

## Robert Downey Jr. is to be Tony Stark

Contributed by Clint Johnson  
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I have to say that I'm not happy with the choice of Robert Downey to play Tony Stark in the Iron Man movie. I've been a fan of Iron Man since before I could even read and I've enjoyed pretty much every part that I've seen Robert Downey play... but the two just don't work together in my head. I really hope that Jon Favreau has seen something in the audition room that Downey's never shown in anything else he's ever done because that is what it will take.

Directing and cinematography can mold an actor's performance to a surprising degree but I can't help but feel that it is best when the actor has it already. So while directing can pull a performance out of an actor that we haven't seen before it is like betting on a horse that starts at the back of the pack.

One thing that people were complaining about with the casting of this part was the actual stature of the actors considered. Using forced perspective with the camera alone (no special effects really) can make Ian McKellen, who is five feet eleven inches, look like he is over seven feet tall while in the exact same shot Elijah Woods, who is five feet six inches, looks to be barely over four feet tall. They are only five inches apart in actual height but there looks to be a three foot difference. You can't discount Tom Cruise because he is only five feet seven inches tall so I think that if Tom Cruise could keep his unstable superstitious beliefs off the set then he would probably have been a reasonable choice for Tony Stark... but could he rein in the wacky?

Going with name actors: Christian Bale might have been a good choice if he wasn't already Batman. Clive Owen I could see auditioning for Tony Stark. Could Jude Law bring the gravitas needed? Viggo Mortensen is getting a little old for an origin film... but Downey ain't no spring chicken either. It isn't that I am wedded to a specific visual - I'd really like to call in Will Smith to see his take on Tony Stark.

Even though Howard Hughes had a serious Tony Stark vibe in his early years and Leonardo DiCaprio did a decent job portraying him in the Aviator... I can't see Leo as Tony Stark.

The fantasy casting? I think a thirty-five year old Gregory Peck would have been the perfect Tony Stark.

I'll still go see it in the theatre but I'm not looking forward to it like I was before this announcement. Robert, don't take this as a slam on you, you are a good actor but even the best actor who ever lived couldn't play every part there is to play.

I guess we can just be thankful that it isn't Hayden Christensen, Ben Affleck, Ashton Kutcher or Keanu Reeves.