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# Capturing Austin Butler, Tom Hardy and Jodie Comer on the Set of 'The Bikeriders' (Exclusive Photos)

See inside the new book 'Vandals: The Photography of The Bikeriders,' which captures the actors on the set of the upcoming Jeff Nichols movie about an outlaw motorcycle gang.

BY **JON ALAIN GUZIK** JUNE 4, 2024 4:26PM



Austin Butler as seen in Insight Editions' new book 'Vandals: The Photography of The Bikeriders' shot by Kyle Bono Kaplan and Bryan Schutmaat KYLE BONO KAPLAN/INSIGHT EDITIONS

Jeff Nichols' *The Bikeriders* is a rousing look into motorcycle gangs, one of the most American of subcultures. The film takes place in the 1960s when the wild freedom of riding in packs of bikes along the open roads of the United States with one's club transformed into the heavy violence and wild mayhem of a biker gang. Starring Austin Butler, **Jodie Comer** and **Tom Hardy**, the long-awaited movie about an outlaw motorcycle gang in Chicago is set to open June 21, after its **previous release date** of Dec. 1 was pushed.

followed and then joined the Chicago chapter of the Outlaws Motorcycle Club. From 1963 to 1967, he took thousands of photos, engaging club members and, just as importantly, their wives and girlfriends in interviews, which he recorded for posterity. His book *The Bikeriders*, released in 1968 to much acclaim, is still a touchstone in modern photo reportage.

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Timed to the release of the new film, a new photography book has just been released *Vandals: The Photography of The Bikeriders*, published by Insight Editions, in partnership with New Regency. The 160-page hardback book is meant to act as a visual companion to the film and was shot by Bryan Schutmaat and Kyle Bono Kaplan.

A photobook about a movie based on a photobook is very meta. When asked to explain his thought process, Schutmaat tells *The Hollywood Reporter* regarding the photo project, “I just wanted to do the subject matter justice. *The Bikeriders* is such a seminal photobook that it would be daunting to try to straight up emulate Danny’s pictures, so I was still myself as a photographer to a large degree. I spoke briefly to Austin Butler about this challenge. When he played Elvis, he wasn’t doing a direct impersonation, but he carried the spirit of Elvis with him and kind of channeled him in untold ways. I didn’t try to do a photographic equivalent of a Danny Lyon impersonation, but I did attempt to channel Danny’s sense of curiosity, vitality and style in the days when I was shooting.” Adds Kaplan, “Being part of a film that not only required photographing the narrative but also paying homage to Danny’s work felt like such a profound connection. Capturing the essence of *Bikeriders* became a tribute to Danny and the photographers of that era who fearlessly documented captivating stories.”

# VANDALS

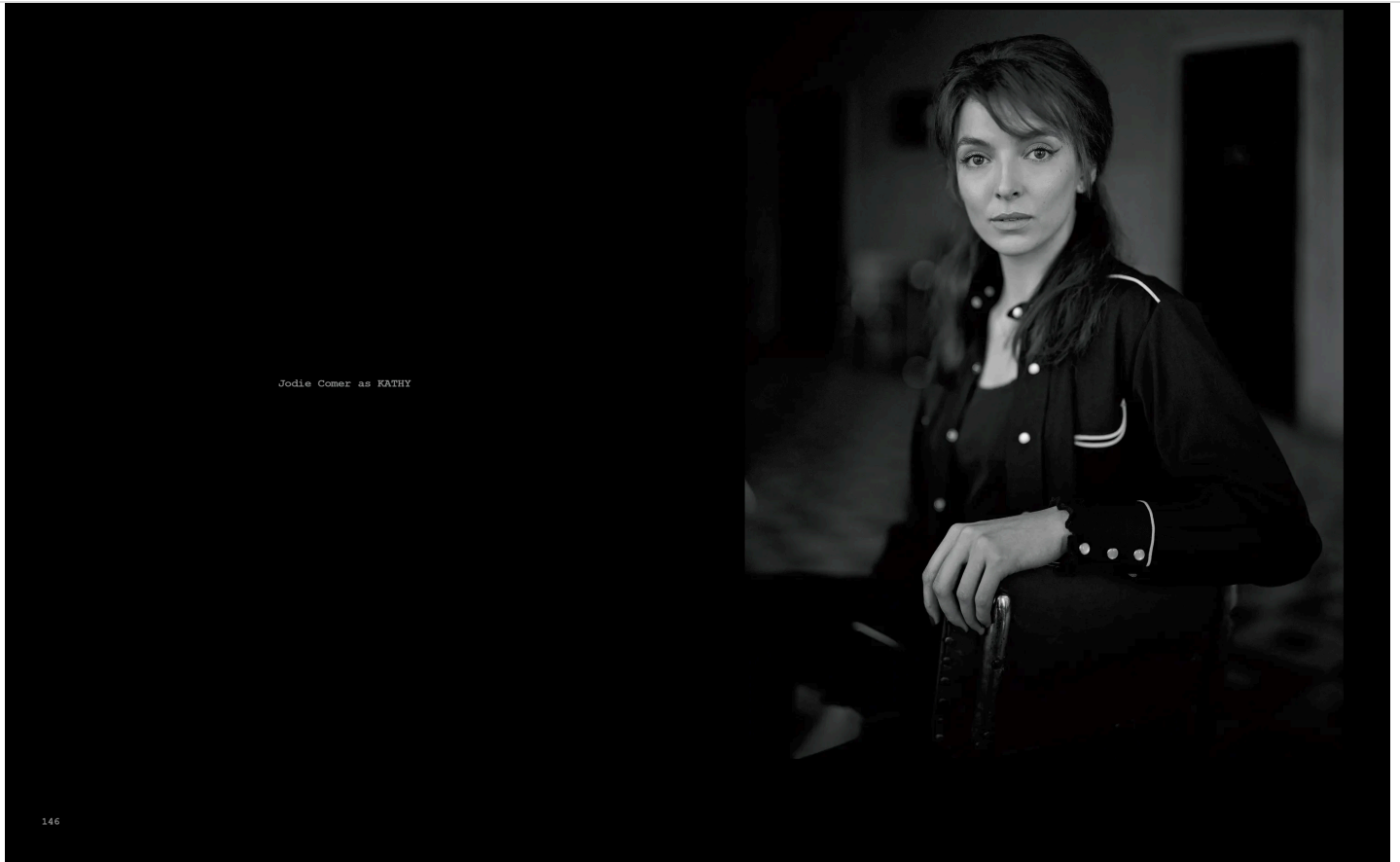


THE PHOTOGRAPHY OF THE MOTION PICTURE  
THE BIKERIDERS

Director Nichols had long been a fan of Lyon's work. "Oddly, before I met him, I kind of started stalking him online and his website *Bleak Beauty*," says Nichols, who spent more than a decade putting the film together.

"I think a big part of it was I didn't know exactly how to pull it off," he explains, with a small laugh, regarding the years it took to make the movie happen. "Honestly, it took a few big hurdles to figure out how I could tell this story. The first was how much to fictionalize it and that gave me a lot of liberties to take those amazing interviews in the book and move them around and to piece them together and make amalgam characters. I was thematically free just to make a movie that felt the way that I felt when I looked at the photographs, and I wasn't beholden to a specific history."

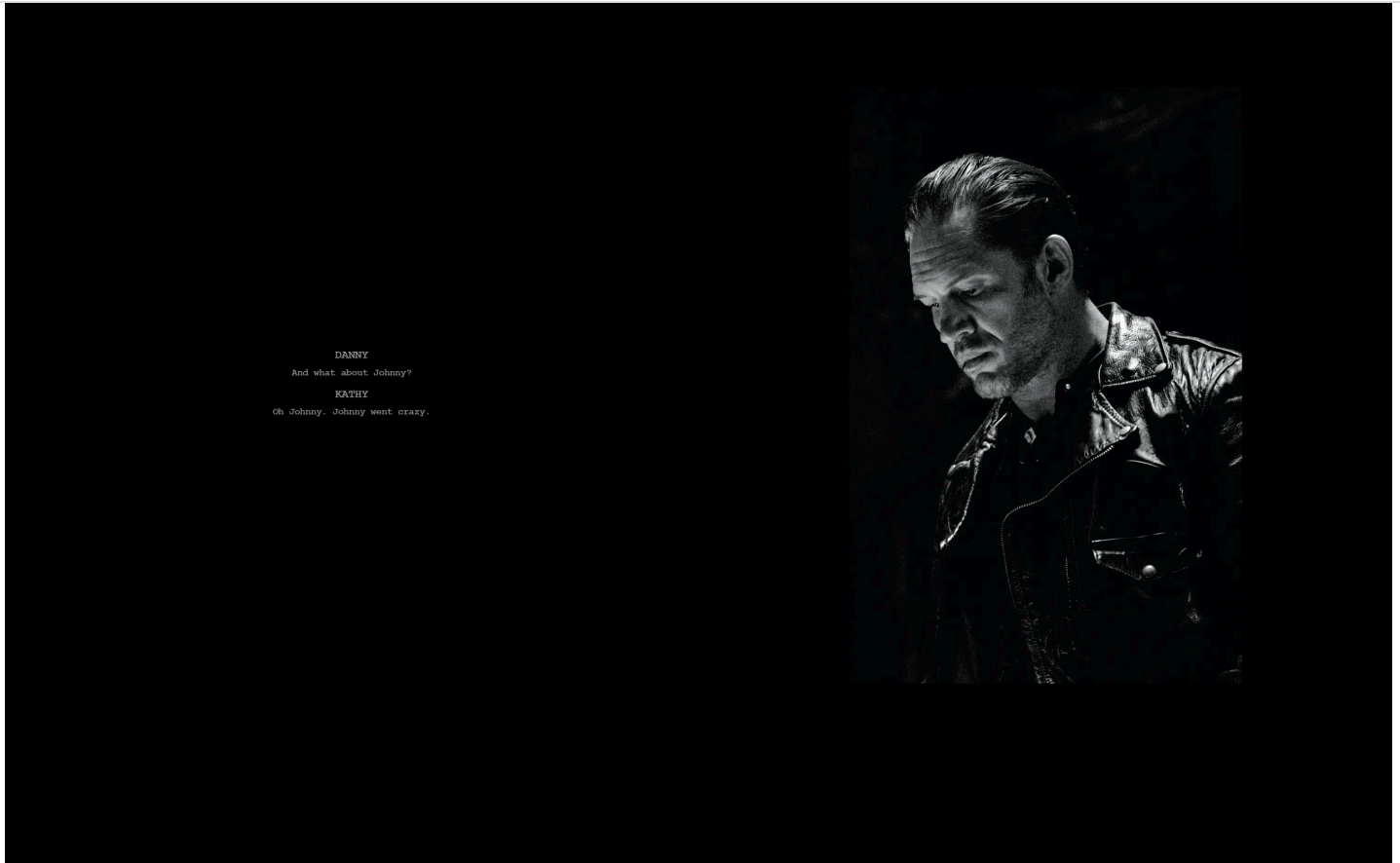
Nichols and Lyon met in 2014 and started to discuss the project, with Lyon eventually giving Nichols access to the source material. "Jeff was able to look through all the prints and contact sheets I had made, so he could see how everyone looked and how everyone dressed." Lyon tells *THR* via email, "The most valuable source was the original ¼-inch audio tapes I had made with all my 'heroes,' who would then become the characters in the film. So Jeff and the cast could hear exactly how they spoke, which the actors then did such an amazing job to recreate."



Jodie Comer as KATHY

146

Jodie Comer as seen in the new book *Vandals: The Photography of The Bikeriders* published by Insight Editions. BRYAN SCHUTMAAT/INSIGHT EDITIONS



Tom Hardy in the new book *Vandals: The Photography of The Bikeriders* published by Insight Editions. KYLE BONO KAPLAN/INSIGHT EDITIONS

Watching the film, it is uncanny how these actors — Hardy, Comer and Butler as well as Boyd Holbrook and Mike Faist — nail not only the voices and mannerisms of these real-life characters but also embody their road-worn, shambolic lives. From Comer’s 1960s Midwestern vocal phrasings to the period leathers and patches that Hardy, Butler and the cast wear throughout the project, these small, accurate details make the film. A special mention also goes out to the period-correct Harley-Davidson motorcycles seen throughout, curated by stunt coordinator Jeff Milburn. In its [review of the movie](#) last fall, *THR* called it “a gorgeous, violent love letter to outsiders.”



A mudslinging scene captured for *Vandals: The Photography of The Bikeriders* (Insight Editions). “Working on this film allowed me to bridge the gap between past and present, weaving threads of history, artistry and personal passion,” says Kyle Bono Kaplan, one of the two photographers of the new book. KYLE BONO KAPLAN/INSIGHT EDITIONS

As for how Lyon feels to see the long-gone characters from his seminal book now onscreen, he says: “I always romanticized them and looked up to many of them. So it makes sense that they should live on in legend and on the silver screen. But it was personal for me, Cal [played by Holdbrook in the film] really was my best friend in the club, and I was crazy about Kathy [Comer]. That is why they talked to me the way they did. If you want someone to care about you, you have to care about them first.” When asked if it was a surprise seeing himself in the film as well, Lyon notes, “Sure, why not? I was as crazy as many of them and loved riding my Triumph through the streets of Chicago.”

But it was a visit to the set that made the now 82-year-old photographer feel that outlaw biker spirit again. “It was seeing my old funky Triumph parked on the set and first sitting on it and then kickstarting it with a tremendous roar and wanting to ride off into the sunset,” says Lyon. “Everyone on the set looked at me in horror.”



Action scenes captured in *Vandals: The Photography of The Bikeriders* (Insight Editions). KYLE BONO KAPLAN/INSIGHT EDITIONS

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