

Photographer: Connor Harris Stylist: Delaney Williams

# 1883

magazine



elliott heffernan

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PHOTOGRAPHER CONNOR HARRIS  
STYLIST DELANEY WILLIAMS



ACTRESS DAFNE KEEN, KNOWN FOR HER ICONIC ROLES IN LOGAN AND THE DEADPOOL UNIVERSE, SITS DOWN WITH RISING STAR ELLIOTT HEFFERNAN TO CHAT ABOUT HIS WHIRLWIND DEBUT INTO ACTING AND HIS STARRING ROLE IN STEVE MCQUEEN'S WORLD WAR II EPIC, *BLITZ*.

T Shirt Zara by Harry Lambert





Sweater and Trousers True Artist  
Sneakers Nike

The film, which has some serious festival cred—opening the London Film Festival and closing the New York Film Festival—follows Elliott as a young evacuee trying to reunite with his mom, played by Saoirse Ronan, amid the chaos of wartime Britain. And no big deal, but Elliott's first-ever acting gig just happens to feature a star-studded cast that includes Harris Dickinson and Stephen Graham.

From performing his own stunts in a water tank to getting acting advice from Saoirse Ronan and working closely with Steve McQueen, Elliott's journey is nothing short of legendary. At just 11 years old, he opens up about the ups and downs of press tours, the excitement of working with such an incredible cast, and the surreal moment of seeing his face plastered on movie posters in Times Square.

Dafne, who's no stranger to stepping into major roles herself, shares her own advice and wisdom with Elliott, as they bond over the challenges of juggling school with a rising acting career. Get ready for an inside look at Elliott's first big step toward Hollywood stardom—and perhaps even his dream Marvel role in the future!



**Dafne: I heard you've just returned from press tours in LA and New York. Was this your first time press touring? Did you enjoy it?**  
Elliot: Yeah.

**D: Did you get to do any sightseeing?**  
E: In New York, I only had a morning to look around before I left, so I didn't do much. I walked around and went to Times Square—that was all I did in New York. But in LA, I managed to see the Hollywood sign, went to Rodeo Drive and I saw the Walk of Fame.

**D: Nice! What did you think of doing junkets and press for the first time? Did you like it?**  
E: Well, it depends. Sometimes it can be hard, sometimes it can be fun and easy, and other times it can be in the middle.

**D: It's long. It's very long days of just answering the same questions. Did you get to do it with other people, or were you on your own?**  
E: Yeah, I did it with Saoirse [Ronan] and Steve [McQueen] most of the time.

**D: What was it like working with them? Was it fun? Are they nice people?**  
E: Yeah.

**D: Did they give you any good acting tips or did they just mentor you in general?**  
E: Well, Steve didn't really give tips—it was more guidance on what to do in the specific scenes. But Saoirse, she said this in our Vogue interview as well, she always told me, 'Don't be embarrassed, and make sure you have fun.'

**D: That's really good advice. So, you had a lot of fun filming *Blitz*, didn't you?**  
E: It was very fun.

**D: I heard you did most of your own stunts. Is that true?**  
E: Yeah.

**D: That's very cool. Did you train for it?**  
E: Not that much. Not a lot.





D: I watched the movie and you're really good in it—I really enjoyed it. I was also impressed when I read that, in the scene where you're swept away by the flood, you did it yourself in a tank. What was that whole process like? How did you guys technically do that?

E: Well, it took a few days to warm the water. Then they just put a wetsuit on me, put me in the water and told me what to do, like, 'George, go that way, and then go this way.'

D: Did you like it? Or are you not into stunt work?

E: I loved it. It's my favourite part of filming.

D: Yeah, me too. It's the most fun part. So, you didn't train much and just got thrown in? It's nice that they warmed the water for you—it would have been much worse if it was cold.

E: What about you? Did you do all of your stunts?



D: I didn't do all of them, but I did most. There was some stuff I legally wasn't allowed to do that my wonderful stunt double, Nadia, had to do on *Deadpool*. But I had a really good time. That's my favourite part as well. So, I always have a really good time training for it, and I think it's a really good way of finding a character, especially when it's a really physical character. When the character doesn't require physicality, you don't really need to do all the training, but it was really fun. And also, in a movie like *Deadpool*, it's just really fun action, over-the-top and you get to look cool while you do it. I've done a lot of falling over and screaming and stuff. It was fun to just be a badass.

E: I like the claws. [mimics whooshing action]

D: They're pretty cool. I tried to steal them, but they didn't let me. Pretty sad. [both laughing]

E: Would have been cool, though.

D: I have the old ones, the ones from when I was... you're 11, right?

Yeah, from when I was your age, when I did the first movie, so I have those ones. It's pretty cool. It's so crazy because I did my first big movie at your age, and I remember that it took a year for it to come out. And I remember that when you're young a year feels like so long. It's so long that I begin to feel so differently about a project when it's coming out as opposed to when I'm making it and even when I watch it. I remember when *Logan* came out, looking at myself and being like, 'Wow, I look so young!' because a year at 11 is so long. You're a completely different person.

How do you feel about it? How long has it been since you shot *Blitz*?

E: It's been two years now. I was nine, and I looked so much younger than I do now. And I'm also taller.

Full look + Glasses Mème.



**D: Of course. Do you feel differently about the movie now that you watched it and received the story as more of a grown-up or have you stayed in the same mental space?**

E: Yeah, I think so. Because when I was nine, I wasn't really aware of anything but now I'm 11. I'm in high school, and I really understand the story a lot more than I did.

**D: So, most of your scenes were with Saoirse. I find that I had a lot of safety as most of my scenes in my first big movie were with the same actor, Hugh [Jackman], and he was so wonderful. Did you feel you and Saoirse created a nice working bond? Were you really happy when you were on set with her? Is she really professional? How do you think she's shaped you as an actor?**

E: She definitely gave me a really good first impression to acting for the first time. She was like a mum on set as well. She was professional, but at the same time, she made room to have fun, and we played games with each other all the time.

**D: That's really important.**

**Was she there for the audition as well, or did you audition on your own?**

E: So, I did a self-tape, and eventually I got to meet Saoirse, but that was maybe a month after I had done my first self-tape.

**D: Tell me if I'm wrong, but did your audition have something to do with Facebook? Is this right? How was the audition process for you and how did you get into acting? I'm really curious.**

E: I had never acted before, and I just finished my school play of Aladdin, and I was the genie. And then my teacher came up to my mum; she said I have to get into acting like right now. And then my mum found the open casting for *Blitz* on a Facebook post. I did a self-tape for it, and I guess they liked it, so they called me back. They kept calling me back. Then I met Saoirse, and I met Steve. I just kept getting called back until eventually they said I got the part.

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**D: Damn, that's a crazy story. That's a really cool first audition story. Do you remember when you were told that you got it? Where were you?**

E: So, I was celebrating my big sister's birthday, and I kind of stole the spotlight from her.

**D: That's so funny. You owe her one. She has to get you back on your birthday.**

E: Hopefully not.

**D: That's crazy that you shot *Blitz* two years ago, though. So, did you audition longer than 2 years ago?**

E: It was late 2021.

**D: Right, and you shot it in 2022.**

E: Yeah, 2022 and then a bit into 2023.

**D: So basically, this has been in the making, for you, for three years.**

E: Yeah.

**D: So, you were eight when you started on this production, technically?**

E: Yeah.

**So, you've really grown up on it in a way; that's kind of nuts. How do you feel now that you're in the final stretch of press, which is always really daunting? I remember my first press experience, even still now I get really overwhelmed by press. It's really weird when something you've made is suddenly yours and it belongs to the people that make it for so long. In your case, it's three years of it belonging to you, Saoirse and the director Steve. It's this little secret experience that you guys all shared, creating this really special thing. Then when it makes it out into the world, it's this weird feeling of, 'Oh my god, it doesn't belong to us anymore. It belongs to everyone else now.' Are you excited to be in school for a bit, or are you excited to go out there and do a bunch of movies?**

E: Yeah, it's a really big future up ahead of me, and I hope I can get an action movie.



D: Exciting, we're manifesting it! You will, you will get an action movie, hopefully one.

E: Hopefully, people like the film, and they're like, 'Ooh, this boy, he's kind of good.'

D: I'm sure the people will love you. I was so impressed by you yesterday. You're really good in it. I'm sure it's going to do so well. And it's such a special movie with a heavy, important and dark theme to it. It's based on something that actually happened, so I think it will really resonate with people. What do you hope people will take away from the movie?

E: Well, it's really something that has been said in the film. It's about love. And when problems happen, most of the time, they rip us apart, and that's what they're trying to do. But the most important thing is to stay together. In the speech that Ié [Benjamin Clémentine] did, he was talking about how it [WWII] was trying to rip everyone apart and destroy everything, but we were all banded together, and we needed to look out for each other. That's the most important thing I think a WWII movie like this one is trying to show the audience.

Top, vest and trousers True Artist  
Shoes Nike

D: What was it like for you prepping for a role based on real life? Did you just read the script and kind of go completely uninhibited into it? Or did you read about that time? Or did you ask around, maybe your parents or grandparents?

E: Well, some people might be surprised about this, but I did no research. I read the script, and eventually I knew a lot. I was on the sets, so it's a different learning experience as my tutor was teaching me a lot about WWII.

D: That's another thing I wanted to talk about. How did you manage school and filming? What was that like for you?

E: Kind of sucks.

D: Kind of sucks, right?

E: You're doing this fun stuff on set, 'Yay, yay, yay' and then you have to go do tutoring.

D: Tutoring is lame, because it's not even like you're in class with your mates. You're on your own with the teacher, and it's intense. And then, like you said it's really important but it can be really annoying. I remember being really annoyed at it because you'd be having a really fun time on set. And then you got to get your three hours in, and you're like, 'Please, just, just let me be on set.'

E: Luckily, I did have an alright tutor. Sometimes the other kids would come do tutoring with me

D: Okay, that's good. You weren't doing it on your own.

E: But still, I just I wanted to stay on set.

D: Do you love being on set?

E: Yeah, best thing ever, even if it's a really serious scene. I don't know why, even if the set doesn't look that cool, just being there with all the cameras, other people is just really fun. Just makes me happy for some reason.

D: What's it been like for your family? I bet they're really proud of you and really excited, right?

E: Yeah, I think so.



**D: I think so. I bet they are. Why wouldn't they be? Have you seen yourself on posters yet?**

E: Yes, when I was in New York I could see one poster and when that one went up if you just look around, it's just like *Blitz*, *Blitz*, *Blitz*, *Blitz*, *Blitz*. I did get recognized. Only because they saw I was standing next to the poster taking a picture. They were like, 'Is that you? Yeah, that's me!'

**D: That's really cool. Was that your first time being recognized?**

E: Yeah, it feels so awesome. It's like, you know who I am, and I've never met you before.

**D: It is pretty cool. You're gonna get a lot more of that now when the movie comes out. How do your friends feel about it?**

E: Well, because I only just went to high school.

**D: Okay. Are they all like new friends?**

E: I don't really have a lot of friends yet. Everyone in my class knows and they're a bit too excited sometimes. Someone in my year will go up to someone in year 11 and ask 'Have you seen *Blitz*? I swear, I swear he's in the movie.' And I'm like, 'Okay, I'm in a movie. I'm just like the rest of you guys, so what if I'm in a movie.' I'm not saying I don't like it, but it's when they get a bit too excited that you're in a movie. 'I'm just like you, I'm no different.'

**D: It can be a lot. That's a really important thing for you to remember as your career goes on. The best piece of advice I ever received was to surround myself with people who remind me that I'm so much more than just the movies. Outside of your career, and your profession and the fame that may come with it, it's really important to find people that are just gonna love you for you, and that's your family and your friends that have known you for a while. And I think it's really telling of you that you're already, 'That's not a defining thing for me. I did the movie, and it's been done, and that's really cool.'**

E: Thank you.

**D: Do you think your family are good at grounding you? Do they keep you humble?**

E: Yeah, especially my sisters.

**D: Of course. Do your sisters pick on you a little bit?**

E: Yeah, both of them, even the smaller one.

**D: Damn, getting it from every angle.**

E: Yeah, yeah.

**D: So, you're back at school now. Are you auditioning? What's the vibe like with work?**

E: Yeah, so there are some self-tapes coming in, and haven't heard anything yet. Yet!

**D: The key word being yet. Do you feel differently about auditioning now that you've already booked once? Is it a little bit less scary?**

E: Yeah. For my first audition, it was a lot of takes. They ask you to say the take number, and then it could be Take 50, and then you just say Take 2. But now auditioning feels a lot less scary and a lot less like I just want to get this silly thing over with. I look forward to getting another opportunity to show people what I can do. Because it was two years ago and it's not like I've stopped practicing to get better at acting. I think I've gotten a lot better, and I want the opportunity to show what I can do after two years of *Blitz*. It doesn't matter what it is, but I just be able to do something to show what I've become.

**D: You will, you just got to be patient. We're all in the same boat here. 90% of acting is auditioning, 5% is callbacks, and then the last 5% is booking; it's tough. You have to get used to being told no a lot. So, you're so ready for it.**

**D: Tell me what your dream role is.**

E: So, definitely an action movie, maybe a Marvel movie, like *Spider-Man*. But all the stuff they do in the Marvel multiverse, it's a lot technically. Maybe, just maybe, I could be like a Marvel character, maybe my own Marvel character, maybe not.

**D: That'd be really cool. You'd definitely be your own Marvel character. Do you have one in mind that you're like, but being hesitant to say?**

E: My favourite Marvel character is Deadpool. My second favourite Marvel character is Wolverine and the third is Spider-Man. So, I just like Deadpool because he's so funny, and Wolverine because he's so serious.

**D: And the fun little dynamic they have.**

E: One thing I want to ask is, how was it working with Deadpool and Wolverine?

**D: It was honestly the most fun I've ever had on set, because, like you were saying they're such different characters. One of them is so funny and so outgoing, and the other one is kinda dark and to themself, almost quiet and serious, and that's a really fun thing to watch just as a viewer. And then as soon as the cameras would cut, Hugh and Ryan [Reynolds] are the loveliest people ever. And I just got to watch these two geniuses at work every day, who are also like the loveliest, kindest, most generous souls ever. So, I just had the best time on that job.**

E: You're making me want to be in a *Deadpool* movie.

**D: Hey, I'll chat to Ryan. We can figure something out. It will be quite fun; it will be a vibe.**

*Blitz* is now streaming on Apple TV+

Interview **Dafne Keen**  
Photographer **Connor Harris**  
Stylist **Delaney Williams**  
Grooming **Tarik Bennafla** at **Stella Creative Artists** using **Horace** and **Olaplex**.  
Stylist Assistant **Keisha Adams**  
Photography Assistant **Jack Mather**  
Location **Soho Hotel, London**

Dior Suit provided by the  
Kidswear Collective  
Sunglasses **Même**  
Shoes **G.H bass**