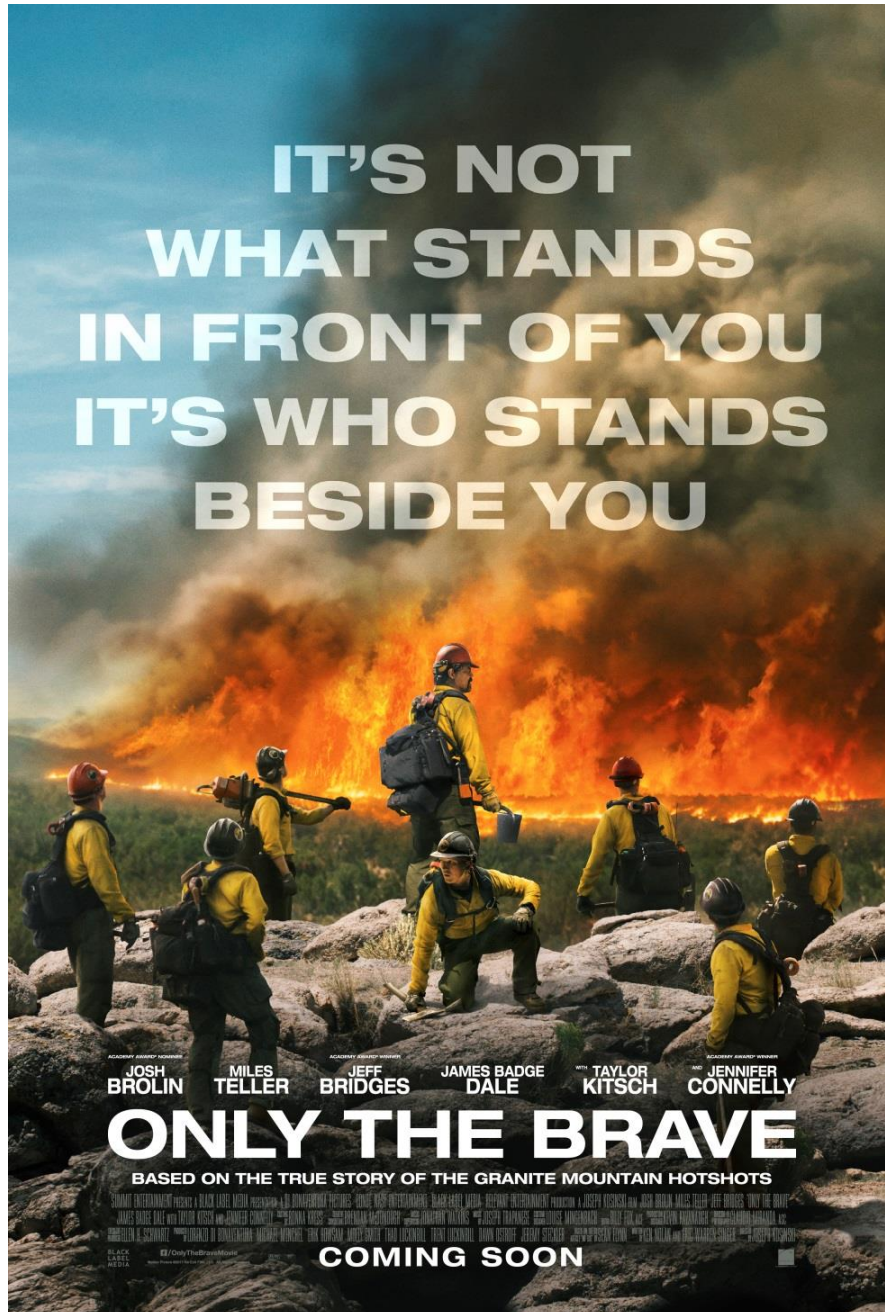




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## ONLY THE BRAVE

### PRODUCTION INFORMATION

It's not what stands in front of you... it's who stands beside you. Only the Brave, based on the true story of the Granite Mountain Hotshots, is the heroic story of a local firefighting crew that becomes one of the most elite firefighting teams in the nation. As most of run from danger, they run toward it – risking everything to save a town from a historic wildfire.

A Black Label Media presentation, a di Bonaventura Pictures / Condé Nast Entertainment / Black Label Media / Relevant Entertainment production, *Only the Brave*. Starring Josh Brolin, Miles Teller, Jeff Bridges, James Badge Dale, with Taylor Kitsch and Jennifer Connelly. Directed by Joseph Kosinski. Written by Ken Nolan and Eric Warren Singer. Based on the GQ article “No Exit” by Sean Flynn. Produced by Lorenzo di Bonaventura, Michael Menchel, Erik Howsam, Molly Smith, Thad Luckinbill, Trent Luckinbill, Dawn Ostroff, and Jeremy Steckler. Executive Producer is Ellen H. Schwartz. Director of Photography is Claudio Miranda, ASC. Production Designer is Kevin Kavanaugh. Editor is Billy Fox, ACE. Costume Designer is Louise Mingenbach. Music by Joseph Trapanese. Music Supervisor is Jonathan Watkins. Creative Consultant is Brendan McDonough. Casting by Ronna Kress.

## **ABOUT THE FILM**

“This is a story about everyday heroes,” says Josh Brolin, who stars in *Only the Brave*, based on the true story of the Granite Mountain Hotshots, the firefighters who did what no other local city fire crew had ever done before making headlines as they battled the deadly Yarnell Hill Fire. Going deeper behind the story into the lives of the firefighters themselves, the film focuses on the everyday lives of the men who – each for his own reasons – would rise to protect us all.

“In an age of superheroes, *Only the Brave* is a film about real heroes,” adds director Joseph Kosinski. “It explores notions of brotherhood, sacrifice, redemption, all set in the world of wildfire – something I haven’t seen in the cinema before. It’s a story that needs to be told and a world that should be seen on a big screen.”

“What draws men to fire? What makes these guys want to do this?” says producer Trent Luckinbill. “These guys are risking their lives every day to save others, to save communities, to save people’s ways of life, and this story gets under the hood of why they do what they do. It’s about who they are and the brotherhood of the crew.”

Producer Lorenzo di Bonaventura agrees that the shared experience between the hotshots is what makes them a real unit. “They start as individuals, and in the forming of a group, and the tortuous training that they go through, they bond in a way that they become a unit as opposed to a bunch of individuals. Their sense of commitment grows during their time being hotshots; like a lot of dedicated people, they become more and more obsessed with their jobs.”

“These guys are the gatekeepers to the wildlands,” says producer Michael Menchel. “Mostly, they are fighting fires on the ground with Pulaskis, with shovels, with burn cans, burning back fires. For anyone who’s spent time in the wilderness, for anyone who loves the outdoors, it’s amazing to think about.”

And as Dawn Ostroff notes, the film goes deep into the lives of this particular hotshot crew. “These heroes deserve to have their story told, for people to know what they did – how they saved this community and put themselves literally in the line of fire.”

The film is based on the GQ article “No Exit,” written by Sean Flynn. Producers Dawn Ostroff and Jeremy Steckler of Condé Nast Entertainment identified the story as a possible feature film, and began the development process, working with director Joseph Kosinski and writer Ken Nolan. Meanwhile, producer Michael Menchel, who had also been developing the project following the events in Arizona and visited the Hotshots, Brendan McDonough (played by Miles Teller) and Amanda Marsh (played by Jennifer Connelly) multiple times, united with Condé Nast and producer Lorenzo di Bonaventura on the project. At that point, they brought the script to Black Label Media, who joined forces to further develop the screenplay and put the film together.

Many moviegoers will be unfamiliar with the term “hotshot.” As is explained in the film, it’s a special and honored designation: hotshots are the country’s top wildland firefighters – the Navy SEALs of firefighting. “The way they fight fires is very different than people would think: they don’t carry water; they fight fire with fire,” Kosinski explains. “They dig lines and cut down trees and try to establish a border. They light fire, back burns, that they use to battle against the wildfire.”

What made the Granite Mountain Hotshots different isn’t their skill or ability, but how they rose to the top. “‘Hotshot’ is a term that is usually reserved for Forest Service special teams,” Kosinski continues. “But the Granite Mountain Hotshots were a municipal squad – a bunch of local guys that Eric Marsh dreamed of turning into a Hotshot crew. No one had ever done that before. It was a very difficult process that took years of training and evaluation. They finally did achieve that, becoming the first municipal Hotshot crew in the United States and travelling across the country fighting wildfires.”

Though many people remember the story of the Granite Mountain Hotshots – the firefighting crew that battled the Yarnell Hill fire in 2013 – the story of the lives of the crew of 20 is largely unknown. The stories of these heroes is told on the screen in *Only the Brave*.

It's a recognition that is highly deserved, but one that a hotshot crew would never seek out. "Most people don't really know what Hotshots are – most people have never even heard of Hotshots – and that's just the way Hotshots like it. They want to be invisible, working hard, and building those close relationships on the Hotshot crew. Everybody involved with this movie had a different reason why they wanted to be involved, but the biggest reason that I saw was that they wanted to put a light on what Hotshots and wildland firefighters do," says Pat McCarty, a former Granite Mountain Hotshot who left the crew in 2010 to become an engineer for the Prescott Fire Department; he also served as a technical advisor on the film. McCarty and other Granite Mountain Hotshots, as well as Brendan McDonough, Amanda Marsh and Duane and Marvel Steinbrink, would provide invaluable advice during filming – not just technical advice about how wildland firefighters operate, but character advice about how the real men would have handled certain situations.

These 20 men are all very different, but share a bond, according to Luckinbill. "The story focuses on the personal level – how teams like these are formed, how those friendships are made," he says. "You need that brotherhood; you need that trust, that respect for each other, to fight these fires. That necessary reliance on each other resonates in a way that military stories do."

Kosinski takes it even further: "*Only the Brave* could be viewed as a war movie – but it's a battle against Mother Nature," he says. "I found that to be a refreshing angle on what a hero is."

That comparison also struck screenwriter Ken Nolan, who previously adapted the book *Black Hawk Down* into an award-winning film. (Nolan would collaborate with Eric

Warren Singer on the screenplay for *Only the Brave*.) “Many of these wildland firefighters were a breed apart, like the Rangers and Delta Force soldiers in *Black Hawk Down*,” he says. “Motivated, indefatigable, and yet human on a level we can all relate to – they got tired, they got scared, they joked around with each other.”

Nolan would go to Prescott, Arizona, and spend time with the families of the Hotshots, meeting Hotshot survivor Brendan McDonough and Amanda Marsh, the widow of Hotshot supervisor Eric Marsh. “Prescott has an amazing small town feel to it,” says Nolan. “People mill about and walk around with family and kids – it’s a super-friendly and welcoming place. It’s also very scenic and outdoorsy. I loved walking around there and getting coffee from my favorite place – the Wild Iris Cafe became my office.”

The more time that Nolan spent in Prescott, the more he began to see the story of the Hotshots in a particular way – one that he felt audiences could get behind. “What interested me was how the team built themselves up to an elite unit and what that entailed. It also offered a great way into the world – through Brendan McDonough’s point of view,” says Nolan. “He was a kid who’d had some troubles and wanted to turn his life around, and did so by joining the team as a recruit. We, the audience, could learn everything about the world of the Hotshots through Brendan’s eyes.”

That approach also gave the screenwriters the chance to explore the relationship between Brendan, the recruit who has to earn trust, and Eric Marsh, the 20-year veteran supervisor of the crew. “This was a hard job, with life and death at stake, and Eric Marsh made sure he had like-minded team members around him. Was Brendan going to make it? Was he going to cut it or not? That’s the story I wanted to explore.”

“It’s not the traditional mentor/mentee relationship,” says producer Lorenzo di Bonaventura. “In the movie, Eric sees something in Brendan that reminds him of himself and his own fallibility. That’s the emotional core of the movie – the relationship between a very young man and a more senior man. It’s about coming to terms with the weaknesses in their lives and the way that building this team becomes even more than

fighting fires – it’s going to turn them into the people they want to be. In the movie, Eric Marsh had seen that happen to himself and now was helping others, particularly Brendan, remake themselves.”

That relationship – between Marsh and McDonough, but really between all of the men – was of particular interest to screenwriter Eric Warren Singer. “I’m interested in the culture that develops around this brotherhood,” says the writer, an Oscar® nominee for his work on *American Hustle*.

“I interviewed many Hotshots and asked them what they love about it. They all basically said the same thing,” says Kosinski. “It’s the camaraderie. It’s being with your team, travelling around the country, being with your crew and knowing they have your back as you have theirs. That was the key to this film: making sure we captured that.”

To bring the story to the screen, the producers tapped Kosinski, previously the director of *Tron: Legacy* and *Oblivion*. “If you’ve seen Joe’s movies, you know how visually spectacular they are; he’s one of the best visual directors in the world,” says producer Erik Howsam. “He was the right choice to convey the epic scale of what it’s like to be in one of these wildfires.”

“When I read the script, I thought I’d never seen anything like this before – I almost couldn’t believe it was based on a true story,” says Kosinski. “I was drawn by the script’s unique approach to the story of viewing it through two points of view: the guy at the top, Superintendent Eric Marsh, and the guy at the very, very bottom, fresh rookie Brendan McDonough – the contrast between them, but also the similarities, became the entry point to this story.”

Rounding out the film, country superstar Dierks Bentley teamed with Bon Iver’s S. Carey and *Only the Brave*’s composer, Joe Trapanese, to provide a song for the film, titled “Hold the Light.”

The story of the Granite Mountain Hotshots is one that is close to Bentley's heart. Bentley first took action in 2013 when he organized and hosted the Country Cares Concert in Arizona, which raised more than half a million dollars for the families of the Granite Mountain Hotshots.

In composing the song, Bentley and Carey worked closely with *Only the Brave* composer Joe Trapanese. In the collaboration, the songwriters worked Trapanese's film theme into the music of the song, providing a seamless transition between song and score and resulting in a song that is integral to the film itself.

"This is at the top, if not the most meaningful experience I've ever been a part of," said Bentley. "It hits me harder than any other song I've had a chance to be a part of. Over the last couple years I've met and gotten to know Brendan, the sole survivor, and my mom has met with some of the guys' families, and it's still unfathomable to put yourself in any of their shoes. But, our goal was to create a message of hope and love. I'm honored to have been a part of it."

Kosinski added, "This story resonated deeply with Dierks from the beginning – he was one of the first to raise money to support the families of the Granite Mountain Hotshots and his commitment has been unwavering since then. The theme comes from the score and the lyrics come from the heart, so it was a natural fit for the film."

S. Carey said, "Working on this song with Joe, Dierks, and the whole crew was a true honor. My brother-in-law has been a wildlands fire fighter for the last several years so I had a somewhat personal starting point for the creative process. I'm extremely thankful to be able to honor these men, these true heroes, in the form of a song in a beautiful, powerful film."

## **CASTING THE FILM**

The role of Eric Marsh, the crew superintendent, is played by Academy Award® nominee **Josh Brolin**.

“I had a personal reaction to this story,” says Brolin. “When I was in my 20s, I fought fires for three years with a volunteer fire department in Arizona. It was something that resonated with me; I liked the idea of the giving of one’s self to preserve something for someone else, even in the face of danger.”

Not surprisingly, then, Brolin has a great respect for firefighters. “They’re the last profession that are untouchably uncorrupt,” he says. And that goes especially for this particular crew. “They’re very tough, they’re very driven – they have this destiny they want to reach, which is becoming a hotshot crew. No municipal crew before them had ever been certified as hotshots, the best of the best. They face one obstacle after another, one make-or-break moment after another.”

Brolin was also drawn to the portrayal of the relationships between the men, especially between his character, Marsh, and Miles Teller’s character, Brendan McDonough. “This movie is on a grand scale but it has a great emotional core to it,” he says. “I’ve worked with people who needed a break, needed someone to give them a chance, and sometimes it works out and sometimes it doesn’t. The writers did a great job of exploring that dynamic, the push-and-pull of it. And they put that in the middle of this larger brotherhood – how they affected, and were affected by, the 18 other guys in the mix.”

**Miles Teller** took the role of Brendan McDonough. He says that from his experiences growing up in a small town, he understood the allure of the kind of wildland firefighting depicted in the film. “I grew up in a rural town in Florida, and the town of Prescott reminded me a lot of that kind of town,” he says. “Firefighting would have been the kind of job opportunity my friends would have had. We wouldn’t think we’re risking our lives;

we were just a bunch of kids who liked being outside in the woods, cutting down trees seven months of the year. When I thought about it like that, it cut close to home.”

Teller says that he also admired the film’s portrayal of teamwork. “If I’m cutting line and I’m doing a bad job or not putting in the effort, it creates a lot more work for the guy behind me. The job filters out people that have that kind of a selfish attitude,” he says. “What you’re doing, you’re doing for the guy to the left and to the right of you.”

Producer Molly Smith reflects, “Miles is vulnerable, he’s strong, he’s witty. So we were really lucky to have someone like Miles come in and take on a really complex role. Brendan is a kid who was really lost, who had no sort of self worth, he did not feel like he fit in anywhere, and Eric Marsh and the crew took him in and gave him a shot and it forever changed Brendan’s life.”

“Brendan was called ‘Donut’ because they said he was like a big zero coming into the job,” Teller says. “He had zero muscle and was a zero provider for the team. He was in and out of jail. He’d had a drug problem. So his path to being a hotshot is unique: he had run out of options, his mom had kicked him out, he’d just had a kid, and he was looking for an opportunity to turn his life around. He went through the hotshot boot camp instead of going to rehab – Marsh gave him an opportunity and he never quit.”

Kosinski offered **Taylor Kitsch** the pivotal role of the provocative hotshot Chris MacKenzie. “Obviously, I’m biased, but I think he’s awesome,” says Kitsch. “I had a blast playing him. Mac is the class clown, if you will – always making everything light – but firefighting runs through his blood: he’s a 10-year vet, and his dad was a 25-year vet. He’s super close with his mom and dad, and that was huge for me, but if I wanna learn anything about anybody, I won’t really go to the parents, I’d go to the best friends. I’d sit down with Donut for two or three hours at a time, just trying to soak in as much as I could.”

MacKenzie at first seems to resent Brendan's hire into the crew. "He was called the gatekeeper – being in this crew was a matter of life and death and being in this brotherhood was huge for him, and he was going to weed out anyone who didn't take that as seriously as he did. I think you see that in any kind of elite group – firefighting, the military – you've got to be committed."

"Taylor brought an attitude that made the character come to life," says Ostroff. "For every right reason, in the beginning, Taylor's character is angry and resentful that they even have to bother with Brendan. And yet, in the end, you see where that relationship has come to and how close they get."

Portraying Amanda Marsh, wife of "Supe" Eric Marsh, is **Jennifer Connelly**. "I was fortunate to spend time with Amanda – she was very generous with her time with me, sharing stories and details of her life together with Eric," she says. "We spent a lot of time together talking over the phone and in person. She came riding with me, and she shared her tools with me and taught me how she trims the horses' hooves. She even let me borrow her cowboy boots, which I wore in the movie."

Connelly and Brolin together created the chemistry of a couple that is very much in love, but under significant strain. "They share a very deep love of the outdoors, hiking, climbing, riding, horses," Connelly notes. "Obviously, they were husband and wife, but I also got the sense that they were the best of friends. But it was complicated – the demands of his job certainly impacted their marriage. When they were together, they leaned on each other, and then he would be away for weeks at a time, sometimes in very remote wilderness, often unreachable, and almost always under the thread of real danger. It's a hard thing to love someone so completely when you're together and be okay when you're apart."

"Jennifer is a force of nature," says Smith. "She's obviously an incredible dramatic actor, but she also has a strength and a wit about her, and she can go toe-to-toe with a tough

guy like Josh Brolin. She brought an incredible passion and dedicated herself to really getting Amanda right.”

In the role of Prescott Wildland Fire Chief Duane Steinbrink is **Jeff Bridges**. “When I first read the script, what impressed me was how it transcended the genre of an action film,” says the Oscar® winner. “There was so much emotion and it just really struck my heart.”

Bridges invited the real-life Steinbrink to his Santa Barbara ranch, asking Steinbrink to bring lots of his clothes with him. Then Bridges requested that the costume designer find similar Wrangler jeans and shirts for him to wear in the film. Bridges cut his hair like Steinbrink’s, and morphed into the role in an uncanny way.

“Jeff has a little bit of that modern western cowboy in him; I think he gravitates towards roles where he gets to showcase that,” observes producer Trent Luckinbill. “Jeff is the quintessential Americana guy. He delivers performances that everyone recognizes as excellent and when you find a role like this where he gets to sort of flex his love for the West, he's the guy you want to go to.”

Last to be cast was **Andie MacDowell**, who plays Marvel Steinbrink, wife of Duane Steinbrink. “I was very familiar with the story. I live in Montana, surrounded by national forest, and I have firsthand been in contact with big fires,” she says. “These guys are heroes and this story is going to tell this to the world.”

## **ABOUT THE HOTSHOTS AND THE ACTORS WHO PORTRAY THEM**

**Josh Brolin** stars as “**Supe**” **Eric Marsh**, the superintendent and founder of the Granite Mountain Hotshots team of 20. Marsh was the oldest member of the team. From North Carolina, Marsh graduated from Appalachian State University and also helped start the Arizona Wildfire Academy.

“This guy was not only in great shape at 43 years old, but basically could run anybody into the ground with his endurance and his strength,” notes Brolin, whose preparation included working out with a trainer to lose 40 pounds, reading books by Norman Maclean, and immersing himself in online videos of real-life firefighters.

The more Brolin researched Marsh, the more he could identify with him. “He didn’t have an amazing start right away. He had to work for everything; he was very human and fallible, but he learned how to be an incredible leader from Duane,” says Brolin. “I really appreciated how hard he worked to get where he was. It really meant a lot to him.”

Of course, Brolin also admired Marsh for the way he would risk everything for others. “If you want self-esteem, do estimable acts,” he says. “You’re not going to get self-esteem from sitting in bed and going, ‘Why don’t I have self-esteem?’ You want self-esteem, go do something for somebody else.”

Brolin immersed himself in the role, becoming the on-set leader for his crew of hotshot actors, who called him “Supe” onscreen and off. “Josh saw that this is really a story about support and teamwork and love, and has embodied that all the way through,” observes producer Jeremy Steckler. “The guy was so prepared, so on point, so together – he was running a squad of guys who are a lot younger than he is, and he stayed a step ahead of them every single day.”

“Josh became Eric Marsh,” agrees producer Eric Howsam. “He’d just tell them, ‘Okay, here’s what you need to do. Here’s the equipment.’ And they’d just do it.”

**Miles Teller** plays **Brendan “Donut” McDonough**, who joins the Granite Mountain Hotshots, intent on turning his life around. Teller comments, “Brendan is the late addition to the hotshot team. He starts out in this film not engaged in the firefighting community at all, kind of directionless, at a crossroads in his life. His firefighting team offers him an opportunity to better himself and become a responsible man for the first time in his life.”

Applying to be part of the Granite Mountain Hotshots was an extreme long shot for Brendan. “He’s at rock bottom at the start of the film,” he observes. “I think these firefighters are guys that he always kind of looked up to, but he thought he’d be kicked out of the room if he ever went in and said, ‘I want to be a firefighter.’”

Academy Award® winner **Jennifer Connelly**, portrays **Amanda Marsh**, Eric Marsh’s independent wife who pursues her own career as a natural horsemanship farrier and runs their ranch when her husband is away fighting fires.

She was inspired to join the film by director Joseph Kosinski’s commitment to telling the whole story. “Joe wanted to explore the complexity of the job – the complexity of their lives and their relationships, the impact that the job had on their lives,” she says. “It put what they accomplished in a very human context.”

Academy Award® winner **Jeff Bridges** portrays Prescott Wildland Fire Chief **Duane Steinbrink**, the cowboy whose unpolished dignity and battle-hardened wisdom make him a mentor for Eric Marsh.

“He’s sort of an elder statesman, or maybe a father figure, to Josh Brolin’s character, Eric Marsh, and the guys kind of look up to him,” says Bridges. “He also happens to have a swinging cowboy band called The Rusty Pistols.”

**James Badge Dale** plays Marsh’s dependable right-hand man **Jesse Steed**, who is the captain of the Granite Mountain Hotshots. In real life, Steed, 36, was a former gunner for the Marine Corp and former member of the Prescott Fire Department.

“This guy was everything I’m not: he was six-foot-four, 220 pounds, funny, and cool,” Dale kids. “Jesse Steed was the big brother that you love to have. He was kind of a beacon of light. He had a great attitude. He helped people. He was unwavering. He was a force of nature at work and force of nature also in keeping people happy. He kept the community together and then everyone was in awe that he could go home and have energy left for his family. There’s a lot to aspire to there.”

**Taylor Kitsch** portrays the character of **Chris MacKenzie**, 30, who was in his third season with the Granite Mountain Hotshots and had more experience than many in the crew.

Kitsch was excited to join the project by the chance to portray the relationship between MacKenzie and McDonough. “It’s a full 180,” says Kitsch. “Mac had seen him quit before; he doesn’t give Donut any credit or benefit of the doubt. And honestly, I don’t blame him. Donut, through his actions, gains Mac’s trust; by the end of it, there’s a huge gesture as they are roommates and best friends. The movie dives through a good period of time to see how that relationship develops and changes.”

Appearing as **Marvel Steinbrink**, the wife of Fire Chief Steinbrink, is **Andie MacDowell**. MacDowell met with the real Marvel Steinbrink, even borrowing a necklace

with a cross on it that Marvel was wearing. “She’s very dynamic and strong and she has a beautiful heart,” MacDowell says.

Australian actor **Alex Russell** plays firefighter **Andrew Ashcraft**, 29. The father of four children, the popular Ashcraft was a skateboarder, hiker, swimmer, applesauce-maker, guitarist, and drummer. “It was a real pleasure to spend each day in his shoes, because he was such an upbeat, happy, beautiful person. No matter how tough a day was, he’d always be smiling and cracking a joke,” says Russell. “He used to collect a special rock for his sons from every fire that he went on.”

English actor **Ben Hardy** portrays the idealistic 22-year-old rookie **Wade Parker**. “He’s a young guy, very athletic,” says Hardy. “He grew up playing baseball. All his family say he was probably good enough to go far in baseball, but he decided to be a Hotshot because his dad’s a firefighter and he wanted to kind of continue that family tradition.”

**Scott Haze** plays the church-going **Clayton Whitted**, 28, a youth minister and junior high pastor who mentored teenagers. “He carries a message of hope, courage, and faith in God in the story,” says Haze.

**Geoff Stults** plays crew boss and ex-Marine **Travis “Turby” Turbyfill**, 27, the father of two young daughters to whom he often read the book “Goodnight Moon” out loud. “He was a bit of a jokester,” says Stults.

**Thad Luckinbill** appears as **Scott Norris**, a history buff and guy’s guy who worked in a gun shop during his off season. “He’s what’s called a sawyer, so he gets to carry the saw on his shoulder and to cut the trees down,” says Luckinbill. “It’s hard work, it’s really

hard work, and the passion, love, and dedication they have for nature comes through immediately.”

**Jake Picking** appears as the pink-cheeked **Anthony “Baby-G” Rose**, 23, whose fiancé was pregnant at the time of the Yarnell Hill Fire. “He was one of the youngest ones,” notes Picking.

Real-life former Granite Mountain Hotshot **Brandon Bunch** portrays his real-life best friend **Garret Zuppiger**, 27, who had a business-administration degree and was an avid fisherman. Describes Bunch, “Garrett was just a great dude. I mean, adventurous, hard worker, super funny guy, always making everyone laugh. Always positive.”

Former Navy Seal **Scott Foxx** plays **Travis Carter**, 31, who grew up on his family’s cattle ranch. Comments Foxx, “Our personalities were quite similar. He’s a quiet guy, I’m quiet. He was confident, super tough, but really smart when you sat down and talked with him. And he was a beast on the chainsaw – he was the best sword they had on Granite Mountain. Nobody could keep up with him.”

**Dylan Kenin** plays **Robert Caldwell**, 23. A squad boss. Says Kenin, “He was a newlywed, really universally well-liked. He was a really intelligent guy who liked to read and loved the outdoors.”

**Sam Quinn** portrays **Grant McKee**, 21, who had just earned his EMT certificate and was engaged to be married. Notes Quinn, “He lived with his aunt throughout high school and helped her manage her clothing store.”

**Matthew Van Wattering** plays **Joe Thurston**, who graduated from Southern Utah University with degrees in chemistry and zoology. According to Van Wattering, “He was very humble, never outspoken, kept his head down, worked really hard from an early age.”

Debuting onscreen as red-headed swamper **Dustin DeFord** is **Ryan Busch**. DeFord grew up in Montana with 10 siblings and worked as a missionary. “He was home schooled,” says Busch. “He had a good sense of humor but it kind of took him a while to get warmed up to people.”

In the role of **Sean Misner** is actor **Kenneth Miller**. Misner came from Santa Ynez, California, where he grew up amid ranches and vineyards. “He was a quiet guy; he loved his dog and his wife, and he had a son on the way. He was definitely a proud American,” says Miller, who wears patriotic accessories in the film, including a stars-and-stripes bandana under his helmet, as did the real-life Misner.

**Ryan Jason Cook** plays **Billy Warneke**, 25, an avid outdoorsman and former Marine who grew up in Hemet, California. “Billy used to go above and beyond, and try to help other guys out,” says Cook. “He lived with his wife in a trailer a few hours outside Prescott.”

**Michael McNulty** portrays digger **Kevin Woyjeck**, who grew up in Southern California as the son of a firefighter. Describes McNulty, “Kevin loved fishing, didn’t sleep much, and was a hard worker.”

**Nicholas Jenks** plays Oregon-raised **John Percin Jr.**, who was in his first season as a Granite Mountain Hotshot and had worked washing dishes at a Mexican restaurant to earn the money to attend the Arizona Wildfire Academy. “He was a big outdoorsman, and he travelled a little bit before he ended up in Prescott,” says Jenks. “They nicknamed him Diesel, because he was a hard worker, he was very determined, constantly working. He never stopped.”

## **ABOUT THE PRODUCTION**

Prior to filming, the 20 actors playing hotshots immersed themselves in a Hotshot boot camp in the mountains outside Santa Fe, NM. The boot camp was led by technical advisor Pat McCarty and other former Granite Mountain Hotshots.

“They created a camp that taught the actors how to become not only a wildland firefighter but a Granite Mountain Hotshot,” says Kosinski. “We sent them into the wilderness and they learned all the separate jobs of Hotshotting. They slept out under the stars; they took wildland fire courses. Most importantly, they built that camaraderie of being a unit.

“I sent 20 actors to boot camp, and they came back a wildland firefighting team,” Kosinski continues.

“We made the guys work, and they worked very hard,” says McCarty. “Most of them had never done anything like this, but nobody ever complained, even though they had giant blisters on their feet and they were all hurting. They worked very, very hard, and they slept in the dirt, ate MREs [military rations; “meals ready-to-eat”]. It was not glorious at all, but they kept a smile on their faces and adopted the Hotshot mentality.”

Almost every day of the 60-day shoot involved exterior shooting in tough terrain. When fire was involved, with real fire crews on standby, the actors themselves had the

responsibility of building real fire lines. “We worked, we cut with saws, we dug line, we built a little containment box for the fire, and it was all done by the actors,” says McCarty. “When it was time to get to work, they just grabbed their stuff and they started going. It was important for them to be able to see the fire, and the way the fire reacts with the fuel.”

Teller says that the boot camp not only taught the basics of wildland firefighting, but perhaps more importantly, created a bonding experience for the actors that mimicked the brotherhood of the Hotshots. “The bootcamp was intense,” he says. “You cut line for miles, hunched over. One guy’s got a rake, another guy’s got a Pulaski – it’s like landscaping on steroids. It’s hard work but nothing brings you closer together than collective suffering. You feel like you can’t let down the guy next to you – you can’t make him do extra work to pick up for your slack.”

For McCarty, “Authenticity is my number-one concern throughout this entire thing. Authenticity of the characters of the guys, how they would walk, talk, act, all of that, and then authenticity of the tools, the way the fire scenes are set up, the way they interact on the radios, the way they communicate with each other, the way fire camps run.”

Insisting on authenticity made the production more challenging, but the actors embraced it. “Wildland firefighting, as a job, has never been put on screen before, and Joe wanted the movie to be as authentic as possible,” says Teller.

“We were sleeping together, hiking together. We had the worst blisters I’ve ever seen in my life,” adds Brolin. “But we were all in it together – you help each other out.”

## **RUGGED LOCATIONS**

The production filmed in the same kind of mountain ranges where the Granite Mountain Hotshots would battle wildfires. The first four weeks were spent in the harshest locations, involving strenuous mountain climbing.

The movie spent its first week filming in the Pueblo of Nambé, an Indian Pueblo in the Sangre de Cristo Mountains north of Santa Fe. Here, the production shot arduous training scenes meant to take place in Prescott National Forest, as well as scenes where the Granite Mountain Hotshots fight the Duck Lake Fire in Michigan.

Next, production spent almost two weeks atop Pajarito Mountain, filming on steep cliffside locations as high as 10,400 feet with a 1,400-foot vertical drop. Here, production crew encountered bears, spiders, and deer while lighting practical fires and climbing cliffs to shoot various scenes including the crew fighting the Cave Creek complex fire, training scenes, and Chiricahua Mountain firefighting action.

Then production moved to rustic Chavez Ranch in the Ortiz Mountains, home to bison, cattle, yaks, game birds, sheep, and diamondback rattlesnakes. This setting was utilized for the rocky mountain scenes where the Granite Mountain Hotshots battle the Yarnell Hill Fire. Doubling for Yarnell's burnt box canyon was Zia Pueblo's chalky gypsum mine.

Scenes depicting the firefighters' personal lives were shot in numerous locales. The village of Pecos stood in for the town of Yarnell. Exteriors of the Marsh ranch-style home were shot at a residence in Eldorado, while the Steinbrink house and corral was filmed in Galisteo. Other residences and Prescott town scenes were shot in the towns of Los Alamos and White Rock.

A few key scenes were shot in downtown Prescott, Arizona.

A filmmaking highlight occurred in downtown Santa Fe's Evangelo's Cocktail Lounge, where production shot the scenes that occurred in real life at Matt's Saloon in Prescott,

where The Rusty Pistols Cowboy Band performed. The band that appears in the film is indeed Duane Steinbrink's real-life band, with Jeff Bridges playing guitar and singing lead vocals with the band in the film.

Bridges arranged for music producer T Bone Burnett to come to Santa Fe for a recording session in which Bridges prerecorded the tracks that the band performs in the film, including the song "Ghost Riders in the Sky," which in real life is the most-requested song performed by The Rusty Pistols.

Marsh and Amanda's idyllic horseback riding and camping scenes in the Arizona backcountry were filmed at Diamond Tail Ranch in the high desert near Placitas. The restaurant where Steinbrink and Marsh meet with the mayor was filmed at the historic Legal Tender Restaurant and Saloon in Lamy.

For the scenes involving the ancient juniper tree in Prescott National Forest, production built a set at Bonanza Creek Ranch, south of Santa Fe, and grafted several juniper trees into one.

Finally, a backlot was built behind Santa Fe Studios, where interiors for the Marsh ranch home were constructed, as was the hotshots' headquarters. Production also constructed a backlot forest behind Santa Fe Studios for filming of fires and stunts with extensive rigging requirements. The 3,000-gallon slurry drop from the low-flying C-130 P-2 Orion turboprop stunt aircraft was also shot here.

## **THE LOOK: COSTUME DESIGN & PRODUCTION DESIGN**

The movie's color palette emphasizes earth tones, primarily blues, grays, and browns, along with a charred bone black. Costume design and production design utilized reality-based sources for authenticity.

## COSTUME DESIGN

For much of the movie, the firefighters are seen in their all-similar wildland firefighting gear, including helmets, black Crew 7 or Granite Mountain Hotshots tee-shirts; CrewBoss Nomex yellow firefighting shirts, including fire retardant; CrewBoss Nomex green khaki firefighting pants; and handmade black leather Nicks firefighting boots from Spokane, Washington. “It’s a troop, an esprit d’corps, and we wanted to show that in their uniforms,” says costume designer Louise Mingenbach.

When not at work, the firefighters favor plaid Western shirts, T-shirts, and jeans, with Wrangler, Ariat, and Carhartt all popular brands. “In Prescott, it’s a cowboy aesthetic,” explains Mingenbach. Josh Brolin and Jeff Bridges are often seen in Carhartt shirts, and Jennifer Connelly is often in boot-cut Ariat jeans.

## PRODUCTION DESIGN

In creating the look for the film, production designer Kevin Kavanaugh teamed with Kosinski to create a powerful image. “We were trying for an epic scale with the biggest frames we could find, to show the power and beauty and destruction of Mother Nature,” says the production designer.

The actors carry customized Mystery Ranch backpacks weighing about 45 pounds each, just like real firefighters do; each pack is filled with survival supplies and tools for digging and creating firebreaks.

Production acquired the actual buggies (trucks that carry the crew and their equipment from fire to fire) belonging to the real Granite Mountain Hotshots, renting them from the city of Prescott. These buggies are white retrofitted Ford F-750 trucks with equipment lockers above the seats.

The Crew 7 Headquarters building was built as a close reproduction of the original in Prescott. This is where the Granite Mountain Hotshots worked and trained.

## **CAPTURING FIRE**

Five fires are portrayed in *Only the Brave*: in Cave Creek, Arizona; Chiricahua Mountain, Arizona; Grand Canyon National Park, Arizona; Doce Fire, just outside Prescott, Arizona; and Yarnell Hill Fire, south of Prescott. Kavanaugh explains, “We had to find the different looks, the different elevations, some more chaparral, some more arid. They all have a different character and different look for different vignettes.”

The fire sequences in *Granite Mountain* are portrayed with a mixture of actual fire (called a practical fire), special-effects fire, and visual-effects CG fire.

It was key to director Joseph Kosinski that the wildfires be captured as realistically as possible. During preproduction, he worked with actual wildland fire departments to film controlled burns, in which fire officials light forest fires on purpose to thin out forest density to control future wildfires.

“Fire is a character in the film,” describes Kosinski. “I’ve heard the sound of wildfire described as a freight train, or a ‘huffing and puffing’ dragon. Big fires actually breathe and you can hear that. Sound design became a huge part of the storytelling.”

“Fighting a big fire is almost like a big air battle,” says producers Lorenzo di Bonaventura. “There are all sorts of different helicopters and planes, dropping water and other fire suppressants. The battle is being coordinated from headquarters. Then, on the ground, are the guys from the infantry, if you will, trying to make their way through. You see the ruggedness of what they’re doing, the challenge of what they’re doing – you’re dealing with fire on a very elemental level.”

The *Granite Mountain* art department built a two-acre backlot forest set behind Santa Fe Studios, where they replanted more than 600 pine, juniper, and spruce trees, along with bushes, grasses, and rocks, and installed a drip irrigation system. Fire pipes were laid throughout the forest and additional bushes were created of steel wool and stainless steel. Thousands of truckloads of soil were moved in to create a mountainous base, along with 50 truckloads of stumps, logs, sticks, and forest debris.

The fires on the backlot set were ignited from liquid propane tanks and sterno cans, with flames bursting 30 to 100 feet high and radiating heat so intense that the cast inadvertently ran from it upon their first close encounter. The trees were a combination of real trees and steel trees with small cutouts to function as manifolds for liquid propane to be pumped through to provide an explosion. The real trees were covered with fire retardant so that when the propane was shut off, the fires smoldered and dissipated.

The trees were surrounded by a ground cover of peat moss mixed with diesel fuel to create ground fires. Dust was sent blowing with giant 10-foot fans accompanied by special effects smoke. Says Kavanaugh, "We encouraged more dust, more dirt, more grime, more smoke. It's almost like we couldn't get enough of it."

In addition to orchestrating the numerous spot fires on location, special effects supervisor Mike Meinardus created full-on fires at the backlot forest accompanied by special-effects white smoke, pyrotechnic black smoke, and lawn mower foggers filled with hot propylene glycol. He oversaw a crew that lit and controlled the propane flow into the steel trees and bushes. There were numerous 500-gallon propane tanks and several 2,500-gallon propane tanks, all equipped to deliver vapor or liquid, and attached to pipes and flexible hoses. Water trucks were filled and standing by whenever fires were lit.

The construction of the backlot forest took four months, with production's biggest fires occurring in August. "We gave the actors complete reality," says Meinardus. "We had a

peat moss and biodiesel mixture that we soaked and put on the ground, so the actors actually took their drip torches and light that stuff up; the fire was all real. The Backlot Forest was so realistic that jackrabbits, snakes, spiders, and lizards moved into it.

## **ABOUT THE REAL-LIFE GRANITE MOUNTAIN HOTSHOTS**

The real-life Granite Mountain Hotshots were the first municipally funded team of hotshot firefighters in US, certified in 2008 and led by Eric Marsh. In his memoir *Granite Mountain* (written with Stephen Talty), Brendan McDonough describes Eric Marsh memorably: “He was a North Carolinian, an outdoorsman, movie-star handsome, former rugby player, a degree in biology from Appalachian State.”

The Granite Mountain Hotshots developed a reputation for their aptitude, ability, and willingness during their six years of operation, which are compressed in the movie into a shorter time frame. “Granite Mountain was known for going anywhere and fighting any kind of fire,” writes McDonough. “If you called Granite Mountain, they came. Arizona, California, Montana, or Minnesota, they got the call. They got helicoptered out to jobs in the remote wilderness and stayed there for two weeks, living like Lewis and Clark out on the frontier.”

The Granite Mountain Hotshots were not only skilled wildland firefighters; they also were known for their respectful demeanor when circulating in communities. As Sean Flynn describes in his 2014 *GQ* article, “Marsh’s men tucked in their shirts; they didn’t spit in camp; they wiped the sink after they washed up. Waitresses and strangers were ‘ma’am’ and ‘sir.’”

In 2013—their last season--the average age of the Granite Mountain Hotshots crew was 27. McDonough was in his third fire season as part of the crew.

The tragic Yarnell Hill Fire was ignited by a lightning strike in June 2013. As the winds increased, the fire spread. Then on June 30, the gusty winds changed course and turned “squirrely,” twisting and rotating the fire’s progress. McDonough, who was the lookout for the Granite Mountain Hotshots that day, radioed his crew captain about the winds. When the fire advanced onto his prearranged trigger point, he alerted his crew and retreated down the mountain.

As the winds gusted even harder and the fire rapidly picked up progress, Superintendent Eric Marsh guided his crew accordingly, switching their movement away from one safe black zone towards a different safe black zone. The flaming front approached faster than anyone anticipated. Marsh’s radio communication grew spotty, interrupted by static and blustery winds. Then, with unpredictable winds now sweeping in at gale force and flames running wild, the Granite Mountain crew’s escape route was suddenly cut off. Caught in a freak inferno, they deployed their fire shelters.

It was the greatest loss of firefighters in the United States since 9/11. At the memorial service, Vice President Joe Biden stated, “All men are created equal and then some become firefighters.” The Granite Mountain Hotshots crew was discontinued after the 2013 tragedy.

## **A SHORT HISTORY OF REAL-LIFE WILDLAND FIREFIGHTING**

Federal agencies fund and oversee most wildland firefighter hotshot teams, most of them under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Forest Service. A breed of specialist firefighters, hotshots fight wildland forest fires, their strategy usually consisting of encircling the fire with a scraped-out perimeter line cleared of fuel. They choke the fire and force it to expire in the charred perimeter. Their firefighting tools are carried in on their backs: chainsaws, Pulaskis, and axes. When fighting fires, the teams retreat into the “cold black”--areas cleared of such “fuel” as trees, brush, and grass.

In Sean Flynn's 2014 GQ article, he wrote, "What makes hotshots elite is that they're so damned tough. Physically, yes, because they do hard labor with, at a minimum, a 40-pound pack on their backs, and they do it on billy-goat slopes and at the bottom of canyons and on the tops of mountains, and they almost always double-time hike a few miles to get there first. But they are also mentally tough, because they're able to do that for 16 hours, sleep in the dirt, then get up and do it for another 16 hours, day after day after day, without dwelling on, or at least not surrendering to, the fact that what they're doing is often quite miserable."

There are approximately 107 hotshot crews in the US, each consisting of 20 firefighters. The 2,000 or so elite wildland firefighters in the US who are certified as hotshots must be completely trained in wildfire suppression tactics, always ready, and always equipped to travel to field assignments in remote locations at a moment's notice during the summer fire season. The crews typically fly or drive in, set up camp, strategize their approach, then jump into the front lines.

In her book *The Fire Line*, Fernanda Santos comments, "Hotshot crews are cohesive units of 20 firefighters, extensively trained, hugely fit, and routinely courageous – but, as they often said, only as strong as their weakest link. If the burning wilderness is a battlefield, they're the infantry, engaging the enemy on foot."

It's a highly dangerous job, and growing more so as worsening fires explode all over the western United States and the world.

**##**

## **ABOUT THE CAST**

A powerful, sought-after film actor, Academy Award® nominee **JOSH BROLIN** (Eric Marsh) continues to balance challenging roles in both mainstream studio productions as well as thought-provoking independents.

Upcoming, Brolin can be seen in multiple projects. He will next star as super-villain Thanos in Marvel's upcoming film *Avengers: Infinity War Part 1*. Disney has slated the release for May 4, 2018. Brolin will also star in the highly anticipated Marvel superhero film *Deadpool 2* opposite Ryan Reynolds for 20<sup>th</sup> Century Fox, which is set for release on June 1, 2018. Also in June 2018, Brolin will reprise his role as Matt Graver in *Sicario 2: Soldado*, a follow up to the 2015 critically-acclaimed crime drama. The film will hit the big screen on June 29.

Brolin was last seen in the Coen Brothers' comedy *Hail, Caesar!*, co-starring George Clooney, Channing Tatum, and Tilda Swinton. This marked Brolin's third collaboration with the Coen Brothers, having previously worked with them on the Western drama *True Grit* and the Academy Award® winning drama *No Country for Old Men*. Also in recent years, Brolin starred in Jody Hill's *The Legacy of a Whitetail Deer Hunter* alongside Danny McBride.

Brolin was nominated for an Academy Award®, Screen Actors Guild Award, and was bestowed honors from the New York Film Critics Circle and the National Board of Review for his portrayal of Dan White in Gus Van Sant's Academy Award® nominated film *Milk*. Other notable recent credits include Paul Thomas Anderson's *Inherent Vice*, for which Brolin received rave reviews and a Critics Choice Award; *Sicario*, opposite Emily Blunt and Benicio Del Toro, and *Everest*, opposite Jake Gyllenhaal, Jason Clarke, and John Hawkes.

Other film credits include: *Labor Day*, directed by Jason Reitman; Spike Lee's *Oldboy*; the Robert Rodriguez & Frank Miller-directed *Sin City 2: A Dame to Kill For*; *Gangster*

*Squad*, opposite Sean Penn; *Men in Black 3*, opposite Will Smith and Tommy Lee Jones; Oliver Stone's *Wall Street: Money Never Sleeps* and as the title role in *W.*; Ridley Scott's blockbuster *American Gangster* opposite Denzel Washington and Russell Crowe; Woody Allen's *You Will Meet a Tall Dark Stranger* opposite Anthony Hopkins and Naomi Watts; *Planet Terror*, part of the critically acclaimed Quentin Tarantino and Robert Rodriguez double feature, *Grindhouse*; *In the Valley of Elah* for director Paul Haggis; John Stockwell's *Into the Blue*; Paul Verhoeven's blockbuster hit, *Hollow Man*; Scott Silver's *Mod Squad*; Ole Bornedal's psychological thriller *Nightwatch*; *Best Laid Plans* opposite Reese Witherspoon, produced by Mike Newell; *All the Rage*; and Guillermo Del Toro's science-fiction thriller, *Mimic*. Brodin also received recognition from critics and audiences in David O. Russell's *Flirting with Disaster*, portraying a bisexual federal agent, alongside an outstanding ensemble cast led by Ben Stiller. Brodin made his feature film debut starring in the action-comedy classic *Goonies*, directed by Richard Donner for producer Steven Spielberg.

**MILES TELLER** (Brendan McDonough) had the distinct honor and privilege of making his feature screen debut opposite Nicole Kidman in the film based on the Pulitzer Prize winning play *Rabbit Hole*.

Teller was born in Downingtown, Pennsylvania, and at the age of 11 moved to Citrus County, FL.

Teller was then cast in Paramount's film *Footloose*, which was released in October 2011. He was also seen in Todd Phillips' *Project X* that year.

In 2013, he starred in *21 & Over*, written and directed by Jon Lucas and Scott Moore. That year, he began reaching critical success after starring in the James Ponsoldt film, *The Spectacular Now*, for which he won the Dramatic Special Jury

Award for Acting at the 2013 Sundance Film Festival, with co-star Shailene Woodley.

In 2014, he co-starred in the comedy *That Awkward Moment*, alongside Zac Efron and Michael B. Jordan, and appeared in the science fiction film *Divergent* opposite Shailene Woodley. In the fall of 2014, he starred opposite JK Simmons in the Sony Pictures Classics critically acclaimed and Oscar® nominated drama *Whiplash*, which received the Grand Jury Prize and Audience Award at Sundance and the Deauville Film Festival. He also landed Teller a Best Actor nomination for the 2014 Gotham Awards.

In 2016, he starred in the Warner Bros. film *War Dogs*, alongside Jonah Hill with Todd Phillips directing, as well as the critically acclaimed Martin Scorsese-produced film *Bleed For This*, which reunited him with his *Rabbit Hole* costar, Aaron Eckhart.

Next up, Teller can be seen in the Steven Spielberg-produced film *Thank You for Your Service*, which will be released by Universal on October 27. Teller will soon start production on “Too Old to Die Young,” the Amazon series creative by Nic Refn (*Drive*). The series explores the criminal underbelly of Los Angeles by following characters’ existential journeys from being killers to becoming samurais in the City of Angels.

Teller now makes his home in Los Angeles.

**JAMES BADGE DALE** (Jesse Steed) has built an impressive resume playing a variety of roles, showing off his remarkable range as an actor.

Not only is Dale a star on screen, he recently owned the stage in the Robert Schenkkan off-Broadway production of “Building the Wall” opposite Tamara Tunie. Directed by Ari Edelson, the powerful dystopian drama sketches a dark vision of an America in recovery.

Last year, Dale completed production on a multitude of upcoming buzzworthy titles, including Twentieth Century Fox’s film adaptation of Boom! Studios’ graphic novel *The Empty Man* directed by David Prior; Nia DaCosta’s modern western *Little Woods* opposite Tessa Thompson and Lily James; and Jeremy Saulnier’s Netflix thriller *Hold the Dark* opposite Jeffrey Wright and Alexander Skarsgard.

Recent credits include Michael Bay’s on-the-ground version of the Benghazi debacle *13 Hours* opposite John Krasinski; Robert Zemeckis’s meticulous re-creation of Philippe Petit’s famous 1974 tightrope spectacle, *The Walk*, opposite Joseph Gordon-Levitt; Gore Verbinski’s revisionist adventure western *The Lone Ranger*; Marc Forster’s post-apocalyptic film *World War Z* opposite Brad Pitt; and Shane Black’s blockbuster *Iron Man 3*.

Other notable film credits include Steve McQueen’s cruel paradox of addiction in *Shame* opposite Michael Fassbender; Martin Scorsese’s Academy Award winning film *The Departed*; Robert Redford’s *The Conspirator* opposite James McAvoy and Robin Wright; and Harry Hook’s iconic *Lord of the Flies*.

On the small screen, Dale is most recognized for his riveting performance as ‘Robert Leckie’ in the Emmy and Peabody award winning HBO miniseries, “The Pacific.” Additionally, he starred in AMC’s critically acclaimed series “Rubicon,” and is remembered as Chase Edmunds, Kiefer Sutherland’s younger partner, in the hit television series “24.”

Dale is the son of late Broadway, film and television star Anita Morris and two-time Tony Award-winning Director/Choreographer, Grover Dale. He followed his parents onto the

stage making his Off-Broadway debut in 2003 with The Flea Theatre Company. He currently resides in New York.

One of Hollywood's most successful actors and a seven-time Academy Award® nominee, **JEFF BRIDGES'** (Duane Steinbrink) performance in *Crazy Heart*—as Bad Blake, the down-on-his-luck, alcoholic country music singer at the center of the drama—deservedly garnered the iconic performer his first Oscar® for Best Performance by an Actor in a Leading Role. The performance also earned him the Golden Globe, SAG Award and the IFP/Spirit Award for Lead Actor.

The film follows Blake, who, through his experiences with a female reporter (Maggie Gyllenhaal), is able to get his career back on track while playing mentor to a hotshot contemporary country star and simultaneously struggling in his shadow. The movie, directed by Scott Cooper, is based on the debut novel by Thomas Cobb and also stars Robert Duvall and Colin Farrell. Bridges' moving and multi-layered performance is one of many in a career that spans decades.

He earned his first Oscar® nod in 1971 for Best Supporting Actor in Peter Bogdanovich's *The Last Picture Show*, co-starring Cybill Shepherd. Three years later, he received his second Best Supporting Actor nomination for his role in Michael Cimino's *Thunderbolt and Lightfoot*. By 1984, he landed top kudos with a Best Actor nomination for *Starman*; that performance also earned him a Golden Globe nomination. In 2001, he was honored with another Golden Globe nomination and his fourth Oscar® nomination for his role in *The Contender*, Rod Lurie's political thriller, co-starring Gary Oldman and Joan Allen, in which Bridges played the President of the United States.

In December 2010, his reunion with the Coen Brothers in the critically acclaimed western *True Grit* landed him his sixth Oscar® nomination. The film focuses on fourteen-year-old Mattie Ross (Hailee Steinfeld) whose father has been shot in cold blood by the coward Tom Chaney (Josh Brolin), and she is determined to bring him to

justice. Enlisting the help of a trigger-happy, drunken U.S. Marshal, Rooster Cogburn (Bridges), she sets out with him — over his objections — to hunt down Chaney.

In 2017, he received his seventh Oscar® nomination for Best Supporting Actor as a retiring Texas Ranger in *Hell or High Water*, a modern action bank heist thriller set in west Texas. The critically acclaimed film starred Chris Pine, Ben Foster and Gil Birmingham. The film that premiered *Un Certain Regard* at the 2016 Cannes Film festival, was written by Taylor Sheridan and directed by David Mackenzie. He also received a Golden Globe and SAG nomination for his performance.

His voice was most recently heard in the first animated feature film adaptation of Antoine de Saint-Exupery's iconic masterpiece "The Little Prince" as the Aviator for director Mark Osborne. The film is streaming on Netflix.

In August 2014, Bridges starred in *The Giver*, opposite Meryl Streep, Brenton Thwaites, Alexander Skarsgard, Katie Holmes, Odeya Rush and Cameron Monaghan. Based on the bestselling young adult novel by Lois Lowry, the film — which he also produced — was a passion project of his for more than two decades and was directed by Phillip Noyce.

In 2010, he starred in the highly anticipated 3D action-adventure *TRON: Legacy*. Bridges reprised his role of video-game developer Kevin Flynn from the classic 1982 film *TRON*. With state-of-the-art technology, *TRON: Legacy* featured Bridges as the first actor in cinematic history to play opposite a younger version of himself.

Prior to *Crazy Heart*, Bridges was seen in the war comedy *The Men Who Stare at Goats*, playing Bill Django, a free-spirited military intelligence officer, who is the leader of a secret group of warriors in the army. The Peter Straughan screenplay (based on the Jon Ronson book and directed by Grant Heslov) is based on a true story about a reporter in Iraq, who meets a former member of the US Army's First Earth Battalion, a

unit that employs paranormal powers in their missions. He stars opposite George Clooney (also a producer), Ewan McGregor and Kevin Spacey.

Additionally, he starred in "A Dog Year" for HBO Films/ Picturehouse, based on the memoir by Jon Katz and directed by George LaVoo (who also wrote the screenplay) and garnered an Emmy nomination; as well as opposite Robert Downey, Jr. in the Paramount Pictures/Marvel Studios blockbuster *Iron Man*, playing the character of Obadiah Stane.

He starred opposite Shia LaBeouf as Geek, a cantankerous and washed-up surfer penguin, in the Academy Award<sup>®</sup>-nominated "Surf's Up," from Sony Pictures Animation. Prior to that, he was in his second film for director Terry Gilliam, titled "*Tideland*," where he played Noah, a drug addicted, has-been, rock guitarist.

The actor's multi-faceted career has cut a wide swath across all genres. He has starred in numerous box office hits, including Gary Ross' *Seabiscuit*, Terry Gilliam's offbeat comedic drama *The Fisher King* (co-starring Robin Williams), the multi-award-nominated *The Fabulous Baker Boys* (co-starring his brother Beau Bridges and Michelle Pfeiffer), *The Jagged Edge* (opposite Glenn Close), Francis Ford Coppola's *Tucker: The Man and His Dream*, *Blown Away* (co-starring his late father Lloyd Bridges and Tommy Lee Jones), Peter Weir's *Fearless* (with Isabella Rossellini and Rosie Perez), and Martin Bell's *American Heart* (with Edward Furlong, produced by Bridges' company, AsIs Productions). That film earned Bridges an IFP/Spirit Award in 1993 for Best Actor.

In the summer of 2004, he appeared opposite Kim Basinger in the critically acclaimed *The Door in the Floor* for director Todd Williams and Focus Features, which earned him an IFP/Spirit Award nomination for Best Actor.

He played a major featured role in *The Muse* (an Albert Brooks comedy starring Brooks, Sharon Stone and Andie MacDowell); appeared in the suspense thriller *Arlington Road* (co-starring Tim Robbins and Joan Cusack, directed by Mark Pellington); and starred in

*Simpatico*, the screen version of Sam Shepard's play (with Nick Nolte, Sharon Stone and Albert Finney). In 1998, he starred in the Coen brothers' cult comedy *The Big Lebowski*. Before that, he starred in Ridley Scott's *White Squall*, Walter Hill's *Wild Bill*, John Huston's *Fat City* and Barbara Streisand's romantic comedy *The Mirror Has Two Faces*.

Some of Bridges' other acting credits include *How to Lose Friends and Alienate People*, *K-PAX*, *Masked and Anonymous*, *Stay Hungry*, *Bad Company*, *Against All Odds*, *Cutter's Way*, *The Vanishing*, *Texasville*, *The Morning After*, *Nadine*, *Rancho Deluxe*, *See You in the Morning*, *Eight Million Ways to Die*, *The Last American Hero*, and *Heart of the West*.

In 1983, Bridges founded the End Hunger Network, a nonprofit organization dedicated to feeding children around the world. Bridges produced the End Hunger televent, a three-hour live television broadcast focusing on world hunger. The televent featured Gregory Peck, Jack Lemmon, Burt Lancaster, Bob Newhart, Kenny Loggins and other leading film, television and music stars in an innovative production to educate and inspire action.

He is currently the national spokesman for the Share Our Strength/No Kid Hungry campaign that is fighting to end childhood hunger in America.

Through his company, Asls Productions, he produced "Hidden in America," which starred his brother Beau. That television movie, produced for Showtime, received a Golden Globe nomination in 1996 for Best TV/Cable Film and garnered a Screen Actors Guild nod for Best Actor for Beau Bridges. The film was also nominated for two Emmy Awards.

One of Bridges's true passions is photography. While on the set of his movies, Bridges takes behind-the-scenes pictures of the actors, crew and locations. After completion of each motion picture, he edits the images into a book and gives copies to everyone

involved. Bridges's photographs have been featured in several magazines, including *Premiere* and *Aperture*, as well as in other publications worldwide. He has also had gallery exhibitions of his work in New York (at the George Eastman House), Los Angeles, London and the Museum of Photographic Arts in San Diego. In 2013, Jeff was the recipient of an Infinity Award, presented by the International Center of Photography, NY.

The books, which have become valued by collectors, were never intended for public sale, but in the fall of 2003, powerHouse Books released *Pictures: Photographs by Jeff Bridges*, a hardcover book containing a compilation of his photographs taken on numerous film locations over the years, to much critical acclaim. Proceeds from the book are donated to the Motion Picture & Television Fund, a nonprofit organization that offers charitable care and support to film-industry workers.

In February 2015, Bridges released a spoken word/ambient album titled "Sleeping Tapes." The collaboration was co-produced with musician Keefus Ciancia who also supplied the music. The album was released by web hosting service Squarespace as part of its Super Bowl advertising campaign, with all proceeds from the album sales going to Share Our Strength's No Kid Hungry campaign.

In August 2011, Bridges released his self-titled major label debut album for Blue Note Records. Multiple-Grammy Award-winning songwriter, musician and producer T Bone Burnett produced the album. It is an organic extension and culmination of his personal, professional and music friendship with Burnett, whom he has known for more than 30 years. The critically acclaimed album was a follow up to his first solo effort "Be Here Soon," on Ramp Records, the Santa Barbara, CA label he co-founded with Michael McDonald and producer/singer/songwriter Chris Pelonis. The CD features guest appearances by vocalist/keyboardist Michael McDonald, Grammy-nominated Amy Holland and country-rock legend David Crosby. In 2014, he released his first live album, "Jeff Bridges & The Abiders Live," and has been touring off and on when he is not working.

Bridges and his wife Susan divide their time between their home in Santa Barbara, California, and their ranch in Montana.

**TAYLOR KITSCH** (Chris MacKenzie) grew up in British Columbia, Canada. In 2006, Taylor landed his breakout role playing Tim Riggins on NBC's critically acclaimed sports drama "Friday Night Lights."

Kitsch then starred in *The Bang Bang Club* as Kevin Carter, a true story about four young photojournalists whose graphic images drew the world's attention to the last stages of apartheid in South Africa.

Two years later, Kitsch collaborated again with *FNL*'s creator, Peter Berg, starring in Berg's acclaimed war thriller *Lone Survivor* with Mark Wahlberg and Eric Bana. From there, Kitsch went on to act in Oliver Stone's *Savages* and Disney's live-action film *John Carter*, directed by the acclaimed Andrew Stanton.

In 2014, Kitsch made his return to television, appearing alongside Julia Roberts and Mark Ruffalo in HBO's Emmy Award-winning movie *The Normal Heart*, directed by Ryan Murphy. The following year, he starred in the second season of HBO's *True Detective* with Colin Farrell, Rachel McAdams and Vince Vaughn. He's set to return to television in 2018, executive producing and appearing as David Koresh in the in Paramount's miniseries *Waco* opposite Michael Shannon.

Kitsch just appeared opposite Michael Keaton and Dylan O'Brien in the adaptation of Vince Flynn's novel *American Assassin*, directed by Michael Cuesta.

Academy Award® winner **JENNIFER CONNELLY** (Amanda Marsh) continues to prove her versatility as an actress with each new project she undertakes.

Connelly will be seen next year in the Robert Rodriguez-directed, James Cameron-produced sci-fi epic *Alita: Battle Angel*, with Michelle Rodriguez, Mahershala Ali and Christoph Waltz. 2018 marks Connelly's return to television, in TNT's futuristic thriller "Snowpiercer."

Other recent projects include Ewan McGregor's *American Pastoral*, with Ewan McGregor and Dakota Fanning, based on the book by Phillip Roth. In 2014, she starred opposite Anthony Mackie in *Shelter*, written and directed by Paul Bettany. 2014 also re-teamed her with Darren Aronofsky and Russell Crowe for the biblical epic *Noah*.

Connelly's first film was Sergio Leone's *Once Upon a Time in America* in 1984, though her big break was her role as Sarah in *Labyrinth* opposite David Bowie in 1986. She earned an Independent Spirit Award nomination for her widely praised, haunting portrayal of a drug addict in Darren Aronofsky's critically acclaimed *Requiem for a Dream* in 2000. She received a Golden Globe®, BAFTA, AFI, Broadcast Critics, and Academy Award® for her starring role in Ron Howard's *A Beautiful Mind* opposite Russell Crowe.

Connelly's other film credits include Dario Argento's *Phenomena*; Dennis Hopper's *The Hot Spot* with Don Johnson and Virginia Madsen; Joe Johnston's *The Rocketeer* alongside Billy Campbell, Alan Arkin, and Timothy Dalton; John Singleton's *Higher Learning* alongside Omar Epps and Kristy Swanson; Lee Tamahori's *Mulholland Falls* alongside Nick Nolte and Melanie Griffith; Alex Proyas' *Dark City* with Rufus Sewell, William Hurt, and Kiefer Sutherland; Keith Gordon's *Waking the Dead* opposite Billy Crudup; Ed Harris' *Pollock* alongside Ed Harris, Marcia Gay Harden, and Tom Bower; Ang Lee's *Hulk* opposite Eric Bana; Vadim Perelman's *House of Sand and Fog* opposite Ben Kingsley; Walter Salles' *Dark Water* opposite John C. Reilly; Todd Field's *Little Children* with Kate Winslet and Patrick Wilson; Edward Zwick's *Blood Diamond* with Leonardo DiCaprio and Djimon Hounsou; Terry George's *Reservation Road* with Joaquin Phoenix and Elle Fanning; Scott Derrickson's *The Day the Earth Stood Still* opposite Keanu Reeves; Ken Kwapis' *He's*

*Just Not That Into You* with Jennifer Aniston, Morgan Lily, Scarlett Johansson, Bradley Cooper, Ben Affleck, and Justin Long; Jon Amiel's *Creation* opposite Paul Bettany; Dustin Lance Black's *Virginia* with Ed Harris, Carrie Preston, and Harrison Gilbertson; Ron Howard's *The Dilemma* with Vince Vaughn, Kevin James, and Winona Ryder; *Stuck in Love*, with Greg Kinnear; Claudia Llosa's *Aloft* with Cillian Murphy, Oona Chaplin, and Mélanie Laurent; and Akiva Goldsman's *Winter's Tale*.

## **ABOUT THE FILMMAKERS**

**JOSEPH KOSINSKI** (Director) is a director whose uncompromising visual style has quickly made a mark in the filmmaking zeitgeist. His feature film debut, *TRON: Legacy*, grossed over \$400 million worldwide and was nominated for several awards including an Academy Award® and a Grammy for the score by Daft Punk. For his sophomore feature, Kosinski created the science-fiction thriller *Oblivion* starring Tom Cruise and Morgan Freeman. With a score by M83, it grossed \$288 million worldwide.

Kosinski won three AICP Awards for his commercials Gears of War "Mad World," Assassin's Creed "Unity," and Destiny "Become Legend," which are now featured in the Department of Film at the Museum of Modern Art.

He received his undergraduate degree in Mechanical Engineering at Stanford University before graduating from Columbia University with a master's degree in Architecture.

**KEN NOLAN** (Screenplay) is best known as the screenwriter who adapted Mark Bowden's best-selling *Black Hawk Down* for producer Jerry Bruckheimer and director Ridley Scott, which was released in 2002. The movie went on to be nominated for four Academy Awards® and won two. Nolan was nominated for a WGA Award for his work. He went on to win the WGA Award for the cold war thriller TNT mini-series "*The Company*," based on the best-selling book by Robert Littell.

In 1994, when he was 27 years old and living paycheck to paycheck as an assistant in Hollywood, Nolan sold his first screenplay to Warner Bros. He went on to record-setting amounts for spec screenplays over the next 20 years.

He hails from Portland, Oregon and Buffalo, New York, and traveled between each growing up due to divorced parents who wanted to get as far away from each other as humanly possible.

Nolan most recently co-wrote *Transformers: The Last Knight*, for Michael Bay and Paramount Pictures, which gets released on July 4<sup>th</sup>, 2017. He co-wrote the screenplay with writing team Art Marcum and Matt Holloway (*Iron Man*).

Nolan is currently working on *Under Fire: The Untold Story of the Attack in Benghazi*, for HBO and late producer Jerry Weintraub, based on the book by Fred Burton and Samuel M. Katz.

He also recently sold the spy thriller *The Defection*, based on yet another Robert Littell novel, to Fox. The script placed Nolan on the coveted Black List in Hollywood, a list of the 50 best scripts of that year. Nolan has another Littell adaptation in the works for Fox.

Nolan's first novel, *The Spawn*, was published by Permuted Press in 2015.

Nolan lives in Los Angeles with his wife, his six-year-old daughter, and three dogs, two of which are lovable rescues, the other an irascible and cranky Jack Russell terrier.

**ERIC WARREN SINGER** (Screenplay) was born and raised in Los Angeles. His first screenplay, *The Sky Is Falling*, was named by Premiere and Empire magazines as one of the top 10 all-time unproduced screenplays. He has worked with and written movies for David Fincher, Gore Verbinski, Ron Howard, Ridley Scott, Ben Affleck, Tom Tykwer, Michael Mann, and David O. Russell. He wrote the screenplay for *The International*,

directed by Tom Tykwer (Columbia Pictures/Sony, 2009). His screenplay for *American Hustle* came in at number eight on the annual Black List, the entertainment industry survey of most well-liked unproduced scripts. It was nominated for an Academy Award® for best original screenplay, won the BAFTA for best original screenplay, and won the Australian Academy Cinema Television Arts award for best original screenplay. He is currently writing *Marita* for Sony with Jennifer Lawrence attached to produce and star.

**LORENZO DI BONAVENTURA** (Producer) is a film producer best known for producing the *Transformers*, *GI Joe* and *Red* film franchises. He is CEO of di Bonaventura Pictures and di Bonaventura Pictures Television.

In February 1989, di Bonaventura joined Warner Bros. as Vice President of Production. While at Warner Bros., he was involved in over 130 productions and eventually became president of Worldwide Production. Amongst his biggest commercial and critical successes were *Falling Down* (1993), *A Time to Kill* (1996), *The Matrix* (1999), *Analyze This* (2000), *The Perfect Storm* (2000), *Ocean's Eleven* (2001), *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone* (2001) and *Training Day* (2001).

In 2002, he left Warner Bros. and started di Bonaventura Pictures, based at Paramount Pictures. Since then he has produced over 30 movies, including *Constantine* (2005) starring Keanu Reeves; *Shooter*, directed by Antoine Fuqua and starring Mark Wahlberg (2007); *Salt* (2010) for Sony Pictures, starring Angelina Jolie; Paramount Pictures' revival of Tom Clancy's famed franchise *Jack Ryan: Shadow Recruit* (2014), directed by Kenneth Branagh, starring Chris Pine, Keira Knightley and Kevin Costner; the critically acclaimed thriller *Side Effects* (2013), directed by Steven Soderbergh and starring Rooney Mara, Jude Law and Channing Tatum; *Deepwater Horizon* (2016), directed by Peter Berg, starring Mark Wahlberg, Kurt Russell, Dylan O'Brien, John Malkovich, Gina Rodriguez and Kate Hudson; *Kidnap* (2017), starring Halle Berry; *Unlocked* (2017), starring Noomi Rapace; and *American Assassin* (2017), the film adaptation of Vince

Flynn's best-selling political thriller, starring Dylan O'Brien, Michael Keaton and Taylor Kitsch.

Upcoming releases include *Meg* (2018), starring Jason Statham and Li Bingbing, and *Replicas* (2017), starring Keanu Reeves. He is currently in production on the *Bumblebee* (2018) film for Paramount, directed by Travis Knight and starring Hailee Steinfeld.

In 2011, the company branched into television production with the formation of di Bonaventura Pictures Television, which produced *The Real O'Neals* and *Shooter*.

di Bonaventura received his undergraduate degree in Intellectual History at Harvard College and his Master of Business Administration at the University of Pennsylvania's Wharton School of Business. He was awarded the Golden Eye Career Achievement Award from the Zurich Film Festival in 2016. He is on the Board of Directors for the American Cinematheque, the board of advisors for Claremont Graduate Colleges and the honorary committee of the Epilepsy Foundation of Greater Los Angeles.

**ERIK HOWSAM** (Producer) is currently Executive Vice President of Production at di Bonaventura Pictures, where he helps oversee all aspects of film development and production.

As a producer, Howsam's credits include *Kidnap*, starring Halle Berry and directed by Luis Prieto, and *Unlocked*, starring Noomi Rapace, Michael Douglas, John Malkovich, and Orlando Bloom, and directed by Michael Apted.

As an executive producer, Howsam's credits include *G.I. JOE 2: Retaliation* starring Dwayne Johnson and directed by John Chu; *The Devil Inside* directed by Brent Bell; *G.I. JOE: The Rise of Cobra* starring Channing Tatum and directed by Stephen Sommers; *Shooter*, starring Mark Wahlberg and directed by Antoine Fuqua; and John

Singleton's *Four Brothers*, starring Wahlberg along with Tyrese Gibson, Andre Benjamin and Garrett Hedlund. Howsam was also closely involved in the development of the blockbuster *Transformers* starring Shia LaBeouf and Megan Fox and directed by Michael Bay.

Raised in Scottsdale, Arizona, Howsam's interest in cinema was sparked at a young age when his father took him to see such classic films as *The Seven Samurai*. He later attended Steven Spielberg's alma mater, Ingleside Middle School.

After studying film and graduating from the University of Arizona, Howsam joined CAA as an assistant in the Motion Picture Department and then became assistant to Mike Stenson at Touchstone Pictures. Following Stenson to Jerry Bruckheimer Films, Howsam was promoted to creative executive and then director of development. In that capacity, he was involved with the development and production of *Black Hawk Down*, which was nominated for four Academy Awards®, and won two. Howsam also worked on such box office hits as *National Treasure*, *Pirates of the Caribbean*, *Gone in 60 Seconds*, and *Remember the Titans*.

**MICHAEL MENCHEL** (Producer) previously produced the Golden Globe-nominated film *One Chance* starring James Corden, Alexandra Roach, Julie Walters, and Colm Meaney. Directed by David Frankel, *One Chance* is the true story of Paul Potts, who was a shy, bullied shop assistant by day and an amateur opera singer by night who became a worldwide phenomenon after winning "Britain's Got Talent."

Menchel executive produced the David Lowery-directed crime drama *Ain't Them Bodies Saints*, starring Rooney Mara, Casey Affleck, and Keith Carradine, about an outlaw who escapes from prison and sets out to reunite with his wife and the daughter whom he has never met.

He currently has several projects in development for film and television.

Prior to becoming a producer, Menchel was a partner and the president of Evolution Management. At Evolution, he was involved in the development of “Prison Town” starring Laurence Fishburne for Fox TV/Cinemax and “Rocket City” written by Tom Fontana for Lionsgate TV.

Menchel established himself in Hollywood by being the first trainee to join Creative Artists Agency and worked his way up from the mailroom to become an agent for actors and filmmakers for the next 25 years. He represented such actors as Robin Williams, Sean Connery, Dennis Hopper, James Belushi, and Penny Marshall. He also represented directors such as Oliver Stone, Alfonso Cuarón, John McTiernan and Joe Johnston. He departed CAA to join his friend Mike Ovitz at his Artists Management Group.

Menchel is currently the owner of production company Relevant Entertainment.

**MOLLY SMITH** (Producer) partnered with Trent and Thad Luckinbill to form Black Label Media in 2013, a film finance and production company.

In the Spring of 2016, Black Label financed and produced *Rebel in the Rye*, the story of the life and mind of the legendary and secretive author J.D. Salinger. This marked the feature directorial debut for writer/director Danny Strong. Nicholas Hoult and Kevin Spacey star along with Zoey Deutch, Sarah Paulson, Victor Garber, and Hope Davis. The film premiered at Sundance 2017, and was released by IFC on September 8.

Black Label recently co-financed and Executive Produced *La La Land* with Lionsgate. The film, directed by Damien Chazelle (*Whiplash*) and starring Emma Stone and Ryan Gosling, garnered a record number of Academy Award® and Golden Globe nominations, winning six and seven respectively.

In September 2015, Lionsgate released Black Label's *Sicario*, directed by Denis Villeneuve (*Prisoners*) and starring Emily Blunt, Benicio del Toro, and Josh Brolin. Following its Cannes debut in Spring 2015, the film was nominated for multiple awards, including Critics' Choice and Producers Guild awards for Best Film. It also received Academy Award® nominations for Cinematography, Original Score, and Sound Editing.

*Demolition* celebrated its World Premiere opening night at the Toronto International Film Festival in September 2015. The film, directed by Jean Marc Vallée (*Dallas Buyer's Club*), stars Jake Gyllenhaal and Naomi Watts and was released in Spring 2016 through Fox Searchlight. The film received the Headliners Audience award at SXSW.

Black Label premiered Philippe Falardeau's *The Good Lie* at TIFF in the fall of 2014. The film stars Reese Witherspoon and was inspired by true events surrounding the Sudanese Civil War. Black Label Media financed and produced *The Good Lie* with Imagine Entertainment, and Warner Bros. released the film. In 2014, BLM acquired an interest in *Begin Again*, written and directed by John Carney and starring Keira Knightley and Mark Ruffalo. The film was released by The Weinstein Company in the summer of 2014. Black Label's *'71* starring Jack O'Connell was released in February 2015 to critical acclaim. The film was directed by Yann Demange and premiered at the Berlin Film Festival in 2014.

Black Label is currently in post-production on *Horse Soldiers*, the story of a small band of Special Forces soldiers who team up with an Afghani warlord to defeat the Taliban on horseback. Black Label is financing and producing with Jerry Bruckheimer Films and Alcon Entertainment. The film stars Chris Hemsworth, Michael Shannon, and Michael Pena. Next summer, Sony Pictures will release the *Sicario* sequel, *Soldado*, which BLM financed and produced with Thunder Road and Ed McDonnell. The film stars Benicio Del Toro and Josh Brolin, and is directed by Stefano Sollima.

Smith produced her first film, *P.S. I Love You*, in 2006, with Wendy Finerman and Alcon Entertainment. Written and directed by Richard LaGravenese and starring Gerard Butler and Hilary Swank, the romantic drama went on to gross over \$150 million worldwide.

Following *P.S. I Love You*, Smith had a first look producing deal at Alcon Entertainment until 2011. Smith was the executive producer on *The Blind Side* (2009). The film, which she brought to Alcon, and for which Sandra Bullock earned the Academy Award® for Best Actress, was a surprise hit, grossing over \$250 million domestically and earning a nomination for Best Picture of the Year.

In 2010, Smith, along with actress and partner Hilary Swank, produced the film adaptation of Emily Giffin's best-selling novel *Something Borrowed*, starring Ginnifer Goodwin, Kate Hudson, and John Krasinski. And in 2012, she produced the supernatural coming of age story *Beautiful Creatures* for Alcon, starring Jeremy Irons, Emma Thompson and Viola Davis, and featuring breakout lead performances by Alice Englert and Alden Ehrenreich. The film was written and directed by Richard LaGravenese and adapted from the popular YA novel.

Later that year, Smith produced the drama *You're Not You*, written by Shana Feste and directed by George C. Wolfe. Based on the book by Michelle Wildgen, the film depicts the unlikely friendship that develops between a successful woman diagnosed with ALS, played by Hilary Swank, and the troubled college student who becomes her nurse, played by Emmy Rossum.

**TRENT LUCKINBILL** (Producer) has an extensive legal and financial background working in both the private and public sectors, at the Department of Treasury's Office of Financial Stability and as a lawyer at the Department of Justice in Washington D.C. After moving to Los Angeles, he formed Black Label Media (BLM) with partners Molly Smith and Thad Luckinbill in 2013 to finance and produce high

quality commercial content.

In the Spring of 2016, Black Label financed and produced *Rebel in the Rye*, the story of the life and mind of the legendary and secretive author J.D. Salinger. This marked the feature directorial debut for writer/director Danny Strong. Nicholas Hoult and Kevin Spacey star along with Zoey Deutch, Sarah Paulson, Victor Garber, and Hope Davis. The film premiered at Sundance 2017, and was released by IFC on September 8.

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Black Label is currently in post-production on *Horse Soldiers*, the story of a small band of Special Forces soldiers who team up with an Afghani warlord to defeat the Taliban on horseback. Black Label is financing and producing with Jerry Bruckheimer Films and Alcon Entertainment. The film stars Chris Hemsworth, Michael Shannon, and Michael Pena. Next summer, Sony Pictures will release the *Sicario* sequel, *Soldado*, which BLM financed and produced with Thunder Road and Ed McDonnell. The film stars Benicio Del Toro and Josh Brolin, and is directed by Stefano Sollima.

**THAD LUCKINBILL** (Producer) partnered with Molly Smith and Trent Luckinbill in 2013 to form the finance/production company Black Label Media (BLM) to finance and produce quality commercial content.

In the Spring of 2016, Black Label financed and produced *Rebel in the Rye*, the story of the life and mind of the legendary and secretive author J.D. Salinger. This marked the feature directorial debut for writer/director Danny Strong. Nicholas Hoult and Kevin Spacey star along with Zoey Deutch, Sarah Paulson, Victor Garber, and Hope Davis. The film premiered at Sundance 2017, and was released by IFC on September 8.

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On the other side of the camera, Thad has appeared on both the large and small screen for over a decade, including recurring roles on "Nikita," "8 Simple Rules...for Dating My Teenage Daughter," and "Undressed."

Among his many guest roles are “Major Crimes,” “Rizzoli & Isles,” “Grey’s Anatomy,” “Law and Order: Criminal Intent,” “CSI: Crime Scene Investigation,” “CSI: Miami,” “CSI: NY,” “Ghost Whisperer,” “Without a Trace,” “Nip/Tuck,” HBO’s “Ballers,” and “Criminal Minds.”

Luckinbill’s previous film credits as an actor include Shawn Levy’s *Just Married* and *Sleepover*. He was recently cast on the ABC pilot “Broken,” executive produced by Reese Witherspoon.

**JEREMY STECKLER** (Producer) is executive vice president, motion pictures at Condé Nast Entertainment (CNÉ), an award-winning next generation studio and distribution network with entertainment content across film, television, premium digital video, social, and virtual reality. He reports to Dawn Ostroff, president of CNÉ.

As the lead motion picture executive at CNÉ since joining the company in 2012, Steckler is responsible for all aspects of acquiring, developing and overseeing production of film properties for the company, many of which are inspired by stories published by the iconic Condé Nast brands. Steckler, who joined CNÉ in 2012, currently oversees 35 film projects in various stages of development with Hollywood studios and financiers and serves as a producer on all of them, including *The Old Man and the Gun*, starring Academy Award® winners Robert Redford, Casey Affleck and Sissy Spacek with Fox Searchlight distributing; and *King of the Jungle* starring Johnny Depp, which is currently in development. Steckler also served as a producer on CNÉ’s previously released *Army of One* and *The First Monday in May*.

Steckler came to CNÉ from Imagine Entertainment, where he was executive vice president of production and oversaw production and development for major motion picture and television-to-film adaptations. Prior to that, Steckler was senior vice president of production at Fox Searchlight, where he oversaw many award-winning motion pictures, including *Black Swan*, *Juno*, *Crazy Heart*, and *(500) Days of Summer*.

His work on these and other projects earned Steckler the distinction of being named one of Hollywood's Top 35 Executives Under 35 by The Hollywood Reporter.

Prior to Fox Searchlight, Steckler served as vice president at Di Bonaventura Pictures, where he helped build the company's slate, working with key studios on major film projects, such as *Salt* with Sony Pictures and *Four Brothers* with Paramount. Earlier in his career, Steckler was director of development at Spyglass Entertainment where we worked on such films as *The Recruit*, *Reign of Fire*, *Shanghai Knights*, and *The Count of Monte Cristo*.

Steckler has a BA from Duke University.

**DAWN OSTROFF** (Producer) is president of Condé Nast Entertainment (CNÉ), an award-winning next generation studio and distribution network with entertainment content across film, television, premium digital video, social, and virtual reality. Ostroff helped found CNÉ in 2011 when Condé Nast decided to build a thriving digital video, film, and television business based on its iconic brands and assets.

CNÉ has grown exponentially since the launch of its digital video network in 2013. Since the start of 2017, digital video has delivered 5.6 billion views. The division currently produces over 5,000 videos annually and consistently ranks in the top 25 of unique viewers in the overall comScore industry rankings ahead of other major content creators like BuzzFeed, Vice, Hearst, ESPN, and Vox.

In addition to CNÉ's thriving digital video division, Ostroff oversees the company's feature film and television operations. Culling from IP across Condé Nast's iconic publishing brands, including Vogue, Vanity Fair, The New Yorker, GQ and Wired, CNÉ has 35 active film projects and 30 television projects in development and production with Ostroff serving as a producer or executive producer.

Her feature film credits include *The Old Man and the Gun*, starring Academy Award® winners Robert Redford, Casey Affleck and Sissy Spacek with Fox Searchlight distributing; *Army of One* (producer); and *The First Monday in May* (producer).

Ostroff's television producing credits include "Last Chance U" for Netflix (executive producer); "Vanity Fair Confidential" on Investigation Discovery (executive producer); "Gentlemen Lobsters" on Seeso (executive producer); and "The Fashion Fund" (executive producer) and "The New Yorker Presents" (executive producer), both on Amazon.

Under Ostroff's leadership, CNÉ has garnered critical acclaim for its content across all platforms, including an Oscar® nomination for the short documentary "Joe's Violin"; nominations for a Critics' Choice Award and for a prestigious Peabody Award in the Documentary category for the Netflix series "Last Chance U"; a BAFTA for Live Action Short for "Boogaloo and Graham"; an Emmy for Glamour's "Screw Cancer"; and a Producers Guild Award for Outstanding Digital Series for Wired's "What's Inside."

Prior to joining Condé Nast, Ostroff was president of entertainment for The CW broadcast network—a joint venture of CBS and Warner Bros. that she helped launch in January 2006. Ostroff was responsible for programming, digital initiatives, branding, marketing, research and sales. As president, she developed several groundbreaking hit series, including "Gossip Girl" and "The Vampire Diaries." In an effort to engage the digital CW generation across multiple platforms, Ostroff and her team instituted cutting-edge strategies for streaming in order to leverage content and revenue opportunities.

From 2002 to 2006, Ostroff served as president of the UPN Network, a subsidiary of CBS, where she oversaw all areas of the network's business—programming, digital, branding, marketing, sales, finance, research, legal and publicity, and more. While at UPN, she developed the popular reality series "America's Next Top Model," which ran for 23 seasons, and shepherded numerous fan favorite series, including "Veronica Mars" and "Everybody Hates Chris."

Before UPN, Ostroff served as executive vice president of entertainment at Lifetime Television, where she headed up programming and production, scheduling and acquisitions, including Lifetime Original Movies, prime-time series, specials, documentaries and sports, as well as all programming for Lifetime Movie Network and Lifetime Real Women. In the five years that Ostroff led Lifetime Entertainment (1996–2002), the network rose from sixth place to become the #1-rated cable network in prime time.

Earlier in her career Ostroff held senior roles at 20th Century Fox Television, Michael Jacobs Productions (at Disney) and the Kushner-Locke Company. She began her career working at several local channels in news as an on-air reporter and a producer.

Ostroff has a BS in journalism from Florida International.

**ELLEN H. SCHWARTZ** (Executive Producer) has produced and contributed to some of the highest-grossing and most beloved films of the last two decades. Schwartz began her career as a DGA trainee working in New York, one of the few women assuming such a role at the time. The first feature film she worked on as a trainee was *The Flamingo Kid*, which was the start of a 25-year friendship and working relationship with Garry Marshall. She worked alongside Marshall as his assistant director and producer on films such as *Beaches*, *Pretty Woman*, *Runaway Bride*, *Princess Diaries 1 and 2*, *Exit to Eden*, *Dear God*, *Frankie & Johnny*, *The Other Sister* and *Raising Helen*.

In addition to working with Marshall, Schwartz has had a long working relationship with director Donald Petrie, with whom she began work on the ground-breaking television show "The Equalizer." Schwartz and Petrie have collaborated on *Miss Congeniality*, *Just My Luck* and *How to Lose A Guy In Ten Days*, which went on to gross over \$175 million worldwide.

Her diverse experience has earned her assistant director positions with Paul Verhoeven on *Showgirls* and Anne Fletcher on the hit films *Step Up* and *27 Dresses*, as well as senior production roles on *Drillbit Taylor*, *Dance Flick* and 2010's boxoffice smash *Get Him to The Greek*. Schwartz was also the executive producer on *Something Borrowed* for Warner Bros. and *You're Not You* for eOne Films.

In 2013, she joined Black Label Media as the Executive VP of Physical Production. She was an executive producer on *Rebel in the Rye*, *The Good Lie*, *Breaking a Monster*, *Sicario*, and *Demolition*.

Oscar®-winning cinematographer **CLAUDIO MIRANDA, ASC** (Director of Photography) lensed Disney's *Tomorrowland* in 2015 for director Brad Bird. The film tells the story of a curious teen (Britt Robertson) and a former boy genius inventor (George Clooney) who embark on a journey to a place somewhere in time and space.

In 2013, Miranda collaborated with director Joseph Kosinski to create *Oblivion* starring Tom Cruise, which opened to critical acclaim.

For his visionary work on *Life of Pi*, Miranda won the 2013 Best Cinematography Academy Award. He also received a BAFTA, a Satellite Award, multiple Critics Society awards and a nomination from the American Society of Cinematographers. Academy Award® winning director Ang Lee chose Miranda to shoot *Life of Pi* after admiring his lensing of the features *TRON: Legacy*, directed by Kosinski and *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button*, directed by David Fincher.

The Academy previously recognized Miranda's work with a 2009 nomination for *Benjamin Button*. The film earned cinematography nominations at the 2009 ASC Awards, the BAFTAs and the Satellite Awards, as well as winning Best Cinematography awards from the North Texas, Phoenix, Las Vegas and Houston Film Critics Societies.

Ahead of *Benjamin Button*'s release, Variety magazine named Miranda one of its 2008 "10 Cinematographers to Watch."

His big break came in 1994, when Dariusz Wolski hired him to work as chief lighting technician on Alex Proyas' *The Crow*. As gaffer, Miranda worked on many powerful films including David Fincher's *The Game* and *Fight Club*, as well as the late Tony Scott's *Crimson Tide*, *The Fan* and *Enemy of the State*. The 2005 Sundance Film Festival hit *A Thousand Roads*, directed by Chris Eyre, provided Miranda's first feature cinematography credit.

Miranda's television commercial career thrived and he received multiple accolades for his work. He picked up Best Cinematography AICP and Clio awards for the Pocari Tennis spot in 2002; a Clio for Xelebri in 2004; an MVPA for a Beyonce (feat. Sean Paul) clip in 2004; as well as an AICP for Heinekin in 2005.

With his wife Kelli and greatest accomplishments, daughters Sofia and Lily, Miranda lives in Los Angeles. He is represented by Dattner Disputo and Associates.

**KEVIN KAVANAUGH** (Production Designer) is known for *John Wick 2* (2016), *Nightcrawler* (2014) and *The Dark Knight Rises* (2012). He has worked with such industry titans as Christopher Nolan, J.J. Abrams, Roger Donaldson, and Dan Gilroy. Throughout his career he has won and been nominated for numerous accolades, including winning the Art Directors Guild Excellence in Production Design for *The X-Files* and *The Dark Knight*.

Kavanaugh was raised in Southern California and graduated from San Francisco State University with a Bachelor of Arts degree. He first became interested in film design while working part time during college at American Zoetrope studios during the making of *The Godfather: Part III* and *Bram Stoker's Dracula*. He worked as Francis Coppola's assistant for three years in San Francisco before moving back to Southern California.

He now lives near Pasadena with his wife and two kids.

**BILLY FOX, ACE**, (Editor) edited the features *Straight Outta Compton*, *Hustle & Flow*, *Four Brothers*, *The Crazies*, and *Black Snake Moan*. He has been nominated numerous times for Emmys for his editorial and producing work on the TV series “Law and Order,” “Wings,” “Chicago Fire,” and “Band of Brothers.”

**LOUISE MINGENBACH** (Costume Designer) is a costume designer known for her work on the *X-Men* films, including *X-Men: Apocalypse*, *X-Men: Days of Future Past*, and *X-Men Origins: Wolverine*, as well as *The Usual Suspects*.

Mingenbach has also worked on such hit films as *The Hangover* series and *Insurgent*, as well as *G.I. Joe: Retaliation*, *Due Date*, *Hancock*, *The Heartbreak Kid*, *Superman Returns*, *Starsky & Hutch*, and *The Spitfire Grill*. She is a frequent collaborator with Bryan Singer and Todd Phillips. She won a Saturn Awards for Best Costume Design on *X-Men* and has been nominated for two more Saturn Awards and a Costume Designers Guild Award.