



blogging the reel world

Laika's 'Missing Link,' Featuring All-Star Cast Led By Hugh Jackman, Hits Theaters in April 2019 [Updated]

By Hoai-Tran Bui on Thursday, June 28th



Update 6/28/2018: Today, Laika announced that *Missing Link* will be released in theaters by U.S. distributor Annapurna Pictures on Friday, **April 19, 2019**. Our original article from May 8 follows:

Laika, the critically acclaimed animation studio behind hits like *Coraline* and *Kubo and the Two Strings*, has announced the release date for its next highly anticipated film. Laika's fifth film is *Missing Link*, an adventure movie about an investigator of mythical creatures who embarks on a journey to find the legendary "missing link" to mankind's primitive ancestry.

At the Cannes Film Festival, Laika announced the full star-studded cast led by **Hugh Jackman**, **Zoe Saldana**, and **Zach Galifianakis**, with **Stephen Fry** and **Emma Thompson** becoming the latest prolific actors to join the ensemble.

Laika is only five feature films in, but the studio has proven to be one of the most formidable companies in [stop-motion animation](#). Each of its films are lovingly crafted, and each of its films have been released to rave reviews. Now Laika has to follow up its most critically acclaimed film yet, 2016's *Kubo and the Two Strings*. And from the looks of it, *Missing Link* more than steps up to the challenge.

Directed by **Chris Butler** (*ParaNorman*), *Missing Link* stars Jackman as the bullish Sir Lionel Frost, a little-believed mythical investigator who seeks to prove his peers wrong by finding the one legendary creature that has never been found: The Missing Link. Jackman is joined by Galifianakis as Mr. Link, and Saldana as an adventurer who joins in their journey. The impressive cast is rounded out by **Emma Thompson** (*Sense and Sensibility*), **Stephen Fry** (*The Hobbit*), **Timothy Olyphant** (*Justified*), **Matt Lucas** (*Alice In Wonderland*), **David Walliams** (*Little Britain*), **Amrita Acharia** (*Game of Thrones*) and **Ching Valdes-Aran** (*Nurse Jackie*).

Here is the official synopsis for *Missing Link*:

The charismatic Sir Lionel Frost (voiced by Hugh Jackman) considers himself to be the world's foremost investigator of myths and monsters. The trouble is none of his small-minded high-society peers seems to recognize this. Sir Lionel's last chance for acceptance by the adventuring elite rests on traveling to America's Pacific Northwest to prove the existence of a legendary creature. A living remnant of Man's primitive ancestry. The Missing Link.

Zach Galifianakis is Mr. Link: the slightly silly, surprisingly smart and soulful beast upon whom Sir Lionel's dreams depend. As species go, he's as endangered as they get; he's the last of his kind, and he's lonely. Proposing a daring quest to seek out his rumored distant relatives, he enlists Sir Lionel's help in an odyssey around the world to find the fabled valley of Shangri-La.

Together with Adelina Fortnight (voiced by Zoe Saldana), an independent and resourceful adventurer who possesses the only known map to the group's secret destination, the unlikely trio embarks on a riotous rollercoaster of a ride. Along the way, our fearless explorers encounter more than their fair share of peril, stalked at every turn by dastardly villains seeking to thwart their mission. Through it all, Mr. Link's disarming charm and good-humored conviction provide the emotional and comedic foundation of this fun-filled family film.

Missing Link sounds absolutely magical. Laika hasn't made a bad movie yet, and this mythology-saturated road trip movie feels like it could be another hit for them. The broad strokes of the story do sound similar to *Kubo*, but with the added twist of fairy tale-inspired tropes. But since it will likely be another Laika stop-motion animation, the film should look and feel wholly original.

Laika and Aardman Animation have been almost single-handedly keeping stop-motion features alive — which is an incredible considering how tedious the process can be. But with animation slowly giving into fully CG movies, we need studios like Laika who aren't afraid to push the boundaries. I can't wait to see where they take us with *Missing Link*.

Missing Link is set to open in U.S. theaters in **spring 2019**.