

## Roland Emmerich Gladiator Series ‘Those About to Die’ Starts Shooting at Rome’s Cinecittà Studios, New Cast Announced

By Nick Vivarelli ▾



Roland Emmerich’s large-scale gladiator series “[Those About to Die](#),” starring Anthony Hopkins as Emperor Vespasian, has started shooting at Rome’s Cinecittà Studios.

Several new cast members have been announced, including “Game of Thrones” alumni Iwan Rheon.

Rheon, who in “Thrones” played the villainous Ramsay Bolton – and can currently be seen in Emmerich-produced film “The Magic Flute” – will replace Lorenzo Richelmy who has exited the Peacock show due to scheduling conflicts.

Also joining the “Those About to Die” cast are Liraz Charhi (“Tehran”) who will play Berenice, Queen of the conquered Judeans; and Rupert Penry-Jones (“The Batman”) as retired general Marsus who aspires to succeed Vespasian on the imperial throne (they are pictured above).

Other new cast additions to the swords and sandals series shot at Cinecittà are Johannes Haukur Johannesson (“Vikings”) as Norse gladiator Viggo; Eneko Sagardoy (“Elite”) as talented chariot driver Andria; Pepe Barroso (“45 rpm”) as Fonsa who dreams of becoming a chariot driver; Gonçalo Almeida (“Esperança”) as a horse trainer named Elia; Kyshan Wilson (“Under the Amalfi Sun”) as female gladiator Aura; and Alicia Edogamhe (“Summertime”) as Julia who is sold as a slave to Marsus.

Previously announced cast, besides Hopkins, comprises Tom Hughes, Sara Martins, Jojo Macari, Gabriella Pession, Dimitri Leonidas, and Moe Hashim.

Peacock last summer handed a straight-to-series order for “Those About to Die,” which is inspired by Daniel Mannix’s nonfiction book. Set in the “complex and corrupt” world of gladiatorial competition, the show follows an ensemble of characters from all parts of Roman society who collide in the arena.

“Those About to Die” is being directed by Emmerich and Germany’s Marco Kreuzpaintner (“The Lazarus Project”).

Emmerich is also executive producing alongside screenwriter Robert Rodat; Hollywood Gang’s Gianni Nunnari and Street Entertainment’s Harald Kloser. Also executive producing are High End’s Herbert G. Kloiber and Jonas Bauer; Constantin’s Martin Moszkowicz and Oliver Berben; as well as AGC CEO Stuart Ford and chief content officer Lourdes Diaz.

High End Productions, which is the new distribution and financing partnership between Herbert Kloiber Sr. and Constantin Film, is co-financing the series alongside Stuart Ford’s AGC International. High End is taking all distribution rights for Europe, while remaining worldwide rights are controlled by AGC.