

approach to what he calls the philology of operatic works.

"Philology, for me, is the semantics of the notes. You have to look at every note. This is musical philology. With Puccini, there is symbiosis [between the words and the music]. You need to know where one starts and the other ends. There is a constant relationship between the words and the music. The key [to successful operatic work] is text-staged music. If you don't do these steps, you can't attain the right quality."

With an interest in such a generous chronological spread of music, Bardazzi is a great appreciator of the evolution of choral music.

"I had a professor who told me that if you perform Bach, it helps you to perform Brahms better. We specialize in Italian music, and we have to look at the history of the music," he says.

Although he now earns his crust primarily as a conductor and teacher, Bardazzi is a trained cellist and says this hands-on knowledge comes into play when he takes the podium.

"The conductor needs to know the technique of playing. The cello is a very important instrument. That helps me as a conductor," he says.

Bardazzi's enthusiasm for opera music in general and the works of Puccini in particular comes through in his every syllable, hence the participants in the four master classes he will give in Acre are in for a treat. He will also conduct the closing concert of the festival, which features a selection of choral works.

Elsewhere on the program, Zimriya artistic director Rami Barber has laid on a roster of works featuring Jewish and Arab musicians, such as soprano Enna Massalha, and an encounter between soprano Yeela Avital and Persian vocalist Maureen Nehedar in a program that brings East and West together.

There will also be concerts for three- to eight-year-olds in Hebrew and Arabic, and actress Adi Etzion will present a show based on the life of iconic opera singer Maria Callas. And there will be free entertainment each evening in The Enchanted Garden.

The Zimriya festival in Acre takes place from August 7 to 10. For tickets and information: (03) 604-1808; <http://www.zimriya.org>

Back in action

'Jason Bourne' is a ripped-from-the-headlines thrill

• By KATIE WALSH

It turns out you can teach an old dog new tricks. That's if the dog is super-soldier former CIA agent Jason Bourne (Matt Damon) and the trainer is director Paul Greengrass, who helmed Bourne's *Supremacy* and *Ultimatum*. After the misfire that was *The Bourne Legacy*, a misguided attempt to pass off the franchise to Jeremy Renner, Damon and Greengrass ably right the ship, delivering a Bourne film that looks and feels like the kind that we've always loved.

Jason Bourne delivers everything that we expect from this franchise. We want Damon making swift, brutal work of his enemies, landing heavy punches and turning mundane household items into deadly weapons. We want him burning rubber on narrow European streets, burning out the clutches on any motorized vehicle he can hijack. We want CIA bigwigs, illuminated by the glow of computer screens, shouting "Enhance!" at surveillance footage and exclaiming in awe: "It's Bourne." All of that is here, gloriously.

This time around, the plot concerns a hacking. "It's worse than Snowden," Agent Jeffers (Ato Essandoh) barks at his boss, CIA director Dewey (Tommy Lee Jones). The missing files contain information about all of their Black Operations, including Treadstone, the recruitment program that turned David Webb into Jason Bourne, and Iron Hand, their plans for total, invasive national surveillance.

Dewey's been making inroads in Silicon Valley to that end, particularly with social media company founder and tech rock star Aaron Kallor (Riz Ahmed), who would like to keep his deals with the government secret. Everything is almost startlingly timely, in a ripped-from-the-headlines way — from the debate over digital privacy to the culminating showdown at a Vegas tech conference, where a rogue CIA asset (Vincent Cassel) seeking revenge on Bourne for his imprisonment in Syria plows a SWAT vehicle through traffic.



movie review

It's a breath of fresh air to see Damon back in this role, one that draws on his innate strengths. His All-American star persona allows us to understand that though Bourne is a lone ranger who doesn't hesitate to use violence, we innately trust his moral compass. That's because we know Bourne but also because of the patriotic, good guy qualities that Damon effortlessly expresses.

Julia Stiles returns as Nikki, Damon's trusty gal Friday, though there's a new cyber ops whiz kid at the CIA in Heather Lee (Alicia Vikander). Oscar winner Vikander seems at times miscast, but she manages to make the ambitious, self-serving Heather into a deeply complicated character, neither ally nor enemy.

Greengrass's camera is anxious, unsettled, constantly shifting on its feet, and he and editor Christopher Rouse keep an antsy trigger finger on the rapid-fire editing. An early action set piece of a motorcycle chase during a Greek political protest demonstrates the best thing that Greengrass brings to the Bourne films — a tightly controlled sense of chaos that rides the line of anarchy, presented at eye-level, on a human-sized scale.

That scale allows the filmmakers to wrestle with global issues within the scope of individual actors, who are rooted in their own histories, with their competing goals, making their own choices. Bourne has always had an issue with his own motivation, frantically searching through his past muddled by government programming for a slice of identity. He needs his history so he knows what he's fighting for, and this film offers another puzzle piece.

Tribune News Service/TNS

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