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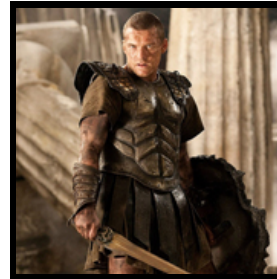
Hollywood's New Macho Man

by Gina Piccalo



Sam Worthington—who biked to the *Clash of the Titans* press conference while wearing an Iron Maiden T-shirt—has filled a virile void the boyish Pattinsons and LaBeoufs can't.

Sam Worthington's simmering presence doesn't exactly scream *Cinema Star!* what with that faded Iron Maiden T-shirt, the formidable brow, the buzz cut and the smirk. As he sauntered into the lily-scented Four Seasons Hotel meeting room, he looked like a bike messenger who'd lost his way. (He had, in fact, pedaled over from some undisclosed location.) "The first time you meet him," said *Clash of the Titans* director Louis Leterrier, "you're like, 'Courier, this way.'"



Warner Bros.

But much to the delight of the Los Angeles junket press, Worthington salted his movie chatter with F-bombs, flirty banter, and cheeky bravado. Occasionally, he'd erupt into unbridled staccato laughter. Compared to the parade of domesticated, cardigan-wearing dudes Hollywood has served up as leading men in the last few years, Worthington's little performance left the room rosy-cheeked and slightly abashed, as if we'd all been gently goosed.

"I hit 30, I woke up looking in the mirror one day, didn't like what I saw," Worthington said. "So I sold the fuckin' mirror. Sold everything else. I call it Control-Alt-Delete, you know?"

"I'm not in this profession to be famous," he told the room with that unblinking, *Semper Fi* look that comes so naturally to him. "That's a byproduct of the size and scope of the movies I do. You want to be famous; you'll go broke. This job is too hard."

There will be no quiet indie dramas for this guy. He didn't sell everything four years ago and camp out in his Toyota Camry just to woo a few bespectacled co-eds. It's go-time, James Cameron-style. *Clash of the Titans* is his first film since the box-office behemoth *Avatar*. Neither film pretends to be anything other than a popcorn-chomping thrill ride, and Worthington wouldn't have it any other way. He says he's in this business to "give the audience their 16 bucks' worth." "You get to the point where you play with the big boys," he said. "And I want to do big movies."

Bring it on, Sam. Those brick-laying years chumming it up with calloused day laborers in Sydney are finally paying off. Hollywood needs you and your machismo now more than ever.

"He's really a no-bullshit guy," says *Clash of the Titans* co-screenwriter Phil Hay. "He's very grounded in the real world, in his life experiences. And I think that

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comes through in that devil-may-care attitude. He never aims it. He just kind of goes for it. It doesn't feel calculated."

But don't be fooled by all that blue-collar bluster. Worthington has legitimate acting cred. After dropping out of high school and working construction, he landed a scholarship to Australia's National Institute for the Dramatic Arts. As [the story goes](#), he was following a girlfriend to the audition and on a whim, he gave it a go himself. That eventually led to a TV series and a few notable film roles, including a gruff rancher's son opposite Abbie Cornish in 2004's *Somersault* and MacBeth in cult director Geoffrey Wright's 2007 contemporary adaptation.

But apparently it wasn't satisfying enough for Worthington. "I hit 30, I woke up looking in the mirror one day, didn't like what I saw," he said. "So I sold the fuckin' mirror. Sold everything else. I call it Control-Alt-Delete, you know?" It wasn't, he said, his decade-long career that dissatisfied him. What was it then, you ask? "That's between me and the fuckin' mirror, isn't it?" All right then.

Worthington has an undeniably masculine charisma that makes him, as [Cameron once put it](#), "an old-school tough guy." And that truly sets him apart from so many actors of his caliber, in his generation. (He's now 33.)

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