

The boy's **CLUB**

Samuel L Jackson tells Tempus about being the world's favourite badass
and giving cancer the middle finger

Words: Michelle Johnson

Say what you like about Samuel L Jackson, he's not afraid to be bold. Cool, charming and profane, the 69-year-old actor has defined righteous fury on our screens for decades. The prolific actor – he has appeared in more than 100 films – and producer didn't quite find his big break until Quentin Tarantino's 1993 hit *Pulp Fiction*, but he has since dominated the box office, becoming the highest-grossing box office star of all time – his films have made an staggering \$4.9bn (£3.5bn) to date.

In April, Jackson returns to our screens as superspy Nick Fury in *Avengers: Infinity War* – the latest franchise to benefit from the actor's love of fun-filled, high-octane adventures. Before joining the Marvel clan, he enjoyed roles in the *Star Wars* franchise and *Jurassic Park* series. He famously starred in *Snakes On A Plane* because he loved the title – and refused to let producers change it to something less, well, ridiculous.

Off screen, Jackson is known for his confident style – his distinctive

glasses, array of hats and penchant for a military style jacket – and doesn't mind cherry picking from his character's wardrobes when the opportunity calls.

"I have a clause in my contract that says I can keep the clothes I fancy," he says. In fact, it's just one of many contractual riders that would make any rock star's green room feel unimaginative. Others include the right to leisure time – specifically, to allow time to play golf at least twice a week during shooting.

Even before his silver screen success, Jackson was never one to follow the crowd. From his early activity in the civil rights movement to his rousing commitment to the One For The Boys charity, when this BAFTA award-winning actor puts his weight behind something it's a whole-hearted endeavour.

Here, Jackson speaks exclusively to Tempus about his matter-of-fact approach to cancer awareness, not taking his work home, and why his competitive nature is the secret behind his success. »



Samuel L. Jackson with celebrities at a One For The Boys fundraiser including 1 Craig David; 2 Richard Roundtree and Lewis Hamilton; 3 Kylie Minogue and Nicole Scherzinger; 4 David Gandy, AJ Buckley, Freddie Fox, Ray Stevenson, Jack Guinness, Daisy Lowe and Dylan Jones

Tempus: You've got a distinct look and obviously enjoy experimenting with different trends. Are there any style rules you follow?

Samuel L. Jackson: Confidence, of course. Confidence is the key in life, as well as in fashion. I have a healthy respect for traditions in menswear, but I don't live by any hard and fast rules. I wear what interests me, and what feels great to wear. And that usually works out great!

You're Chairman of One For The Boys, which has had a great presence at fashion weeks, including London Fashion Week Men's. Why do these events work so well with fashion?

Eyeballs are always on whatever is going down in the fashion world – especially when Fashion Week comes to town. A lot of guys love fashion and spend a lot of time making sure they look their best, but with the One For The Boys fashion events, we're saying 'hey man, we already know you look great on the outside, but think a bit about what's going on underneath all that, inside your body, too.'

What's the key to your success?

The key to my success is definitely hard work, patience and dedication. I also really, really love my job, so that helps.

2018 is a big year for you in the box office – what are you most excited for audiences to see? Is there anything that's been a departure for you?

Most of the films I have out this year are sequels, so none of those have been a departure for me so much as it's revisiting characters I've played before and are already familiar to audiences, like Nick Fury [Avengers: Infinity War]. One movie that came out at last year's Toronto Film Festival was Unicorn Store, which is an indie movie where I did play more of a quirky character – that was a nice departure from the roles I'm more well known for.

You've worked with world-leading directors, like Quentin Tarantino, on multiple films. Do you look at each script individually, or is it your experience on their films that make you go back?

It's both things really. Sometimes it's an incredible script that just hooks me and I want to be a part of, but it also helps when you've worked with the director or some of the cast before, as it makes it a more comfortable working experience when you're already familiar with each other and how each of you work.

“ I WILL SAY ONE THING FOR SURE – I DON'T SUFFER FOOLS WELL, ON OR OFF THE CLOCK ”



You're one of our favourite film badasses, but how much of that 'bad guy' persona do you take home with you?

Nothing at all. For me, it's simply acting. Though I will say one thing for sure – I don't suffer fools well, on or off the clock.

Is there a role (or real-life person) you'd love to play on screen?

No, I'm wide open!

Who are your biggest inspirations?

The people who have been the biggest inspirations in my life are those who raised me and taught me I needed to give back. They are why I'm involved with charitable causes like One For The Boys and encourage others to use their profiles to help where they can, too.

Was there a key event or moment when you realised how few men are aware of the risks of cancer?

Sofia Davis launched One For The Boys in 2013. She is a close friend of mine, and we've worked together for many, many years. Sofia's friend Simon sadly lost his brother Ali to brain cancer, and soon after that Ali's dad died from cancer, too. Sofia wanted to do something to help Simon with the healing process. After researching it, Sofia found the only information for men out there was bit on prostate and testicular cancer, but we knew men needed something more as there are so many different types of cancers that can affect them, including breast cancer. So Sofia created One For The Boys to help create a change in male attitudes, and I offered to step in as chairman of the campaign to help use my voice to get guys speaking more openly about their health.

Catching cancer early gives you the best chance of beating it. It's so important for guys to realise we're not invincible, cancer can affect anyone at any time – it doesn't matter how much money you have, cancer doesn't give a fuck.

You've travelled extensively for One For The Boys and hosted galas to raise awareness. Have you seen a difference?

I've definitely noticed a difference. One of the first times I saw One For The Boys making a difference in the real world was when a close friend of mine was inspired to go get himself checked out after we discussed the campaign. He told me afterwards that he went to his doctor and found out that he had early stage prostate cancer. It showed me just how important and needed this campaign is – and luckily my friend got treatment and is now in remission, all because he got himself checked early. 🙏

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