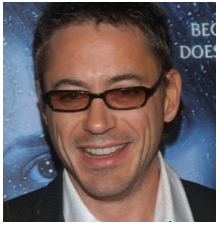


2 October 2006

By: Elena Gorgan, Entertainment News Editor



Robert Downey Jr. Is a Superhero

The actor will play 'Iron Man', another Marvel vigilante

Given the fact that most of the flicks that started from a Marvel Comics story or that took the superhero and transferred it as such to the big screen, yet another of this type is currently in the making. But, this time, Marvel Entertainment will actually fully finance the project, while Paramount Pictures will feature as distributor. The script for 'Iron Man' will be handled by Jon Favreau, a self-declared comic books fan and the same man that was behind another movie of this genre, 'Daredevil'. And a main star has already been named and considered good enough to don the steel armor: Robert Downey Jr. Tom Cruise and Nicholas Cage, who would have liked to take on the part and lobbied hard for it, were left behind Downey, who reportedly lobbied even harder. The idea for the project is not a new one, it has been gestating for years, but it just never came to anything concrete. Now, with a budget estimated at around \$100 million (thus becoming the first big budget action movie for Downey Jr.), 'Iron Man', the superhero created in 1963, will get to live on the big screen too. A character initially created by Larry Lieber, Stan Lee, Don Lee and Jack Kirby, the Iron Man used to battle Communists, often joining forces with Captain America. Tony Stark, the real name of the superhero, is a billionaire industrialist and inventor who, after a nearly fatal accident, builds himself an impenetrable steel suit that gives him superhuman strength and supernatural powers, with which he fights the bad guys. Since the fight against the Communists is a bit outdated, the producers say that the plot of the movie will be brought to date and that Iron Man is more than likely to fight terrorists. Also, an announcement from Marvel and Paramount said that they will not focus on Stark's drinking problem, an issue that will be picked up in a sequel, should a franchise be established. 'In every casting announcement we've done, people in their mind's eye have their own view of it and let us know about it. We're used to it. The point is, we looked at everybody, and we found the best person for the role. It's as confident a casting move as we've ever done. The proof will be in the pudding, but he is Tony Stark.', a spokesperson for Marvel said about choosing Robert Downey Jr. for the part. 'Iron Man' begins production in February and is scheduled for release in May 2008.