

50 MPH: EPISODE 19

“THE ULTIMATE L.A. MOVIE GUIDE” (with Katie Walsh)

Transcript (01:28:33)



KRIS TAPLEY

This is *50 MPH*!

[INTRO MUSIC]

DENNIS HOPPER (as “Howard Payne”)

Pop quiz, hotshot!

DENNIS HOPPER (as “Howard Payne”)

There’s a bomb on a bus.

JEFF DANIELS (as “Harry Temple”)

You’re deeply nuts, you know that?

DENNIS HOPPER (as “Howard Payne”)

Once the bus goes fifty miles an hour, the bomb is armed.

SANDRA BULLOCK (as “Annie”)

Stay on or get off?

DENNIS HOPPER (as “Howard Payne”)

If it drops below fifty...

SANDRA BULLOCK (as “Annie”)

Stay on or get off?!

DENNIS HOPPER (as “Howard Payne”)

...it blows up.

ALAN RUCK (as “Stephens”)

Oh, darn.

DENNIS HOPPER (as “Howard Payne”)

What do you do?

KEANU REEVES (as “Jack Traven”)

You have a hair trigger aimed at your head. What do you do?

DENNIS HOPPER (as “Howard Payne”)

What do you do?!

KEANU REEVES (as “Jack Traven”)

What do you do?

KRIS TAPLEY

I’m your host, Kris Tapley, and you’re listening to an oral history of director Jan de Bont’s 1994 summer blockbuster, *Speed*, straight from the people who made it happen. Now, don’t forget to fasten your seatbelts. Let’s hit the road!

KRIS TAPLEY

Hello, folks, welcome once again to another action-packed episode of your favorite *Speed* podcast. Probably the only *Speed* podcast, or maybe it’s not, but it’s definitely your favorite. This is indeed *50 MPH* and last week, we established *Speed* as a sort of ultimate LA movie. We covered the locations element of the film and how it sort of utilized the city as a backlot doing crazy stuff on city streets, the 105 freeway before it was completed, the airport out at LAX, a brand-new subway system at the time and, of course, a rousing finale in front of Hollywood’s famed Chinese Theatre. I thought it was a good excuse to go off-road this week with another of our top film critics and sort of break down the greatest LA movies of all time. That’s right. *50 MPH* has gone listicle, and we’re doing it today with the help of Katie Walsh, film critic for Tribune News Service as well as the *LA Times*. She also co-hosts the *Miami Nice* podcast on One Heat Minute Productions, where she and her colleague, Blake Howard, dig into the world of *Miami Vice* and the world of Michael Mann. And it’s probably not a spoiler to say we’ll be talking about that particular filmmaker a little bit today. So, Katie, thank you so much for joining me on a hot summer day to talk about the great Los Angeles movies. Do you feel good about your list?

KATIE WALSH

I do. It was such a challenge. This is probably one of the hardest lists I’ve ever had to make, but it was really fun to sort of drill into what I consider to be an ideal LA movie and why and I’m excited to talk about it.

KRIS TAPLEY

Yeah, it does become a difficult journey to start whittling it down. We both had about 20 each before we got down to our lists. But let’s start talking about methodology first. I literally told Katie to make this list whatever she wants it to be. You know, whether it’s best movies set in LA, best movies that showcase the city, best movies that tap into, whatever, the collective psyche of LA. A greatest LA movies list can be whatever you want it to be, and hopefully by the end of things here, we will have assembled the ultimate LA Movie Guide for everybody out there. And I’ll just start by talking about what I did. My methodology was kind of a combination of all of that, but I really found that I was sort of drawn to movies that, I don’t know, capture the idea of LA in many ways.

And I guess there's something abstract about that. There's certainly something subjective about it. But it wasn't as simple for me as, you know, movies set in LA. You know, I didn't gravitate to, you know, sort of localized things, which might lead to some eyebrow-raising omissions for me. But, you know, again, just what the idea of LA is in my mind, that was sort of my chosen course. But how about you Katie? What was yours? And we're going to start with you, by the way. So, first tell us how you came to your list and then kick us off with the first movie on that list. And by the way, by pure coincidence, one movie is shared across our two lists. Like, when we came together and said, "These are our lists," one movie on both of them. So, this is going to be a bulky discussion with 19 individual movies. And I want to note that Katie is anti-ranking, which is, which is adorable and fine. But I just want to mention that as well.

KRIS TAPLEY

Like, I ranked all the *Mission: Impossible*s recently, and then everyone got so mad at me for the last one. And this is why I hate ranking because one of them has to be last. And I also just – I think it's just really hard to, like, put wildly disparate films, you know, in, I guess, competition with each other. So, that's the only reason why I'm against ranking.

KRIS TAPLEY

Very noble of you.

KATIE WALSH

But I have put this in somewhat of an order.

KRIS TAPLEY

OK.

KATIE WALSH

So, there is a beginning and an end.

KRIS TAPLEY

I did ask her to save her most passionate sentiments for the end, so we can start to lean that way. But yeah, you go ahead and tell us first about the methodology, I guess.

KATIE WALSH

Yeah, my methodology was movies that I felt captured Los Angeles as a place, as a setting, that allows me to see LA in a new way or sort of reflected the way that I know the city in a certain way. So, definitely Los Angeles as a character, as a setting and maybe from a different point of view. I also really wanted to include at least one film directed by a woman or a person of color, and also that had different representational aspects in that way. I just think my approach to list-making is kind of to include all kinds of different people and artists and representation. So, that was just something that I kept in mind while I was putting my list together, but when I think about it, it's, like, definitely films that make me see or feel the city as a place as a setting, and I think that films that

had to be set in LA, or there's something integral to the city about what's going on in these movies?

KRIS TAPLEY

Awesome. What's your first movie?

KATIE WALSH

Okay, so my first movie is *Tangerine*, which is the Sean Baker film. And he started on iPhone, and it has to do with two sex workers who are – transgender sex workers – who are basically going on a Christmas Eve journey up and down, essentially, Santa Monica Blvd., sort of from West Hollywood to East Hollywood and back and forth. On foot, on the bus, on the subway. They have a sort of memorable opening in a donut shop, which is now a donut shop – it's on Highland and Santa Monica and it's owned by Danny Trejo. It's, like, one of Danny Trejo's donut shops.

KRIS TAPLEY

Oh, it's still there?

KATIE WALSH

Yeah, it's still there but it's, like, painted pink and it's Trejo's Donuts or whatever, or Donuts & Coffee. In the movie it's called Donut Time. The structure is still there, but it's just rebranded. And when I first moved to LA, I did not have a car for three years. So, I think when you see the city on foot or by public transportation, it's a vastly different experience than seeing it in a car, and that's what I loved so much about *Tangerine*, was, like, the aspect of seeing it on foot. And I think I just love that it was highlighting people that you don't always see in LA movies. I think there's, like, an Armenian cab driver in this movie, and just, like, highlighting things that if you lived in LA and you knew the city quite well, like, you would identify these people and these experiences and these locations. So, that's why I chose *Tangerine*.

KRIS TAPLEY

No, I haven't seen *Tangerine* since it came out, and I loved it. It peels back the layers of the city in a way I feel like Sean Baker only can, too. I mean, no one else is going to make that movie that way, and he just has such an indelible focus on that. So, I saw that and I certainly had thought about it, but it had been a while since I had seen it. So, it didn't stick as much as some other movies. But yeah, perfect choice. My number 10, because I rank, is – you know, I thought about *Sunset Boulevard* here. I felt I should. The noirs are difficult for me, and by the way, we're going to use this as an excuse to just talk about other movies the whole time. So, expect that. But then I started to think about them. You know, *Kiss Me Deadly*, it's a Bunker Hill movie to me more than it's an LA movie. That localized thing. *Double Indemnity*, *Mildred Pierce*, like, OK, you'll see like some Glendale or Los Feliz location here and there, but it doesn't start to scream "LA movie" to me. *The Long Goodbye*, it's a Malibu movie. It's not really an LA movie. But then I was thinking, because my head was there, about black and white, and *Ed Wood* flashed in my head. And I said, *Ed Wood* is definitely a great LA movie. So, I got a little wacky there. But I just thought about it, and I I'm really into this idea of movies

that, again, showcase different areas of the city, and I just think of things like Bela Lugosi living in Baldwin Hills. And I even reached out to Larry Karaszewski when I was putting this together. I was like – he wrote the script with Scott Alexander, his partner – and I was, like, did “Did he really live in Baldwin Hills or did you just make that up?” And he’s like, “Oh, no,” and he showed me all his research instantly. He was like, “He lived in Baldwin Hills in this house.” And so, just little weird things like that. I mean, this movie, shares DNA with a lot of movies on my list, which is a lot of mine are about dreamers. And that’s, to me, sort of a quintessential element of LA. You come to LA because you’re trying to get away from somewhere else. You know, I interviewed somebody not long ago. No, I didn’t interview him. Dennis Hopper. I saw an interview with Dennis Hopper.

KATIE WALSH

You interviewed Dennis Hopper?

KRIS TAPLEY

No, no, no-

KATIE WALSH

I know, I’m just kidding.

KRIS TAPLEY

I saw an interview. Yeah, that would be interesting. I went down to the grave and pulled out my recorder.

KATIE WALSH

It was a séance? You had a Ouija board?

KRIS TAPLEY

Yeah, yeah, yeah. He showed up! He was on time. No, but I saw an interview with Dennis Hopper where he was talking about, he grew up in Dodge City, and he came to LA because he wanted to know where all the trains were going.

KATIE WALSH

Oh my God, I love that.

KRIS TAPLEY

And I just always thought that was a great line. And a lot of my movies sort of reflect that idea of LA as a dreamer’s city. And also, *Ed Wood* certainly is part of the reflexive cinema canon, movies about the industry. *Boogie Nights*, *The Player*, things like that. So, it just struck me. I wanted to include *Ed Wood* on the list. It was one of my favorite movies when I was, you know, getting into movies. It’s my favorite Burton movie – Tim Burton movie – so, *Ed Wood*. Number 10 for me.

KATIE WALSH

Nice. And I love *Ed Wood* so much. And, yeah, I don't know, I haven't seen it in a long time, so I need to rewatch it.

KRIS TAPLEY

It goes all over. That's what I love about it. It showcases a lot of areas and, you know, there's the whole bit with Orson Welles, and it's my favorite movie-magic kind of movie, in terms of showing you how that sausage is made, or a movie kind of depicting the industry in that way. I love it for that. So, yeah.

KATIE WALSH

And I think so many of the movies like on both of our lists are about, like, filmmakers who come to LA as dreamers and are reflecting that back in their own work. Because I don't think we have a lot of, like, native Angelenos as directors on this list, so they're really capturing the sense of falling in love with the city, I think. Which, I'm not from here, so I also feel like I share that sometimes. You know, that's a connection you can feel with a filmmaker when they are sort of showing you the city that they've fallen in love with or that they are grappling with as a as a transplant, as a dreamer.

KRIS TAPLEY

Totally.

KATIE WALSH

OK, so, my number nine is *The Nice Guys*, a Shane Black film-

KRIS TAPLEY

The Miami Nice Guys. Sorry, I'm not going to keep doing that.

KATIE WALSH

The Miami Nice Guys! Yeah. But I really, really wanted to include a Shane Black film, because – and this, I think, is one of his best. I could have also done *Kiss Kiss Bang Bang*, I guess.

KRIS TAPLEY

I thought about that one.

KATIE WALSH

But there's just such a, like, affability to this film. It's Ryan Gosling and Russell Crowe, who normally do quite tough-guy, a little bit, characters. And it's them leaning into their physical comedian aspects, or even their, you know – just their comedian aspects. And it's a sort of LA noir. It's all over the city. It's Shane Black sort of riffing on LA noir, even though he riffs on that, I think, a lot, but this is sort of the most direct one. And I think it's just a really sort of beautiful distillation of, like, his talent and his approach to filmmaking. I also interviewed Shane Black for *Playboy*, I think in 2016, and it was about this movie, and I said to him, I said – my last question to him was, like, "Shane, what's the deal with Christmas?" Because if you know Shane Black movies, you know that he always has some scene that's set at Christmas, and Shane Black is a really interesting guy. He

speaks in full paragraphs. Like, beautiful, beautifully written sentences that have no “um’s” or “likes” or pauses or anything. He just speaks like he’s writing for a character of his own. And he just told me this, like, really beautiful anecdote or sort of evocative notion of LA at Christmas and how there’s a sadness to it because there’s no snow, but, like, but people are still sort of celebrating Christmas in very small ways. Like, the taco truck will have, like, a little Virgin Mary or a Santa or, you know, just the kind of you know, palm-tree-with-Christmas-lights-on-it kind of idea that there’s a poignancy and a beauty and a little bit of a sad twinge to Christmas in LA and that there’s something evocative about that that makes you feel something, so.

KRIS TAPLEY

Yeah, and a lot of times, the town in empties out a bit. So, yeah, it’s a vibe.

KATIE WALSH

Well, the town empties out because it’s made of people from other places, you know?

KRIS TAPLEY

Exactly.

KATIE WALSH

Which is kind of what we’re talking about, so.

KRIS TAPLEY

Or the weirdos that go to Hawaii for Christmas and New Year’s, which I’ve never understood, but yeah, Shane Black.

KATIE WALSH

The industry is shut down.

KRIS TAPLEY

Yeah, the industry shuts down. Shane Black, it goes back to *Lethal Weapon*, right? LA and Christmas. You know, I’m a big *Last Boy Scout* fan. You could definitely put a number of Shane Black movies on here. I certainly thought about *Kiss Kiss Bang Bang*, which I want to watch again. I was I looked at the trailer again when I was thinking about it for this list and I was like, “Man, I’ve got to go back to that,” but *Nice Guys*, you know, I remember not being a huge fan of that movie, though. I want to go back to it because I just feel out of place not liking. It seems like something I should like more than I do.

KATIE WALSH

Do you remember why you didn’t like it? Or was it just-

KRIS TAPLEY

No, I just – something – I don’t remember.

KATIE WALSH

It didn’t hit on that day. It depends on the day.

KRIS TAPLEY

It could have been the day, because I do know that I liked both of them and that they were just so good together in that way, Russell and Ryan. My buddies, Russell and Ryan.

KATIE WALSH

There are so many Shane Black movies, as you said. Like, *Lethal Weapon* would have been a fun one. You know, that could fit on this list. I don't know why this was the one I zeroed in on, but I think it just felt like the most LA to me, and him kind of reckoning with his – with the genre of the LA noir but also, like, the place, and I don't know. It's almost like a – we're going to talk about this movie later – it feels almost like a foil to *L.A. Confidential*.

KRIS TAPLEY

Totally.

KATIE WALSH

With Russell and stuff.

KRIS TAPLEY

Good call. Do you want to mention the movie that you wanted to switch out there? Or do you want to save it? We talked about it right before we started recording.

KATIE WALSH

Oh, yes. I was going to switch-

KRIS TAPLEY

She really wanted to do this but I was like, "Eh, it would be fun to keep the Shane Black in there."

KATIE WALSH

Yeah, we really wanted to talk about Shane, so we put that on there. And I feel like we're going to be just referring to everybody, like, by their first name like they're our friends the whole time.

KRIS TAPLEY

Yes. It happens.

KATIE WALSH

But I really wanted to put *Licorice Pizza*, because I felt like I had to include a Paul Thomas Anderson movie. There are so many Paul Thomas Anderson movies that are about LA. *Boogie Nights*, *Magnolia*, *Licorice Pizza*. But *Licorice Pizza* just felt like such a love letter to the valley and where he grew up, so that was kind of what I was thinking about, wanting to put that on there. I ultimately – it's not on there, but it's there – it's in my heart. It lives in my heart.

KRIS TAPLEY

We'll talk about him now because – I think this was really my number eight, not my number nine, but I'll make it my number nine for these purposes. *Magnolia* is my number nine. PTA, as you say, a consummate LA filmmaker across a number of movies, and this one, to me – it's my favorite PTA movie. I think it's an outright masterpiece, and every time I go back to it, I'm obliterated all over again. And it has something to say about connections between people that feels like – and it feels like it could only have been in LA. Like, I don't think you could have made this movie in, like, I don't know, San Francisco, wherever else. It just – there's something about – and in some ways, it's like it's a Magnolia Blvd. movie, right? Like, it's not a movie that goes all over, really. You know, you've got Tom Cruise at his dad's house and stuff, but, like, there's just something about the characters and the idea of disconnection and connection that is at the heart of the movie that I just – it feels like it screams the city's soul to me in some sense. And so that was my PTA movie.

KATIE WALSH

Yeah. You truly could choose any number of them.

KRIS TAPLEY

Yeah.

KATIE WALSH

But yeah, I love *Magnolia*. I need to rewatch it. I haven't seen it in very many years, but it's such a special movie. It's the type of movie that I haven't seen in many years, but there are certain images and performances and moments that are just, like, seared onto you.

KRIS TAPLEY

I can't believe he made that movie. It's like – that movie exists.

KATIE WALSH

Right.

KRIS TAPLEY

I mean, he could do what he wanted to at that stage, but obviously comes in that great film year of '99, and you just wouldn't get this movie from anybody today, I don't think. So.

KATIE WALSH

No. It's completely unique. And, of course, I love that it lands in Tom Cruise's years of working with auteurs and doing daring material, which, he's doing daring material in different ways now, but we love him playing a villain as he will be later on my list.

KRIS TAPLEY

Ooh, the tease. Alright, what's next for you?

KATIE WALSH

I'm going to go *Boyz N the Hood*, because I love John Singleton and I love this movie, and I also think this movie captured just, like, a moment in time. It was very zeitgeisty. I think John Singleton was, like, the youngest person ever nominated for Best Director at that time?

KRIS TAPLEY

Yep.

KATIE WALSH

He was, like, right out of college at USC. And, you know, it's sort of like-

KRIS TAPLEY

Fight on.

KATIE WALSH

Yeah – hey, we're both Trojans!

KRIS TAPLEY

We are.

KATIE WALSH

But I just think he's such a great director. I mean, RIP. I love him so much, and he's so insanely talented. But this movie also just came at this, like, really interesting moment in time for Los Angeles and for – you know, it represents a different part of Los Angeles, South Central, Compton area that we don't always see as well. And it's also just, like, really beautiful and tragic and sad and really, like, deeply moving. It's just a great film, you know, aside from all the sort of meaning that is put onto it for what it's about, where it's from, you know, what it says about the culture in the mid-90s and all of this stuff, you know, when we were obsessed with the LA riots and gangsta rap and all this stuff. But, you know, I think it just shows this story of, like, normal people living in their neighborhood, and it's more of a personal story than it is, like, about the idea of where it is. So, it balances both.

KRIS TAPLEY

I'm glad you included it on the list. I feel like John Singleton needs to be represented. I, just, fair warning, my list is very white, and part of it was what I said about things being localized. Like, you know, this movie takes place within a few square blocks, right? So, it's sort of – my methodology wasn't allowing it space. Also, you know, earlier this year I actually watched all of these films. *Boyz N the Hood*, *Menace II Society*, that I had not seen in years. *Menace II Society*, I think, is my favorite still. I just – that movie is so freaking good and potent and just an exhibition of talent that still blows me away. But if I had gone with any of them, I might have even said *Friday*.

KATIE WALSH

Oh my God! Yeah. Totally.

KRIS TAPLEY

I mean that that is a movie – I wore out my VHS when I was in middle school and high school.

KATIE WALSH

That didn't even occur to me, but yes. Like, because I just thought John Singleton, and then I just immediately thought *Boys N the Hood*, but *Friday* is, like, such a great choice.

KRIS TAPLEY

It's so good. And you could even go to things like *Training Day* and stuff, that really are kind of city-hopping movies as well.

KATIE WALSH

God, I love *Training Day*.

KRIS TAPLEY

There are so many to choose from, and not that you have to choose one, but I just I ended up not having a John Singleton film or any of these from the early-90s. So, I'm glad you have that on there. It's an excellent choice.

KATIE WALSH

Also, he is an Angeleno. So, we've been talking a lot about people who are transplants, so, I think, in this film, he's, like, saying, "This is my 'hood."

KRIS TAPLEY

This is going to make an interesting segue to my next movie, but I went with *Falling Down*, the Joel Schumacher film from 1993 that I don't think you would ever see made in a million years today.

KATIE WALSH

No, not at all.

KRIS TAPLEY

It is Michael Douglas as this guy who's just on his way to work over here in – I think he's over here in Pasadena, South Pas, something like that – and in traffic in this glorious opening shot that just sets up the kind of closeness of things and just the heat and settles on this guy's face and he just freaking snaps and gets out of his car and goes on a tear through the city, and talk about, like, a road trip to the city. I mean, this goes all the way through Koreatown, through – I guess he's in Boyle Heights at one point. He's making his way to Venice and just slowly losing his mind along the way. And it – today, it could be seen as, like, a poster child for, like, MAGA types. I still think, looking at the movie now – I don't know when last time you saw it was or what you think about it – I think the movie is very smart in its kind of assessment of that stuff, and still is, and ends on one of the bleakest images I can imagine, actually. I don't know if you remember, but

it's after they kill him out on the – Duvall kills him out on the pier, which is actually the Manhattan Beach Pier, which is standing in for Venice Beach Pier.

KATIE WALSH

It's a good pier.

KRIS TAPLEY

Yeah, it's a good pier. Photographs better. But he – they kill him and then the kind of camera is wandering back through the house, and before the finale has happened, he was in there watching old home movies with him and his wife, played by Barbara Hershey, and their daughter. And so, at the end of the movie, the camera kind of floats through the house and settles on this, like, familial moment between him and his daughter, and then, "Directed by Joel Schumacher." And it's just, like, oof. It's a bleak passage.

KATIE WALSH

I love Joel.

KRIS TAPLEY

But, again, these this kind of trip-through-LA movies I really cling to. I think of stuff like *Volcano*, *To Live and Die in L.A.*

KATIE WALSH

Oh, God. You know what? That should have been on my list.

KRIS TAPLEY

She's calling for a redo. A recount.

KATIE WALSH

Eleven! Eleven!

KRIS TAPLEY

Stop the count! Or, like, *Ambulance*, even, more recently.

KATIE WALSH

Shit! Kris.

KRIS TAPLEY

This is going to happen. You're just going to have to let it happen.

KATIE WALSH

I'm so mad.

KRIS TAPLEY

It's going to happen.

KATIE WALSH

I know, I know.

KRIS TAPLEY

But these kind of movies that really just blast through the city in ways and just – it's just really cool to me. So, *Falling Down*. If you haven't seen it in a while, or if you feel icky about it, I mean, just give it another shot. I still think it's very brilliant, so.

KATIE WALSH

I think Joel is good – Joel, my guy – is good at showing stuff, but also having a critical stance. And not that it's demonizing, but just kind of presenting it in a way that, you know, is sort of just, like, let's take this in, kind of thing.

KRIS TAPLEY

Yeah.

KATIE WALSH

At least with that movie. And that movie, I love the camera – like, sort of floating, long, long takes that are happening all the time. And it's Andrzej-

KRIS TAPLEY

Bartkowiak, the DP – I should say this – of *Speed*.

KATIE WALSH

Yes, I was looking at that right before we started recording. I'm like, "He shot *Speed*!" I could not say his name. Thank you for doing that.

KRIS TAPLEY

Sure. You can see, like, you know, ideas forming for stuff to put in *Speed*, because there's some stuff happening at the construction area of the 105. *Lethal Weapon 3*, which Jan de Bont shot, there's a big subway thing in that when they're still building the subway, so you kind of see these locations that are coming together in the early-90s, and then they get really utilized in *Speed*. But, yeah.

KATIE WALSH

And it's like, you get these two genius cinematographers working on *Speed*, and it's just the perfect movie ever made. I mean, what can you say?

KRIS TAPLEY

And there's a scene, by the way, in *Falling Down*, with Frederic Forrest, who we just lost, played Chef in *Apocalypse Now*.

KATIE WALSH

Oh, yeah.

KRIS TAPLEY

And he plays this, like, racist, homophobic gun nut in, you know, a gun shop, or kind of selling military fatigues and stuff in – I don't know where that is. That seems like Koreatown-ish. But I always just felt like him and the guy with the gimp downstairs in *Pulp Fiction* must have known each other or something.

KATIE WALSH

Wait, is that the LA – is it the one, the army surplus store in Silver Lake? No? Yes?

KRIS TAPLEY

I don't think he would have had an army surplus store in Silver Lake.

KATIE WALSH

There was one, though, that was there forever, but just closed.

KRIS TAPLEY

I believe there was one, but this was so seedy it just couldn't have been. Couldn't have been. But, interesting. What's next for you?

KATIE WALSH

OK, my next one is my one and only Tarantino entry. I could have done *Pulp Fiction*, but I went with *Once Upon a Time in Hollywood*.

KRIS TAPLEY

Lower than I thought it was going to be. Interesting.

KATIE WALSH

I know. You know what? The ranking is a little – I'm just – it's a little wonky.

KRIS TAPLEY

All good.

KATIE WALSH

Because, you know, I'm not quite a ranker.

KRIS TAPLEY

I won't hold you to it.

KATIE WALSH

But I – again, I think I put this on the list just for that sequence where all the neon lights turn on at, like, Casa Vega and Musso or, you know, Arclight, Cinerama Dome, Vista. I can't even remember

KRIS TAPLEY

The Mexican restaurant.

KATIE WALSH

Is it Casa Vega?

KRIS TAPLEY

No, no, the one near the New Beverly, across the street from the New Beverly.

KATIE WALSH

Oh, El Coyote.

KRIS TAPLEY

El Coyote, yeah. Isn't that one of the signs?

KATIE WALSH

I think so. I can't remember. I'm just literally naming places that I think he would have included, so, if I'm wrong, just let me know. But just that kind of magical, twinkly sequence of – clearly a filmmaker just being, like, "I love these spots." And it's totally the LA dreamer – you move to LA or you visit LA and you're just, like, "Oh, I've got to go to these places." So, I think I put it on just for that reason. But also, I'm very obsessed with the Manson murders. And so, it was fun for me to see them, like, at Spahn Ranch, and kind of this stuff that I had always thought about. I was very skeptical, before this movie came out, of this movie, because I was worried about how he would treat the Manson murders, because I am so steeped in the details. But I think, ultimately, he puts this revisionist history tendency that he has towards, like, a really beautiful fantasy of Sharon Tate just living her life and imagining what that might have been for her. And I think – I respect what he does at the end of that movie. So, yeah.

KRIS TAPLEY

One of the guys I interviewed for the podcast is Gil Combs, who was the stunt driver who drove the bus pretty much anytime you see it moving, and he's, like, a third-generation stunt guy – and this will probably be repetitive. I'm not sure when I'm going to bring this up on the show. But he kind of grew up with Burt Reynolds and Hal Needham in the house. So, I was, like, "Well, what did you think of *Once Upon a Time in Hollywood*?" Because that's who Leo and Brad Pitt are playing. And he's like, "Ah, I had trouble with it, because I know these guys," and, you know, it was one of those things. It was just too close for him. But I just wanted to throw that out there, because these guys – it's an interesting community of people, the stunt world, and I've run into a number of them on this and he's pretty special. Just, this third-generation guy who, his grandfather started in stunts in the silent era doing westerns and stuff.

KATIE WALSH

So cool.

KRIS TAPLEY

Anyway, we had to get a Tarantino movie on here. I don't have room for one ultimately. You know, I might have gone with *Jackie Brown* if one had made it through. I think that would have been my choice.

KATIE WALSH

I know. Again, impossible. Like, with Paul Thomas Anderson, it's, like, impossible to choose one Tarantino LA movie.

KRIS TAPLEY

You could totally say *Pulp Fiction*. You could say *Reservoir Dogs*, which they filmed right over here in my neighborhood, basically. Pat & Lorraine's is a restaurant that's still open. Great breakfast burritos. That's where they shot the diner scene. There's a bowling alley over here. The wall of this bowling alley is where they're sort of walking at the beginning on the credits. It's, like, right over here.

KATIE WALSH

I know, *Jackie Brown*. Like, it's so hard to choose one.

KRIS TAPLEY

I think that's the one I would have gone with, though, if something had squeezed through. But *Once Upon a Time in Hollywood* probably makes the most sense for these purposes. OK, next. Where are we, like, number seven or something?

KATIE WALSH

I just did – I've done four from the bottom.

KRIS TAPLEY

OK, here we go. I watched this again last night just to make sure, and, God, the movie still soars, and I actually don't know what you think about it. *La La Land*. Tell me now, what do you think?

KATIE WALSH

What do I think about it?

KRIS TAPLEY

So I know what I'm getting into. Am I walking into a wood chipper or not?

KATIE WALSH

No, no, no. I like *La La Land*. I don't think I'm, like, obsessed with it. But the thing about *La La Land* is, I was, like – I wasn't sure about it. And then the last 10 minutes or so, like, totally got me. That whole sequence at the end. It really – I was, like, "OK, I'm emotionally connected to it." I respect this choice. I think it's a good choice and I think it had to – you've got to have this movie on here.

KRIS TAPLEY

Getting back to my methodology. I mean, the idea of LA. It's a movie about dreamers. It's a movie about – it's got beautiful sunsets. It's got traffic. It's got that opening sequence, which takes place in *Speed* country, by the way, where they shot the big jump sequence in *Speed*.

KATIE WALSH

Speed country!

KRIS TAPLEY

This will come back to *Speed* every time. Yeah, man *Speed* country. The big finale in *Heat 2*, with the big gun fight? That's *Speed* country.

KATIE WALSH

Yes, it is! Yes, totally.

KRIS TAPLEY

I can't wait until they shoot that.

KATIE WALSH

And I live right off the 110.

KRIS TAPLEY

Oh yeah?

KATIE WALSH

Yeah.

KRIS TAPLEY

But yeah, you know, just being someone in the crowd, to steal a line from the movie. I'm going to be really douchey real quick and just read what I wrote about the movie, because I went back to my thing that I wrote at the time. I said, "*La La Land* is about reaching. It's a reminder to the stability-clinging pragmatist in all of us that the painful, often self-destructive act of dreaming is the very elixir of life." That's how I feel about this movie, and that's why it really gets in my bones, because it really is about that in every single ounce of its DNA. I mean – and I wanted to throw in here, *Babylon*, because it's a completely different view of LA.

KATIE WALSH

Oh, it totally is.

KRIS TAPLEY

Totally cynical, just, view of a machine that destroys you. And I just thought, that those two came from the same mind – I mean, I have mad issues with *Babylon*, but I actually love it more than most people do. And this Damien Chazelle is talented, man. The way this guy has put together a movie every step of the way, I just – you know, we could spend plenty of time talking about the merits of these filmmakers, but as an LA movie, you know. And also, it's about these two people – this is what really got me, I think, about it at the time, because I'm sure plenty of us relate to this – it's about two people who come into each other's lives at exactly the right time, when they needed it, and then they left. You know, they exited stage right. And so, that really impacted me. So, *La La Land*.

KATIE WALSH

I was going to say, I do love the sort of dark/light comparison of *Babylon* and *La La Land* and also including them as sort of a yin and yang entry on this list. What's so funny as, like, if the last 10 minutes of *La La Land*, like, got me on the side of that movie, the last 10 minutes of *Babylon*, like, completely threw me out. I was actually having so much fun with that movie until the end. I was just, like, "No. Stop. Don't do this."

KRIS TAPLEY

And there is stuff in the last third that I love. Like, I love that seedy club sequence thing with Tobey Maguire and just, "Here is the star," and it's, like, they're going down to the bowels to kind of – it's this berserk kind of, like, representational thing about stars that I just thought was really interesting.

KATIE WALSH

Yeah. It's his David Lynch moment.

KRIS TAPLEY

But the montage, I cannot sanction that.

KATIE WALSH

No, I can't sanction the montage, either. I also can't sanction showing as much of *Singin' in the Rain* as he shows in that movie. I was, like, "Yeah, we get it. We we got it about an hour ago, but, yeah, we're good. Just show, like, 30 seconds of this." But no, *Babylon*, I think putting those two together in terms of, you know, just both of these coming from his brain and his experiences, but I do think *La La Land*, that's the one we're putting on the list, it's the more fun movie, certainly, and I think it is the right choice for the LA Movie Guide. OK, next, for me, I'm going to go *Terminator 2: Judgment Day*.

KRIS TAPLEY

Yes.

KATIE WALSH

And now I'm sort of questioning if I should have put that on the list, but I really wanted either *Terminator* or *Terminator 2*. I just love the location-ness of it. Like, the mall, the LA river, like, just all of that.

KRIS TAPLEY

"The Galleria?"

KATIE WALSH

Yes, of course. And Linda Hamilton, of course, her glow-up – her amazing glow-up. I just love the movie. I think it's, like, a perfect movie.

KRIS TAPLEY

Totally valid choice.

KATIE WALSH

And, again, we have someone, James Cameron, a Canadian man, came here to make a dream. He was building sets on Roger Corman's workshop, you know, sweatshop, whatever you want to call it. He was plucked by Gale Anne Hurd, who said, "That man knows what he's doing." She was Corman's assistant and she could see talent and she optioned the *Terminator* script for \$1.

KRIS TAPLEY

A steal.

KATIE WALSH

Yes. She's still enjoying those spoils. But I just think *Terminator 2* – I really like *Terminator*. *Terminator 2* is an upgrade for me, though.

KRIS TAPLEY

Without question. This is a great choice. I mean, this is one of the few movies where I've, like, gotten on Google Maps and been, like, "Wait, where did John Connor live? What's the address?" And go and look at the street view and be, like, "Oh, it's still there. It looks like it," like, total LA movie. And, yes, you could have done *Terminator* as well. I mean, this was back when the industry was in LA, so the movie sort of was going to have to be in LA, right? Like, you're going to shoot that movie here. And the way he does it is, like – I had a professor in film school, a cinematography teacher. He had this funny story about when they were shooting that movie, when they were shooting, specifically the big freeway chase, you could not find cable in this town. Like, rigging cable.

KATIE WALSH

Oh my God

KRIS TAPLEY

Like, the production had just gobbled up all the assets and it was, like, this whole thing.

KATIE WALSH

That's so funny. They're, like, "We literally have no cords."

KRIS TAPLEY

"No stingers, sorry." And you look at that scene, and, it's like, it's night and they light the hell out of it. There's also a lot of really good rear-screen projection in that movie, by the way. Like, incredibly integrated rear-screen projection, just on a nuts-and-bolts level. And just to find another reason to talk about *Speed*, there's that great rear-projection sequence in the subway at the end when they're fighting each other on top of the subway, and people might not even realize that's rear projection, because it was a

massive screen, like, more immersive than most rear projection is. See? I find a way. I find a way to bring *Speed* in. But *Terminator 2* is totally valid.

KATIE WALSH

Yeah, I also, just, sort of outside of the text of *Terminator 2* – I love how I’m talking myself into this, even though I did put it on my list, but I love Eddie Furlong’s a Glendale native. Eddie Furlong was discovered by Mali Finn, the casting director at, like – I just looked at it up – at a Pasadena Boys and Girls Club. So, I just love, also, the idea of this LA kid just getting plucked out of obscurity and turned into John Connor in this huge movie, and he’s so great in the movie. And the kid – the red-haired kid from the camp show who plays his friend, who doesn’t narc him out.

KRIS TAPLEY

I also remember him from *Tiny Toons*. He played Max.

KATIE WALSH

Yes, yes. I’m like, I don’t know that guy’s name.

KRIS TAPLEY

I forgot his name, too. “Hey, I think I saw that kid you were looking for – hey!” He’s got that great voice.

KATIE WALSH

Yes, he does. The kid with the red mullet.

KRIS TAPLEY

Yes.

KATIE WALSH

So, yeah, great, fun LA movie. Great action movie. Jimmy Cameron doing his thing.

KRIS TAPLEY

Well, my next movie, this was the movie that – you know, this was my movie when I got to town. I guess, like, the movie that sort of, like, captures the feeling of being a transplant, sort of pointed me in the direction of LA in some ways, and that’s *Swingers*.

KATIE WALSH

Hell yeah.

KRIS TAPLEY

Doug Liman. You know, the Dresden becomes sort of a pilgrimage when you get out there, to go see Marty and Elaine – RIP Marty – do their thing. And yeah, just this idea of being a transplant, trying to make it, stringing things together. Feeling the pull and the draw of back home, wherever that is, is a big part of the movie, because there is that thing when you get here, I feel like, where something in the universe wants you to fail, wants you to just pack it up and go back, and there’s something about this movie that

captures that spirit. And it's represented in the form of an ex-girlfriend in some way, but, like, I just really love that element of it. And, you know, I never was a swing dancer or anything, but I've been to The Derby before. It's, you know – looks beautiful. Like, the photography, they shot Super 16 and there's something about the look of that movie that I love. You know, the weird party scene, of which, you know, every generation has their own, I'm sure. I don't go to parties too much often now.

KATIE WALSH

Oh, like, up in the hills?

KRIS TAPLEY

Yeah, but just all of them. Going to these weird, like, bars that don't have a sign and stuff, and, you know, "This place is dead anyway." That guy. Just all of it. It's just such a quintessential LA movie and was sort of my movie when I got here. So, *Swingers*.

KATIE WALSH

Oh, for people our age, like, *Swingers* is a formative text

KRIS TAPLEY

Yeah, people like 25, 26 years old, I agree, yeah.

KATIE WALSH

Hahaha, yeah, exactly. No, it's a formative text. I remember having the soundtrack on CD when I was in high school and I listened to it all the time.

KRIS TAPLEY

I've still got it.

KATIE WALSH

Like, being 16 years old listening to, like, "Your nobody until somebody loves you," or, like, "King of the Road." Like, what? I'm, like, a 16-year-old girl just, like, getting down with these standards. But yeah, no, and I think that it still holds a certain sway over us. I mean, I still go to the Dresden sometimes and there's still there's still a charm to it. It feels like it hasn't changed at all.

KRIS TAPLEY

Blood and Sand.

KATIE WALSH

Yes! Oh my God. Those drinks are so gross, though. I don't like Blood and Sand. But yeah. And I like to imagine that that group of friends is, like, a representation of, like, Shane Black's friends when he was a struggling screenwriter in the '90s, because he lived in some house that was, like, called The Pit or some, like – you know, some frat house of screenwriters, and they were all trying to make it, and I feel like that that's a representation of what was going on there. I also am, like, weirdly friends with Steve Brill, who made *D2: The Mighty Ducks*, and, like, he and Peter Berg were, like, out here,

like, playing street hockey and, like, doing punch-up, and they were friends with Marc Maron. I'm just, like, ugh, this era of the '90s screenwriter guys.

KRIS TAPLEY

Totally. I always feel like I was born 10 years too late or something.

KATIE WALSH

Yeah. So, I feel like Favreau really captures that community of '90s screenwriter guys.

KRIS TAPLEY

And the first script I ever wrote in film school – I'm sure it's a piece of crap. I haven't looked at it since. Is called *Nobody 'Til Somebody*. To your point.

KATIE WALSH

Oh my God! Did it take place in LA?

KRIS TAPLEY

No, it was just some small-town thing.

KATIE WALSH

OK, but you got it from the soundtrack, didn't you?

KRIS TAPLEY

I got it from the soundtrack, yes.

KATIE WALSH

Amazing.

KRIS TAPLEY

Moving on. What's next?

KATIE WALSH

OK, I'm going to go with our shared entry.

KRIS TAPLEY

You're the one. OK.

KATIE WALSH

Yeah. I'm going with *Nightcrawler*.

KRIS TAPLEY

There it is.

KATIE WALSH

Jake Gyllenhaal at his crazy-eyed finest. Dan Gilroy. An exploration – this is kind of tied to me, like *Tangerine*, like, it's showing you the part of LA that you don't – that is a part

of the fabric of the city, but it is not what you usually think of when you think of the city. And, this ambulance-chasing, you know – not ambulance-chasing.

KRIS TAPLEY

Sort of.

KATIE WALSH

Police-scanner-chasing, ambulance-chasing sort of cravenness. But, again, I think it does also capture this corruption of media and entertainment and the exploitation of people both behind the camera and in front of the camera. And obviously, it's just one of Gyllenhaal's best performances.

KRIS TAPLEY

Absolutely. This movie could be number one on another day. I think there's something about this movie that gets this city in ways that very few movies do. I mean, this town is about freelancer culture. This is a gig economy town. You know, they say if you can make it in New York, you can make it anywhere. If you can make it in Los Angeles, you probably can only make it in Los Angeles, is my kind of dig.

KATIE WALSH

Yes.

KRIS TAPLEY

It's a town of misfits, and this is like a really dark vision of that. And Robert Elswit shot the hell out of it. It was the same year as *Inherent Vice*, so he was capturing LA in very different shades. I wrote a story about that specifically. I interviewed him because it was just so fascinating to me. But, you know, entertainment, exploitative news, learning on the job. Like, he plays this – Jake plays this Rupert Pupkin kind of looking guy, and it's just-

KATIE WALSH

Such a good comparison. That he's a Rupert Pupkin. Such a good comparison.

KRIS TAPLEY

Totally. It's an incredible movie. I watched it again, because I was, like, "Do I want to put this on the list?" And it was a shot to the top five. I was, like, "Absolutely." And I was trying to stay away from it because it was on your list, and I was, like, "We're going to have to share this one."

KATIE WALSH

Yeah.

KRIS TAPLEY

It's so, so good. And I cannot believe that we dropped the ball on that for Oscars, because everybody should have been nominated. Rene Russo's incredible.

KATIE WALSH

Riz Amed's incredible.

KRIS TAPLEY

Bill Paxton is incredible, in his brief bit.

KATIE WALSH

I know. RIP Bill. I miss him so much. You know, I am not surprised that this did not get nominated for Oscars, because I feel like the Academy, with the Oscars, they like to – it's like, it's always about, like, what is the story we want to tell about ourselves? And, so-

KRIS TAPLEY

They don't want to tell this one. Yeah.

KATIE WALSH

No, they're like, "Please, don't look at this like." They're, like, "Guys, like, look away," because it's so cynical and so dark and so-

KRIS TAPLEY

True.

KATIE WALSH

Indicting, and true and accurate, but it's, like, such an indictment of the industry and just the way that he is living on the edge in a way that is, like, very scary, but also very realistic in terms of his just his sheer existence. Like, his financial situation, his apartment, like, it's so easy for people to have big dreams and slip through the cracks, and if they have no support system, then they, you know – things can get really edgy and scary really quickly.

KRIS TAPLEY

Yeah.

KATIE WALSH

So, I think that when the Academy is, like, "Yay, *The Artist!*" And, like, "Yay, *La La Land!*" And, "Yay, *Birdman!*" It's like, they want to celebrate, like, artistry and beauty and-

KRIS TAPLEY

Birdman is pretty cynical.

KATIE WALSH

Yeah, it is. But it's also, like, "I'm an actor and it's really hard."

KRIS TAPLEY

True.

KATIE WALSH

And, “We hate critics!”

KRIS TAPLEY

“Engage with my plight.” Yes, I get it.

KATIE WALSH

But yeah, it is cynical. But it’s, like – you know, they’re trying to say, like, “We work really hard.” And, like, “This is important,” and, like – and sometimes it’s nice, but they don’t want to be like, “This is scary and this is what could happen if, you know, it doesn’t work out.”

KRIS TAPLEY

That’s the one we share. And it’s an interesting one, I feel like, to be on both lists, so.

KATIE WALSH

Yes. And that we both would not sacrifice.

KRIS TAPLEY

Yeah, exactly. What’s next for you?

KATIE WALSH

What’s next for me is *Mulholland Drive*.

KRIS TAPLEY

I’m really fascinated that you haven’t said one of them yet. At how high it is? But anyway, go ahead.

KATIE WALSH

Oh. Again, my ranking is very wonky.

KRIS TAPLEY

I know, I know. *Mulholland Drive*, David Lynch

KATIE WALSH

Mulholland Drive. I really wanted a David Lynch movie. Again, because I feel like he is like a filmmaker who’s grappling with – he’s from Idaho. He’s coming to LA. He’s kind of obsessed with LA but also grappling with it. And, again, I think it could be on a very scary double bill with *Nightcrawler* in terms of the cynicism of Hollywood and how it sort of chews people up and spits people out. It’s also obviously named after a very famous street in LA, and just as a side note, you had mentioned briefly Sunset Boulevard, which, you know, it’s like, people would assume, “Oh, you have to watch Sunset Boulevard,” but to me I feel like Sunset Boulevard is just about that one house off of Sunset Boulevard.

KRIS TAPLEY

It's about what the business did to her, too, but yeah, absolutely. Localized, yeah.

KATIE WALSH

It's about the business but, like, it's very – it just takes place in one place, and it's about the industry, but I just was, like – it's not – it doesn't express LA, the city, to me.

KRIS TAPLEY

Yeah.

KATIE WALSH

It expresses Hollywood, but not city, but it's so hard to divorce those two. But anyway, so, yeah, *Mulholland Drive*, and just great performances and creepy and scary, dealing with sort of genre elements of noir and totally inscrutable as well.

KRIS TAPLEY

And starring Patrick Fischler, who is in the elevator in *Speed*. See? I will make it happen every time.

KATIE WALSH

Bringing it back.

KRIS TAPLEY

He got his SAG card on *Speed*. Very nice guy, too, by the way. Yeah, *Mulholland Drive* was really close for me to making the list. And Lynch is low-key an LA filmmaker. I mean, like, I could have gone with *Inland Empire*, which I love, or *Lost Highway*, which is probably my favorite.

KATIE WALSH

Oh, *Lost Highway*. So good.

KRIS TAPLEY

He could have set *Blue Velvet* in, like, Burbank or something if he wanted to, or something wacky like Palmdale, you know?

KATIE WALSH

Yes.

KRIS TAPLEY

So, it's absolutely valid and really came close for me. So, yeah, I can't add much more to that. OK, now I'm entering a trilogy. You ready?

KATIE WALSH

Oh, nice. I see this trilogy.

KRIS TAPLEY

The trilogy of the kind of secret history of Los Angeles. And this one's fun. *Who Framed Roger Rabbit*.

KATIE WALSH

Mm-hmm.

KRIS TAPLEY

You know, it's got a lot of elements at play. Obviously, entertainment industry and stuff, but just the role of developers and politicians in shaping this city, because it gets into the collusion with the auto industry and the destroying of the kind of immaculate public transportation we had here. The red cars, things like that. And this happy ending of, like, a freeway not happening. It's kind of, like – it's fascinating to me on that front. And just, again, really just this idea of that collusion of developers and politicians and how that's underneath this zany story about the entertainment industry. And, you know, when I was at USC, actually, for grad school, for journalism, my beat was transportation in Culver City. And I remember writing this story – this was '08 – I remember writing this story about – the story was called "Back to the Future" and it was how we were finally getting back to the kind of strands of great public transportation we used to have here. And it was at a time when the Expo Line was being built through Culver City, and I just always thought that was fascinating. I mean, you go around town here, and you will see old rights of way from old tracks from, like, red cars and stuff, like, buried, like, sticking out of the ground. Like, we had a great, beautiful system here that we destroyed because of the automobile, and then we became a freeway culture, and kind of a poorly designed one. I don't think anyone watches *Roger Rabbit* and has this on their mind, necessarily, but, like, it's just something about the movie to me that really just has a strong whiff of Los Angeles. So, *Who Framed Roger Rabbit*.

KATIE WALSH

Yeah, it's so funny. I just rewatched this actually, too, because I had not seen it in so, so, so long, and it is funny how – I mean, what I remember of it, because I was a kid, I just remember some of these really indelible images. I remember the kiss, like, flying through the air from Jessica Rabbit, and also how scary Christopher Lloyd is at the end.

KRIS TAPLEY

Totally.

KATIE WALSH

And I was going, "Oh my God. I can't believe my parents let me watch this." But it was such a, like, cultural phenomenon, and then it is funny when you revisit it as an adult and you're, like, "They're really weaving in some *Chinatown*-esque political commentary."

KRIS TAPLEY

Yeah, it's got that *Chinatown* overlay.

KATIE WALSH

That obviously goes over kids heads when they watch it, but it is clearly a filmmaker grappling with the history of LA and with the industry as well. And Bob Hoskins – has there ever been a person who has been a better actor opposite cartoon characters? Like, he's so locked in and he's so – I was, like, did he go to clown school? Like, his physical performance is so good, especially at the end.

KRIS TAPLEY

Oh, with the number? Yeah.

KATIE WALSH

He's sort of struggling and fighting against all of these animated elements-

KRIS TAPLEY

As he's singing and dancing.

KATIE WALSH

And he's so good at it. And I just have a huge crush on Bob Hoskins also. RIP.

KRIS TAPLEY

RIP Bob. There's somebody named Bob and *Speed*, too. No, sorry. There actually is. Patrick Fischler plays a Bob in the elevator and then the guy that gets blown up in the bus at the beginning, his name is Bob. Anyway.

KATIE WALSH

Amazing.

KRIS TAPLEY

I know.

KATIE WALSH

I love it.

KRIS TAPLEY

I've got it.

KATIE WALSH

It's right there. It's so present in your mind.

KRIS TAPLEY

What's next?

KATIE WALSH

OK, this I am now on my number three. My number three, and it really could have gone to another title. I'm going with *Strange Days*.

KRIS TAPLEY

That's the one. I was, like, "When is she going to mention this." Great choice, but go ahead.

KATIE WALSH

I almost went *Point Break*. I really wanted to go *Point Break*. But I had to get a Kathryn Bigelow film on here. I really wanted to go *Point Break*, but again, that also – kind of like what you said before – feels like a Malibu movie, and *Strange Days* is such a movie about LA and about LA cops, and I feel like she is extremely – well, she's both reacting to the LA riots, and then also predicting the future when she's dealing with the corrupt LAPD and also these, like, virtual reality headsets that everybody's wearing. It takes place in the year 2000. I believe this is 1995, so it has, like, a light cyberpunk element to it, but, you know, those virtual reality headsets are anticipating things like body cameras or even cell phone video footage of police brutality, and so, I think that she's reckoning with stuff that had happened and also anticipating things that would come to pass in a really interesting way. And also, she just is, like – I don't know. She did so much cool technical innovation with her Steadicam op, who she got from her ex-husband, James Cameron, and he – they, you know, really innovated a lot of really light Steadicam rigs, and you can see it in both the foot chase in *Point Break* where Keanu is chasing Patrick in the Reagan mask, where, like, the camera is, like, going over fences and all of this crazy stuff. And then she innovated even more with some of the camera work that she was doing on *Strange Days* where she's capturing these really intense, like, visceral POV shots from the virtual reality headsets. So, had to include *Strange Days*. Love that movie. And it needs a 4K or Blu-ray re-release. James Cameron, let my people have this.

KRIS TAPLEY

Oh my God. Well, he's got a number of those he's got to work on.

KATIE WALSH

Yeah, he does.

KRIS TAPLEY

Yeah, absolutely great choice. I can't add much. I haven't seen it in a while. I am a fan. I will say, starring the star of *Speed*, Glenn Plummer.

KATIE WALSH

There you go.

KRIS TAPLEY

It's a very different vision of the city, and for all the reasons you note, I think it's a very smart choice. So, I saw it and I was, like, "Oh, of course. That's so good." But *Point Break* would have been – I thought about *Point Break* as well.

KATIE WALSH

It's really hard to not include *Point Break*. It's painful for me.

KRIS TAPLEY

Yeah. So, my – continuing my trilogy. We just kind of brought it up: *Chinatown*. More secret history of LA, the creation of the city, the California water wars. I mean, I don't know what else we could say about *Chinatown* in terms of being an LA movie that hasn't been said, but also, I guess, the only noir on my list, ultimately. Yeah. Because, again, like I was saying, a lot of those tend to be so localized. But this one certainly is not.

KATIE WALSH

But this is an interesting noir, because it's kind of, like, outside of the traditional timeframe.

KRIS TAPLEY

Yeah, exactly. Just – what can you say about *Chinatown*? It's a masterpiece. And I just – I love that it continues this thread of, like – this place has a complicated history, and you can make movies about it until you're blue in the face. I mean, it's like, there's just so much to be dug into and kind of mined just to spin into narrative, to spin into story, because, obviously, you know, *Chinatown* is jumping off of nonfiction. But it's just immaculate.

KATIE WALSH

You truly could find dig through the history books and find some crazy noir history that you could turn into a classic film. There's just – I feel like, like you say, there's so much history and story to be told there.

KRIS TAPLEY

Yeah.

KATIE WALSH

Yeah, I love this movie. I haven't seen it in a long time, but it's a good thing we got a Robert Towne movie on here, I think.

KRIS TAPLEY

OK, what's next? We're down to two more each.

KATIE WALSH

Alright, my number two: Amy Heckerling's *Clueless*.

KRIS TAPLEY

So good!

KATIE WALSH

I had to include *Clueless*, I think, because it was so formative for me at probably 12 or 13. And I think also because Amy is specifically interested in a group of people from this very specific community. And so, she took *Emma*, the Jane Austen film, and put it into Beverly Hills teenagers. And so, I think this is a movie that has to be in LA, that LA is,

you know, very much a setting and a character and a part of this world, and again, like, kind of like how *Swingers* is, like when you're, like, "Oh, there's the location from, whatever, *Swingers*," and, you know, for people who love *Clueless*, it's like, you kind of get obsessed with the liquor store in the valley where she gets held up.

KRIS TAPLEY

Circus Liquor.

KATIE WALSH

Yeah, Circus Liquor, with the clown! My friend used to live right by there. So, again, like, a fun location for, you know, dreamers who move here and want to experience their movie their favorite movies IRL. But yeah, I just think, like, it's sort of an anthropological study of a very specific type of person and a type of place at a certain time. And I just – it's so iconic. I could quote this whole movie. I really recently rewatched it and just sort of said the entire screenplay to myself, and it really had a big impression on me. And it's not like when I moved here that I thought my existence would be anything like Cher Horowitz, but it just-

KRIS TAPLEY

What a name, by the way.

KATIE WALSH

I know. But I think it's a perfect movie. I think it's a perfect lead performance and such a funny screenplay, and really evocative of a, sort of, part of town and people who live in it.

KRIS TAPLEY

Totally. A perfect choice. I frankly had it on my list and I just slid it to you because I wanted to squeeze something else on.

KATIE WALSH

Yes. We have to spread the love.

KRIS TAPLEY

And certainly, the whole bit about it evokes a place, certainly a time. I mean, that is an ultimate '90s movie as well. And, you know, kind of also – maybe not so much – I think of it in the spirit of *Fast Times at Ridgemont High*. They're not similar in how they depict things, but it's just kind of a wheelhouse that I think is shared in some sense, and *Ridgemont High* is a movie we could totally have put on this list. So, I just think of that. *Clueless* rocks. What else can you say? I will say, the music supervisor of *Clueless*, Ralph Sall, the music supervisor of "Songs from and Inspired by *Speed*." So.

KATIE WALSH

Wait, what is that album?

KRIS TAPLEY

Oh, hang on.

KATIE WALSH

Inspired by *Speed*? Songs inspired by *Speed*. That's amazing.

KRIS TAPLEY

Hang on. Go through my CDs here. There you go. "Songs from and Inspired by the Motion Picture *Speed*."

KATIE WALSH

Wait, did that come out before or after the movie?

KRIS TAPLEY

It's one of those things that comes out in tandem, you know?

KATIE WALSH

Oh, OK.

KRIS TAPLEY

There's the track listing. It's got Billy Idol's jam on there, obviously.

KATIE WALSH

I need to listen to that.

KRIS TAPLEY

Some of these are in the movie, some of them are not. That's the "inspired by" bit. He was literally hired to come up with a – I mean, listen. Cracker, "Let's Go for a Ride." Blues Traveler, "Go Outside and Drive." Ric Ocasek, "Crash." Pat Benatar, "Rescue Me." Rod Stewart, "Hard Road." You get it? Kiss, "Mr. Speed." He was literally – it's a theme album that he was hired to come up with.

KATIE WALSH

Yes. I love it. And he and he was the music supervisor for *Clueless*?

KRIS TAPLEY

He was the guy on *Clueless*, too, yeah.

KATIE WALSH

And that soundtrack was such a big deal to me as well. My older sister taped it for me on a tape and I listened to that tape all the time.

KRIS TAPLEY

Although I embarrassed myself. He's not responsible for "Tenderness" at the end. I was like, "Dude, that's the greatest needle drop." And he's, like, "That wasn't me, unfortunately." I was, like, "Oh, well, pass it on, whoever did it." But Ralph Sall, he's the man. He kind of created the tribute album. He did, like, a Grateful Dead one in 1990,

and then they did a Doors one called “Stoned Immaculate.” And he came up with – he didn’t do “Encomium,” the Led Zeppelin one, but he sort of insinuates that that was his idea. Anyway, interesting dude. People will hear from him on the podcast at a later date.

KATIE WALSH

I’m excited.

KRIS TAPLEY

Yeah. Alright, so, what am I up to? Number two.

KATIE WALSH

You’re on your two.

KRIS TAPLEY

Finishing my trilogy, you know, *L.A. Confidential!* Talk about just mining history, as well as apocrypha, you know, just – it’s got everything. It ties in stuff like the Bloody Christmas thing. The Hush-Hush magazine and just the kind of corruption of entertainment and law enforcement and how those two worlds collide, and everything. Shattered dreams. It ends on this sort of undying spark of hope. As much as we can stomach, you know, seeing Kevin Spacey on screen, he’s incredible in the movie.

KATIE WALSH

Yeah, he’s very good.

KRIS TAPLEY

And really, really conveys that in such a great way. And just how show business is wielded to sort of distract from the rot of the city. There’s just so much going on in this movie that is just an ultimate LA movie. And so, *L.A. Confidential*.

KATIE WALSH

I love *L.A. Confidential*, and yeah, just, like, the themes of police brutality, and kind of – when you revisit it, you just are, like, “Oh, this is just a thing in the LAPD.” And it always has been and that’s just one of the things we reckon with as a city here, sort of, constantly. But – and Russell Crowe. So good and so hot in this movie

KRIS TAPLEY

Oh, he’s great. Everybody’s so good in this movie. Guy Pearce, it’s his first thing, really.

KATIE WALSH

Guy Pearce is great. Everybody-

KRIS TAPLEY

Cromwell.

KATIE WALSH

Cromwell, and I love Danny DeVito as the journalist, which, I was, like, “OK, I feel a little attacked by this.” But it’s true and he relishes his performance. And, yeah, it’s just a great movie. Beautiful, classic. You can watch it anytime. And again, it sort of feels a little *Strange Days*-y to me in terms of dealing with the LAPD, but it also feels very – a foil to *Nice Guys*. So, it’s like, those could be a kind of interesting little triple feature. We should do a little programming session.

KRIS TAPLEY

We should have a festival.

KATIE WALSH

Yes. Let’s talk to the American Cinematheque.

KRIS TAPLEY

There we go. She’s got the hat on, folks.

KATIE WALSH

Yeah.

KRIS TAPLEY

Yeah, and by the way, my number one and number two film – not to spoil – same DP. But let’s get to your number one movie.

KATIE WALSH

My number one movie is *Collateral*. You know, directed by Michael Mann, 2004, starring Tom Cruise and Jamie Foxx. Now, I do co-host a podcast about Miami Vice and about Michael Mann, co-hosted by Blake Howard, who did *One Heat Minute*, and I feel like every time you talking about ranking – you know, sore subject for me – ranking Michael Mann movies, you have to have *Heat*, and then it’s the next one. So, it’s like, Heat is always the number one. Just — that’s just a given.

KRIS TAPLEY

Spoiler.

KATIE WALSH

And so, my next one is *Collateral*, and I the reason why I love *Collateral* is, like, I love Tom Cruise, I love Jamie Foxx in this movie. I think their performances are so good. But I love what an LA movie this is and the locations. They’re going all over town. I love when they’re in downtown. He picks up Vincent Collateral – as he as canonically named – Max picks up Vincent Collateral and he says, “Oh, I need to go to this location and he asks him how long it will take, and if you know LA – and Max says it’ll take seven and a half minutes or something like that – and you’re, like, yeah, that actually – that tracks. That sounds right.

KRIS TAPLEY

He gets it right.

KATIE WALSH

And then, at one point at the end – or in the middle – they go to 6th & Alexandria, and it's in K-town, and it's a Korean club, but he doesn't really have to announce that. He just knows that if he takes you to different parts of town, it will have a specific, you know, cultural and ethnic feel, which I think, when you live in LA, you start to figure these things out. And I think if you think LA is, like, just Hollywood, or, like, just one thing, you haven't done enough exploring. And so, that's what I love about this movie. It's really exploring all of LA, and I think – it's not really dealing with the industry, but it's dealing with people who have dreams, and, you know, especially in Max.

KRIS TAPLEY

Oh yeah. Island Limos

KATIE WALSH

Yeah. So, it's just – it's a perfect Michael Mann movie. Great Tom Cruise movie, right kind of at the end of his experimentation-with-auteurs era, and Jamie Foxx is so good. Like, how do you be the coolest guy ever and then play such a nerd? It's amazing.

KRIS TAPLEY

Yeah. Same year he played Ray, too. Ray Charles.

KATIE WALSH

Exactly. So, *Collateral*, love it. Great LA movie

KRIS TAPLEY

Totally valid choice. It's – this is the first movie I watched when I moved to LA. I moved here in the summer of '05 and the first thing I did was pulled out my laptop, pulled out my *Collateral* DVD and watched *Collateral* again. I was living on someone's couch in Culver City. And again, talk about this idea of a road trip through the city. I mean, this movie is that in so many ways. Vincent's whole spiel about LA being disconnected, I mean, it gets at something really true about the city as well. And it's funny, too. Two Vincent's in our top films. But, you know, capturing the true look of the city at night, which he obviously was harping on and it totally did that. I mean, it's an incredible looking movie. I can't add anything else. I mean, it's-

KATIE WALSH

It's the first time Mann did digital? Or was *The Insider* digital?

KRIS TAPLEY

He did a little bit on *Ali*.

KATIE WALSH

On *Ali*. OK.

KRIS TAPLEY

But not a lot. Like, some of those weird cameras, small cameras, he used to get into the fights, he used it.

KATIE WALSH

Right. So, yeah, this is – I mean, the digital cinematography of this is amazing and beautiful and we, on our podcast, not to plug our podcast, but we did talk to the sound supervisor for both *Miami Vice* and *Collateral*, Elliott Koretz, and he talks a lot about how when you use digital at night, it opens up so much more of what you can see in the frame, and so he had to layer in so many other sounds of the city because you could see much more than you could see if you were shooting on film. So, I think just the craft that goes into a Michael Mann film about LA and shot on digital and at night. It just captures everything, and I think he's just very interested in the city and what it means. And I think if we're going to do double features, this and *Falling Down* maybe?

KRIS TAPLEY

That would be interesting, yeah.

KATIE WALSH

Because when you said road trip across LA, I was thinking-

KRIS TAPLEY

And cynical characters.

KATIE WALSH

And the cynicism, yeah.

KRIS TAPLEY

Yeah. That would be interesting. Yeah, I mean, it's – I don't know what else to say about it. It's a fantastic movie. My number one is also a Michael Mann movie: *Heat*!

KATIE WALSH

See? It's always got to be *Heat* at number one. If you're doing Mann movies or LA movies.

KRIS TAPLEY

My number two would probably, by the way, be *The Insider*. But my number three might be *Thief*. But it's hard to rank Mann.

KATIE WALSH

It's so hard. But he's the ultimate LA filmmaker. And I just want to go back to *Collateral* real quick and say the most LA shot in any Michael Mann movie has to be the coyote, right? I mean-

KATIE WALSH

Yes. Yes.

KRIS TAPLEY

And who doesn't love a good Chris Cornell needle drop? But *Heat* is just perfection for me. So, same filmmaker tops both of our lists, which I think is kind of fascinating, and I mean, what else – oh, wait, something's going on here. I can't-

BLAKE HOWARD

Excuse me.

KRIS TAPLEY

This fucking guy!

BLAKE HOWARD

Are you talking about *Heat* and Michael Mann without me, Katie Walsh?

KRIS TAPLEY

He's like a genie. You rub the lamp and this guy pops up and there he is.

BLAKE HOWARD

There I am.

KRIS TAPLEY

You mention *Heat* and, poof. Blake Howard has joined us. Blake Howard, the host of *One Heat Minute*, and the maestro behind One Heat Minute Productions and, as we said at the top, co-host of *Miami Nice* with Katie. I'm sure they were talking earlier today, in fact.

BLAKE HOWARD

We actually were and it was hard not to spill the beans.

KATIE WALSH

Oh, you're so funny. That you were going to crash.

BLAKE HOWARD

That I was going to crash in.

KRIS TAPLEY

I wanted to surprise you.

BLAKE HOWARD

I wanted to crash in because I thought, "How dare that Katie Walsh talk about *Collateral* and *Heat* on another show!" But it's great because it's *50 MPH*. It's this terrific opus that I've been talking to Kris about long before it actually manifested into the pod. So, I'm so excited that you're on the show, because I know you have an unabiding love for *Speed*.

KATIE WALSH

And you know what? I don't even get to talk about *Speed* on this episode. It's, like, not fair!

KRIS TAPLEY

We'll bring you back.

BLAKE HOWARD

It's cruel. It's cruel!

KRIS TAPLEY

So, let's talk about *Heat*.

BLAKE HOWARD

Let's talk. Whatever you want.

KRIS TAPLEY

Because I don't think Blake has really spilled much ink on *Heat*. I mean, it's the movie that – I love it because-

BLAKE HOWARD

I've spilled more blood than ink!

KRIS TAPLEY

It's the movie that made Mann to get to know his city. And I think that shows in every pore of the movie. It's an unseen tapestry against an iconic backdrop that I just think oozes Los Angeles. It's kind of – I don't know, that I ever, when I was a kid, watched the movie, and that was what I had, a vision of Los Angeles in my head. But there was something about whatever this LA was, I had to know more about, or just – it was just fascinating to me, what he was able to kind of dig into, the nooks and crannies of this metropolis, and showcase it within the scope of this crime saga. And, you know, it's maybe a movie you could have set somewhere else, set it in Chicago or something. But the fact that it's here and that it showcases the city the way it does, it is always and forever my number one LA film.

KATIE WALSH

Nice.

KRIS TAPLEY

Miami Nice.

BLAKE HOWARD

Miami Nice indeed.

KATIE WALSH

I also – one thing I love about Mann as an LA filmmaker is that he just gets locations right, and geography, and he's very meticulous about place, which, obviously, you see

in *Collateral*. But yeah, he – again, and we’ve been talking about this a lot, like, these filmmakers kind of grappling with their adopted homeland. And what is underneath the glossy exterior. So, I mean, what else is there to say about *Heat*? It’s just a perfect movie.

KRIS TAPLEY

Especially with this group.

KATIE WALSH

I know, right?

BLAKE HOWARD

Collectively, there’s some stuff out there between the three of us.

KRIS TAPLEY

Go do some research. You’ll dig it up.

BLAKE HOWARD

The one thing that I’ll just say before I bounce, specifically on the locations of *Heat*, is, for the longest time, because it’s so almost, like, mythical in its structure, that the way that Los Angeles is depicted, it almost doesn’t feel like Los Angeles. It doesn’t resemble that kind of tropey thing that a lot of people do, that, like, you know – and I love this about Michael Bay, but, like, in *Bad Boys*, that Miami sign. It’s, like, “This is in Miami! OK, guys? It’s in Miami!” And we’re, like, “Yes, it’s in Miami!” And so many filmmakers get lured by all of those familiar places of Hollywood for a variety of reasons, and sometimes it’s more just about showcasing, you know, hey, we made this movie in LA, etc. We’ve got to get our grant from the city or reward the fact that we’ve been allowed to film in a certain place, but I love that it doesn’t depict an LA – like, the one image is, like, Drucker standing in the middle of frame and behind him is, like, a mound of sulfur, is an image that I think of a lot in *Heat*. And I’m, like, “Where is that?” Like, I know they’re in LA. And it was a mutual friend of Kris and I, Garth Franklin from *Dark Horizons*, was, like, “Blake, that’s, like, an hour and 10 minutes south of downtown.” And I remember he plotted it out on a map.

KATIE WALSH

Oh, wow.

BLAKE HOWARD

This is what I do with my friends in my spare time. But he plotted it out. He’s, like, “That’s an hour and 10,” and we were trying to, like, do some triangulation of *Heat* locations. But, like, just the fact that, you know, a desolate wasteland of a former drive-in, and Drucker standing there, and then, you know, even these, you know, beautiful, miraculous shots of these, like, stilt houses that don’t quite feel like the Hollywood Hills. They feel like LA is an ocean of lights. I think everything about it, it makes you feel like you’re so there. It’s kind of, like – and absolutely no shade, because another action masterpiece, especially on mute, is *Mission: Impossible II*. It’s, like, the Sydney in

Mission: Impossible II is not the Sydney that you see in something like *Mr. Inbetween*. Like, a really terrific FX show where you kind of get in the nooks and crannies of what Australia is and Australian suburbia is. It's kind of like, flash, here's the Opera House, here's the Sydney Harbour Bridge. And, like, not every city is that, and so, I can imagine – especially you guys as, you know, LA natives now, like, you're living in LA and, like, movie LA is not the LA that you live every day. So, that's what I think. *Heat* is like a secret. And, like, how the hell did he do this? And then that's just – it kind of helps you pique your interest into the layers of the dedication and obsession that is, you know – almost, like, typifies everything that Michael Mann does.

KRIS TAPLEY

I just want to quote Michael – our buddy Michael.

BLAKE HOWARD

Our buddy Mike.

KRIS TAPLEY

This is an interview he did with Mike Fleming last year. “I just became fascinated with LA and realized I didn't know anything. I had been living in LA since '71. It's now '94 when I started out” – when he started out on *Heat* – “it was like 23 years, and I realized I didn't know anything about LA. Everybody I know in LA doesn't know anything about LA. It's not just me. They don't know about the Samoan community in San Pedro. They don't know about the Caribbean little section of South Central. They don't know that there's this whole range of bars that are Mexican bars, but only people from Sinaloa go there. And everybody wears the same kind of cowboy hat and has the same kind of keychain, drives white pickups with Brahma bulls on the door. It's so rich and so diversified and it's something that no one's really commented on in *Heat*. You're not in this cultural, self-imposed ghetto of driving through Los Angeles of myth. If you live on the west side or Malibu, drive down Sunset, here's the strip, here's this, here's that, same restaurants, everything else. That's not LA at all. It's the people who are fascinating, and then the subculture and the diversity. I love diversity. I love the diverse culture. I've always had extremely diverse film crews. I'm bored about being around people who just look like me.” Michael Mann!

BLAKE HOWARD

What a man.

KATIE WALSH

I think you can see his curiosity in all of his films about LA, or any place, where he's, like, “I'm really curious about this bar or this neighborhood or this person. Like he – it's a loving curiosity and wanting to know more and wanting to depict it, which I really respect and appreciate about him.

KRIS TAPLEY

Totally. Let's-

BLAKE HOWARD

I'm going to let you get back to your top 10s.

KRIS TAPLEY

Yeah, whose podcast is this anyway?

BLAKE HOWARD

It's yours. I'm out of here. I love you both.

KATIE WALSH

Bye!

KRIS TAPLEY

Thank you, Blake. Good to see you, buddy.

BLAKE HOWARD

Thank you. Peace.

KRIS TAPLEY

Blake Howard, everybody. So, that is our sort of ultimate LA movie guide, but let's not leave it there. Let's do a lightning round. What are some movies that didn't make your list that we didn't talk about here? Because I've certainly got a little list here.

KATIE WALSH

OK, so, I did have, like, a total B-team. Some of them we've already talked about. *Chinatown*, *L.A. Confidential*, those movies. I'm really sad that I didn't get – I mean, *To Live and Die in L.A.*, I love that movie so much. William Peterson, oh my God. So hot in that movie. *Point Break*, *Blade Runner*.

KRIS TAPLEY

Yeah.

KATIE WALSH

What the hell? Where's *Blade Runner*? *Die Hard*.

KRIS TAPLEY

The thing about *Blade Runner* is, what LA is that? It's not any LA I know.

KATIE WALSH

I know. It's true.

KRIS TAPLEY

It's kind of hard.

KATIE WALSH

I guess I just – whenever it's rainy and misty in LA and I'm driving at night, I'm just, like, "Oh, it looks so Blade Runner right now." *Die Hard*, again, I think maybe because *Die Hard* is just in one place, I don't-

KRIS TAPLEY

Great Century City movie.

KATIE WALSH

Yeah, great Century City movie. Also, *Barbie*, great Century City movie. *Double Indemnity*. I guess I was just thinking of some of, like, the famous locations. *Beverly Hills Cop* I had on my list.

KRIS TAPLEY

Yeah.

KATIE WALSH

I also have this really weird Paul Mazursky movie, *Alex in Wonderland*, which stars Donald Sutherland as a screenwriter, sort of, avatar for Paul Mazursky, and it's in LA in the '70s, and it's very weird. A lot of it does not hold up, but it's very evocative of the time period. There's some, like, wildly offensive stuff that doesn't hold up.

KRIS TAPLEY

Never seen it.

KATIE WALSH

It's such an obscure little movie. And then, also, I just want – there is a crazy sort of B movie exploitation movie called *Van Nuys Blvd.* about – have you ever seen *Van Nuys Blvd.*?

KRIS TAPLEY

No. I saw that on your list. I didn't know what it was.

KATIE WALSH

It's about, like, people cruising on Van Nuys Blvd. in the valley, and they cruise almost exclusively in vans.

KRIS TAPLEY

Vans on Van Nuys.

KATIE WALSH

Vans on Van Nuys, and it is, like – it's one of these wacky curios of – I can't even describe it as, like, a good movie. It's just a very strange movie that you would probably find on VHS somewhere it has, like, a theme song where the chorus just goes, "Van Nuys!" Hopefully I didn't peak your audio recording there.

KRIS TAPLEY

Fantastic. It actually sounded good.

KATIE WALSH

It's a very weird movie, so seek that out if you can. It's, like, basically, like, a '70s exploitation movie.

KRIS TAPLEY

Vans on Van Nuys. Isn't there a "Keyes on Van Nuys," like, jingle about, like, some auto-

KATIE WALSH

Yeah, there is something on Van Nuys, yeah.

KRIS TAPLEY

Like, "Keyes, Keyes, Keyes, Keyes on Van Nuys!" Or am I just making that up? Anyway.

KATIE WALSH

And the other ones that I mentioned, like, *Sunset Boulevard* and *Point Break*, but I've already mentioned those, so.

KRIS TAPLEY

All good, and it's hard to get them all on there. For me-

KATIE WALSH

It's hard to get them all.

KRIS TAPLEY

I mentioned *Volcano* and *Ambulance*. Also, *Drive*. I mean, you've got to bring up *Drive*.

KATIE WALSH

Yeah.

KRIS TAPLEY

He's clearly inspired by Michael Mann on that. I haven't seen *L.A. Story* in a long time-

KATIE WALSH

Yeah, same.

KRIS TAPLEY

So, I don't know if that ultimately would have popped up on here or not. It's sort of on the nose. But there's also stuff like *Grand Canyon* and *Short Cut*, like, these big ensembles. I didn't end up with – did I? I didn't have an Altman movie.

KATIE WALSH

I don't think so.

KRIS TAPLEY

It's just the way it rolled out. Because I thought about *Long Goodbye* until I watched it again, and I was, like, "He's just in Malibu." You know, I thought about *The Limey*.

KATIE WALSH

Oh, interesting. Interesting choice.

KRIS TAPLEY

Which is, you know – you've got to kind of, maybe, stretch a little bit, but not really. I mean, it's got a lot of the thematic residue of what we've been talking about throughout, I think. There's also *Repo Man*, Alex Cox, which I saw recently for the first time, actually. Weird-ass movie. I don't know that it would have, like, made my list, but that and this other movie, *Miracle Mile*. Have you seen *Miracle Mile*?

KATIE WALSH

Yes, yes, I did think about *Miracle Mile*, but-

KRIS TAPLEY

Very interesting, similar, sort of, dreamscape vibes on both of them. There's also Taylor Hackford's *Blood In Blood Out* that I thought about, starring Carlos Carrasco, who was in *Speed*.

KATIE WALSH

I haven't seen that.

KRIS TAPLEY

Yeah, I haven't seen it in forever, but it's a big, you know, Latino gangland epic.

KATIE WALSH

Oh, you know, I thought about Allison – God, what's her – Allison Anders, *Mi Vida Loca*.

KRIS TAPLEY

Yeah, good one.

KATIE WALSH

Which is about Echo Park and the Latino community there. So, unfortunately, I did not get that one on there. But yeah.

KRIS TAPLEY

And one – I do want to give a shout-out to *Los Angeles Plays Itself*, by the way, Thom Andersen's big opus about how LA has been used in movies. But finally, I wanted an excuse to put this on the list, but it just felt like a stunt, but I do think there's something to it, and that's *Demolition Man*.

KATIE WALSH

Oh, yeah.

KRIS TAPLEY

Starring – sorry. I’m not going to go there. But, yeah, I just, you know – that’s a fun LA movie. When he goes to the museum and he’s looking at, like, you know, the encapsulated, like, riot scene? It’s just insane. That movie is off its rocker and the best way and I’m such a fan. But, you know, I’m sure we left something unturned here. I’m sure someone’s going to be, like, “What about this?”

KATIE WALSH

I know. That’s the thing. It’s, like, this is such an impossible list to make. But, like, it is fun to think about your own criteria and why you think someone who’s moving to LA should watch this movie or just lives in LA should watch this movie or just is interested. Everybody has their own way of doing it, so.

KRIS TAPLEY

Well, Michael Mann is a way to go as we’ve clearly illustrated.

KATIE WALSH

Exactly. Just start with Michael Mann.

KRIS TAPLEY

Yeah. Well, we went long and this was epic, and I so appreciate it. I think we’ve given everybody a pretty good overview, if they want to just jot down every movie we’ve talked about throughout and just do your own little course on LA cinema. It’s its own unique breed, so – and I think, personally, *Speed* is the greatest of them all. I don’t think I like *Speed* more than *Heat*, frankly.

KATIE WALSH

I was going to say, better than *Heat*?

KRIS TAPLEY

Not to dish on the movie I’m dedicating a podcast to, but-

KATIE WALSH

I love *Speed*, too. It would have been my number one if I was allowed.

KRIS TAPLEY

Since you didn’t get to talk about *Speed* much, anything you want to say about it here before we close?

KATIE WALSH

Oh, just another really formative film for me. Just came at exactly the right time for me to just have a huge crush on Keanu Reeves, but it’s such a perfectly made movie. I love Jan de Bont. I think he just understands cinematic language and sort of combines both efficiency and style and over-the-top-ness in a way that I love so much. I love Sandra

Bullock, love everybody in that movie. I don't know. I mean, I feel like I'm not saying anything intelligent about it other than just, like, I love it so much. And I did make my class at Chapman watch *Speed* for the last day, just so I could be, like-

KRIS TAPLEY

Oh, nice.

KATIE WALSH

This is part of your film history and you need to know it and I am shaping young minds, so, I have forced, you know, college students to watch it and I do not regret it at all.

KRIS TAPLEY

You did your duty.

KATIE WALSH

Yeah, I had to.

KRIS TAPLEY

She's preaching to the choir on that, folks. I think we've done enough damage. Thank you to Blake Howard for dropping in here. And thank you so much, Katie. Again, Katie Walsh. You should check out her podcast Miami – if we haven't talked about it enough – *Miami Nice*, with Blake Howard. You know, her reviews are all over the place. Tribune News as well as *LA Times*. What else you want to tell us? Any place they can find you or ought to look for you?

KATIE WALSH

Yeah, those are the two outlets that I review for every week. I'm on Twitter and Letterboxd @KatieWalshSTX, so follow me there. I always share all my reviews there. And just search my name on *Rotten Tomatoes* if you want to find any of my reviews, too. So, yep.

KRIS TAPLEY

Hopefully this has delivered on its promise to be the ultimate LA Movie Guide. I think it has. We all know what the king is. *Speed* is the king, so, with that in mind.

[OUTRO MUSIC]

KRIS TAPLEY

Next week on *50 MPH*...

KRIS TAPLEY

It's finally time to meet some of the key artisans tasked with bringing this crazy screenplay to life.

ELLEN MIROJNICK

Jan was a master of creating this. He knew exactly what he wanted to do, how he wanted to do it.

JACKSON DE GOVIA

It was part of the *Die Hard* legacy. I mean, it was that kind of movie. Jan is, like, a “will do anything to get the shot” kind of guy.

KRIS TAPLEY

We’ll get to know a number of production department heads who discuss *Speed* as a movie of a bygone era, because they just don’t make ‘em like they used to.

JOHN FRAZIER

Every page you’d earmark the page because it was something on there for you. You’d turn the page and then it says the bus does this, and it was, like, “Boy, this is going to be a ride.”

KRIS TAPLEY

And there are plenty of strong feelings to go around on this point as the film industry continues apace into the future.

BRIAN SMRZ

I can’t stand the fake stuff. Like, the whole business has gone in this direction that everything’s on a soundstage and I am one of those people who believe people can tell.

KRIS TAPLEY

All of that and more next week right here on *50 MPH!*

KRIS TAPLEY

Thanks so much for listening. *50 MPH* is written, produced and edited by yours truly, Kris Tapley. You can find us on Twitter @50MPHPod. I’m @kristapley. That’s Kris with a K. You can also catch every episode and more at our website 50MPHpodcast.com. If you dug the show, please like and subscribe and do all the things. We’ll see you next time.