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## WHY THE FILM "THE INVISIBLES" NEEDS TO BE SEEN

 SONYA · OCTOBER 1, 2024

ENTERTAINMENT FILM

**THE INVISIBLES** is a film that follows a couple in the midst of a crumbling marriage and career. Charlie's (Tim Blake Nelson) life is sliding towards the proverbial cliff. His relationship with Hanna (Gretchen Mol) is tense, he's overlooked for a promotion at work, and he feels increasingly invisible to those around him.

Then, in a surreal twist, Charlie begins to physically disappear. As he fades from the world, he discovers a parallel universe of people, "Invisibles", who have disappeared just like him. They share the same physical space, but like ghosts, they're unable to affect the real world.

At first, Charlie enjoys the benefits of invisibility, but his unique vantage point also forces him to confront the real reason he disappeared in the first place. To reclaim his place in the world, Charlie must release the burdens of a traumatic past and welcome the unpredictable future that beckons.

*The Invisibles*, directed by Andrew Currie, is a thrilling and visually mesmerizing tale about an alternate dimension coexisting seamlessly with our reality. As Charlie grapples with the age-old Shakespearean conundrum: "*To be or not to be?*" he, and by extension all of us, learn that truly living means being anchored in the present and living for the future.

We had a chance to interview Andrew Currie recently to learn more...

**What drew you to telling this story that is relatable on many levels?**

Currie: The story was born from a personal experience. About 15 years ago, my wife and I had twin boys who were born prematurely. They were both tiny but doing well, and then our son Max had a brain hemorrhage, and suddenly he was gone. I found it incredibly hard to face his death, and for a while, I even denied that it had happened. For the next year, I felt increasingly disconnected from the world, like people weren't seeing me, as if I were invisible. I didn't realize at the time that my grief was shutting me down. When I began to

heal, I started sharing my experience and realized that many people had felt invisible for various reasons—grief, isolation, getting older, mental health struggles, and more. That universal feeling of disconnection sparked the idea for *The Invisibles*. For me, the story became about exploring not just loss, but how we find our way back to connection, healing, and hope. I think it resonates because many of us have felt unseen at some point, and too often we journey through those feelings alone.

**Although the story is shaped around a couple working through trauma, the main storyline focuses on Charlie and his journey and self-realization. Also, working through stages of grief and acceptance—What was important for you to get across to the audience about this character?**

Currie: Charlie's journey is about confronting the grief he's buried deep inside. He's spent years pretending that everything is fine, but underneath, he's in denial about the loss of his son, Oskar. I wanted to show that grief isn't something you can push aside—it will always surface, and you need to face it to move forward. For Charlie, the invisible world is a place to avoid that pain, but ultimately, he has to choose to return to reality and accept the loss. His journey takes him through the stages of grief, but what I really wanted to convey is that after acceptance, there's hope. That's the message I hope audiences take away—after going through something as heavy as grief, there is always hope, and it's a powerful thing to find.

**With the recent pandemic still fresh in our minds, many of us can recall that feeling of loneliness but also a sense of slowing down and appreciating what we have. Did Covid play a part in how you wanted to tell this story?**

Currie: Covid definitely played a role. I had been co-writing the script with a friend, Colin Aussant, but after hitting an impasse, he suggested I do a rewrite alone. During Covid, I took that advice and infused my personal experiences of loss, as well as the collective experience of isolation we all went through. The pandemic forced us to slow down and reflect, and that feeling of disconnection became even more potent. I think/hope *The Invisibles* taps into that—showing that even in our darkest moments, there's a way forward, and reconnection is possible.

**I found the film had a very thoughtful balance between dark and light (difficult situations and moments of happiness in between) and led me to think about the two working together to help us cope with challenging situations. Was that an important factor in creating this film for you?**

Currie: Absolutely. Balancing the dark and light was crucial for this story. Life is full of those contrasts—grief and joy, pain and humour—and I wanted *The Invisibles* to reflect that. I had a Scottish mother and English father, and humour was always around us. I think it's essential for survival, especially in difficult times. Even in the midst of Charlie's struggle, there are moments of lightness and humour that help him cope. Humour is part of healing, not a way to ignore pain but a way to keep moving forward despite it.

**Charlie said the words "Everything is fine. It's all good," several times early on. These words really struck a chord with me – as I'm watching this film, I realized that I say these words all too often!**

Currie: Haha, I say it too! I think it's a bit of a mantra to stave off negativity. But it can also be a way of avoiding uncomfortable truths. It's easier to say 'everything's fine' than to admit something's wrong. For Charlie, it's almost like a shield. He's not ready to face his grief, so he keeps telling himself—and everyone around him—that everything's okay. It's a defense mechanism, but eventually, the facade cracks, and you have to confront what's really going on inside.

**Hanna, his wife, is also going through her own journey alongside Charlie but in a different way, reminding us that while we all grieve there are different ways. What would you wish audiences to know about her character?**

Currie: Hannah is a reflection of resilience, especially in how she faces her grief head-on. While Charlie retreats into himself, Hannah finds strength in holding onto hope and trying to keep their relationship alive. Gretchen Mol brought so much warmth to the role, and we built moments where Charlie, as an Invisible, is observing her—almost like *It's a Wonderful Life*—seeing her in ways he hadn't before. Those small moments are what help Charlie ultimately realize that he needs to come back to her. Her strength is one of the things that leads him toward hope and healing.

**The bowling alley appears to be a sanctuary for the invisibles to feel seen and understood. This sense of community reminds us that we are not alone. While we work through whatever challenges life throws us. What more can you tell us about this place and the people who are there?**

Currie: The bowling alley is a bit of a relic from the past, and I liked the idea of it representing a space that has lost its former glory—much like the Invisibles themselves, who feel forgotten. It's a liminal space between the visible and invisible worlds, where the Invisibles can escape their pain. It feels warm and nostalgic, almost like a sanctuary, but it's also a place where they are stuck. Carl, played by Bruce Greenwood, is a philosophical guide and bartender. He's someone who advocates fiercely for the invisible world, but he's really trapped in his own way. For me, it's a way of showing how easy it is to hide in comfort rather than face the real struggles of life, a key theme that drives Charlie's journey throughout the film. The bowling alley symbolizes comfort in stasis, but it's not a place where real healing can happen.

**It was fascinating to see how the actors played out being, and feeling, invisible to the other characters they were interacting with – particularly Hanna and Charlie. Their moments were so deeply felt on both sides. Tell us more about that process?**

Currie: It was challenging but exciting to convey invisibility on an emotional level. With Tim Blake Nelson and Gretchen Mol, we focused on their emotional disconnection—how it feels to be unseen, unheard, and misunderstood. Tim and Gretchen brought such subtlety to those moments, even when they weren't physically interacting. We worked on small gestures, the way they move, the way they avoid eye contact—it's all about those little details that make the audience feel that emotional invisibility.

**What about the visual approach? The film moves from being invisible to being seen. What can you tell us?**

Currie: The visual approach was crucial in distinguishing between the two worlds and conveying Charlie's emotional journey. The invisible world is always bathed in a warm, golden light, creating this comforting, almost nostalgic atmosphere. It feels safe, like a refuge from the pain of the real world. Sounds are soft and melodic there, reinforcing that sense of calm. In contrast, the real world is colder—the lighting is harsher, and the sounds are more present and sharp, reflecting Charlie's discomfort with reality.

Maya Bankovic, our cinematographer, is incredibly gifted with light and lenses. She suggested using spherical lenses for the real world, which helped maintain a more grounded and sharper feel. And for the invisible world, we switched to anamorphic lenses, which gave everything a softer, dreamlike quality. It creates that subtle but significant visual difference between the two spaces.

We also made sure to do some lighting changes in-camera at key moments, like after Charlie kisses Hanna near the end of the film. In that scene, we transition from the warmth of the invisible world back into the real world with colder light that brings us into Hanna's perspective. The way Maya captured these shifts helped keep the emotional tone of the film consistent, visually guiding the audience through Charlie's internal transformation.

**As the filmmaker, what's been a great learning for you while working on this?**

Currie: I learned the importance of connection—both in the story and on set. More than any other film I've made, I worked hard to ensure that the entire crew felt connected to the story we were telling. Everyone brought their own experiences and creative energy, and by the end it really felt like we had done this together. I did the same with the cast, especially Nathan Alexis, who plays Nick. He brought his personal life experience into the film, speaking in the Stoney language (he is Nakota Sioux) when he speaks his heart to the waitress. Then later there's a song he sings near the end that is a family song that is about healing. Those were things he brought from his own experience and culture that deepens the story, and expresses the idea that we're all in this together.

**What has the response from audiences been like, so far? I think this film will resonate in many ways. Any surprise reactions or comments?**

Currie: The response has been incredibly moving. I've been struck by how many people have shared their own experiences of feeling invisible. It really reinforces the power of storytelling to tap into those shared human experiences. I've been especially glad to hear that people are walking away from the film feeling uplifted, which is exactly what I hoped for. One woman told me the film helped her process her own loss in a way she hadn't been able to before, and that was truly amazing to hear.

**The Invisibles** is now in select Canadian theatres!



ANDREW CURRIE GRETCHEN MOL LEVELFILM THE INVISIBLES TIM BLAKE NELSON

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Co-founder with a curious mind. I write about food, arts & culture, travel and wellness, quiet luxury, and things that are otherworldly. I love learning the stories and inspirations behind people, places and things. I'm a 50+ year old that is skincare obsessed. Also, the keeper of the monthly "City Girl's Guide to...". Reach me here: [theculturedpearlsonya@gmail.com](mailto:theculturedpearlsonya@gmail.com)