



JOHNNY DEPP STARS AS CHARISMATIC BANK ROBBER JOHN DILLINGER IN THIS SHOOT-EM-UP DRAMA, WHICH TELLS THE TRUE STORY OF HOW THE UNITED STATES FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION CAME TO BE.

Gangster flicks have long been a guilty pleasure, giving audiences the chance to escape into a world where crime lords are well dressed, polite and sport nicknames like 'Pretty Boy Floyd'.

The difference with *Public Enemies* is that it lifts its storyline from the real-life book, *Public Enemies: America's Greatest Crime Wave and the Birth of the FBI, 1933-34*. It was written by Bryan Burrough in 2004, who says the big-screen adaptation "is not 100% historically accurate – but it's by far the closest thing to fact Hollywood has attempted, and for that I am both excited and quietly relieved."

The film is set during the Great Depression, and focuses on the true story of Bureau of Investigation agent Melvin Purvis, played by Christian Bale, as he attempts to stop criminals John Dillinger, Baby Face Nelson (Stephen Graham) and Pretty Boy Floyd (Channing Tatum).

Despite being one of America's most notorious bank robbers, John Dillinger was idolised by the public for being something of a Robin Hood.

"John Dillinger was that era's rock and roll star," Johnny Depp tells *Telegraph.co.uk*.

"He was a very charismatic man and he lived the way he wanted to and didn't compromise. I feel he was a kind of a Robin Hood because he truly cared about people. He knew time was short and I believe he had found himself and was at peace with the fact that it wasn't going to be a very long ride, but it was going to be a significant ride."

Christian Bale, who plays the straight-as-an-arrow agent who works to take Dillinger down, reveals that working with Depp remains a bit of mystery – as the two only share one face-to-face scene.

"I think Johnny is a superb actor, and what I like so much about him is that there's nobody else like him," Bale explains,

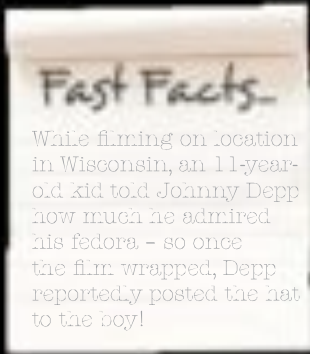
"[but] we don't know each other in the slightest."

They met at the script read-through, but other than that the actors shared just two scenes: one in a jail cell, and another where they're shooting at each from 200 feet away.

"I have a tendency – and it seemed like he (Depp) was happy to do the same – I have a tendency to not really wish to talk unless we're doing the scene. I enjoy it that way," Bale says.

"I'll get to know Johnny somewhere down the track, because it certainly didn't happen on the movie."

Working with director Michael Mann – who's responsible for action flicks such as *Hancock*, *Miami Vice*, *The Aviator* and



PUBLIC ENEMIES

VITAL STATS

SStars: Johnny Depp, Christian Bale, David Wenham, Channing Tatum, Stephen Dorff, Marion Cotillard, Billy Crudup, Giovanni Ribisi

Director: Michael Mann

Budget: US \$100 million

Gross worldwide revenue: \$195,912,000

Collateral – was a different story.

"He's one of the finest filmmakers around. His ability for all aspects of filming is stunning," Bale says.

"I just loved the research, the attention to detail, his perception of exactly what each actor is doing at any given moment. It's truly stunning. I liked my experience working with him as much as any that I've ever been through. I would certainly hope to repeat that because you don't get people with his kind of talent very often."



PUBLIC ENEMIES

DVD and Blu-ray from December 2

WORDS Sarah Megginson