

## A NOTE FROM WRITER/DIRECTOR CHRIS WEITZ

For Lyra, the child at the center of *The Golden Compass*, the journey begins in the relative safety of her Oxford home and takes her to the edge of the world. My voyage with this story began in London seven years ago, when a friend suggested I read Philip Pullman's books while I was in the relative safety of directing a movie called *About a Boy*.

I knew immediately that I wanted to translate these books to film. I was absolutely stunned by the imagination, daring and intelligence of the books. Pullman's insights range from the everyday to the metaphysical, and his great trilogy is a testament to nothing less than the freedom and potential of the human soul. *The Golden Compass*, the first book of the series, offers everything a filmmaker could want - a compelling story, fascinating characters, psychological and philosophical depth, and an abiding wonder at its heart. For me, there could be no better challenge to turn my hand to over the intervening years.

It takes a great deal of fortitude to watch someone adapt your work to another medium, and I am indebted to Mr. Pullman for trusting me with one of the twentieth century's greatest works of the imagination, and for being a consistent source of advice and support.

I will always be grateful to New Line for giving me the opportunity to make *The Golden Compass*, for displaying trust in me throughout its long gestation, and for helping to put together an extraordinary cast and crew. I'm just one of the many people working on the film who have been inspired by these books, and I have been consistently amazed by their dedication, and the effort and creativity they have brought to it. For all of us living with the sheer size and scope of this film, which has consumed our days and occasionally our nights, it has been a labor of love.

###

## ***THE GOLDEN COMPASS***

### Production Information

In a parallel world, where human souls take the form of animal companions, one child stands between the end of free will and the beginning of a new age.

Lyra Belacqua (Dakota Blue Richards) is only 12, but even she knows that doing what you're told versus doing what you feel is right can yield very different outcomes. A rebellious orphan living as a ward at Jordan College in Oxford, Lyra belongs to a world that is one of many parallel worlds – unseen, intangible dimensions where humanity evolves with subtle differences.

But Lyra is never alone in hers – she goes everywhere with her daemon, a small, ever-changing animal called Pantalaimon. In other worlds, one's soul resides inside the body, silent and unseen. In hers, a daemon is a lifelong companion.

But Lyra's world is changing. The all-encompassing governmental body called the Magisterium is tightening its grips on the populace. Its dark work has resulted in a rash of kidnappings of children by a mysterious force called the Gobblers. Rumors among the Gyptian boat people, who have lost many of their own to the kidnappers, is that the children are being taken to an Experimental Station in the north to be subjected to unspeakable experiments.

When Lyra's best friend Roger (Ben Walker) vanishes, she swears she will travel to the end of the world to rescue him.

Lord Asriel (Daniel Craig), Lyra's dashing, gruff explorer uncle, is simultaneously setting out for the same region where he is seeking to harness the power of a mysterious phenomenon called Dust that he believes resides where the Northern Lights play over the icy Arctic Circle.

Desperate to accompany her uncle but denied, Lyra is given a second chance when the college is visited by an associate from the city – Mrs. Coulter (Nicole Kidman). A beguiling scientist and world traveler, Mrs. Coulter spirits Lyra away from her life in Jordan promising tantalizing adventures in London and beyond.

Before leaving, Lyra is given a puzzling, ancient device called the alethiometer – one that is said to tell the bearer only the truth, if she can only figure out how to use it.

In Lyra's world, there is a myth of a child whose fate is to end fate – a child who can write her own tale – and who will play a crucial part in the coming war. In her quest to save Roger, could Lyra be that child?

Banding together an unlikely alliance with a tribe of seafaring Gyptians, a mysterious witch, a great armored bear and a Texas airman, Lyra embarks on an adventure that will take her over sky and ocean, to the wilds of the icy north, and into the mysteries at the very core of the human soul.

A great war is coming – one that threatens not only her world but all the parallel worlds waiting just beyond the northern lights – and Lyra will need all her skill, all her courage, to stop it.

New Line Cinema presents *The Golden Compass*, an exhilarating fantasy adventure set in an alternate world with powerful ties to our own starring Oscar winner Nicole Kidman (*The Hours*), newcomer Dakota Blue Richards, Sam Elliott (*We Were Soldiers*), Eva Green (*Casino Royale*), and Daniel Craig (*Casino Royale*). Based on Philip Pullman's best-selling and award-winning first novel in Pullman's *His Dark Materials* trilogy, *Northern Lights*, the screenplay is by Academy Award nominee Chris Weitz (*About A Boy*), who also directs. In association with Ingenious Film Partners, a Scholastic Production, A Depth of Field A Chris Weitz Film, *The Golden Compass* is produced by Deborah Forte and Bill Carraro, with executive producers Bob Shaye and Michael Lynne. Toby Emmerich, Mark Ordesky, Ileen Maisel, Andrew Miano and Paul Weitz also executive produce.

The distinguished cast also includes Academy Award nominee Tom Courtenay (*The Dresser*), Derek Jacobi (*Gosford Park*), Ben Walker (BBC's *Sweeney Todd*), Adam Godley (*Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*), Simon McBurney (*The Last King of Scotland*), Nonso Anozie (*Prime Suspect*), Jim Carter (*Shakespeare in Love*), Clare Higgins (*Stage Beauty*), Jack Shepherd (*Charlotte Gray*), Magda Szubanski (*Happy Feet*) and Ian McShane (TV's *Deadwood*).

The creative behind-the-scenes team is led by Emmy-winning director of photography Henry Braham, BSC (*Waking Ned Devine*, *Flyboys*), Academy Award-winning production designer Dennis Gassner (*Bugsy*, *Road to Perdition*), Oscar winner (for *Lawrence of Arabia*) and four-time Academy Award-nominated editor Anne V.

Coates, A.C.E. (*Becket, The Elephant Man, In the Line of Fire, Out of Sight*), Oscar-nominated costume designer Ruth Myers (*Emma, L.A. Confidential*) and Oscar-nominated senior visual effects supervisor Michael Fink (*X-Men 1 & 2, Constantine*). Music is by Oscar nominee Alexand re Desplat (*The Queen*). Casting is by Fiona Weir and Lucy Bevan.

The film also features the work of property master Barry Gibbs (*Oliver Twist, Hannibal Rising*), Oscar-winning make-up and hair designer Peter King (*The Lord of the Rings* Trilogy) and stunt coordinator Paul Jennings (*Batman Begins, Mission: Impossible*).

The film will be released worldwide by New Line Cinema on December 7, 2007.

[www.goldencompassmovie.com](http://www.goldencompassmovie.com)

### **INTO THIS WILD ABYSS: Adapting *The Golden Compass***

Writer/director Chris Weitz encountered the first book in Philip Pullman's widely read and award-winning trilogy while making his acclaimed film, *About A Boy*, for which he was nominated for an Oscar for Best Original Screenplay (along with his brother Paul). "I had heard from friends of mine about a fantastic and life-changing British fantasy series that was 'written for children but really for adults,'" he recalls. "I was absolutely stunned by the imagination, daring and intelligence of the books. As far as ambition and philosophical depth, they left everything I had read previously in the dust."

To gain the opportunity to adapt Pullman's immersive tale for the screen, Weitz presented New Line Cinema with a manifesto describing how he saw the film, and then dedicated the ensuing three years to bringing his vision of the film to life. "It offers everything a filmmaker would be interested in – a compelling story, fascinating characters, psychological and philosophical depth, wonder and the chance to make a beautiful film," Weitz explains. "It's a fantastic story, about things that matter, like the human spirit, loyalty, kindness and free will. When you are directing a movie, you have to have utter commitment to every aspect of it, and there was nothing about this project that I didn't feel absolutely passionate about."

Like Pullman, Weitz attended an “Oxbridge” college – in his case, Trinity College, Cambridge, where he studied 17<sup>th</sup> century literature and developed an affinity for John Milton, whose work resonates throughout Pullman’s books. Pullman, in fact, titled his trilogy from the enticing thematic connections between Milton’s mention of “His dark materials” in *Paradise Lost, Book II*, and “dark matter” – the very essence of the universe:

“Into this wild abyss,  
the womb of nature and perhaps her grave,  
Of neither sea, nor shore, nor fire,  
But all these in their pregnant causes mixed  
Confusedly, and which thus must ever fight,  
Unless the almighty maker them ordain  
His dark materials to create more worlds,  
Into this wild abyss the wary fiend  
Stood on the brink of hell and looked a while,  
Pondering his voyage...”

For producer Deborah Forte, the journey to bring Pullman’s novels to the screen had begun nearly 11 years ago when she first read *The Golden Compass* (called *The Northern Lights* in the UK) in manuscript form and immediately pursued the rights on behalf of Scholastic Media. “I thought at the time, ‘This is an extraordinary writer, and wherever he’s going, I want to go with him,’” Forte recalls. *The Golden Compass* unfolds in a world that is, “not traditional fantasy; it’s not traditional science-fiction,” Forte continues. “When people read these books, they are presented with an instantly engaging world that is entirely original and at the same time relatable.”

Pullman’s *His Dark Materials* trilogy – comprised of *The Golden Compass*, *The Subtle Knife* and *The Amber Spyglass* – became a critical success and publishing phenomenon, selling 14 million copies around the world to date. The trilogy also began collecting awards, including the prestigious Whitbread prize, which no novel for children had ever won previously.

Executive producer Ileen Maisel of New Line Cinema discovered the books and found that a number of her colleagues, including Mark Ordesky and Michael Lynne, had also taken the plunge into Lyra’s world. “It’s a story of a young girl’s journey to self awareness and understanding the price of free will,” Maisel describes, “set against

extraordinary worlds of fantasy as well as reality. Philip doesn't call this a fantasy. Philip calls this a reality novel. That's the way we look at it, and that's what's so exciting about it because Lyra does things that all of us wish we had the ability and the courage to do. And that's why I think we all relate to her and believe in her."

The ideal synthesis between material and adaptor had been struck. "Chris Weitz is so smart and so thoughtful," says executive producer and New Line President of Production Toby Emmerich. "He also has great humanism and artistry paired with a real instinct for making fun, entertaining movies. We got very lucky with Chris and have every confidence that he has made a compelling, exciting film."

"Everyone was fully prepared – each department and every individual working on this movie understood the material from inception," says Forte. "They appreciated it. They had a vision for it that dovetailed with Chris's vision for the movie, and so it was off and running the moment Chris walked into this project."

Weitz, Forte and the entire filmmaking team found a powerful ally and steadfast resource in Pullman himself. "I'm adapting Philip Pullman," explains Weitz. "So, while there is some compression involved, my commitment is to carry over the spirit of his vision and this world he has created."

"I've done my part," says Pullman. "I handed it over to Chris and his team to make the film. I couldn't have people to trust my story to who were more trustworthy, and I know my story is in good hands."

Weitz met on numerous occasions with Pullman and discussed the film throughout development and production. Weitz also set sail for Svalbard, Norway – 1000 miles north of Oslo and a key location in the story – where he wrote the bulk of his adaptation.

"I believed in the film's potential when Chris first turned in his 156-page draft 2 ½ years ago," recalls executive producer Andrew Miano. "He poured so much of his own heart and soul into the material, along with a deep faith in the universe Pullman created." Adds producer Bill Carraro, "Chris Weitz adapted the book in such a wonderful manner and carried that dedication and commitment into directing. The writer in him was always helpful to everyone working to put together the movie because he

could always focus on the elements that were most important, from design to stunts to acting to effects.”

The production would be a vast one, with striking vistas, myriad creatures and next-generation visual effects. But for Weitz, the key factor in his adaptation would always be the truths at the heart of Pullman’s story. “The magic of the piece is as much in the relationships as in the potential for spectacle,” he says. “Though it’s an enormously well-conceived parallel world, it speaks very truthfully about our world, about our lives as children, parents and individuals in society. And although the heroine is a child, there is nothing childish or silly about this story. It must be treated with human sympathy, in terms of the emotions of the characters, and the gulf in scale between the cosmic and the personal must be bridged as well as Pullman bridges it.”

New Line Cinema Production President Toby Emmerich adds, “When I read the book, I fell in love with the relationship between Lyra and Iorek, the armored bear. Chris has beautifully realized this in the film, capturing a great performance from Dakota Blue and marrying it seamlessly with incredible computer technology. It’s an extraordinary relationship that could only exist in Lyra’s world, but it is still very human and very emotional.”

## **OF HUMANS AND DAEMONS:**

### **The Story and Cast of *The Golden Compass***

The film tells the story of precocious 12 year-old Lyra Belacqua, whose curiosity and willful nature open the door to mysteries upon which the fate of her world comes to rest. An orphan, Lyra and is being raised among the mostly paternal company of the Master of Jordan College in Oxford (Jack Shepherd), where her best and most trusted friend is a kitchen boy named Roger (Ben Walker). “*The Golden Compass* is about free will and free choice, and Lyra is the ultimate example of that,” says executive producer Mark Ordesky. “Lyra is going through her life doing her daily activities with no knowledge that the decisions she makes are going to ultimately save or doom not only her world, but all the other parallel worlds that exist. But essentially, she is still forming, and she is wild, willful and precocious.”

To find the right young person to embody the critical role of Lyra, casting directors Fiona Weir and Lucy Bevan cast a wide net across the UK, ultimately seeing over 10,000 young actresses. “We had casting sessions in multiple cities,” recalls producer Bill Carraro. “Literally thousands of young girls came out, really brave, wonderful personalities, and it was then honed down to a core group for the director. And when we found our Lyra, she just seemed born for the part.”

Overwhelmingly, one young actress stood out – Dakota Blue Richards. “Dakota had a particular spirit that made you sit up and take notice,” recalls Weitz. “I was looking at the tapes and there was this waif of a girl whose hair was unkempt, and there was something very strong and interesting about her.”

“She is an extraordinary young woman,” says Forte. “She’s just 12 years old, and has never acted professionally before, but when she gets in front of the camera, she possesses that intelligence and feral quality, a little bit of wildness, that is perfect for Lyra. Even Philip, when we sent him the tapes, identified Dakota as the one.”

Adds Pullman, “I’m delighted with the casting of Dakota Blue Richards as Lyra. As soon as I saw Dakota’s screen test, I realized that the search was over. She has just the combination of qualities that make up the complicated character of this girl.”

Dakota Blue Richards had read the books and seen the stage adaptation of *The Golden Compass* and jumped at the opportunity to play a character for whom she had a passionate affinity. Richards particularly admired Lyra’s bravery and determination. “Because Lyra never had parents, she thinks no one can tell her what to do, so she never really does what she’s told,” explains Richards. “She does things other people would be scared of, like climbing the roofs of Jordan College, where she lives, and getting into fights with people. She likes to give the impression that she is better than everybody else because she’s braver and more intelligent, and if she doesn’t actually have a story to tell she’ll make something up.”

Lyra is accompanied every step of her life by her daemon (pronounced DEE-mon), Pantalaimon. A daemon, explains Philip Pullman, is “the person themselves. They’re not separate from them. They are part of them, so much so that if your daemon was a cat and a real cat came along, the real cat would look at your daemon as a human being rather than a cat.”

Throughout her journey, Lyra is constantly given strength, comfort and occasionally wary admonishments by Pan. “I think it’s a very enticing concept, this notion that you have a running dialog with your soul for your entire life,” muses Weitz.

But Lyra’s life changes dramatically when she meets Mrs. Coulter, the beautiful and bewitching head of the Magisterium’s General Oblation Board, who visits the college on business. A scholar and an explorer, Mrs. Coulter embodies everything Lyra hopes she’ll someday be. “I don’t think there are many people in the world who could convincingly play this character,” says Weitz. “I believe that Nicole Kidman was the first person that everyone on the creative side wanted for Mrs. Coulter.”

Executive producer Maisel had worked with Kidman on the film *Birth* and remembers that Pullman had sent a gift of signed copies of the novels to the actress and her family. “Nicole immediately understood the nature of Mrs. Coulter,” Maisel notes. “She understood the power of the character; she understood the charisma of the character, and ultimately she understood the vulnerability of the character.”

Adds executive producer Miano, “Nicole was the only actress that we ever talked about for the role. I believe Philip had her in mind years ago, and Chris’s script went to Nicole first. We never entered into a discussion of anyone else because she was the only choice. Luckily for us, she shared our enthusiasm for this project.”

The Academy Award-winning actress embraced the intricacies of Marisa Coulter, who has kept her true relationship with Lyra hidden from the child. “I’ve obviously played characters before that have done despicable things,” Kidman relates. “Rarely do you judge the character you’re playing. You have to work from within and try to find the motivations as to why she feels that what she’s doing is right, and you hope that her humanity bleeds through.”

“The chemistry between Mrs. Coulter and Lyra is a very specific one,” says Chris Weitz. “Mrs. Coulter’s allure and glamour draw her in, but there are other dimensions which Lyra will not discover until later. Nicole brings such experience, compassion, intelligence and insight to this role, and her style just meshed perfectly with Dakota’s very natural, instinctual performance. Their relationship, while incredibly tricky, worked out seamlessly on camera.”

Mrs. Coulter serves at the pleasure of the Magisterium, an all-encompassing government body that seeks to tighten its control on the people of Lyra's world. "Every society has felt the tension between the life-giving force of awe and wonder, and the political power that comes as soon as you have human structures," notes Philip Pullman. "As soon as you have human organizations you have people who have got the power and who wield it over other people, and you have people who are oppressed by that power, or who want to join the power themselves. You've got all these human structures, which work against the natural human impulse, which is one of wonder and delight at being alive and being part of this beautiful universe."

Seeking to create a rift in the structures of his time and place is Lord Asriel, Lyra's powerful and enigmatic uncle, played by Daniel Craig, whose performance in *Casino Royale* revitalized the James Bond franchise. Craig, a longtime fan of the books, leapt at the chance to portray Lord Asriel. "He's an explorer and scientist," explains Craig. "He has a mission. It's the most important thing, he thinks, in his life, and probably the most important thing in the history of the world that he lives in. He has discovered this connection between the worlds, and believes that there are millions and millions of worlds running in tandem, and that you can access these worlds if you know the way. And he is hell-bent on going out and finding out what it is, which is against the wishes of the Magisterium."

Like Mrs. Coulter, Lord Asriel's relationship with Lyra forms the kernel of who she is and who she becomes. "Lyra wants parents like every child does, and the way that Lord Asriel behaves towards her is what forms Lyra and makes her into this wonderful human being that she's becoming," Craig explains. "He is very tough with her, but he feels it's the only way to be because she's got to be as tough as he is. She has got no choice but to go out there and do it on her own. By the same token, her friendships and her connections become the most important thing in her life. And that's why people stick with them – because their bravery and their integrity are what always comes through in the end."

"Daniel has strength and fearlessness and ruthlessness – but it's a ruthlessness that has a level of emotion to it," comments executive producer Maisel. "He doesn't treat Lyra particularly well, and yet you understand that there's something else bigger that's

going on and you appreciate that with him. In fact, because of how resonant the performances of Daniel and Nicole are, you understand why they're doing what they're doing, and you don't hold it against them. That's an incredible achievement."

From Lord Asriel's lips, Lyra first hears of the evocative phenomenon that he is traveling north to investigate – Dust. "She doesn't know what it is because no one has ever told her," explains Richards. "It's like the one thing they haven't tried to teach her. So, of course, she wants to find out everything she can about it. When she mentions it to Mrs. Coulter, she gets a bit scary. And Lyra doesn't understand because her uncle was speaking quite openly about it but nobody else seems to want to talk about it."

As all of the forces begin to coalesce around the north, where Lyra's adventure unfolds, Dust goes from a whispered, forbidden concept to a very real question at the core of her daring adventure. "I pictured it as having some connection with this mysterious substance called dark matter," Pullman explains. "Scientists don't quite know what it is, but because it's such an evocative phrase – dark matter – and because it fit very well with that line from *Paradise Lost*, I linked the two up."

Secreted off to London by Mrs. Coulter, Lyra soon finds herself on the run carrying a very sought-after artifact that was given to her by the Master of Jordan College (Jack Shepherd) before her departure – the alethiometer, a compass-like device said to tell the truth to the person who bears it. "It's a helping hand in way," explains Richards. "It shows you what to do and where to go when you're lost. But I also think it's got a mind of its own because although it answers your questions, it doesn't always tell you everything you want to know. I think it knows where to stop because it doesn't tell you more than you need to know."

"She has been gifted with this alethiometer, this golden compass, which tells her the truth, once she figures out how to read it," adds executive producer Ordesky. "So, by using it, she is looking into her own wisdom, which is of course still forming, because she's a child. Throughout the story she must read it from a place of innocence because there are truths she's not prepared to know."

Though she considers her a mentor, Lyra is horrified to learn of Mrs. Coulter's role on the General Oblation Board, which has been secretly kidnapping children from Lyra's world for use in their secret experiments at a lab in Bolvangar. "The villains of the

piece believe these experiments are for the children's own good," comments Weitz. "That is about as foul a crime as one can imagine. And for Lyra, knowing that this woman she has admired is involved in the abduction of her best friend is unspeakable."

The revelation cuts her to the core.

Lyra flees and is scooped up by a band of Gyptians before the Gobblers – the General Oblation Board's henchmen – can find her. "The tribe of water gypsies have been keeping an eye on Lyra, and when she's threatened, they come to rescue her and take her north to the arctic circle," explains Jim Carter, who plays John Faa, the Gyptian king.

Though unaware of the role she is to play in the fate of her world, Lyra enlists the alliance of three people who will help her reach her task and save the children from the terrible fate the Magisterium has in store for them. One is Serafina Pekkala (Eva Green), Clan-queen of the witches of Lake Enara, who helps Lyra see the important role she must play in the coming war. "She's not a traditional witch," explains Green, who recently starred in *Casino Royale* and *Kingdom of Heaven*. "She's very maternal, very nurturing towards Lyra. It is quite a mysterious role, which I found very attractive."

She also enlists the help of an aeronaut from Texas, Lee Scoresby, played by Sam Elliott. "Sam has this extraordinary ability to sum up everything we mean by the idea of cowboy," notes Philip Pullman. "The grizzled veteran. The white moustache. The eyes that look a thousand yards. All these things. And his has this capacity to be both tough and wise, both threatening, dangerous and warm."

Her final alliance is with an estranged armored ice bear named Iorek Byrnison. "When she first sees him, she is kind of scared because he's really big, strong and wounded," describes Richards. "But she knows he's her only chance of having an armored bear as a friend." Eventually, Lyra finds in Iorek a kindred soul on whom she can unflinchingly rely. "Iorek is the only person that Lyra lets be better than she is," says Richards. "He's the only person that she truly accepts to be bigger and stronger and braver than she is. She looks up to other people and understands that they're important, but he's the one exception to her idea that she's the best."

Rounding out the cast are Ian McShane voicing the bear king Ragnar Sturlusson; Tom Courtenay as the wise Gyptian Farder Coram; Simon McBurney as the sinister Fra

Pavel; Derek Jacobi as the Magisterial Emmissary; and Clare Higgins as Gyptian matriarch Ma Costa.

In the Arctic Circle, Lyra is reunited with Roger, but in ways she does not expect. She also begins to glimpse not only the truths about her own life, but about her world and the people who surround her. As her fate reveals itself, Lyra will need to muster all her strength, all her will and the help of those she trusts to find a way to change fate itself.

“Lyra travels from the relative safety of her Oxford to the edge of the world, where the aurora place and the space between all the parallel universes is thin,” describes Chris Weitz. “She goes from innocence to experience and wisdom, and is put through enormous physical and emotional trials as she is swept up in this vast adventure. It’s a very archetypal, mythic story about a girl who sets out to do something very personal, which is to save her best friend, Roger, and by the time she reaches her destination, saving Roger has given way to saving not only her world, but every world.”

“It’s a very exciting story about being a human being, and how difficult that is,” adds Daniel Craig. “It’s about growing up and how what happens in your childhood is the most important part of your life.”

### **DARK MATERIALS: Design and Locations of *The Golden Compass***

To mount a production that harnessed the next evolution in filmmaking, director Weitz and the filmmakers assembled a team of artists, technicians and craftspeople to hand-craft the parallel world in which *The Golden Compass* unfolds.

Oscar-winning production designer Dennis Gassner worked with Weitz to conceptualize everything from Oxford colleges to the vast snowy wastes of the far north, home of the armored bears; from the sophistication of Mrs. Coulter’s London to the bustle of the Northern port of Trollesund, and on to the ice palace of the King of the Bears, Ragnar Sturlusson, and Bolvangar, where Lyra finds the kidnapped children. The project would require hundreds of people to create a world with depth and scope from scratch, and bring the characters and their daemons to perfectly syncopated life utilizing a combination of practical and digital effects, as well as a working alethiometer – the

golden compass of the title – and zeppelins, carriages, sky ferries, armored bears, spy flies, boats, barges and inconceivable machinery and artistry of a parallel age.

“The whole project is about translation – translation from something you would understand into something that is in a different vernacular,” notes Gassner. “So, it’s a new signature, looking into another world that seems familiar but is still unique. There’s a term I use – called cludging – it’s taking one element and combining it with another element to make something new. It’s a hybrid or amalgamation, and that’s what this movie is about from a design perspective. It’s about amalgamating ideas and concepts and theoretical and physical environments.”

Gassner and his team - headed by art directors Richard Johnson, Andrew Nicholson and Chris Lowe, set decorator Anna Pinnock, property master Barry Gibbs, and construction manager Andrew Evans – set about bringing the book’s diverse world to life.

To conceptualize Jordan College, Gassner utilized exteriors from existing architecture in Oxford, Greenwich and Chatham, along with interiors built from the ground up at Shepperton Studios. “I first came to Oxford with Philip Pullman as my guide and he knows the college and the city better than anyone,” recalls Gassner. “People who have worked on and read the books and worked on the project, they’ve come to the project because they loved the books. The director and I have discussed the emotional fabric of this film at great length, now it’s just a matter of getting that fabric made.”

Some sets were fashioned practically at the stately Hedsor House, in Buckinghamshire. “We’ve basically used the structure of the house but changed everything to adapt it for the world that we’re creating,” says Gassner. Another essential practical location was London’s Park Lane Hotel, the backdrop for the restaurant scene and the beauty parlor.

Shepperton Studios was transformed into a full-scale *Golden Compass* production facility, with huge soundstages filled with art departments, a foundry for the film’s considerable brassworks, costume factories and offices, and yet others draped with green screens, flying rigs and painstakingly detailed sets showcasing interiors.

In the foundry, numerous versions of the film's enigmatic machine called the alethiometer were forged. The alethiometer is "a time piece, a magnetic piece," describes Gassner. "It's an emotional piece really. The history of time has been unique in terms of evolution, so we wanted to create a magical piece that belonged in the time family."

Pullman took Gassner to the Museum of Mechanical Pieces to show him some artifacts that formed the inspiration of the piece. "In a sense, the alethiometer is the fusion of all of that," the production designer explains. "It's the sum of all the parts. A lot of people on my team worked out the symbology and how it works and how Lyra uses it. It's become just one small piece in the puzzle. And our journey on this project is to find the right piece in every case."

The objects were first modeled on a computer, then processed through a cutting-edge rapid prototype machine, which renders out of resin a 3-D model from the computer. The model was then refined, engraved, acid-etched and painted in varying degrees of detail. "Some of them needed to be read, others needed to be dropped or just carried around in Lyra's pouch," says prop master Barry Gibbs. "The alchemical marks on the object needed to be precise, so we went to engravers to create those."

The bears' armor was likewise brought to life in the foundry after the bears themselves – and their armor – were carved into life-sized maquette sculptures that could then be scanned into the computer.

Similar maquettes were made for each daemon, from Lyra's Pan to Mrs. Coulter's golden monkey. Only dog daemons were performed by trained animals.

Designing the artifacts of a parallel world was, for Gassner and his team, "new, interesting, exciting and stimulating for all of us to look at, especially working with the young actor playing Lyra, who gets to take a journey through this world."

Ruth Myers, a two-time Oscar nominee whose credits include *L.A. Confidential* and *Emma*, worked closely with director Weitz and Gassner to create costumes that would be at once unfamiliar yet totally consistent with Lyra's world. "I talked to Chris Weitz about playing with fabrics so things weren't quite recognizable, not just home spun and hessian," she describes. "We were painting and printing and dyeing so the fabrics we used were unique. We'd talked about the Gyptians and wanting to give them some ethnicity, a sense that they came from all sorts of different places. With Mrs. Coulter, we

talked about the most glamorous time she could exist, and looked at movie stars of the '30s and '40s. The costumes evolved.”

As chaotic as the robes of Serafina Pekkala, the witch queen, the garment of the Magisterial Emmissary would conversely need to represent the picture of authority in Lyra’s world. Even Lyra’s transformation, from ruffian through her makeover by Mrs. Coulter and eventual bearing to the north, would need to precisely reflect her growing sense of self-awareness.

She found a responsive and knowledgeable collaborator in director Weitz. “Chris has a very sophisticated and intelligent visual reference,” Myers notes. “He is possibly the first director I’ve worked with who you can throw a piece of really esoteric references and his own background of culture is so strong that he picks that up. I’ve loved working with him.”

“Ruth’s work is beautiful,” says Weitz. “I felt that the costumes should feel like the best of every era brought forward and given a hybrid twist. Ruth’s work was detailed to an incredible degree; everything feels lived-in and absolutely right.”

Since everything would need to be created, Myers set up shop on-site in Shepperton. “I thought the only way we could do it was being part of the art department and opening up a huge workshop,” she recalls.

Make-up and hair design were entrusted to Peter King, an Oscar winner for his work on New Line Cinema’s *Lord of the Rings*, who was well equipped to find the right look for a raft of different characters in parallel universes.

## **NORTHERN LIGHTS:**

### **The Photography and Visual Effects of *The Golden Compass***

From the inception, the visual palette for *The Golden Compass* involved varying moods that changed in subtle ways throughout Lyra’s journey.

An Emmy award winner and BAFTA nominee for *Shackleton*, director of photography Henry Braham worked with Weitz to bring into focus the vast canvasses he sought while never losing touch with the psychology of the individuals in the scene.

“The color at the beginning is rich, golden, warm tones,” Braham describes. “We’re in a parallel world where the night and even the moon is golden, as opposed to a silvery blue moon. That is the Oxford world.”

In London, Lyra is dazzled by the dramatic change in scenery from Oxford. “She goes on this fantastic physical journey to Mrs. Coulter’s London, which is sparkly and seductive,” he explains. “With the practical lights, we burned them out a bit so they’re kind of white and crisp. But when she escapes from Mrs. Coulter, the night-time London in our parallel world has a much greener light.”

As she moves north, the landscapes become “cold, silvery, blue hues, which will be a romantic version of the north,” Braham describes. “I’ve spent some time on the ice in the Arctic and it’s actually very beautiful. There is a lot of color in the ice.”

Planning for the substantial visual effects was worked intricately into the production plan, so that tests could begin even prior to physical production. “Fundamentally, the process of how we were going to do something and, more importantly, why we were going to do something, was decided a lot earlier,” recalls Braham. “Some scenes required a huge load of visual effects painting, and previsualizations helped us all stay on the same page.”

Weitz entrusted visual effects supervisor Michael Fink and his VFX producer Susan MacLeod with helping to realize the film’s complex effects needs. Three visual effects facilities were also employed extensively on the project – Cinesite and Framestore CFC in Britain, and Rhythm & Hues in the United States. Cinesite’s VFX supervisor Sue Rowe, Framestore CFC’s supervisor Ben Morris, and Rhythm & Hues supervisor Bill Westenhofer, and their teams set a pace of 40 effects shots per week from the time they commenced their work until the final mix.

Gassner, Braham and Weitz worked closely with the visual effects department to create a seamless relationship between practical and live action photography and digital effects. “They gave me the freedom to move things around, and continuously make changes as the storytelling demanded,” recalls Weitz. “Nothing was impossible for Mike and his team. Their flexibility and ingenuity throughout this process have been remarkable.”

After the initial storyboarding phase of the film, an animatic was created to help frame each scene for the effects elements that would need to be created and composited. “This is the biggest and most complex film I’ve ever done,” notes Fink. “It took me 30 years to figure out how to do it, and I feel like my whole career has led up to this film.”

“The greatest challenge was the film’s various crowd scenes, with multiple humans and multiple daemons,” says Weitz. “These scenes would not have been possible with live animals because daemons don’t act precisely as animal pets – they are an active part of the human they accompany.”

The most immediate and ubiquitous effects elements in the film are two main characters who are not human – Lyra’s daemon, Pan, who takes many forms as children’s daemons do, and Iorek Byrnison, an armored polar bear.

Rhythm and Hues handled the animation of the daemons and setting the stage for their interaction with human actors. “You need to know how big it is, how much it weighs, how it moves, and you need to communicate this to the actors and find a decent surrogate, whether it’s a green sock or a puppeteer pantomiming in the air,” says Rhythm and Hues’ Bill Westenhoffer. “Mrs. Coulter’s monkey is a cool character, as opposed to Pan, who jumps around a lot. We wanted that reflected in the character so when our puppeteer does his performance it conveys to the actors how their daemon will behave.”

Likewise the character Iorek Byrnison’s performance was critical. “This is not a polar bear – this is a *Panserbjørne*, which wears armor and speaks,” notes Fink. “So, as we animated each piece of the bear, whether it’s running across a fjord with Lyra on his back, or embroiled in a fight, or having an intimate conversation, its muscles, its expressions, even the movement of its fur all had to be precisely unique to that character in that moment.”

Throughout production, Fink and his team focused primarily on the most important mandate for these digital characters – performance. “They have to perform as well as the human actors in the movie,” explains Fink. “Forget the technical stuff – the fur and armor, the scratches, the dirt under the fingernails – the most important facet of these characters was capturing emotion in their performances.”

All elements were continuously cut together throughout production and post-production by veteran editor Anne V. Coates, who had previously won an Oscar for

David Lean's film *Lawrence of Arabia* back in 1960, and continues to work today in her 80s. "I think *Lawrence of Arabia* is the greatest film ever made and I've always wanted to work with Anne Coates," says Weitz. "Coincidentally, she had an interest in the books. For me it's fantastic – I get to work with one of the greatest editors of all time. Anne brings a wealth of experience in storytelling. She's very quick; very aware of visual effects."

The end results bowled over even a diehard fan of the books. "It's really being done exactly how I imagined it," says cast-member Daniel Craig. "It's a testament to Chris's passion, the work of his crew, and Philip's incredible writing that is so universal, that this world could be brought to life in such a staggering, cohesive way."

###

**DAEMONS AND DUST:**  
**The Language of *The Golden Compass***

**Alethiometer**

A truth-telling or future-telling device that is able to answer questions formed in the mind of the user.

**Anbaric Energy**

A form of electrical current used in Lyra's world.

**Bolvangar**

The northern Experimental Station where Gobblers have secreted the children they've kidnapped.

**Daemon (pronounced DEE-mon)**

The soul of each individual human being embodied in an animal familiar. In childhood, a daemon alters its form to reflect the ever-changing nature of children. In adulthood, it assumes a permanent form that best reflects the inner nature of its human.

**Dust**

Mystical particles in highest concentration in the Arctic Circle.

**Gobblers**

The henchmen of the General Oblation Board who are responsible for disappearing children across the country.

**Gyptians**

Similar to gypsies, the Gyptians are a nomadic group of water farers who live on canal boats.

**Intercision**

The process of severing a human being from his or her daemon.

**Jordan College**

A prosperous college in Lyra's Oxford that is a center of experimental theology.

**The Magisterium**

The councils that form the heart of government in Lyra's world. Now tightening its control over the populace, the Magisterium seeks to eliminate free will and calls Lord Asriel's research into Dust heresy.

**Northern Lights (Aurora Borealis)**

Storms of charged particles and intense solar rays that cause a luminous radiation in the arctic circle. Lord Asriel believes the Northern Lights cloak a magnificent city in the

sky.

**North**

A place of great beauty, diversity, and danger, it is home to armored bears, Tartars, witches, and innumerable creatures. Lord Asriel has photographed Dust and a sort of other world in the Aurora from an outpost in the North.

**Panserbjørne**

Armored bears who live in the northern region of Svalbard. While not possessed of dæmons, the Panserbjørne make special armor that they liken to their own souls.

**Photogram**

A type of photographic image; a slide.

**Samoyeds**

Northern hunters who kidnap Lyra and bring her to Bolvangar.

**Spy Flies**

Small mechanized insects rumored to be made from both machinery and trapped souls.

**Svalbard**

A cold, rugged Northern region inhabited by armored bears.

**Tartars**

A warlike people who live to the north.

**Witches**

Female beings that travel through the air and outlive humans by hundreds of years.

###

**ABOUT THE CAST**

**NICOLE KIDMAN** (Marisa Coulter) first came to the attention of American audiences with her critically acclaimed performance in the riveting 1989 psychological thriller "Dead Calm." She has since become an internationally recognized award-winning actress known for her range and versatility. In 2003, Kidman won an Academy Award, a Golden Globe Award, a BAFTA Award and a Berlin Silver Bear for her portrayal of Virginia Woolf in Stephen Daldry's *The Hours*. In the year prior, she was honored with her first Oscar nomination and second Golden Globe Award for her work on Baz Luhrmann's *Moulin Rouge!* She was awarded her first Golden Globe for her

portrayal of the wickedly ambitious Suzanne Stone in Gus Van Sant's *To Die For*, and has been Golden Globe-nominated four other times for her performances in *Birth*, *Cold Mountain*, *The Others* and *Billy Bathgate*.

In 2005, Kidman starred in Sydney Pollack's thriller *The Interpreter*, and with Will Ferrell in Nora Ephron's *Bewitched*. She narrated the 2006 Sundance Grand Jury Award and Audience Award-winning documentary *God Grew Tired of Us*, and was recently seen in *Fur: An Imaginary Portrait of Diane Arbus*, directed by Steven Shainberg, which premiered at the Telluride Film Festival and the RomeFilmFest. She also recently portrayed the voice of Norma Jean, the mother of the penguin Mumble, in George Miller's Academy Award-winning animated film, *Happy Feet*.

Upcoming films for Kidman include Oliver Hirschbiegel's thriller *The Invasion*, with Daniel Craig, and Noah Baumbach's as-yet-untitled feature, also starring Jennifer Jason Leigh and Jack Black.

Kidman is also the narrator in the forthcoming film biography of Simon Wiesenthal, *I Have Never Forgotten You*. Early next year, she will reunite with *Moulin Rouge!* director Baz Luhrmann and fellow Australian actor Hugh Jackman to film an epic love story set in Australia's outback.

Kidman's additional film credits include Robert Benton's *The Human Stain*; Lars von Trier's *Dogville*; Stanley Kubrick's *Eyes Wide Shut*; *The Peacemaker*, with George Clooney; Jane Campion's *The Portrait of a Lady*; *Batman Forever*; *Malice*; and Ron Howard's *Far and Away*.

In January of this year, Kidman was awarded Australia's highest honor, the Companion in the Order of Australia. She was also named Goodwill Ambassador of the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), a role that will focus on raising awareness of the infringement on women's human rights around the world. For the past nine years, Kidman has served as the UNICEF Ambassador for Australia. Three years ago, she became the first Chair of the Women's Health Fund at UCLA, at the David Geffen School of Medicine.

**DAKOTA BLUE RICHARDS** (Lyra Belacqua) was born in London in 1994. When her mother named her Dakota Blue, she couldn't have imagined the impact that

name would have just over a decade later when she was cast in the leading role of Lyra in *The Golden Compass*.

Richards was a fan of Philip Pullman's books and her mother read *His Dark Materials* to her when she was nine. She also saw the National Theatre production in London and told her mother that she wanted to be Lyra, the fiercely loyal and high-spirited heroine of *The Golden Compass*.

She lives with her mother in Brighton, in the UK. *The Golden Compass* marks her feature film acting debut.

**SAM ELLIOTT** (Lee Scoresby) most recently appeared in co-starring roles in *Ghost Rider*, *Thank You for Smoking* and *Lies and Alibis*. He also provided the voice of the patriarch in the recent animated comedy *Barnyard* and starred opposite Joan Allen in *Off the Map*, which premiered at the 2003 Sundance Festival. He also starred in *Hulk*, *We Were Soldiers*, *The Contender*, *The Hi-Lo Country*, *The Big Lebowski*, *Tombstone*, and *Gettysburg*.

On television, he was nominated for an Emmy and a Golden Globe for his role *Buffalo Girls*. Other television credits include *Fail Safe* and *You Know My Name*, a movie for TNT that won the first Golden Boot "Best of the West" Award.

Elliott gained cult status some years ago with his performance in the title role *Lifeguard*. Since then he has gone on to star in such films as *Mask*, *Fatal Beauty*, *Prancer*, and *Rush*, and miniseries such as *Murder in Texas*, *Gone Texas*, *The Sam Houston Story*, *The Yellow Rose*, and *Fugitive Nights*.

Described by Oscar®-winning director Bernardo Bertolucci as "so beautiful it's indecent," **EVA GREEN** (Serafina Pekkala) made her film debut in Bertolucci's critically acclaimed *The Dreamers*, a triangular love story set against the Paris riots of 1968, starring opposite Michael Pitt and Louis Garrel.

Born in Paris, Green studied at the St. Paul Drama School. This was followed by a course at the London Weber Douglas Academy of Dramatic Art.

She began her acting career on stage, appearing in 2001 in two plays: "Turceret" directed by Gerard Descartes, and "Jalousie En Trois Fax" directed by Didier Long. The

latter was highly acclaimed and earned her a nomination for Les Molières, France's most prestigious theatre award, in the category of Best Female Newcomer.

In 2003, she starred alongside Kristin Scott Thomas and Romain Duris in Jean-Paul Salomé's French-language film *Arsène Lupin* and, in 2005, she made her Hollywood film debut as the female lead in Ridley Scott's Crusades epic *Kingdom of Heaven* with Orlando Bloom and Liam Neeson.

She most recently starred opposite her co-star from *The Golden Compass*, Daniel Craig, in *Casino Royale*, in which she played Treasury officer Vesper Lynd.

**DANIEL CRAIG** (Lord Asriel) recently made his first appearance as 007 agent James Bond of British Secret Service MI6 in the blockbuster *Casino Royale*, the 21st film in the series, produced by Michael G. Wilson and Barbara Broccoli and directed by Martin Campbell.

Craig was born in Chester, England, and brought up in Liverpool, leaving there to join the National Youth Theatre in London at the age of 17. He continued his training at the prestigious London Guildhall School of Music and Drama, graduating in 1991. He made his film debut in 1992 in the South African boxing drama *The Power of One*, but came to the attention of critics and casting directors in the much lauded 1996 television drama serial *Our Friends in the North*, playing the role of Geordie Peacock. In 1998, Craig played the role of George Dyer, painter Francis Bacon's working-class boyfriend, in John Maybury's powerful biopic *Love is the Devil*. In 2000, he was recognized as one of European Films' "Shooting Stars." This was followed by roles in the Hollywood blockbuster *Lara Croft: Tomb Raider*, in which he played Lara Croft's boyfriend; the ensemble black comedy *Hotel Splendide*; and *The Trench*, written and directed by acclaimed author William Boyd.

In 2002, Craig starred in Sam Mendes's film, *Road to Perdition*, receiving critical acclaim for his portrayal of Connor Rooney, the troubled son of crime boss John Rooney, played by Paul Newman. The following year he starred in *The Mother*, a powerful drama directed by Roger Michell in which he played a young man who has an affair with a 60-year-old woman. This was followed by the role of Ted Hughes, starring opposite Gwyneth Paltrow, in *Sylvia*, the story of poets Hughes and Sylvia Plath.

In 2004, Craig took leading roles in *Enduring Love*, directed by Roger Michell and adapted from Ian McEwan's novel, and *Layer Cake*, Matthew Vaughn's successful directorial debut about the contemporary criminal drug scene.

A role in John Maybury's thriller, *The Jacket*, starring alongside Adrien Brody and Keira Knightley, was followed by the lead in the television adaptation of Robert Harris' bestselling novel *Archangel* and a leading role in Steven Spielberg's Oscar®-nominated *Munich*. Craig played a South African mercenary, part of a team hand-picked by the Mossad to eliminate the terrorists whose attack at the 1972 Olympic Village resulted in the death of 11 Israeli athletes.

Recent film work includes *Infamous*, in which he played Perry Smith, opposite Toby Jones as Truman Capote (writer of the best-selling novel *In Cold Blood* detailing the murders committed by Smith and Dick Hickock) and *The Visiting*, a horror thriller directed by Oliver Hirschbiegel, in which Craig stars opposite Nicole Kidman.

In addition to his film work, Craig is acknowledged as a highly accomplished stage actor. His credits include leading roles in "Hurlyburly" with the Peter Hall Company at the Old Vic and "Angels in America" at the National Theatre. In 2002 he was nominated for a London Evening Standard Award for Best Actor for his performance in "A Number," in which he played three roles and appeared opposite Michael Gambon.

Born in Hull, Yorkshire in 1937, **TOM COURTENAY** (Farder Coram) trained at RADA and made his stage debut in 1960 in Chekov's "The Seagull" at the Old Vic. On the West End stage he starred as "Billy Liar," later recreating the role in John Schlesinger's film version in 1963.

Courtenay's film debut was Tony Richardson's acclaimed *The Loneliness of the Long Distance Runner*, and he gave memorable performances in *King and Country* with Dirk Bogarde, and Bryan Forbes's prison-of-war drama, *King Rat*. He won an Oscar nomination as best supporting actor for his revolutionary Pasha in David Lean's *Dr. Zhivago*, as well as making a life-long friend of Rod Steiger.

On the stage he won recognition for his work both in drama (his admired "Hamlet" at the Edinburgh Festival of 1968) and comedy, the lead in Alan Ayckbourn's celebrated trilogy, "The Norman Conquests." He created "The Dresser," with Albert

Finney as the aging legendary actor, and both men recreated their roles in Peter Yates's screen version of the Ronald Harwood play. Both Finney and Courtenay were nominated for Academy Awards for their performances.

On television with Joanna Lumley, Courtenay and Finney starred in the award-winning "A Rather English Marriage" in the late 90s. Courtenay played an undertaker in "Last Orders," an adaptation of Graham Swift's Booker winning novel.

He became Sir Tom Courtenay in the 2001 New Year Honours, the knighthood in recognition of his contribution to acting.

Called one of the finest actors of his generation, **DEREK JACOBI** (Magisterial Emmissary) has earned a singular place in the affections of theatre goers both in Britain and America, and attracted a far wider audience when he played the Roman emperor Claudius in the BBC's award winning production of Rupert Graves' "I, Claudius" in the mid '70s.

A Cambridge graduate (fellow students included Ian McKellen and Trevor Nunn), he joined the Birmingham Repertory Theatre and was invited by Laurence Olivier to be a founder member of the National Theatre.

He was a celebrated "Hamlet," touring extensively with the play in the wake of his "I Claudius" success, and is also to be frequently found in London's West End from his debut in "Breaking the Code" and "Becket" up to recent successes, Schiller's "Don Carlos" and John Mortimer's "A Voyage Round my Father".

Film credits include *The Day of the Jackal*, *Henry V*, *Dead Again*, *Up at the Villa*, *Gladiator*, *Gosford Park* and *Nanny McPhee*.

On television he played Augusto Pinochet in *Pinochet in Suburbia*, and achieved a career dream playing a villain in *Doctor Who* just prior to making his appearance in *The Golden Compass*.

Born in 1993, **BEN WALKER** (Roger) has appeared in London's West End in the hit show "Chitty Chitty Bang Bang," directed by Adrian Noble, and appeared with Ray Winstone in the BBC production of *Sweeney Todd*, shown on television at Christmas 2006.

**ADAM GODLEY** (Pantalaimon) recently starred in the films *Nanny McPhee*, *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, *Love, Actually*, and *Armadillo*.

On the stage, he recently appeared in Mike Leigh's "Two Thousand Years" at the Cottesloe in the UK. His previous work for the National Theater includes Martin McDonagh's "The Pillowman" and Terry Johnson's "Cleo, Camping, Emmanuelle and Dick." His extensive theatre work also includes "The White Devil" and "A Midsummer Night's Dream" for the RSC, "Cabaret at the Donmar," and "Private Lives," "An Inspector Calls," and "The Revengers' Comedies" in the West End.

Born in Cambridge, and trained at the Jacques le Coq school in Paris, **SIMON McBURNEY** (Fra Pavel) is founder and artistic director of *Theatre de Complicite*. Founded in 1983, Complicite is known as being daring and inventive.

McBurney won the Laurence Olivier Theatre Award for best choreography of the 1997 season for "The Caucasian Chalk Circle," at the National Theatre's Olivier stage. He was nominated for a Tony on Broadway as best director for the 1998 revival of Eugene Ionesco's "The Chairs." His play, "Mnemonic" at the Riverside Theatre in London, won the Critics' Circle award for best new play in 1999.

McBurney's film credits include *Kafka*, *Tom & Viv*, *Cousin Bette*, *Onegin*, *Bright Young Things*, *The Manchurian Candidate* and *The Last King of Scotland*.

**NONSO ANOZIE** (Iorek Byrnison) played "King Lear" for the Royal Shakespeare Company's Academy directly following his graduation from drama school. At the age of 25, he starred in the title role of "Othello," which he performed with the British company Cheek by Jowl on a world tour that took him to Sydney, Shanghai, Istanbul, Moscow, and Prague. The role gleaned him an Ian Charleson award and the 2004 Magnolia Stage Performance Award in China. He also became the youngest actor in history to star in the title role of "King Lear."

On television, Anozie starred in the most recent production of *Prime Suspect: The Final Act*. Upcoming films include Joe Wright's *Atonement*, and Doug Lefler's *The Last Legion*.

In a film and television career stretching over 26 years, **JIM CARTER**'s (John Faa) credits include over 100 film and television projects, beginning with *Flash Gordon* in 1980 and encompassing such titles as *A Private Function*, *The Singing Detective*, *Haunted Honeymoon*, *A Very British Coup*, *A Month in the Country*, *The Rainbow*, *Lipstick on your Collar*, *The Madness of King George*, *Richard III*, *Brassed Off*, *Shakespeare in Love*, *102 Dalmatians*, *The Way We Live Now* and *Ella Enchanted*.

A diary entry by playwright Alan Bennett, who wrote *A Private Function*, recalled that Carter amused himself on set between takes by doing conjuring tricks. In the finished film he performed a magic trick as Inspector Noble. In *Shakespeare in Love* he is seen juggling.

Jim Carter is married to actress Imelda Staunton and they have a daughter, Bessie.

**CLARE HIGGINS** (Ma Costa) is one of the most remarkable stage actresses of her generation, a popular triple Olivier award winner (for "Sweet Bird of Youth" at the National Theatre in 1995; "Vincent in Brixton" at the National Theatre and Wyndham's Theatre in 2002; "Hecuba" at the Donmar Warehouse in 2006).

Born in Norwich, she trained at the London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art, and enjoyed early success in Manchester at the Royal Exchange theatre in leading roles in many plays including "Measure for Measure" and Stella in "A Streetcar Named Desire." Making the move to London, she found her theatrical home at the National Theatre where she has been much in demand, often working with director Richard Eyre.

In 2005 she starred with Woody Harrelson in "Night of the Iguana."

Her infrequent film appearances include the sinister Julia in *Hellraiser*, repeated in its sequel, *Hellraiser II*, *B Monkey*, Richard Eyre's *Stage Beauty* and *Bigger than the Sky*.

Born in Leeds, Yorkshire, **JACK SHEPHERD** (Master of Jordan College) studied Fine Art at Kings College, Newcastle, and studied acting at the Central School and helped found the Drama Centre in London.

He worked at the prestigious Royal Court Theatre for four years in the '60s, and was involved in the first production of Edward Bond's "Saved," "Narrow Road to the Deep North" and "Early Morning". In 1967 he was named most promising actor of the year for his performance in David Storey's restoration of Arnold Middleton.

He ran a drama studio with Richard Wilson during the '70s, providing workshops for professional actors to develop their skills. He wrote a number of plays produced by the BBC during this time. A member of the National Theatre from the late '70s until the mid '80s he appeared in many admired productions and won best actor for "Glengarry Glen Ross."

He also worked extensively in television, and is remembered for *Wycliffe* mysteries in which he played detective superintendent Charles Wycliffe. In the theatre he has also directed – notably "Two Gentlemen of Verona" for the opening season of the restored Globe Theatre.

Among his films are *The Virgin Soldiers*, *The Last Valley* and *Charlotte Gray*.

**MAGDA SZUBANSKI** (Mrs. Lonsdale) is best known for her role as Mrs. Hoggett in the Academy Award-nominated and Golden Globe Award-winning family adventure *Babe* and its sequel, *Babe: Pig in the City*. Recently she provided the voice for Miss Viola in Szubanski's third project with director George Miller, *Happy Feet*. Her other film credits include *The Crocodile Hunter: Collision Course*, alongside the late Steve Irwin, and *Son of the Mask*, with Jamie Kennedy and Alan Cumming.

She most recently completed shooting the role of Mrs. Plonk in the latest Rolf de Heer comedy, *Dr. Plonk*. On stage, Szubanski has starred in the Melbourne Theatre Company production of "The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee," for which she was nominated for a Hellman Award; the national tour of "Grease: The Arena Spectacular," with John Farnham; and "The Rise and Fall of Little Voice," for the STC. In 2002, she won the Australian Film Institute (AFI) Award for Best Supporting Actress in the hit TV comedy *Kath & Kim*, and was nominated twice more for the same role in the following years. She has also won several Logies, Australia's People's Choice Awards and Writers Guild Awards. Szubanski's other television credits include the

Dogwoman telefilms, *Big Girl's Blouse* and *Something Stupid*, all of which she wrote, co-produced and starred in.

**IAN McSHANE** (Ragnar Sturlusson) won the 2005 Golden Globe Award for Best Actor in a Television Drama and earned Emmy and Screen Actors Guild Award nominations for his performance as the charismatic Al Swearengen in the second season of HBO's hit series *Deadwood*. For his work during the series' 2004 debut season, McShane received the Television Critics Association Award, with a second nomination for the 2005 season, and was named one of GQ Magazine's Men of the Year.

McShane has starred in over 25 films over a long and distinguished career, including *The Battle of Britain*, *The Last of Sheila*, *Villain*, co-starring Richard Burton, *Exposed* and *Agent Cody Banks*. In Jonathan Glazer's acclaimed *Sexy Beast*, he gave a riveting performance as the sinister gangster Teddy Bass, opposite Sir Ben Kingsley and Ray Winstone.

Recently, he joined the ensemble cast of writer-director Rodrigo Garcia's drama *Nine Lives*, McG's *We Are Marshall*, and co-starred in the Woody Allen film, *Scoop*. He will next lend his vocal talents to the upcoming animated feature *Shrek The Third*, as Captain Hook; the animated fantasy *Coraline*, and the animated comedy *Kung Fu Panda*, with an all-star voice cast including Jackie Chan. Among his upcoming screen appearances are the action comedy *Hot Rod*, and the thriller *Case 39*, opposite Renée Zellweger.

McShane has also enjoyed a long career in both British and American television, including a role in David Wolper's seminal 1970s miniseries *Roots*. Last season, he was seen on both BBC and BBC America's comedy series *Trust*. A starring turn in *Whose Life Is It Anyway?*, for Granada TV, the role of Heathcliff in *Wuthering Heights* for the BBC, and Harold Pinter's Emmy-winning *The Caretaker* are among his other television highlights. He has also portrayed Judas in NBC's *Jesus of Nazareth*, directed by Franco Zeffirelli; Prince Rainer in the network's *The Grace Kelly Story*; and the title role in Masterpiece Theatre's *Disraeli*. His additional miniseries credits include *Charlie the Kid, A.D.*, *The Great Escape II*, *Marco Polo*, *Evergreen* and Dan Curtis's *War and Remembrance*.

In the late 1980s, he formed McShane Productions, which produced the much-adored *Lovejoy* for the BBC and A&E, a project that gave him a vehicle in which to star as well as produce and direct. He followed by producing and starring in the lead role of Madson in the comedy drama *Soul Survivors*, for BBC and Showtime.

In 2000, McShane returned to London's West End for his musical stage debut in Cameron Mackintosh's successful production of "The Witches of Eastwick," as Darryl Van Horne. His stage career has included roles as Hal in the original cast of "Loot," the title role of "The Admirable Crichton" at the Chichester Festival, Tom in Tennessee Williams' "The Glass Menagerie" and Charlie in "The Big Knife." He co-starred with Dame Judi Dench and Sir Ian McKellen in "Promise," which successfully played London before moving to Broadway. In Los Angeles, he starred in three productions at The Matrix Theatre, including the world premiere of Larry Atlas' "Yield of the Long Bond" and two others for which he received the Los Angeles Drama Critics' Circle Award: "Inadmissible Evidence" and "Betrayal."

## **ABOUT THE FILMMAKERS**

Writer/Director **CHRIS WEITZ** most recently produced the critically acclaimed film, *In Good Company*, along with his brother and collaborator, Paul Weitz. He previously co-directed, with his brother, the award-winning hit film *About a Boy*, adapting the screenplay from the Nick Hornby novel. The screenplay received an Academy Award nomination for Best Adapted Screenplay, as well as similar nominations from BAFTA, Writers Guild, Chicago Film Critics and Humanitas; the film was named one of AFI's Movies of the Year and was nominated for the Golden Globe award for Best Comedy, winning Best Studio Comedy Feature at the U.S. Comedy Arts Festival.

In 1999, Weitz and his brother formed Depth of Field, their Los Angeles-based production company. Their diverse slate of upcoming projects include *A Stolen Life*, a remake of the Bette Davis classic to be directed by Miguel Arteta (*The Good Girl*); the feature adaptation of Michael Moorcock's fantasy epic *The Elric Saga*; the comedies *Army Geek* and *The Last Bachelor Party*; and the WWI drama *Silent Night*.

Weitz's first directorial collaboration with Paul was on *American Pie*, the phenomenally successful first installment of the *Pie* franchise, which was followed by *American Pie 2* and the final installment, *American Wedding*, both of which he also executive produced.

Prior to their screenwriting work on *About a Boy*, the brothers collaborated on several screenplays, including *Antz* and *Madeline* (adapting the popular children's book). Weitz also made his acting debut in the Sundance Film Festival hit *Chuck&Buck*.

Born in Norwich in 1946, **PHILIP PULLMAN** (Novel) is a graduate of Exeter College Oxford where he read English. He became a teacher at various Oxford Middle Schools before moving to Westminster College in 1986, where he spent eight years teaching.

Pullman's first children's book was *Count Karlstein* in 1982, followed by *The Ruby in the Smoke* in 1986, first in a quartet of books about a Victorian adventurer, Sally Lockhart. A successful television production of this starring Billie Piper and Julie Walters was transmitted at Christmas 2006.

Pullman's celebrated trilogy, *His Dark Materials*, made its debut in 1995 with *The Golden Compass* (*Northern Lights* in the UK), followed by *The Subtle Knife* in 1997 and *The Amber Spyglass* in 2000. These books won many awards – including the Whitbread Book of the Year for *The Amber Spyglass*, the first time the award has gone to a children's book. To date the trilogy has sold 14 million copies around the world.

He is currently writing a sequel to *His Dark Materials*, entitled *The Book of Dust*.

**DEBORAH A. FORTE** (Producer) is President of Scholastic Entertainment, and Executive Vice President of Scholastic Inc. and an award-winning producer of children's media, including movies, television programming, CD-ROMs and Internet sites and a leading marketer of children's brands. In addition, Forte oversees interactive media, which includes software, software clubs and Weston Woods Studios. She is leading Scholastic's efforts in the broadband arena and is Chairperson of the corporation's



branding initiative. Forte is responsible for managing Scholastic Entertainment and serves as SE's lead creative and business executive.

Forte formed Scholastic Entertainment in 1997, creating the only full-scale, production, branding and merchandising division in the children's publishing industry that successfully develops, produces and markets children's brands for the global media marketplace. She has executive produced more than 300 television productions and additional producing credits include the feature films *Clifford's Really Big Movie* for Warner Bros. Pictures, *The Babysitters Club*, *The Mighty* and *Tuck Everlasting*.

Additionally, she has executive produced the top-rated *Clifford The Big Red Dog*<sup>TM</sup> and the highly successful spin-off series *Clifford's Puppy Days*<sup>TM</sup> on PBS KIDS<sup>®</sup>; *Dear America*; the Emmy Award-winning *I SPY* on HBO Family; Scholastic's Emmy Award-winning series *The Magic School Bus* on The Learning Channel and Discovery Kids; *Animorphs* and *Goosebumps*. Most recently, Ms. Forte executive produced the animated series *Maya & Miguel*<sup>TM</sup>, which debuted to rave reviews in October 2004 on PBS KIDS GO!. Based on an original concept by Ms. Forte, *Maya & Miguel* is at the core of a multi-media initiative designed to entertain all children, while promoting cultural diversity and encouraging English language acquisition with a special emphasis on the growing Latino population.

Ms. Forte's productions have won more than 100 awards, and the CD-ROMs and Web sites currently managed under her direction have won dozens of awards including the Parent's Choice and the Webby for best kid's site.

As Producer on *The Golden Compass*, **BILL CARRARO** (Producer) has invested the better part of the last 3 years working with New Line Cinema, its creative team and writer/director Chris Weitz in a determined effort to bring this production to the big screen.

An independent producer, Carraro is a native New Yorker, Brooklyn-born, and a graduate of Ithaca College with a degree in Film and Photography. Carraro began his career in the commercial film industry, working on dozens of commercials before moving on to feature film production.

Carraro's feature credits as producer or executive producer include: *The Sentinel*, starring Michael Douglas, Kiefer Sutherland, Eva Longoria and Kim Basinger; *My Super Ex-Girlfriend*, starring Uma Thurman and Luke Wilson; *Stay*, starring Ewan McGregor, Naomi Watts and Ryan Gosling; *The Best Man*, starring Taye Diggs, Nia Long and Morris Chestnut; *Frequency*, starring Dennis Quaid and Jim Caviezel; *Undercover Brother*, starring Eddie Griffin, Chris Kattan and Denise Richards; *American History X*, starring Edward Norton, in a powerful, Oscar-nominated performance, and Edward Furlong.

In addition to working with *The Golden Compass* director Chris Weitz, Carraro has worked on films helmed by such directors as Ivan Reitman, Woody Allen, Brian DePalma, Malcolm Lee, Gregory Hoblit, Joan Micklin Silver, Marc Forster, and James Foley.

In addition to producing, Carraro also served as president of production for Aaron Russo Films, supervising independent and co-financed projects which included a first-look deal at Orion Pictures.

Carraro produced the Emmy-winning and Golden Globe-nominated HBO Film, *The Tuskegee Airmen*, based on the true story of the first African American fighter pilots, which starred Laurence Fishburne and Cuba Gooding, Jr. This highly acclaimed project garnered Carraro the Directors Guild Award for Outstanding Achievement. He was also the recipient of the NAACP Image Award for producing *The Best Man*. In addition, he received a Saturn Award for producing *Frequency*.

Carraro is a member of both the Producers Guild and the Directors Guild of America and has worked extensively as a 2<sup>nd</sup> Unit Director.

Having lived in Los Angeles for seven years, Carraro and his family currently reside in New York.

Since founding New Line Cinema in 1967, **BOB SHAYE** (Executive Producer) has guided the company's growth from a privately-held art film distributor to one of the entertainment industry's leading independent studios and a veritable box office force.

Recently, Shaye has returned to his origin as a filmmaker directing New Line's sci-fi adventure *The Last Mimzy*. The film tells the story of two young children who

discover a box of highly sophisticated toys which empower them with a series of remarkable abilities. Shaye's previous work as a feature director came with the 1990 romantic comedy *Book of Love*.

After beginning his filmmaking career at the age of 15 with a training film for employees of his father's supermarket, Shaye found early success as a young filmmaker. He took First Prize at the prestigious Society of Cinematologists' Rosenthal Competition, where he and Martin Scorsese shared the Best Motion Picture by an American Director Under the Age of 25 honor.

While working at the Museum of Modern Art, Shaye began to explore the world of distribution and formed New Line Cinema, in his Greenwich Village apartment. Building on re-releases of cult films like *Reefer Madness* and first-run domestic distribution of foreign films, New Line broke out commercially with the release of such popular franchises as the *Street Fighter* series, *The Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles*, and *A Nightmare on Elm Street*. Those successful series set the stage for later New Line hits like *Rush Hour*, *Austin Powers*, *Dumb & Dumber*, *The Wedding Singer*, *Seven*, *Boogie Nights*, *The Mask* and *Blade*.

With Shaye as Co-Chairman, New Line has developed a reputation for working miracles in "niche" markets and became a trailblazer in the industry thanks to its innovative business strategies, many of which have since become industry norms.

The studio's maverick style was never more evident than in 1998, when writer/director Peter Jackson brought his 25-minute pitch reel for a big screen epic of J.R.R. Tolkien's classic *The Lord of the Rings* to New Line, hoping to turn the three volumes into two films. Shaye suggested Jackson make three films and mandated the subsequent green-light for an unprecedented simultaneous production for all three installments.

The results of the gamble are staggering. Combined, *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy was nominated for 30 Oscars, winning 17, including a clean sweep of 11 awards for *The Return of the King*, including Best Picture, Best Director and Best Adapted Screenplay. At the box office, all three films combined to earn nearly \$3 billion worldwide.

This established New Line as the most successful independent film company ever. But New Line's recent success is not limited to the Rings phenomenon. Other breakout

films include the top-grossing comedy of 2005, *Wedding Crashers*, as well as such hits as *Monster-in-Law*, *The Notebook*, *Elf*, *Freddy vs. Jason*, *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre*, and the Oscar-nominated *A History of Violence*.

As New Line celebrates its 40th anniversary in 2007, the studio has an exciting slate of upcoming films scheduled for release including *The Golden Compass*, based on author Phillip Pullman's bestselling *His Dark Materials* trilogy; *Rush Hour 3*; and a big-screen adaptation of the Tony Award-winning musical comedy *Hairspray*, starring John Travolta and Queen Latifah.

A University of Michigan graduate with a degree in business administration and a J.D. degree from Columbia University Law School, Shaye is also a Fulbright Scholar, member of the New York State Bar, and serves on the Board of Trustees of the Motion Picture Pioneers and the American Film Institute.

**MICHAEL LYNNE** (Executive Producer) is Co-Chairman and Co-Chief Executive Officer of New Line Cinema Corporation. During his twenty-plus year association with the company, he has been a driving force in its becoming the most successful, fully integrated independent film company in the world, with divisions devoted to the production, marketing and distribution of theatrical motion pictures as well as home entertainment, television, music, theater, licensing and merchandising.

Mr. Lynne is also Executive Producer of New Line's *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy, of which the final installment, *The Return of the King*, was the winner of the 2003 Golden Globe Award for Best Picture-Drama and of the Academy Award for Best Picture. New Line is a pioneer in franchise filmmaking and its *Lord of the Rings* trilogy is the most successful film franchise in history, with *The Return of the King* recently becoming only the second film in history to attain a worldwide box office gross in excess of \$1 billion.

Together with his Co-Chairman and Co-Chief Executive Officer Bob Shaye, Mr. Lynne has helped shape the direction of the film industry as a whole with the development of new and unconventional strategies relating to production, marketing and distribution, including the pre-sale of international distribution rights, creating and exploiting "niche" franchises, harnessing off-peak movie going periods and the

unprecedented simultaneous production of the three films in *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy, to name a few.

In addition to *The Lord of the Rings*, during Mr. Lynne's tenure at New Line, the studio has produced and distributed a diverse mix of both financially successful and creatively acclaimed motion pictures, including *Elf*, *About Schmidt*, *I Am Sam*, the *Austin Powers* trilogy, *Blade*, *Rush Hour*, *Magnolia*, *Shine*, *Seven*, *Dumb and Dumber*, *The Mask*, *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles*, *Hairspray* (which the studio later co-produced on Broadway, winning the Best Musical Tony Award) and the *Nightmare on Elm Street* series.

Over the years Mr. Lynne has helped oversee and direct New Line's successful transition from a closely-held small business to its listing as a publicly traded company on the American Stock Exchange (1986); the formation of its subsidiary, Fine Line Features (1990); its purchase by Ted Turner's Turner Broadcasting System (1993); Time Warner's purchase of Turner (1996); and AOL's merger with Time Warner (2001).

Prior to his appointment as Co-Chairman and Co-Chief Executive Officer in 2001, Lynne had previously served as President of New Line Cinema since 1990, and as Chief Legal Counsel for the company for a decade before that. He has been a member of the Board of Directors (now Executive Committee) since 1983. His alliance with Bob Shaye dates back to 1961, when they both attended Columbia Law School.

Prior to his position with New Line, Mr. Lynne was a partner for twenty years with Blumenthal & Lynne, specializing in entertainment law. He also worked with Barovick & Konecky, an entertainment law firm, and as resident counsel for Embassy Pictures.

Mr. Lynne is a member of the Boards of the Museum of Modern Art, Citymeals-on-Wheels, the American Museum of the Moving Image, the Drawing Center and chairs the Museum Committee of Guild Hall of East Hampton. He also is a member of the Board of Visitors of Columbia Law School and the Dean's Council of Columbia University School of the Arts. Mr. Lynne is a member of the New York Bar and received his J.D. degree from Columbia Law School in 1964. He graduated from Brooklyn College in 1961 as an English Literature Major.

He and his wife Ninah have two children and reside in New York City.

**TOBY EMMERICH** (Executive Producer) is president of production for New Line Cinema. Since being named to the post in January 2001, Emmerich has overseen production in the most successful period in company history.

Since Emmerich took the production helm, New Line has released such hits as the Academy Award-winning blockbuster *The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King*, 2005's highest-grossing comedy *Wedding Crashers*, *Monster-in-Law*, *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre*, *Elf*, *The Notebook*, and *About Schmidt*, which starred Jack Nicholson in a Golden Globe-winning performance.

A long-time studio veteran, Emmerich previously served not only as President of New Line Music, but also as an accomplished screenwriter and producer who wrote and produced New Line's sleeper hit *Frequency*, starring Dennis Quaid and Jim Caviezel.

Emmerich joined the company in 1992 as a dual development and music executive. In his position as President of Music, he oversaw the development of Platinum or Gold-selling soundtracks such as *Texas Chainsaw Massacre*, *Elf*, *Freddy vs. Jason*, *Austin Powers: The Spy Who Shagged Me*, *Next Friday*, *Austin Powers: International Man of Mystery*, *Love Jones*, *Who's the Man*, *Menace II Society*, *Above the Rim*, *The Mask*, *Don Juan DeMarco*, *My Family*, *Friday*, *Dumb and Dumber*, *Now and Then*, *Mortal Kombat* and *Seven*, among others.

Prior to his posts at New Line, Emmerich was an A&R representative at Atlantic Records from 1987 to 1992. Emmerich attended the Calhoun School and Wesleyan University, from which he graduated Phi Beta Kappa in 1985, with honors in English, and concentrations in Classics and Film.

Emmerich lives in Los Angeles with his wife Julie and their daughter.

A lifelong fan of J.R.R. Tolkien's novels, **MARK ORDESKY** (Executive Producer) was an early champion of the Oscar-winning *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy at New Line Cinema and, as an executive producer of all three films, played a key role in their production.

In addition to *The Golden Compass*, Ordesky is simultaneously supervising *Inkheart*, based on the best-selling Cornelia Funke novel. *Inkheart* is being directed by

Iain Softley (*Wings Of The Dove*), and stars Brendan Fraser, Paul Bettany, Helen Mirren, Jim Broadbent, Andy Serkis and newcomer Eliza Bennett.

In 1997, following the acquisition of the Oscar-winning *Shine*, Ordesky began a five-year tenure as the head of Fine Line Features, where he helped foster a unique film culture that included the likes of Bernardo Bertolucci, Lars Von Trier, and David Mamet, and provided a haven for emerging talent such as Sundance winners Gavin O'Connor (*Tumbleweeds*) and Bob Pulcini and Shari Springer Berman (*American Splendor*). Ordesky has also acquired such acclaimed films as Cannes-winner *Dancer In The Dark*, *Saving Grace*, the Oscar-nominated *Before Night Falls*, *Tumbleweeds*, *The Sweet Hereafter* and *American Splendor*.

His career at New Line Cinema began 18 years ago when he developed a taste for material as a script reader. Working his way up the ladder at the company, Ordesky did everything from managing the company's relationship with John Waters to successfully introducing Jackie Chan to U.S. audiences with the breakout hit *Rumble in the Bronx*.

Throughout her long career, **ILEEN MAISEL** (Executive Producer) has been responsible for diverse movies ranging from *Dirty Dancing* to *Dangerous Liaisons*. She produced Patricia Highsmith's critically acclaimed *Ripley's Game*, starring John Malkovich, and executive produced Jonathan Glazer's *Birth*, with Nicole Kidman.

During her 10 years as a Senior Vice President at New Line, Maisel has been responsible for an intensive program of European productions. She has overseen two of 2007's most anticipated movie releases: *The Golden Compass* and *Inkheart*, an adaptation of the best-selling children's novel by Cornelia Funke, starring Brendan Fraser, Dame Helen Mirren and Paul Bettany. Maisel brings to her work the unique combination of experience and understanding of the inner workings of Hollywood, with a strong and successful feel for European talent.

**ANDREW MIANO** (Executive Producer) most recently executive produced Paul Weitz's critically acclaimed film *In Good Company*. He partnered with Paul and Chris Weitz in 1999, overseeing all phases of production at Depth of Field, their Los Angeles-based production company. Their diverse slate of upcoming projects include the feature

adaptation of Michael Moorcock's fantasy epic *The Elric Saga* for Universal Studios and the comedies *Army Geek* and *The Last Bachelor Party*. Also in development is *Nick & Norah's Infinite Playlist* for Focus Features; as well as *The Game*, which Miano will produce, from best-selling author Neil Strauss.

Miano also served as a producer on the WB television series *Off Centre* and is currently overseeing Depth of Field's recently finalized television deal with NBC Universal Television.

Prior to joining the Weitz brothers, Miano worked for three years at the William Morris Agency, where he started in their agent trainee program. Miano is a graduate of SUNY Oswego, where he earned a Bachelors of Arts degree in theatre and creative writing.

**PAUL WEITZ** (Executive Producer) most recently wrote, directed and-along with his brother and frequent collaborator, Chris Weitz, produced the critically acclaimed films *American Dreamz* and *In Good Company*. He also co-directed the award-winning hit *About a Boy* with his brother, also adapting the screenplay from Nick Hornby's novel. The screenplay received an Academy Award® nomination for Best Adapted Screenplay, as well as similar nominations from BAFTA, Writers Guild, Chicago Film Critics and Humanitas; the film was named one of AFI's Movies of the Year and was nominated for Golden Globe and Golden Satellite awards for Best Comedy, winning Best Studio Comedy Feature at the U.S. Comedy Arts Festival.

In 1999, Paul and Chris Weitz formed Depth of Field, their Los Angeles-based production company. Their diverse slate of upcoming projects includes *A Stolen Life*, a remake of the Bette Davis classic to be directed by Miguel Arteta (*The Good Girl*); the feature adaptation of Michael Moorcock's fantasy epic *The Elric Saga*; the comedies *Army Geek* and *The Last Bachelor Party*; and the WWI drama *Silent Night*.

Weitz made his feature directorial debut teaming with his brother on *American Pie*, the phenomenally successful first installment of the *Pie* franchise. Prior to their screenwriting work on *About a Boy*, the brothers collaborated on several screenplays, including *Antz*. Weitz also made his acting debut in the Sundance Film Festival hit *Chuck&Buck*.

Weitz was born in New York, the grandson of fabled agent Paul Kohner (who represented filmmakers such as John Huston, Billy Wilder and Ingmar Bergman). His parents are fashion designer/writer John Weitz and Oscar-nominated actress Susan Kohner. Weitz graduated from Wesleyan University with a degree in film. His last year there, his play "Mango Tea" was produced off-Broadway with Marisa Tomei and Rob Morrow by New York's Ensemble Studio Theatre (EST). EST also produced his next works, "Captive" and "All for One"; and, most recently, the ensemble comedy "Roulette," starring Larry Bryggman, Anna Paquin, Ana Gasteyer and Shawn Hatossy (which The New York Times cited as an "original jewel"). *Privilege* was recently produced by the Second Stage Theatre.

Director of Photography **HENRY BRAHAM** recently shot his second collaboration with director Kirk Jones after *Walking Ned*, the family comedy *Nanny McPhee*,

Braham's other film credits include Tony Bill's *Flyboys*, Stephen Fry's *Bright Young Things*, Charles Sturridge's *Shackleton*, for which Braham won an Emmy Award for Best Cinematography and received a BAFTA nomination for Best Cinematography; John McKay's *Crush*; Adam Brook's *The Invisible Circus*; David Leland's *The Land Girls*; Stefan Schwartz's *Shooting Fish*, Paul Weiland's *Roseanna's Grave*; Gary Sinyor's *Solitaire for 2*; and *Soft Top Hard Shoulder*, also for Stefan Schwartz.

His television credits include most notably Peter Richardson's *Four Men and a Car* and Paul Weiland's *Oliver II - Let's Twist Again*.

In commercials, Braham has worked for clients including Coca Cola, McDonald's, Playstation 2, Ford, British Airways, Polaroid, Walkers Crisps, and Budweiser.

**DENNIS GASSNER** (Production Designer) won an Academy Award® for his work on Barry Levinson's *Bugsy*, starring Warren Beatty and Annette Bening. He was also nominated for an Oscar that same year for his work on the Coen brothers's *Barton Fink*. Gassner was recently nominated for a BAFTA Award for Tim Burton's *Big Fish* and won BAFTA Awards for Peter Weir's *The Truman Show* and Sam Mendes's *Road to*

*Perdition*. He earned a BAFTA nomination for his work on the Coen's *O Brother Where Art Thou?*

Gassner's other production design credits include *Waterworld*, *Hero*, *The Grifters*, *Field of Dreams*, *Earth Girls are Easy*, *Like Father, Like Son*, *Wisdom* and *The Hitcher*. He most recently designed *The Ladykillers* and *Ask the Dust*.

**ANNE V. COATES, O.B.E., A.C.E.** (Editor) came to motion pictures after harrowing experiences as a nurse at Sir Archibald McIndoe's pioneering plastic surgery hospital in East Grinstead. She fulfilled her long-held ambition to be a film director with a company called Religious Films. The work consisted of patching up prints of devotional shorts before sending them out to Britain's churches. This led to a job in the cutting room at Pinewood, where she worked on *The Red Shoes*, among other films, before achieving her first screen credit with *The Pickwick Papers*.

Coates received an Oscar for her work on *Lawrence of Arabia* and was nominated for both Academy Awards® and A.C.E. Awards for her work on *Becket*, *The Elephant Man*, *In The Line of Fire*, and *Out of Sight*. Her other credits include *Catch and Release*, *Greystoke: The Legend of Tarzan, Lord of the Apes*, *Unfaithful*, *Erin Brockovich*, *Out To Sea*, *Striptease*, *Congo*, *Chaplin*, and *What About Bob?*

Coates has been honored by Women In Film on two separate occasions for her achievements in the industry.

An Academy Award nominee for *Emma* and *The Addams Family*, **RUTH MYERS** (Costume Designer) has contributed her style to such diverse films as *Beyond the Sea*, *Connie & Carla*, *L.A. Confidential* (for which she received a BAFTA nomination), *The Cradle Will Rock*, *Center Stage*, *Proof of Life*, *Four Feathers*, *Iris*, *Nicholas Nickleby*, the fantasy fairy tale *Ella Enchanted* and *The Painted Veil*..

Born and raised in Manchester, England, Myers graduated from St. Martin's College of Art in London before training under scholarship with the English Stage Company of the Royal Court Theatre. At the completion of her scholarship, she stayed with the company, first as an assistant then as a designer. She went on to design many plays in London.

Myers switched to film with *The Loves of Isadora* and went on to design the costumes for *A Touch of Class*, *The Ruling Class*, *The Twelve Chairs* and *Smashing Time* before being persuaded by Gene Wilder to come to America. With Wilder she collaborated on *The World's Greatest Lover*, *The Woman in Red* and *Haunted Honeymoon*.

Myers designed the costumes for Sydney Pollack's *The Firm*; two films for Fred Schepisi, *Plenty* and *The Russia House*; Norman Jewison's *And Justice For All*; Ken Russell's *Altered States*; Jack Clayton's *Something Wicked This Way Comes*, *Electric Dreams* directed by Steve Barron, and Arthur Hiller's *Teachers*.

Among her additional credits are the films *One Thousand Acres*, *Bogus*, *How to Make An American Quilt*, *I.Q.*, *Mr. Saturday Night*, *The Marrying Man*, *The Accidental Tourist* and *The Main Event*.

Most recently, Myers designed the costumes for the films *Infamous*, *Monster House* and *Half Light*. For television, she received an Emmy Award and the Costume Designers Guild Award for the HBO pilot, *Carnivale*.

As a small boy, **MICHAEL FINK** (Visual Effects Supervisor) created his first miniature shot – a still of a rocket to the moon – in the hallway of the family home. He continued experimenting with photography and effects until his ability was outstripped by the explosive power of his concoctions, at which point he wisely left further research to others.

A graduate in business from California State University, Mike Fink was drafted into the army. Afterwards, he worked as a portfolio manager in San Francisco before taking leave of absence to attend the Art Institute of San Francisco, later completing an MA at the California Institute of the Arts in Los Angeles.

Fink served his movie apprenticeship on *The China Syndrome* in 1977, *Star Trek the Motion Picture* and *Blade Runner*, and received his first effects supervisor credit on *War Games*.

Oscar nominated for *Batman Returns* in 1992, Fink helped set up Warner Digital Studios which employed 150 people and did stellar work on films including *Eraser*, *Mars Attacks!*, *Contact* and *Batman & Robin*.

More recently Fink's credits include *X-Men*, *Vanilla Sky*, *The Mothman Prophecies*, *Road to Perdition*, *X-Men 2* and *Constantine*.

After composing the music for over fifty European films and being nominated for two Cesar Awards, **ALEXANDRE DESPLAT** (Composer) burst onto the Hollywood scene with his evocative score to *Girl With the Pearl Earring*, which earned him nominations from the Golden Globes, BAFTA and European Film Awards. His reputation was solidified by his critically acclaimed score to Jonathan Glazer's film *Birth* (starring Nicole Kidman). Following in close succession, Desplat composed the scores to *The Upside of Anger* (starring Joan Allen and Kevin Costner), *Hostage* (starring Bruce Willis and directed by Florent Siri) and Lasse Holström's *Casanova* (starring Heath Ledger and Jeremy Irons). More recently, Alexandre lent his talents to Stephen Gaghan's film *Syriana* (produced by Steven Soderbergh; starring Matt Damon and George Clooney), which earned him another Golden Globe nomination, and *Firewall* (starring Harrison Ford and directed by Richard Loncraine).

He next completed the score to *The Queen* (directed by Stephen Frears), which earned him an Oscar nomination, with the film's star Helen Mirren winning Best Actress. After *The Painted Veil* (directed by John Curran and starring Naomi Watts and Edward Norton), his next score will be for *Mr. Magorium's Wonder Emporium* (starring Dustin Hoffman and Natalie Portman, 2007).

Balancing his busy Hollywood schedule, Desplat still makes time to lend his talents to a select number of European films, his most recent score for *De Battre Mon Coeur S'Est Arrete* (*The Beat that My Heart Skipped*), earned him a Silver Bear Award for Best Score at the Berlin Film Festival in 2005 and a Cesar award at the Cesar Awards in 2006. Desplat's Greek mother and French father met while attending College at Berkeley in the United States. The multilingual Desplat was classically trained, but fed a constant diet of American Jazz and Hollywood movie scores. These influences have been fused in his music to create a fresh and unique, new voice in film music.

Among **BARRY GIBBS's** (Property Master) credits are *In the Name of the Father*, *Wings of a Dove*, *Mansfield Park*, *Onegin*, *Captain Corelli's Mandolin*, *About a*

*Boy, Love, Actually, Timeline, Around the World in 80 Days, Bridget Jones: The Edge of Reason, Oliver Twist and Hannibal Rising.*

*The Lord of the Rings* trilogy brought **PETER KING** (Make-up and Hair Designer) a mantle of awards – the Academy Award for *The Return of the King*, the Academy of Science Fiction, Fantasy & Horror Films Awards in 2003 for *The Two Towers* and again, the following year for *The Return of the King*, the BAFTA award in 2002 for *The Fellowship of the Ring*, followed by nominations in both following years for the subsequent parts of the trilogy, the Hollywood Make-up Artist & Hair Stylist Guild Awards in both 2003 for *The Two Towers* (both character hair styling and character make-up) and in 2004 for *The Return of the King* (character make-up award, and hair styling nomination). King has also received BAFTA nominations for *Quills, An Ideal Husband* and *Velvet Goldmine*.

King has spent much of the new millennium in New Zealand, firstly for *The Lord of the Rings*, and later for director Peter Jackson's subsequent epic, *King Kong*.

King started in the film industry as a wig maker – Peter Greenaway's *The Draughtsman's Contract* was a stylish early credit. Films since then include *Little Voice, Miss Julie, The Importance of Being Earnest, Bright Young Things, Thunderbirds, Beyond the Sea* and *Nanny McPhee*.

Stunt coordinator **PAUL JENNINGS** learned his craft at the sharp end of action movies like *Robin Hood, Prince of Thieves, Patriot Games, Braveheart, Goldeneye, Mission Impossible, Michael Collins, The Saint, Shakespeare in Love, The Mummy* and *The World is not Enough*.

Since graduating to the top job in the stuntman's repertoire – organizing others to do the falls and rides – his credits include *Johnny English, Thunderbirds* and *Bridget Jones: The Edge of Reason*.

# # #