

Celebrating great  
New York movies

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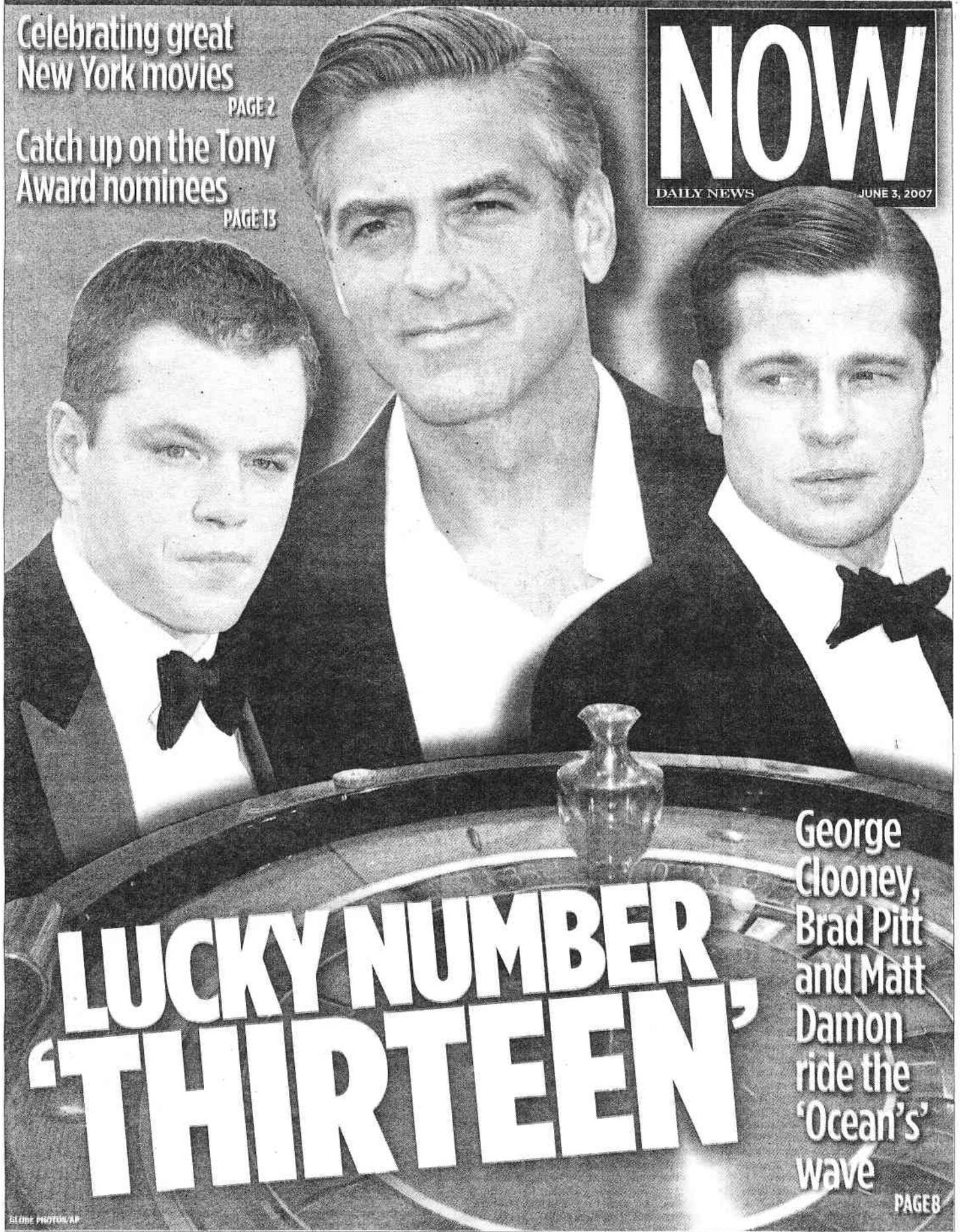
Catch up on the Tony  
Award nominees

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# NOW

DAILY NEWS

JUNE 3, 2007



# LUCKY NUMBER 'THIRTEEN'

George  
Clooney,  
Brad Pitt  
and Matt  
Damon  
ride the  
'Ocean's'  
wave

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# JOKERS WILD

Clooney, Pitt and Damon riff about 'Ocean's Thirteen' and how to turn friendship into a franchise

BY MICHAEL GILTZ



**T**he best special effect in a movie this summer may simply be the sight of George Clooney, Brad Pitt and Matt Damon palling around in a casino and pooling their star wattage in "Ocean's Thirteen," the Stephen Soderbergh heist comedy opening June 8. This third (and possibly last) entry in the slick-but-shaggy trilogy co-stars Al Pacino, Don Cheadle, Ellen Barkin, Bernie Mac and Elliott Gould, among others, and the plot is ... well, secondary to watching big stars have fun for our amusement. In an exclusive chat with Clooney, Pitt and Damon just before the movie's world premiere at the Cannes Film Festival, the trio of powerhouses revel in re-creating the ring-a-ding banter of Frank Sinatra's Rat Pack by teasing each other, joshin' around — and gamely ignoring the paparazzi bobbing up and down in speedboats in a nearby harbor.

Yet all three have put the insatiable media curiosity to good use as they've ascended the Hollywood mountain. Latest case in point: The guys hosted a Cannes screening that raised funds for Darfur, a cause Clooney in particular has taken up.

**DAILY NEWS:** In "Ocean's Thirteen," the line "You shook the hand of Frank Sinatra" is sort of shorthand for saying, "You should have respect for tradition and be a person of your word." So, did any of you ever actually shake the hand of Frank Sinatra?

**ALL THREE:** [In unison] No!

**GEORGE CLOONEY:** I did get a call from him once.

**BRAD PITT:** You did?

**CLOONEY:** It was the funniest, weirdest situation: I had this boycott of "Entertainment Tonight" years ago because I was in a fight with "Hard Copy" [which was airing intrusive footage of celebrities]. I just said, "I'm not going to help you guys make money at 'Entertainment Tonight' and then the same company screw us over with 'Hard Copy.' I'm not going to put money in your pocket to buy these [video images]."

**PITT:** That was a good coup.  
**CLOONEY:** Yeah, it was a good one. It worked pretty well.

**PITT:** I followed suit.

**CLOONEY:** I know. So I was in my trailer on "ER," and I got a call from Nancy Sinatra saying, "Hold on a minute," and she put her father on. It was just when all these helicopters were flying over his house and there were reports saying he was dying. [But] it was two years before he died.

And he said on the phone, "It's not working!" I said, "What?" He said, "This is Francis, it's not working!" I said, "What do you mean, 'It's not working?'" He said, "The helicopters are all over! This thing you're doing, it doesn't work! Not for s—!" I said, "Oh." And he said, "All right." And then he hangs up. That was it! [Laughs] He was p—d that there were helicopters flying overhead.

**DAILY NEWS:** The Rat Pack came first, of course, and their films followed. With you guys, though, it was the opposite; "Ocean's Eleven" was first.

**CLOONEY:** Yeah, we don't really care for each other.

**PITT:** I don't necessarily like you guys. Well, a couple I do.

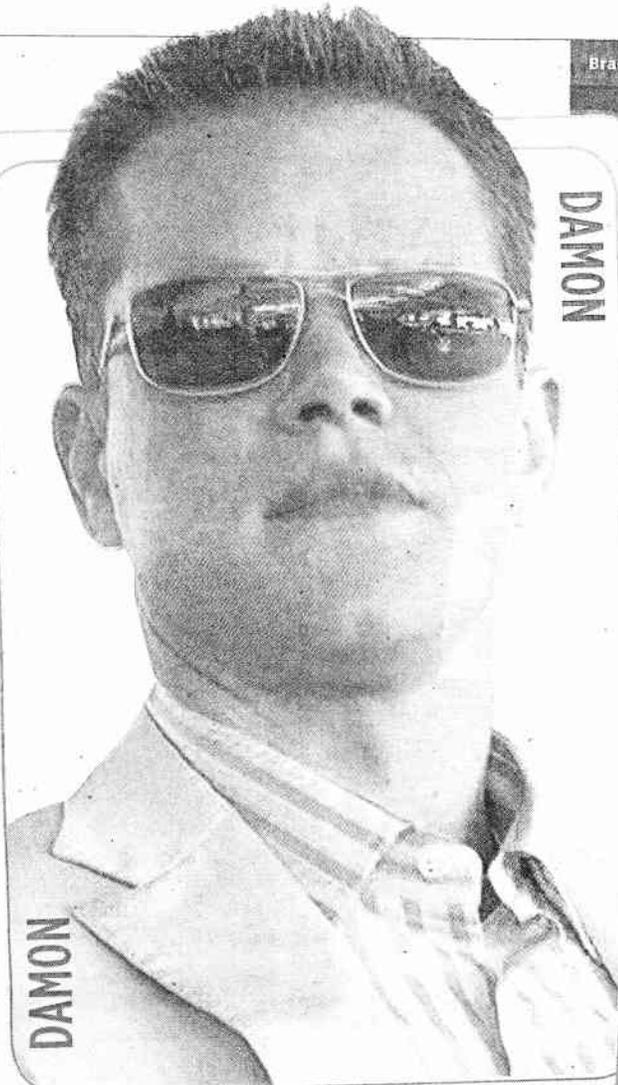
**CLOONEY:** I like ... what's the one guy? Cheadle? He's a good fellow. But the rest ... Oh, and that little fellow.

**PITT:** Shaobo [Chinese actor Shaobo Qin, who plays Yen].

**CLOONEY:** Shaobo! I like him. But the rest I can do without.

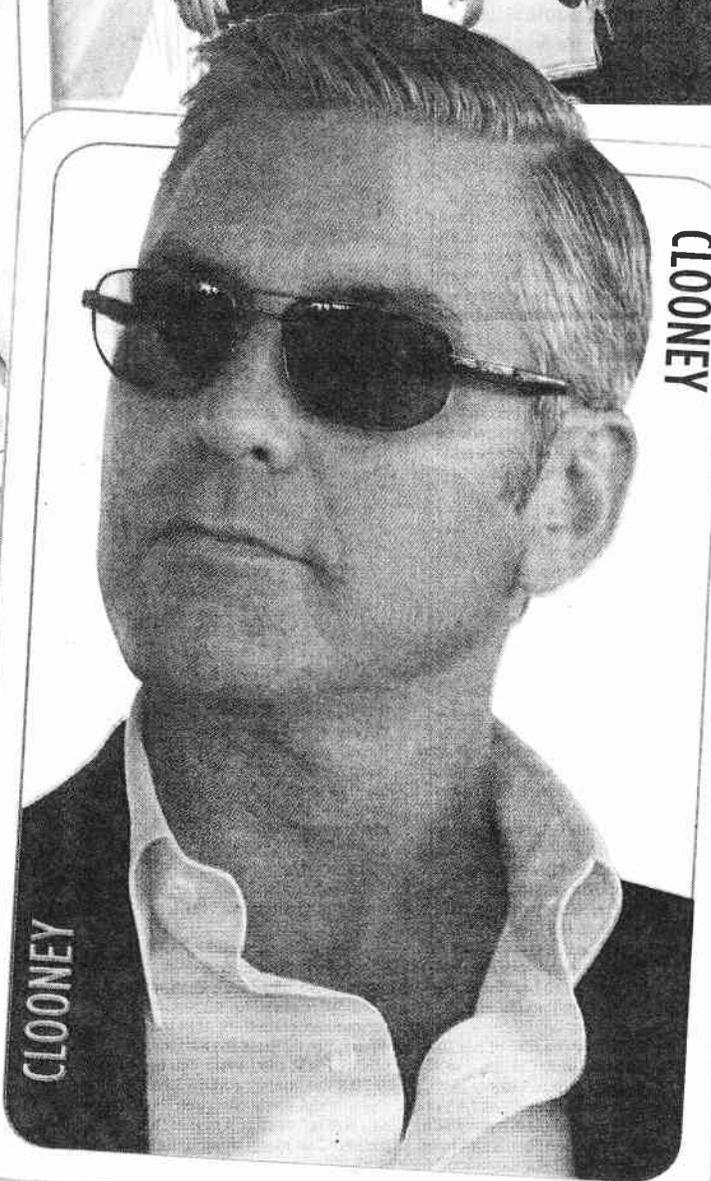
**DAILY NEWS:** So Matt, it doesn't hurt your feelings when you call up Brad and George and say, "What are you up to?" And they

Brad Pitt, Matt Damon and George Clooney (from l.) gamble on charisma in "Ocean's Thirteen."



DAMON

DAMON



CLOONEY

CLOONEY

say, "Oh, we're making a Coen brothers movie ["Burn After Reading"] together?"

**MATT DAMON:** Yeah, yeah, I appreciate the shout-out, that's nice. [To Clooney and Pitt] Thanks for reaching out and including me! [Faking irritation] I get to do "Syriana."

**CLOONEY:** Yeah, you get to do the fun one.

**DAMON:** Oh, thanks.

**CLOONEY:** "Come out to Morocco, Matt!"

**DAMON:** "Come out to the Arabian Peninsula."

**DAILY NEWS:** Obviously, none of you need to make any movies unless you want to ...

**DAMON:** So why did we make a second sequel to a remake? [They all laugh.]

**DAILY NEWS:** Good point. But as we're on it, you may want to stop now before "Ocean's 27" becomes a Dean Martin roast with a \$200 million budget.

**PITT:** I want to ride this thing right into the ground!

**CLOONEY:** He's doing the next one. "Ocean's One." Just Brad.

**PITT:** We're going to kill everyone off. It'll be like a last-man-standing kind of thing.

**DAILY NEWS:** Your friendship tends to stretch out to other pals, doesn't it? Brad's got a Western, "The Assassination of Jesse James by the Coward Robert Ford," coming up in the fall, co-starring Matt's friend Casey Affleck, Ben's brother.

**DAMON:** Actually, Casey is so neurotic ... he would want to rehearse for his auditions for that over the phone with me. And we would talk and talk and talk. He would talk for four hours! And then I'd finally say, "Dude, I don't know what else to tell you." And then he'd say, "Fine," and hang up. And then he'd call Ben and do the same thing for another four hours!

**CLOONEY:** We had that too, with Al Pacino. He just kept calling us and asking us ...

**DAMON:** Yeah, late-night phone calls ...

**CLOONEY:** [To Damon] Pacino, though, took your advice.

**DAMON:** He did.

**PITT:** In all fairness, he did get comfortable by ... the third or fourth week.

**DAMON:** I was surprised to find out that this was his first movie!

**PITT:** Alan?

**CLOONEY:** Al. It's Al! ♦