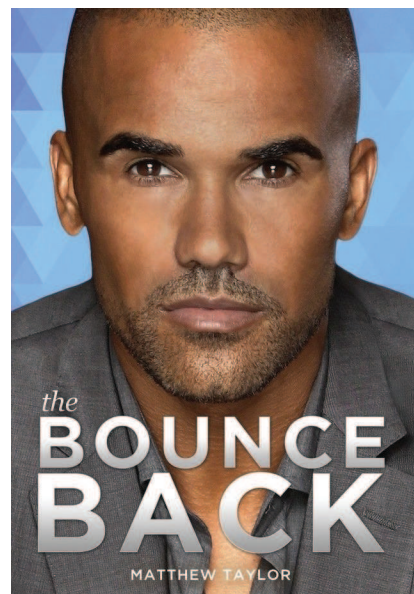
Kam Williams: Hi Shemar, thanks for the interview. I'm honored to have this opportunity to speak with you.

Shemar Moore: Well,

I appreciate your taking the time to show me love and to talk about the movie, Kam.

KW: What interested you in "The Bounce Back"?

SM: It was the sweet, fun script that had been around about a decade. But it's all about timing. 10 years ago, I was just getting my feet planted with "Criminal Minds." It didn't work out with my schedule back then. Fortunately, the script came back around. I thought it was a silly, fun, sweet story that people would like. To be honest, in the beginning, I knew that the transition from "Criminal Minds" was on the horizon, so I started



Shemar Moore stars opposite Nadine Velazquez and Bill Bellamy in 'The Bounce Back'

thinking about the next steps I could take as an actor, going forward with my career. After unsuccessfully shopping the script around, I seized upon the opportunity to produce the film myself. I said, "Why not go the independent route?" I felt that I could identify with the Matthew Taylor character. I just needed some help with the others. So, I went and found Bill Bellamy who I'd so much fun and chemistry with

on The Brothers years ago. I knew he could deliver the jokes and bring the relationship of being my best friend and manager to life. He liked the idea and we knew Nadine Velazquez from within our circle of friends. We showed her the script. She was interested, and pieces kinda of fell into place from there. And the next thing you

know, here I was executive producing the picture, and raising \$630,000 through my fan base. I call them my Baby Girls. It was a great hug and pat on my back that they believed in me and were so loyal to me. I'm very proud that we not only made a movie, but got it out into theaters, and that my Baby Girl Nation was part of it.

KW: How similar are you to your character,

Matthew Taylor?

SM: As an actor, I find the essence and elements of myself in any character I play. I think I believe a little bit of Matthew's philosophy and a little bit of Kristin Peralta's philosophy. One can't exist without the other. Love is a tricky, beautiful, exciting, complicated, elusive entity. But it hits when you least expect it. Matthew Taylor figured it out, and so did Derek Morgan on Criminal Minds, towards the end. So, now it's Shemar Moore's turn. I'm a romantic, and I believe in love.

KW: "The Bounce Back" has a nice twist at the end.

SM: What I love about this movie is that we didn't try to reinvent the wheel but we did find an original way to tell a love story about falling in love, the heartache of being betrayed and still having the courage and faith to fall back in love, and from both the male and female perspective. It illustrates that

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FILM REVIEW: 'A Monster Calls' a Bittersweet Escapist Fantasy



Conor O'Malley (Lewis MacDougall) befriends a giant tree monster (Liam Neeson) in 'A Monster Calls'

By Kam Williams
For The Skanner News

Conor O'Malley (Lewis MacDougall) is understandably miserable. First of all, the 12 year-old divorced mom (Felicity Jones) is terminally ill. Second, they're both estranged from his father (Toby Kebbell) who has long since started another family over in America.

Third, Conor is tired of being mistreated by his cold-hearted grandmother (Sigourney Weaver) who cares

“The film is less a feel-good flick than a picture about making the best of a bad situation

more about her prized possessions than his welfare. And finally, he's routinely teased at school by a bully (James Melville) about always being off in his own dream world.

So, it's no surprise when Conor starts being plagued by nightmares on a daily basis. A few minutes after midnight, the giant yew tree (Liam Neeson) standing in the graveyard outside his bedroom window turns into an intimidating, anthropomorphic monster.

Despite its imposing presence, the beast gradually gains the kid's confidence, agreeing to tell a trio of insightful allegories on the condition that Conor reciprocate with one of his own. The idea, ostensibly, is that there will

be a meaningful lesson to be learned from each of the parables.

That is the point of departure of A Monster Calls, a bittersweet escapist fantasy directed by J.A. Bayona (The Impossible). The movie is based on the illustrated children's novel of the same name by Patrick Ness who also adapted it to the big screen. Ness' award-winning book was inspired by the late Siobhan Dowd, who passed away before she could tackle the semi-autobiographical project herself.

The film is less a feel-good flick than a picture about making the best of a bad situation. For, the monster's stories paint a sobering picture of life that's anything but

rosy. However, they do ultimately enable Conor to own up about his deepest fear, when it's his turn to share.

Given the mature themes and the dire plot developments, it's hard to recommend "A Monster Calls" for vulnerable youngsters. Nevertheless, it is unique in its approach to preparing a tweener to processing an impending tragedy.

A visually-enchanting, if fateful, fairy tale.

Very Good ★★★

Rated PG-13 for mature themes and scary images

Running time: 108 minutes

Distributor: Focus Features

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