

# BIG SHOT

Putting you in the picture

## SOLOMON KANE

Like big swords and demonic beasties? Like tortured antiheroes with a damned soul and a five o'clock shadow to kill? Then you're going to love *Solomon Kane*. Based on the character created by Conan author Robert E Howard, and adapted from his 1930s pulp fiction strip, this 16th century-set swords-and-sorcery actioner should deliver violence by the horse and cart load.

*Deathwatch* director Michael J Bassett had to fight hard to get the film made, and to date it still hasn't found a US distributor, despite some positive word of mouth at film festivals. From what we've seen so far, America's reluctance to pick it up seems rather unfair, and one thing everyone seems to agree on is that it looks fantastic. Stark, oppressive, downright dirty landscapes dominate the world of *Solomon Kane* - when it's not engulfed in flames, that is. It's less the age of heroes, more the squalor of *Monty Python And The Holy Grail* - minus the comedy peasants.

*Solomon Kane* is in cinemas from 5 February.



### BAD TO THE BONE

Sorcerer Malachi, played by *Primeval*'s Jason Flemyng, is the film's Big Bad. Sporting authentic 16th century text and scars similar to Solomon across his face (but of the black magic rather than religious kind), he's not only terrorising the English countryside, but he's squatting in Solomon's ancestral home. The cheek!

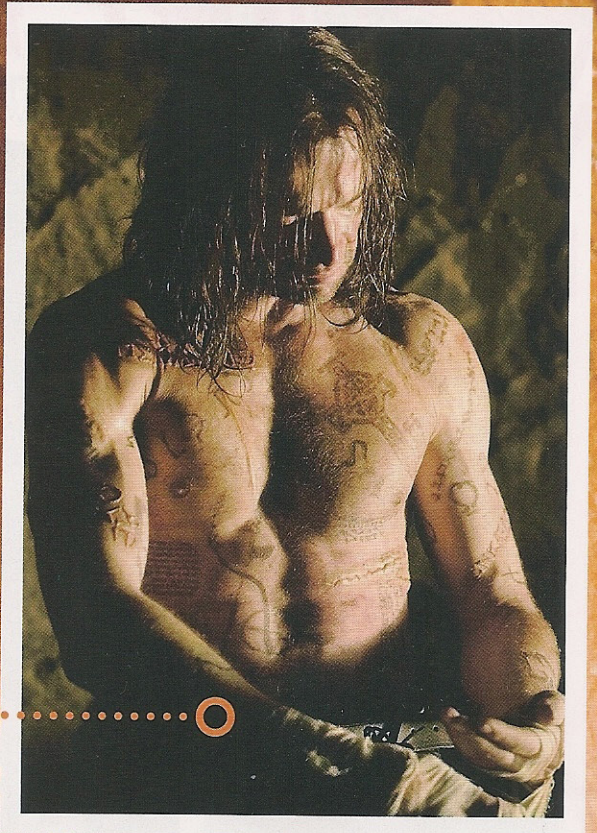
To make matters worse he slaughters a family Solomon has befriended and kidnaps their daughter, spurring Solomon into action as he breaks his vow of peace to save her from life as a slave. There might be a few obstacles along the way (namely Malachi's skin-mask clad right-hand man) but expect an epic showdown between the two come the film's final frames.



### TOP MARKS

After encountering The (grim) Reaper in Africa and learning his soul is destined to spend eternity in Hell, Solomon renounces his evil ways in an effort to redeem himself. Turning to God he holes up in a monastery and gets these nifty religious tattoos and scars – bet he regretted the one about his ex-wife in the morning though...

He's a tortured, Hell-fearing shadow of his former self. But the marks on his body aren't just a symbol of his devotion, or even idle superstition – they're protective spells discovered during his research into dozens of religious texts. Emblazoned across his body they signify a desperate attempt to postpone the forces of Hell dragging him down to the pit.



### FIRE AND BRIMSTONE

Here we find Solomon (*Resident Evil*'s James Purefoy) in the film's opening moments, cloaked head to toe in black, with signature rapier, cutlass and dual flintlock pistols in tow – essential tools for a guy who'll go on to pass his time vanquishing evil.

At this point in the movie, however, he's very much the bad guy, leaving a bloody trail behind him in Africa as he plunders every last gold piece from wealthy landlords – until, that is, a brush with death sets him on a more righteous path...