

Whether you're a Taylor Swift fan or not, there's no denying that you know who she is. The 24-year-old has sold millions of albums, won so many awards that we've stopped keeping track and has a reputation for being one of the most honest songwriters — especially when it comes to writing about her relationships. She's not new to the big screen either, having starred opposite big names in *Valentines Day* in 2010. Now, she's back on the big screen with the film adaptation of Lois Lowry's bestselling novel, *The Giver*, brought to the screen by The Weinstein Co. and Walden Media.

The dystopian story traces a young man named Jonas, who lives in a seemingly ideal and often colourless world of conformity. *The Giver*, the sole keeper of memories, begins to open up to him about dark and deadly truths from the past. Taylor talks to us about starring in the film alongside Hollywood biggies such as Meryl Streep, Jeff Bridges, Katie Holmes and newcomer Brenton Thwaites, what she thinks of acting and whether she's still a romantic at heart.

■ First off, tell us about your role in *The Giver*.
I play the character of Rosemary, who is someone that has no emotions. She is the first child who was designated to be the Receiver of Memory, but after five weeks of training with *The Giver*, she was asked to be released from the community.

■ That sounds interesting! Was the character what led you to being associated the film?
I remember that the book affected me deeply when I read it in school. While reading the script, I pictured the characters, played by these incredible actors, Jeff Bridges and Meryl Streep, who had already been signed on. I was thrilled to be able to play Rosemary.

■ What did you think when you first read the book? It has been so controversial — do you think that it deserves the negative attention, or is it all just silly controversy?
When I first read the book in school it deeply affected me. While reading the script, the same memories came back to me. I am glad to be playing Rosemary. *The Giver* is a bestseller and readers and fans have a lot of expectations from the film. I know we have put in an immense effort and hope to live up to the expectations of our fans.

■ Your role has been described as small, but incredibly important — why is Rosemary such an integral part of this story?
Yes, I have a very brief role. For me, the project was worth taking up because of Rosemary's character, the people associated with it, and of course, getting to work opposite acting heavyweights such as Jeff Bridges and Meryl Streep. No one would ever decline that offer.

■ So, what was it like, working with such a star-studded cast? Was it intimidating?
It was a great learning experience. Jeff is an amazingly talented actor — I kept asking



>> Taylor (pictured here in November last year, performing at the Victoria's Secret Fashion Show and below, at the Academy of Country Music Awards) recently starred in *The Giver* (right and bottom), releasing on August 15

TALKING ABOUT TAYLOR

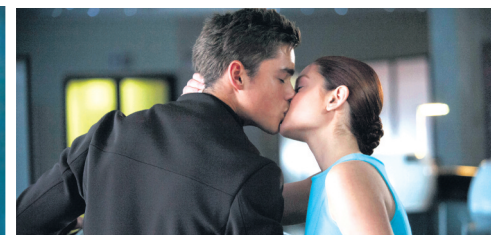
With countless awards, sold out tours and chart-topping albums to her credit, **Taylor Swift** seems to be doing everything right, and she's back on the big screen with upcoming film, *The Giver*. **Rhea Dhanbhoora** talks to her about her music and the film

him during the shoot to tell me how to do things differently and he would reply so simply, telling me to stick to what I was doing and not to sensationalise my acting skills.

■ What would you feel like, being a part of a community like the one in *The Giver*?
I firmly believe that the only religion we all must follow is humanity. A

community that is devoid of racism, sickness, death and war is only possible when every individual does their bit and spreads harmony around. I wish that we could live in a world like this!

■ You've been in a couple of films now — is acting something you want to continue to do or are you going to stick to music?
Music is and always will be my first love.



But, if and when interesting roles come up I will definitely consider them.

■ You've released several albums in the past few years. Is there anything lined up, or are you going to take a break and focus on other projects for the moment?
I am currently shooting for *The Secret Service*. It is expected to release in November this year. It's a spy film, where I require some heavy-duty martial arts training so that my character can convincingly kick Samuel L. Jackson's butt.

■ A lot of your songs deal with your relationships. After everything, would you say that you're still a romantic? What's something you look for in relationships?
As a person I am very emotional and so, romance is the strongest emotion; it cheers me up. I think people should be themselves with whomever they are, being fake ruins every relationship.

■ Do you think that the industry is opening up and becoming more of a level playing field for men and women?
The industry is neutral now, all that matters is your talent, passion, professionalism, dedication and sincerity towards your work.

■ You've never been on a tour here — and you have a lot of fans. Do you think you'll ever make it to India to perform?
I would love to come to India to perform; I know I have a lot of fans here! I will be planning a trip to India soon.

■ Anything else you would like to tell fans about your music, the book or the film?
Please watch *The Giver*. It's a beautiful film that a lot of effort has been put into.
**The Giver releases worldwide on August 15, 2014*

TAYLOR'S QUICK PICKS

- A song that you love performing on stage: *Love Story*, on any given day.
- An actor that you would love to work with: Leonardo DiCaprio.
- Someone you aspire to be like in the industry: I really look up to Meryl Streep. She is an icon!
- Your biggest inspiration: I draw inspiration from my music. I love entertaining people and would love to do so forever.
- White wine or red: Red.
- Your favourite place in the world: France
- Your favourite type of outfit to wear on the red carpet outfit: A gown.
- A designer you adore: Roberto Cavalli.
- A few other books you would love to see made into films: *The Alchemist*; it's an inspiring book.

