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To read a powerful essay in this issue by Andrew McCarthy, see page 93.

Judd Nelson is post-production on four films at press time: *The Downside of Bliss*, *The Bandit Hound*, *Kreep*, and *1/1*.

Right Now

Judd Nelson



FROM TOP: FILE PHOTO; GLENN HARRIS

The actor has checked in with us across four decades. Shouldn't you get a blazer or something for that?

INTERVIEW BY COLIN W. SARGENT

Which character you've played over the years would you most like to play in a sequel?

There aren't any characters I've played that I'd necessarily want to revisit in a sequel. Part of the uniqueness of film, as opposed to a television series, is that it's a "one-off" experience. Not that I'm opposed to sequels (I did one in *Return to Cabin by the Lake*), but the beginning, middle, and end nature of a film's story has a completeness I enjoy.

We know you're intimately familiar with Portland, but when you return, have you ever gotten a strange feeling being somewhere in the city?

Any strangeness I might feel when I return to Portland comes when places that I frequented and loved are no longer there. Terroni's—opposite King Jr. High, Together Leather on Exchange Street, The Boom Boom Room—Cumberland Ave., Recordland—Congress Street, and though not in

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PERFORMERS

Portland but crushing, The Sea Hag on Badger Island, the best lobster rolls I've ever had.

You told us in the '80s that your goal was to be a real working actor. Can you name three films where you've said to yourself, "Yeah, I'm working, I'm close to where I want to be?"

I feel very fortunate that I'm able to make my living being paid for what I'd do for free. But I've never said to myself, "Yes, I'm here. This is where I want to be with my career."

I'm of the opinion that the work of an actor is a continual learning process. I think of "career" as a retrospective term, like let's look back over the career of Marlon Brando.

What fellow performer has had your back through thick and thin?

Over the years various people have given me some good advice or a helping hand. But no fellow performer has had my back through thick and thin for any length of time. However, I am extremely fortunate that my family has always been very supportive my whole life. My father, mother, and sisters have always had my back through thick and thin, and I am forever grateful to them for their love, wise counsel, honesty and humor.

If you were buying a waterfront house on the Maine coast, where would it be?

A private, forested island off the coast of Maine anywhere from Portland north to Canada (close enough that I could row to the mainland in less than an hour), with a freshwater well, a huge fireplace, and high cliffs facing east. ■

Judd Nelson

ON THE RECORD, 2009

Where are your Maine touchstones that you feel you need to visit whenever you return?

When I've been out of state for any length of time, that first moment when I cross the border into Maine—wherever that might occur—brings me a feeling of comfort, a sense of knowing I am now standing where I am from, and where I belong.

[For] touchstones, I almost always take a flight to Boston, then rent a car and drive the last 100-plus miles.

I get off Interstate 95 at Portsmouth, head

down toward Strawberry Banke, then cross the water on the old bridge so that my first tracks in Maine are on Badger Island.

I always stop at the Sea Hag for a couple of lobster rolls, which I eat where I stand (I get some lump crabmeat and lobster to go)—if there is a better lobster roll anywhere else on the planet, I've not tasted it.



Pitch Perfect II tried to make the *Breakfast Club* a meme. As if it wasn't already!

Then I head north until I reach the outskirts of Portland, and I like to drive by the house of my infancy on Catherine Street, then drive by the house of my cavity-prone years on Falmouth Street, then head up to the Western Promenade so I can drive by the old Carroll Street house, and if there's snow on the ground, I'll boot-slide down the long curved "sled-track" that runs along the old cemetery.

I always drive through the Old Port, and down Exchange Street. The first "real" job I ever had (other than delivering the morning *Press Herald*) was working at the old Candle Factory on Exchange Street.

1998

If you could tell your 1986 self advice knowing what you know now, what would you tell yourself?

I wouldn't have followed up *The Breakfast Club* with *Saint Elmo's Fire*. I'd have tried something alone rather than becoming part of another young ensemble cast. Better to dip my foot in there instead of diving all the way in.

1986

How'd you get your big break? What took you out of Portland?

It wasn't like that. I was going to college. I went to Bryn Mawr and Haverford for two years, majoring in Philosophy. Then I decided to go to acting school [Stella Adler's acting conservatory in New York]. ■

