

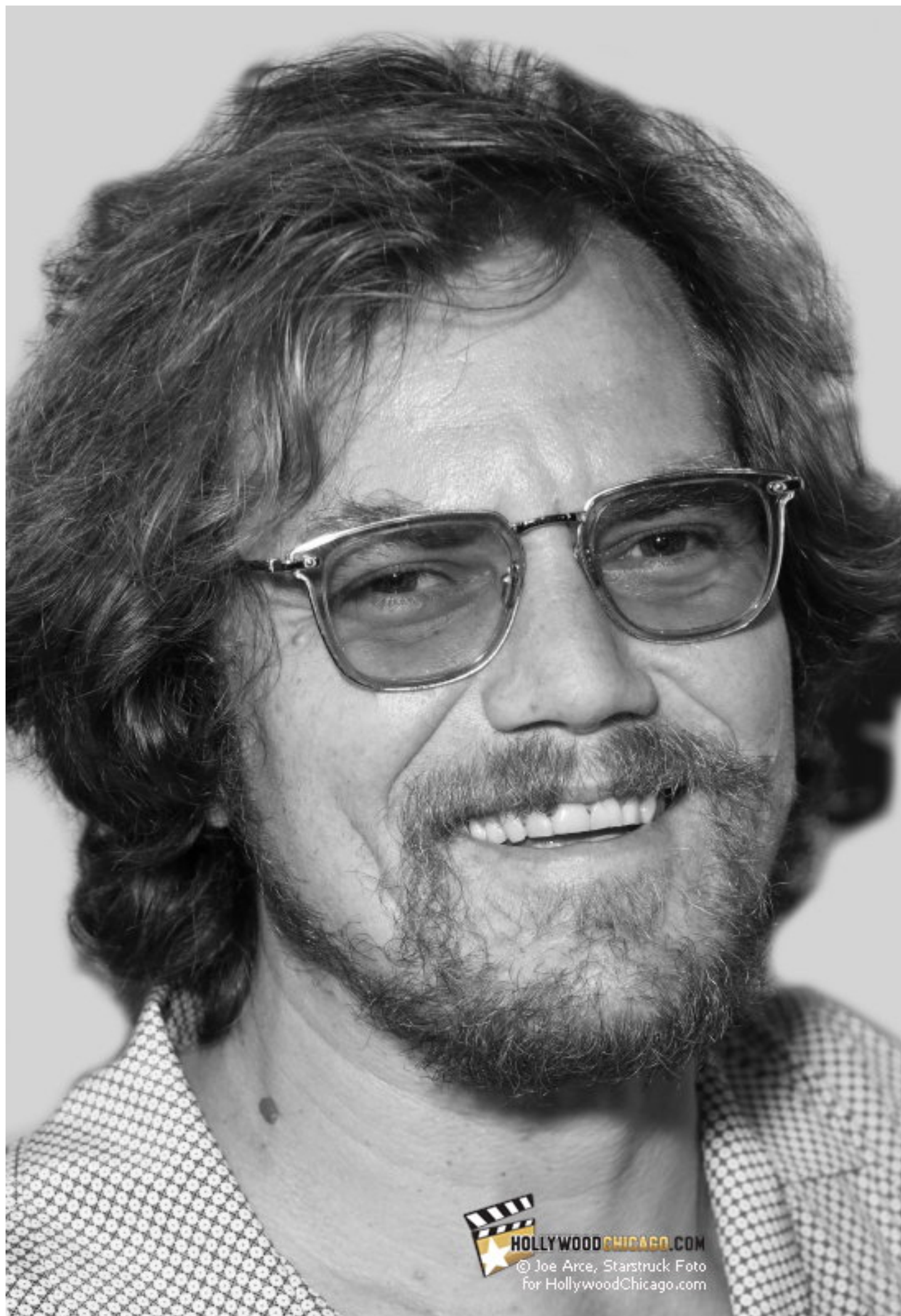
## Podtalk: Michael Shannon is Electric in ‘The Current War’

Submitted by [PatrickMcD](#) [1] on October 28, 2019 - 7:21pm

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CHICAGO – It is a solid assertion that actor Michael Shannon is one of the finer performers currently working in stage and film. Recently he brought to light the real-life character of George Westinghouse, as he was rival to Thomas Edison (Benedict Cumberbatch) for control of the new fangled electricity grid in ‘The Current War.’

Much like the Silicon Valley inventors, the race to wire the entire country with electricity was both highly profitable and life changing in a way that life and society were never the same afterward. In the middle of the two men was immigrant Nikola Tesla (Nicholas Hoult), who had figured out the precision and science necessary to achieve electrification, but didn’t have the business mind to allow it to happen. From light bulbs, AC vs. DC current, and the egos of the players involved – including the inherent altruism of Michael Shannon’s Westinghouse – the film is a surprisingly beautiful story of enterprise.



Michael Shannon at the 55th Chicago International Film Festival

*Photo credit: Joe Arce of Starstruck Foto for HollywoodChicago.com*

Michael Corbett Shannon was born in Kentucky, and moved to the Chicago area when his father became a professor at DePaul University. Bitten with the performance bug at an early age (listen to his anecdote in the Podtalk) he made his mark on the professional and storefront stages of Chicago. He made his film debut with a small role in “Groundhog Day,” and moved up the film role spectrum with parts in “Jesus’ Son,” “Cecil B. Demented,” “Pearl Harbor” and “8 Mile.” His exquisite performing style made memorable characters out of everyman personas.

In 2008 his stage work (which he has never stopped doing) continued, as he worked with the late Philip Seymour Hoffman on “The Little Flower of East Orange” at the Public Theater in New York City. That same year he appeared in the film “Revolutionary Road” as a troubled and bipolar antagonist, which effectively launched the next phase for his in-demand character acting. His roles thereafter ranged memorably between TV (HBO’s “Boardwalk Empire”), stage (“Long Day’s Journey into Night” on Broadway) and film (“Take Shelter,” “Man of Steel,” “99 Homes,” “Midnight Special” “Elvis and Nixon” and “What They Had”). He will also be in the upcoming Rian Johnson film, “Knives Out.”





Michael Shannon as George Westinghouse in ‘The Current War’  
Photo credit: TWC

In a free ranging Podtalk with Patrick McDonald of HollywoodChicago.com, Michael Shannon talks about George Westinghouse, the connective force between actors when sharing a scene and his definition of “movie star.”

*“The Current War” opened nationwide on October 25th. See local listings for theaters and show times. Featuring Michael Shannon, Benedict Cumberbatch, Nicholas Hoult, Katherine Waterston and Matthew Macfayden. Written by Michael Mitnick, Directed by Alfonso Gomez-Rejon. Rated “PG-13”*



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