Beatles films cast their gay manager: James Norton

James Norton is a British actor known for being on TV shows like Masterpiece’s “Grantchester,” and Netflix’s “House of Guinness.” He was also in Greta Gerwig’s “Little Women.” His sex symbol status is solid among fans, but now his biggest profile role to date is set: Brian Epstein. That’s a name you might not know, but he was the manager of the Beatles, he was gay, and he was a driving force behind their early success, and sometimes referred to as the “Fifth Beatle,” which means his presence across all four upcoming Beatles biopics from “Skyfall” director Sam Mendes will be significant. The four films in question will be referred to, for now, as “The Beatles – A Four-Film Cinematic Event” and star Paul Mescal (Paul), Harris Dickinson (John), Barry Keoghan (Ringo), and “Stranger Things” actor Joseph Quinn (George). The four-movie multiplex-busting project is set to arrive in 2028 – these things take time, after all – so newcomers to all things Beatle can content themselves by watching “A Hard Day’s Night” and “Yellow Submarine” over the next 36 months while you wait to meet The Fab Fifth.

John Early’s got a “Secret”

Queer comic actor John Early has directed his first movie after being everywhere at once on TV and in film, most notably as one of the stars of “Search Party.” His debut feature film is “Maddie’s Secret,” and it won great acclaim at the Toronto International Film Festival last month. The plot involves a young woman named Maddie – played by Early – who works as an internet food content creator and who also has a husband and an eating disorder she’s trying to keep secret. Word is that the comedy also works within the retro TV movie social issue genre, which is intriguing – Kristen Wiig and Will Farrell did something similar in 2015’s “A Deadly Adoption” – and the supporting cast, including Vanessa Bayer, Kristen Johnston, and queer comic Kate Berlant makes this one something we’re eager to see. Indie distributor Magnolia Pictures has picked it up for release in 2026, so we’ll be there supporting our local arthouse theater.

Emmy-winner Jeff Hiller is “Lost & Found in Cleveland”

November is when most of the Christmas-themed films arrive in theaters and this year the indie comedy “Lost & Found in Cleveland” is ready to make merry. Set over a 24-hour period in the midwestern city during the holidays, as an “Antiques Roadshow”-style TV show comes to town, the film follows a group of people whose lives intersect over the course of that day. And the cast is stacked: queer favorites like “Glee” veteran Dot-Marie Jones, Jeff Hiller (Emmy winner for “Somebody Somewhere”), as well as Dennis Haysbert, Martin Sheen, Loretta Devine, June Squib, Stacy Keach, “Gilmore Girls” alum Liza Weil, and Mark L. Walberg (who appears as the antiques show host named, appropriately enough, “Tom L. Hanks.”) With more and more holiday films relegated to streaming services – everybody wants to compete with Hallmark – it’s good to know there are still movies that aim for a cozy cinema experience. It hits theaters on November 7, so wear a festive sweater.

“Red, White & Royal Blue” invites you to a wedding

Never underestimate audience desire for good-looking rich people falling in love; it’s a tradition as old as movies. And it’s almost certainly one reason for the success of the 2023 Amazon movie “Red, White & Royal Blue.” Based on the novel of the same name by Casey McQuiston, about a gay prince and his handsome non-aristocratic suitor, it became a queer rom-com sensation. And now there’s a sequel in the works, “Red, White & Royal Wedding.” Amazon MGM has Emmy-nominated director Jamie Babbit (“But I’m a Cheerleader”) is on board, as well as original stars Nicholas Galitzine and Taylor Zakhar Perez (and, presumably, the rest of the first film’s cast). Plot details are currently under wraps, but with that title you sort of already know what happens. And no one’s asking you to save the date yet, either. That’s a secret, too.

Romeo San Vicente: never a drag, always a queen