

# **I LOVE YOU, BETH COOPER**

## **Production Notes**

**Genre: Comedy, Romance**

**Duration: 1 hrs. 42 min.**

**Starring: Hayden Panettiere, Lauren Storm, Jack Carpenter, Lauren London, Paul Rust,**

**Director: Chris Columbus**

**Producer: Chris Columbus, Mark Radcliffe, Michael Barnathan**

**Distributor: Fox Atomic**

**Release Date: July 10, 2009**

**Writer: Larry Doyle**

### **SYNOPSIS**

Buffalo Grove High School valedictorian Denis Cooverman (PAUL RUST) has had quite an academic career...on paper, at least. Superlative student, conscientious young gentleman and patently obvious dork, Denis has played it safe and made it all the way to graduation day without ever having really experienced some of the joys of higher learning: breaking curfew, destruction of property, over-consumption of alcohol, fist fights, late nights, fast cars or faster women (actually, women of any sort).

But all of that is about to change, and all by uttering five little words: "I LOVE YOU, BETH COOPER."

Seems that Denis has been harboring a secret for six years, a chronic case of l'amour fou for Beth (HAYDEN PANETTIERE), one of the most popular girls in school, who sat in the desk just in front of him in multiple classes (God bless alphabetical order!). And thanks to his colorful best friend, Rich (JACK T. CARPENTER), Denis has been goaded into telling the truth and declaring his love during his valedictory address - while also putting names to several other white elephants stampeding through the senior class.

His resulting embarrassment is short-lived, however, when The Trinity - Beth and her two best friends, super-bitchy Cammy (LAUREN LONDON) and super-easy Treece (LAUREN STORM) - shows up to his and Rich's ad hoc graduation night party. Unfortunately for Denis, Beth's thick-necked, military hopeful boyfriend, Kevin (SHAWN ROBERTS), also shows up, with two equally menacing, double-digit IQ friends in tow. When the inevitable can of "you insulted my woman!" whoop-ass is opened, Beth comes to the rescue, and whisks Denis, Rich, Cammy and Treece away in her beat-up Cabriolet.

As the chase continues from sunset to sun up, Denis realizes that his little speech has given rise to one of the wildest, most eventful, most hilarious and most revealing nights of his life.

### **ABOUT THE PRODUCTION**

#### **The Love Story Begins**

Writer/producer/director Chris Columbus has always been a funny guy...funny, combined with a little sense of the bizarre thrown in, but funny nonetheless. Case in point: the megahit *Gremlins*, one of Columbus' first screenplays, about a cute little furry creature that is accidentally hit with a little water and, before its cute little owner knows it, their cute little town is on the verge of destruction from a horde of small, not-so-cute, murderous monsters.

A few years later, Columbus helmed *Heartbreak Hotel*, his homage to Elvis, and worked with a young assistant director named Mark Radcliffe. They next collaborated on the global hit film *Home Alone* - accidentally left behind, a cute little kid defends his home from two would-be burglars - with Radcliffe as first assistant director/associate producer. Along the way, the two found they shared some of the same sensibilities when it came to filmmaking - funny, offbeat, creative - and began to collaborate on other projects. The romantic comedy *Nine Months* brought aboard producer Michael Barnathan, to Columbus' writing/producing/directing and Radcliffe's producing. Around that time, the three joined to form the company 1492 Pictures.

Many films later, from comedies to dramas to the screen adaptations of three of the most popular and widely read books in the world, Columbus found that he wanted to return to the director's chair and began searching for his next project. When Barnathan noted, "You know, Chris, it's a long time since you've been funny," he realized that it had been a long time, indeed. Serendipitously, it was about that time that the first 100 pages of an as-yet-unpublished novel found its way to the offices of 1492 Pictures. Its title was *I Love You, Beth Cooper*. It was funny and offbeat, with a decidedly bizarre tilt to the story of a lovelorn dork named Denis and the object of his affection, Beth - with a motley entourage in tow - spending graduation night fleeing together from Beth's vengeful boyfriend. It was love at first read.

Michael Barnathan observes, "The story of *I Love You, Beth Cooper* has real emotion and heart, which we've always responded to." Mark Radcliffe says, "One of Chris' strengths as a director has always been his ability to fuse comedy and emotion, and Beth Cooper has plenty of both."

The author of the novel was Larry Doyle, whose ability to conjure the universal themes and pitfalls of the last days of high school belies his distance from the actual experience. The acutely observed and laugh-out-loud work was, according to Doyle, written as if he were in high school at the time (in the appropriate decade), and then the tale was embellished with the trappings of a post-millennial high school world. "The basic issues of being a teenager, figuring out who you are, where you fit, haven't changed," he says. "Out of the box, the characters look as if they're going to act and behave in a certain way, but by the end of the movie, none of them is who you think they are."

Two days after he began shopping the manuscript (as a 100-page sample), it had quickly reached the desks of some of Hollywood's leading producers, where it was snatched up by the 1492 team.

For Doyle, it was a dream, literally: "The story came to me in a dream, where I imagined that I was giving my high school speech and, in it, I declared my love for this girl that I had a crush on in seventh grade."

Columbus was drawn to the project because of the universality of the characters' experiences, and because it's essentially a love story. He states, "Being a high school kid and dealing with those intense emotions - feeling love for the first time, questioning your identity, whether it's your future or your sexual identity - for me is fascinating. We never have a more emotionally turbulent moment in our lives than our junior or senior year in high school. It just doesn't get any more intense in terms of what we're feeling about ourselves."

For Columbus, heading *I Love You, Beth Cooper* harkened back to his development, casting and directing of the first *Harry Potter* film; it was a chance to work with and nurture a group of fresh young actors. Columbus explains, "When they're just starting out, actors have a sense of excitement and hunger and an eagerness to be in the movie. That kind of energy fuels the production. There are no star turns. Everyone is there to work. You can never recapture your own youth, but you can certainly tap into that creative energy that fuelled you 15 or 20 years ago. That was what I was hoping to do with this movie."

In describing *Beth Cooper*, Columbus says, "The film is about two people whose lives cross at a time when they're about to make an enormous leap forward. Denis' leap forward is toward a future that's extremely bright and filled with the potential for success. Beth's future is not so certain. In a way, she may have reached her pinnacle in high school. I found that to be an interesting moment, when these two come together."

Lucky for the director, the perfect *Beth Cooper* - Hayden Panettiere, from the hit television series *Heroes* - had already expressed interest in the project. Her first meeting with Columbus made an immediate and happily positive impression on him: as soon as Panettiere entered the room, Chris turned to Michael Barnathan and said, "She's a big movie star."

What drew Panettiere to the film was the layered character of *Beth*, which afforded her the opportunity to turn her *Heroes* cheerleader/superhero image on its head: "Beth's character goes through a definite change. In the beginning, you don't know her, but you don't like her, either. She's the popular girl. She comes off a bit rough around the edges, but as you get to know her, you realize that it's because she thinks the rest of her life, after high school, is going to be completely ordinary. She isn't really good at anything. She doesn't have a talent. She's not particularly smart and she isn't good in school. She isn't going to get into a good college, and she can't even afford to go to a community college...so high school is her world. That is where she thrives, and that's all she knows."

Columbus thought she was perfect for the role: "I knew she was a very gifted dramatic actress, but I had no idea she was so unbelievably talented in terms of comedy. She brings an incredible sense of comic timing."

Panettiere explains the supposed disconnect between the story being told in *I Love You, Beth Cooper* and the way in which it's told: "Every time I describe the plotline in the movie and how the characters come together for this journey, it always sounds a bit like a drama, even though it's a very funny comedy. To me, that shows that it's a comedy that really has a heart behind it. We're basically running through the entire movie the whole night to get away from my psychotic

boyfriend, who's intent on destroying Denis because of what he said. But so much happens - we drive crazy, we drink a little, we end up in the woods, and then at this fancy graduation party, then a cabin on the lake - it's really so funny. At one point, I drive a Hummer through the front of a house! And it all ends with cops. So that's not such a drama, is it?"

To find the actor to portray Denis Cooverman, an extensive casting search was launched in Los Angeles, New York and Vancouver. The filmmakers found their Denis - Paul Rust - at an evening of improv at the Upright Citizens Brigade Theatre. Rust had moved from Iowa to Los Angeles with the goal of becoming a creator of comedy; at the most, he had hoped for a shot at being "the funny guy" in the ensemble. Landing a lead in a major motion picture was beyond his dreams.

"Paul is both a very gifted verbal comedian and an incredibly gifted physical comedian, plus he's an amazing actor," says Columbus. "He's naturalistic, honest and quite moving in his performance. Once you get to know Paul, you realize there's so much depth and so much complexity within him, and he brings that to the Denis. I met a lot of actors who were very talented in a comedic way, but they didn't have that soul. I love that combination. Paul is not the type of person you'd expect to get the girl at the end of the movie. He's not the person you'd expect to be successful with women, yet Woody Allen was able to pull it off all those years, as did Chaplin, Groucho Marx, and now, Seth Rogen. Paul embodies that kind of persona."

"Denis is the sort of guy that was in everybody's class," observes Paul Rust. "He's a dorky guy, who's maybe a little shy and scared to live life. Then, one day, for some reason, he decides not to be shy and be completely open. He tells everybody that he loves Beth Cooper, and they've never even spoken, by the way. And when he opens up, so does his life."

Panettiere thinks Rust hits the nail on the head regarding his character, and takes the point even further when she says, "Denis Cooverman has a way of bringing out the truth in people. Throughout the movie, people become more honest because of him."

"I think before you come of age you view things in very black-and-white terms," counters Rust, "but as you get older, you realize it's a little more complicated. Denis gets his eyes opened to the world. On an emotional level, Denis learns that being scared and being fearful of new experiences can keep you from having a more satisfying life. As far as Beth's character is concerned, I think Denis gets her to see herself as a more worthy person than she was giving herself credit for."

If Beth is at the top of the social ladder at Buffalo Grove High, Denis and his sidekick, Rich, are near the bottom, probably just above the guys steadying the ladder. Larry Doyle says, "Denis and Rich, socially speaking, are just slightly above people in band in the hierarchy. And I think they're just below the Mathletes."

Cast in the part of the flashy Rich is Jack T. Carpenter, who shares his own take on the place he and Denis occupy in the scheme of all things high school: "The characters Paul and I play are not the complete losers. It's just that we don't quite fit in. It's where I was in high school and that's something that I definitely connect to."

Rich is one of those great character combinations, then, of verbal acuity, physical comedy and a deep soul...think The Fool in several of Shakespeare's plays. And who wouldn't want to portray that?

Carpenter continues, "The thing I like most about Rich is that underneath all of his shtick and his movie quotes, there's a real sincerity to the guy; he's a real human being who's had a really hard background. And he's trying to get through it. He's got these brand new shoes that he had to buy himself, because his father wouldn't get them for him; it's oddly symbolic, because he's just trying to dance his way through life without concentrating too much on the bad stuff. Rich convinces Denis to tell Beth he loves her, because in the movie-influenced world of Rich, people who do that fall in love. And even though things don't go that way, he just doesn't concentrate on it. He goes with the flow, onto the next piece of bad advice he will give Denis."

So if Rich is the one in Denis' corner, in Beth's, it's the seemingly mismatched Cammy and Treece. Per the actresses portraying the pair - "The Laurens," as they were called during production, Lauren London and Lauren Storm, respectively - the girls are Beth's best friends because of their nonjudgmental attitude toward her.

Lauren London's reaction to the script echoed the filmmakers': "When I first read the script, I thought it was hilarious, and I had to be a part of it. I wanted to be Cammy, not just because she's dry and bitchy, although that is fun, but because you can't hate her. She's likeable because she's telling the truth. Most people have social filters, but Cammy doesn't. She says what she thinks without thinking. It's funny and dry, and it has a sting. But it stays funny because, inside, you know she's a good person."

Lauren Storm comments, "I think Cammy is dealing with a lot at home, and sometimes, the meanest people are the ones who hurt the most. I approached Treece as just that dumb girl - no judgment, I think it's genetic - who thinks physical affection equals love. I guess you'd say she's easy. I didn't really want to think of her as a traditional 'dumb blonde' role, because when you do that, you're judging the character before you play it. She may be dumb, but she's perpetually naive and happy, so I had to totally change my thinking." (Storm's thinking wasn't the only thing that changed in order to play Treece--she gained nearly 15 pounds to screen test for the role, and eventually added another 15 pounds on top of that to give her the curves of Doyle's character.)

It seems that everyone either had or found a personal connection to the characters they played, including the "heavy" of the piece, Shawn Roberts, who was cast as the possessive and excessively macho Kevin, Beth's boyfriend. While Roberts never experienced the kind of bullying that Kevin enacts, he did at least have a glancing knowledge of the experience. Roberts relates, "I wasn't ever really bullied, not so much. I mean, I had two older brothers, if that counts. And being older brothers, it's kind of their job to do a little of that stuff. But, no, I've never had to experience the bullying thing, thank goodness, because I have seen how painful and destructive that kind of thing can be."

Prior to the start of principal photography, the cast spent two weeks in Vancouver, rehearsing and getting to know each other. "We're a bunch of extremely different individuals," says

Carpenter. "I don't know if socially we would hang out in any other situation, but because we did, there was a really interesting, unique bond...sort of like in the movie."

Columbus also employed the technique of having the actors prepare and write backstories for their characters. The finished pieces were read to the entire cast, establishing an even more familiar bond between their onscreen personas. And some even found that they had experiences in common with their characters. "When I first read the script," says Rust, "I thought, 'That's funny, I made the same mistake when I was graduating, too!' I was valedictorian of my class and when I gave my address, I used it as an opportunity to essentially give a kiss-off. I'd heard so many speeches where people had said that these were the best years of their lives. My speech asked, are they really? I listed all the awful things about high school, like break-ups and acne and teenage pregnancy. I was being a smartass and later, I was incredibly embarrassed and regretted everything I said."

Characterizations weren't the only things that came out of the rehearsal period. Despite its sweet title, *I Love You, Beth Cooper* calls for some serious fighting - mostly Kevin and his crew pounding on poor Denis. And the lead pounder, Shawn Roberts, had to work with veteran film fight choreographer, Bob Brown, along with co-star Rust and all of the stunt doubles, to ensure the ultimate safety during filming of the tussles.

Rust felt that his progression through the movie, as he withstands an ever-increasing number of run-ins with Kevin and crew, warranted his performing as many of his own stunts as Columbus would allow. Roberts says, "Paul's been such a trooper with us. There's one fight, in the locker room, where I'm stomping down and missing his groin by inches. I wouldn't trust a lot of people, doing that. But Paul and I worked with Bobby, and no worries. Paul's doing a lot of the stunts himself really helped the rest of the actors, because we work with him in a scene and establish a flow, as opposed to stopping and switching in the stunt guy. Don't get me wrong - the stunt people are amazing, incredible and talented people. But they can't deliver the lines with the zest that Paul brings. And that makes all of the other cast members take their game to the next level. I think it plays well, in the end, and it certainly makes the editor's job a littler easier."

Rust knew he could take the risks he did because of the close working relationship formed with his director. Rust comments, "Chris and I definitely collaborated on the character. I would have an idea about how I wanted to do something, and then I'd take it to Chris, and he'd give his two cents, and he made it better. When you take something to him, he doesn't say, 'Bad idea.' Instead, it's 'Oh, I like that idea, and here's something else we can do with it.' Then he makes your idea better. I think that's what a good director does; he helps you pinpoint what you're trying to do and then give you a garden to grow in. Ha, yeah, I'm standing by that image: I'm not backing down. It's a garden to grow in!"

*I Love You, Beth Cooper* filmed for nine-and-a-half weeks in Vancouver, British Columbia. The biggest challenge facing production: Filming a summer movie during springtime in the Northwest. And they encountered plenty of surprises, courtesy of Mother Nature, including a heavy snowfall. The book's setting of a suburb near Chicago was shifted to Tacoma, Washington. This would not only allow for a little leeway in the weather, it also provided the opportunity to shoot on and around beautiful Lake Alouette, a glacial lake amid forested

mountains an hour-and-a-half outside of Vancouver.

The filmmakers couldn't find one high school that provided all of the settings they needed, so four schools were amalgamated (with film magic) to become the story's Buffalo Glenn High School. Since Valli's house, the scene of the disastrous party, is described in detail in the book, production designer Howard Cummings found just the right house just outside of Vancouver, which received a false bay window addition (which was duplicated on the interior set). This would allow the avenging Beth an ideal place into which she could crash Kevin's Hummer. To contrast, an elegantly designed Craftsman bungalow was chosen to stand in for the Cooverman house.

The Hummer crash took around seven weeks to prep and execute, and was the single largest stunt in the film. The interior version of the bay window was constructed out of balsa wood and candy glass, to lower the chances of injury from flying, heavy debris. Additionally, the enormous vehicle collides with a buffet table full of food and dishware. When time came for the shot, all of the actual plates and silverware were switched out for plastic or acrylic, to lessen their harmful 'missile' potential. The sequence was filmed with five cameras.

Cummings declares, "It was a very exciting sequence for us with a lot of prep; it crosses a lot of different departments because it involves stunt people, special effects, along with the set decorating and lighting and others. All of this work was because of the complicated nature of trying to make something smash and fly through the air. It took a lot of coordination, and we wound up getting people's opinions about how to do it different ways. And, of course, we needed to make it as safe as possible."

The sometime comic nature of high school, plus the time spent trying to mature to graduate to the next stage of life, was a universal theme that struck a chord with all involved in making *I Love You, Beth Cooper*. For Hayden Panettiere, it brought to the surface fond memories of other motion pictures she grew up watching. She hopes, "Someday, maybe lines from this film will be quoted, like some from the John Hughes movies of the '80s. That'd be wonderful. Then you'd say, 'Yeah, it's from that old film *I Love You, Beth Cooper*, oh, I loved that film!' One day, I'll be old and gray and think, 'Oh, I remember doing that film.'"

For Paul Rust, it was the opportunity to come to see someone in another, perhaps better, light that will stay with him: "Beth is somebody who Denis thought was like an angel. Then, after spending the evening with her, he sees that she is somebody who swears and drinks and makes offers to get beer. That's an awakening, a way of opening yourself up. Like, 'Oh, it wasn't as simple as I thought.' And I think that's how Denis grows up."

Larry Doyle wrote a novel and screenplay in which everybody, he believes, can recognize something of themselves: "This is the same story as it would have been when I was in high school. I knew that people my age - ancient people like myself, when they read the large print edition - would be able to empathize with it. But what was truly amazing to me is that teenagers ended up writing to me from all over the place, not because of some great insight I have into the way teenagers are today, but in the fact that being a teenager hasn't changed. The basic stuff that everyone thinks about, and gets all worried about, like drugs or sex, those do change, or at least,

the headlines about them change. But the basic issues, like figuring out who you are and where you fit, all teenagers have that exact same problem, no matter when they were teenagers. People would ask, 'How did you know what it's like to be a teenager?' And all I said was, 'Because I was one.'"

## **ABOUT THE CAST**

**HAYDEN PANETTIERE** (Beth Cooper) has an impressive resume of feature film, television, animation and commercial credits that have made her name synonymous with a rising star.

Currently starring in the popular NBC Television drama *Heroes*, Hayden has been cast in the unique and challenging role as a high school cheerleader who is literally indestructible. The NBC series is a critical and audience hit and was been nominated for a 2007 Emmy® Award by the Academy of Television Arts and Sciences in the Outstanding Drama Series category. The series also received a Golden Globe® nomination from the Hollywood Foreign Press Association in 2007.

Also in 2007, Hayden herself was honored with the Capri Hollywood Film Festival's Breakout Actress Award, as well as the 1st Annual Wave Award as Favorite Clipped Dramatic Artist for the Television Season. She also has received the Genesis Wyler Award from The Humane Society of the United States for her impassioned efforts in raising awareness of animal welfare worldwide. In July, 2008 she was named Choice Female Actress in a Television Drama Series by the wildly popular Teen Choice Awards.

Hayden's film credits are impressive. She co-starred in *Fireflies in the Garden*, opposite Julia Roberts, Willem Dafoe and Emily Watson for Senator International, which debuted at the 2008 Berlin Film Festival. The story, directed by Dennis Lee, explores the complexities of love and commitment in a family torn apart when faced with an unexpected tragedy. She also starred in the independent feature *The Architect*, opposite Anthony LaPaglia and Isabella Rossellini, and *The Good Student* for Kevin Spacey's company, Triggerstreet, co-starring Bill Sadler and Tim Daly. She co-starred in the romantic dramedy *Shanghai Kiss*, and she starred as the lead in *Bring It On: All or Nothing*, the sequel to the box office hit *Bring It On*, for Universal Home Video.

Hayden dazzled everyone in her role as a competitive ice skater in *Ice Princess*. In order to bring authenticity to her role for the film, she trained rigorously and executed all of her own stunts. In addition, she recorded the ballad "I Fly" for the film's soundtrack and closing credits. She co-starred in the Lifetime Original movie *Lies My Mother Told Me*, based on a compelling true story, opposite Joely Richardson, and she embodied the challenging leading role as a jockey in Warner Bros.' *Racing Stripes*, opposite the voices of Dustin Hoffman and Whoopi Goldberg.

Hayden had a lead role in the feature film comedy *Raising Helen*, directed by Garry Marshall. Additionally, she starred in *Tiger Cruise*, a dramatic story based on the true events of September 11th, which debuted to rave reviews on The Disney Channel.

Hayden's film, *Normal*, opposite Jessica Lange and Tom Wilkinson, and directed by Jane

Anderson for HBO, premiered at the 2003 Sundance Film Festival. Her spitfire characters in both *Joe Somebody* (as Tim Allen's daughter) and *Remember the Titans* (in which she co-starred with Denzel Washington) helped to establish her as a unique talent. Her portrayal of a young Jeanne, played by Hilary Swank, in *The Affair of the Necklace*, is a cameo performance of depth beyond her years.

Hayden's other film credits include *Message in a Bottle* with Kevin Costner and *The Object of My Affection* with Jennifer Aniston. Her television appearances have won her numerous nominations and awards.

Hayden's voice is as recognizable as her face. She starred in the delightful animated feature, *A Bug's Life*, as Princess Dot, and as Suri in Disney's *Dinosaurs*. Her work for *A Bug's Life Read-A-Long* garnered her a Grammy® nomination for Best Spoken Word Album, as well as a nomination for The Hollywood Reporter's Young Star Award for Best Young Voiceover Talent.

Hayden is a Fresh Face for Neutrogena and has participated in popular campaigns for Candie's and Dooney & Burke, the latter for which she designed several exclusive handbags.

She is a spokesperson for The Whaleman Foundation and Save the Whales Again! Campaign. The Foundation is an oceanic non-profit conservation, research and production organization dedicated to preserving and protecting dolphins, whales and our oceans.

**PAUL RUST** (Denis Cooverman) is a writer, performer, improver and videographer who can pretty much do it all. And if he can't, he can probably fake it.

Rust's first major feature film role was opposite Will Ferrell in the sports comedy *Semi-Pro*. Prior to that, he appeared in the experimental comedy, *Exquisite Corpse*, for which 15 writers created a scene apiece, which were then played in random order at each screening. He also had a role in writer/director Adam Deyoe's indie fest comedy *Psycho Sleepover*.

Upcoming for Paul is the new film from Quentin Tarantino, *Inglourious Basterds*, in which he performs alongside an international ensemble cast, including Brad Pitt and Samuel L. Jackson. The film follows a special group of guerrilla soldiers parachuted into Nazi-occupied France, who aim to spread fear among Hitler's troops by single-handedly killing as many German soldiers as they can.

Paul first began writing and performing comedy in his home state at the University of Iowa. Upon moving to Los Angeles, he quickly began catching attention as a regular performer at The Upright Citizens Brigade Theatre, performing sketch, improv and stand-up comedy. His stage work (along with partner, Neil Campbell) was featured at HBO's The Comedy Festival in Las Vegas, as well as San Francisco Sketchfest.

His writing credits include Adult Swim's *Moral Orel*, MTV's *Human Giant* and the Fox pilot *The Right Now Show*, which also featured Paul as a lead performer. Paul's self-made videos have gained a growing following on the Internet and can be viewed at [funnyordie.com/paulrust/videos](http://funnyordie.com/paulrust/videos).

**JACK T. CARPENTER** (Rich) made his film debut in the teen comedy *Sydney White*, a modern-day version of the classic *Snow White*, with Amanda Bynes. Next up, he will show his range of acting in the drama *Harvest*, an independent film written and directed by Marc Meyers. The film centers around three generations of a family coming together one summer, and around the eventual passing of the patriarch of the family, a WWII veteran. Carpenter stars opposite Robert Loggia and Barbara Barrie.

In 2006, just months out of Carnegie Mellon's School of Drama, Carpenter nabbed the lead role of Adam Lipshitz opposite Leslie Nielson in the NBC Television pilot *Lipshitz Saves the World*, which unfortunately never aired. However, he later went on to a recurring role in the Fox comedy *The Return of Jezebel James*, opposite Lauren Ambrose and Parker Posie.

Carpenter, a classically trained actor who is also a writer, lives in New York and continues to pursue his first love, the theatre. In 2006, he starred in the off-Broadway production of *The Night That Roger Went to Visit the Parents of His Old High School Girlfriend*, directed by Andrew McCarthy.

**LAUREN LONDON** (Cammy) made her feature film debut opposite rapper T.I. in *ATL*, directed by Chris Robinson, and next appeared in the all-star cast of Sony Screen Gems' *This Christmas*, alongside Idris Elba, Loretta Devine, Delroy Lindo, Columbus Short and Chris Brown.

Recently, Lauren played the hot new cheerleader, Christina, on the cutting-edge resurrection of TV's *90210*, and also appeared in Benny Boom's feature film, *Next Day Air*.

Lauren, a Los Angeles native, also has starred on the critically-acclaimed HBO Original Series *Entourage* as the romantic interest of the character Turtle (played by Jerry Ferrara), and impressed the fashion world as a spokesmodel for the Sean Jean women's line.

**LAUREN STORM** (Treece), at the young age of 14, landed a two-episode arc of the hit series *Boston Legal*, and things quickly developed from there. Up next was a scene-stealing recurring role on the show *Malcolm in the Middle*, along with a very different and dramatic turn on the popular and critical success *24*, starring Kiefer Sutherland. Lauren followed that with a string of memorable guest-starring roles on some of the most-watched series on the air: *Joan of Arcadia*, *CSI: Miami* and *7th Heaven*.

She also had a supporting role opposite Annette Bening and Ben Kingsley in the multiple Emmy-nominated movie for HBO, *Mrs. Harris*. She then got cast as a series regular on the long-running NBC/Discovery Kids series *Flight 29 Down*.

Her feature film credits include big budget films, as well as grittier, independent fare, most notably as Nanny Cindy to Dwayne Johnson's daughter in the box office hit, *The Game Plan*. Her commitment to her career and her determination in being cast in the role of Treece are evident in her willingness to gain 15 pounds for the *I Love You, Beth Cooper* screen test (and more than 30 pounds for the role). Lauren can currently be seen on television as the Mac Genius

in the Apple Computer commercials. She will next be seen in the Screen Gems thriller *The Roommate*.

**SHAWN ROBERTS** (Kevin) recently completed production on *Edge of Darkness*, opposite Mel Gibson for director Martin Campbell and GK Films. Roberts starred in The Weinstein Company's George A. Romero's *Diary of the Dead* and in Lions Gate Films' *Skinwalkers*. His other film credits include: *Land of the Dead*, directed by George A. Romero for Universal Pictures; *X-Men*, directed by Bryan Singer for Twentieth Century Fox; and the successful Canadian teen comedy *Going the Distance*.

Roberts was raised in Stratford, Ontario, and began acting professionally at age 12, when he landed a lead role on the CBC series *Emily of New Moon*, which was produced by Academy Award®-winning producer Michael Donovan. Since the completion of the show's successful run, Roberts has worked continuously in film and television.

## **ABOUT THE FILMMAKERS**

**CHRIS COLUMBUS** (Director / Producer) is a major force in contemporary Hollywood filmmaking, from his anarchic, genre-bending 1980s classics *Gremlins* and *The Goonies*, to the blockbuster *Harry Potter* films, which are among the most successful book-to-screen adaptations of all time.

Columbus was born in Spangler, Pennsylvania, and grew up outside of Youngstown, Ohio. As a student, he aspired to become a commercial artist. He spent several years studying art and oil painting, eventually becoming interested in drawing *Spider-Man* for Marvel Comics. Columbus eventually made the connection between comic books and movie storyboards. In high school, he began making his own homegrown 8mm films and drawing his own storyboards, which he continues to this day. After high school, he enrolled in the Directors Program at New York University's prestigious Tisch School of the Arts.

Columbus first attained success as a screenwriter. While still in college, he sold his first script, *Jocks*, a semi-autobiographical comedy about a Catholic schoolboy who struggles with his religion and his inability to succeed on the high school football team. After graduating from NYU, Columbus wrote a small town drama entitled *Reckless* (1984), based on his experiences as a factory worker in Ohio. The film was directed by James Foley and starred Aidan Quinn and Daryl Hannah.

Columbus gained prominence in Hollywood writing several original scripts produced by Steven Spielberg. The back-to-back hits of the Joe Dante-directed *Gremlins* (1984) and *The Goonies* (1985), helmed by Richard Donner, were decade-defining films that intertwined high notes of offbeat, edgy, often outrageous humor against more classic adventure-thriller backdrops. He next wrote the fantasy adventure *Young Sherlock Holmes*, which was directed by Barry Levinson.

These screenwriting achievements led Columbus to directing his first feature, *Adventures in Babysitting* (1987), starring Elisabeth Shue. A meeting with John Hughes brought Columbus to

the helm of *Home Alone* (1990), the first of three collaborations. *Home Alone*, and its hugely successful follow-up, *Home Alone 2: Lost in New York* (1992), were universal in appeal and launched the career of Macaulay Culkin. Only *the Lonely* (1991), a bittersweet comedy-drama directed by Columbus from his own screenplay, was praised for featuring one of the late John Candy's best performances, and for the return of legendary star Maureen O'Hara to the screen.

Columbus' smash hit comedy *Mrs. Doubtfire* (1993), starring Robin Williams and Sally Field, bent genders as well as genres, to great critical and public success. Columbus directed another comedy, *Nine Months* (1995), with Hugh Grant and Julianne Moore, before turning to drama with *Stepmom* (1998), starring Julia Roberts and Susan Sarandon.

Columbus faced a daunting task when he was called upon to direct *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone* (2001), the first film based on J.K. Rowling's monumentally successful series of books. With millions of avid and sometimes fanatical readers -- both young and old -- in a high state of expectation and anticipation, Columbus cast newcomers Daniel Radcliffe, Emma Watson and Rupert Grint in the leading roles as Harry Potter and his friends, Hermione Granger and Ron Weasley. Once again, he demonstrated his facility for nurturing and cultivating young talent and turning them into natural screen performers.

The success of *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone* was followed by *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets* (2002), which once again met with huge box office success. He served as producer on the blockbuster *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban*, and directed the film version of the Pulitzer Prize-winning Broadway musical, *Rent* (2005). He was a producer on the hit *Night at the Museum*, with Ben Stiller and Robin Williams, in 2006, as well as this summer's follow-up, *Night at the Museum: Battle of the Smithsonian*.

He is currently directing the fantasy-adventure *Percy Jackson & the Olympians: The Lightning Thief* for Fox 2000 Pictures, based on the best-selling novel.

**LARRY DOYLE** (Screenwriter (based on his novel) / Executive Producer) is a 1976 graduate of Buffalo Grove High School, the setting for his 2007 novel, *I Love You, Beth Cooper*. He was not the valedictorian like the book's protagonist, ranking only 13th out of 500, although several of the students above him took pretty easy classes.

Doyle has wandered through a writing life that has seen him reporting on the early AIDS epidemic and the Challenger explosion, doing comic strips and editing magazines, and writing for the best television show of all time. He currently makes his living writing screenplays while contributing to *The New Yorker* and other magazines.

Doyle began his career with a seven-year stint at United Press International, where he was a medical and science reporter. For a short while thereafter, he was editorial director of First Comics, then the third largest comic book company in the country. He left that to write the newly revived Pogo comic strip, which appeared in more than 300 papers. He then became an editor at the *National Lampoon*, which, thanks largely to his efforts, folded a year later.

He was executive editor of *SPY* magazine during the last of the funny years, and went on to be

an editor-writer for New York magazine for four years. During that time, he also wrote several episodes of Beavis and Butt-Head.

Doyle was a writer and supervising producer of The Simpsons for four years, where he won two Emmys and an Annie® award. He was the writer and executive producer of the film Looney Tunes: Back in Action, and produced eight new Looney Tunes shorts for Warner Bros. He also wrote the movie Duplex, starring Ben Stiller and Drew Barrymore.

Doyle has written for numerous magazines, including Esquire, GQ, Rolling Stone, Harpers and Time. He is a frequent contributor to The New Yorker's "Shouts and Murmurs" section. His second novel, Go Mutants!, will be released by Harper-Collins in 2009.

He lives outside Baltimore with his wife Becky, their three children and one dog, until it dies, and then no more dogs, according to the wife. The wife's sister is married to Campbell McGrath, the famous poet who won a MacArthur Super Genius Grant, and once hit his brother-in-law in the face with an oar and then wrote a poem about it.

In 2008, Doyle also won an award, which, while no ^#&\*%\$ genius grant, was a pretty darn good one. He is the son of Irish immigrants, who only recently have accepted that he will probably not become a doctor.

More information and assorted amusements can be found at [larrydoyle.com](http://larrydoyle.com).

**MARK RADCLIFFE** (Producer) continues his long association with director Chris Columbus, which dates back to 1988, when he served as assistant director on Columbus' second directorial effort, Heartbreak Hotel, his homage to Elvis Presley.

Since the birth of their partnership, Radcliffe has served as producer or executive producer on such Columbus-helmed films as Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone, Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets (serving as executive producer on both), and Mrs. Doubtfire, Stepmom, Rent, Bicentennial Man, Nine Months and his current project, the epic fantasy-adventure, Percy Jackson & the Olympians: The Lightning Thief (all as producer). He also produced the third installment in the Potter franchise, Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban, directed by Alfonso Cuarón (sharing a BAFTA Award as Best Children's Film and a second nomination as Best British Film).

Working together in their 1492 Pictures production entity, Radcliffe also produced Fantastic Four and the sequel, Fantastic Four: Rise of the Silver Surfer, Christmas with the Kranks, Jingle All the Way, Night at the Museum and this summer's sequel, Night at the Museum: Battle for the Smithsonian. His producing duties began on three early Columbus triumphs--Home Alone (on which he doubled as assistant director and associate producer), Only the Lonely (as co-producer and assistant director), and Home Alone 2: Lost in New York (executive producer).

A native of Tulsa, Oklahoma, Radcliffe began his film career as assistant director on the Francis Ford Coppola production The Escape Artist, re-teaming with Coppola on Rumble Fish and Peggy Sue Got Married. Other assistant director credits include John Hughes' She's Having a

Baby and Planes, Trains and Automobiles, Jerry Zucker's Oscar®-nominated 1990 hit, Ghost, Donald Petrie's Mystic Pizza and Paul Schrader's Light of Day. He also served as production manager on the 1979 film Rock 'n' Roll High School.

**MICHAEL BARNATHAN** (Producer) is President of 1492 Pictures, in which he is a producing partner with Chris Columbus and Mark Radcliffe. The company was formed in May 1994. Barnathan served as producer on Nine Months, Jingle All the Way, Stepmom, Cheaper by the Dozen, Rent, Night at the Museum and Night at the Museum: Battle for the Smithsonian. He was executive producer on Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone, Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets and Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban.

Currently, he is a producer on the fantasy-adventure Percy Jackson & the Olympians: The Lightning Thief, for Fox 2000 Pictures.

Prior to joining 1492 Pictures, Barnathan was Senior Vice President of Production at Largo Entertainment for four years. His responsibilities included supervision of both development and production of Largo's films. Before joining Largo, Barnathan spent seven years working for Edgar J. Scherick Associates. During his tenure, he produced and executive-produced numerous cable movies, movies of the week and mini-series, including The Kennedys of Massachusetts, which received nine Emmy nominations. Barnathan is a graduate of New York University's Tisch School of the Arts.

**JENNY BLUM** (Executive Producer) is Senior Vice President of Production for 1492 Pictures. Her career began in 1994, when she worked in set production of the HBO movie, Witch Hunt. Since that time, she has amassed an impressive and varied resume, beginning as second assistant director on several projects, and graduating to first assistant director on multiple independent titles, working with a diverse group of multi-hyphenates.

Some of her more recent feature film credits include: writer/director/actress Nikhil Kamkolkar's multi-racial romantic comedy, Indian Cowboy; producer/director/editor Dana Packard's dramatic thriller, Mr. Barrington; the New York-set romantic comedy A Tale of Two Pizzas, from writer/director Vinnie Sassone; the thriller Beacon Hill, from writer/director Michael Connolly; USA Films' Session 9, the horror film from writer/director/editor Brad Anderson; producer/director Lauren Himmel's award-winning Treading Water; and Sam the Man, starring Fisher Stevens and Annabella Sciorra, helmed by producer/director Gary Winick. Her additional credits as first assistant director are the indies I'll Take You There, Saturn and Enough Already. She also served as second assistant director on Next Stop Wonderland, starring Hope Davis and Phillip Seymour Hoffman, written and directed by Brad Anderson (The Machinist).

**MICHAEL FLYNN** (Executive Producer) began his producing career under the tutorship of Edward R. Pressman. While working for Pressman, he was fortunate to associate-produce films such as True Stories, Masters of the Universe, Wall Street, Talk Radio, Walker, To Sleep With Anger and Reversal of Fortune. He subsequently produced Stacy Cochran's My New Gun (showcased at the Cannes Director's Fortnight) before beginning a career as a line producer. His credits include Romeo Is Bleeding, Ed Wood, Pushing Tin, Remember the Titans, Hearts In Atlantis, Monster-In-Law, Because I Said So, Hamlet 2 and Extract. He's currently serving as the

executive producer of *Beastly* for CBS Films.

**PHIL ABRAHAM** (Director of Photography) received four Emmy nominations for his filming of the HBO award-winning ratings juggernaut *The Sopranos*. On his fifth nomination--for the pilot episode of the stylish, hit series from AMC, *Mad Men*--he took home the statue. Abraham has been behind a camera since 1987, and has a prolific resume of feature film and television credits as first/second assistant camera, camera operator, cinematographer or director.

His film credits as cinematographer include *Annapolis*, starring James Franco; *Cherry*, starring Shalom Harlow and Jake Weber (NBC's *The Medium*); *For the Love of the Game* (second unit), starring Kevin Costner and Kelly Preston; and the Martin Scorsese documentary *My Voyage to Italy*. His camera work may also be seen in the features *Forever Mine*, *The Out-of-Towners*, *Gloria*, *Living Out Loud*, *Illuminata*, *Godzilla* and *Primary Colors*; in the telefilms *M.O.N.Y.* and *Our Town*; and in the series *Six Degrees*, *Spin City*, *Brooklyn South* and *Tales from the Darkside*. He has directed an episode each of the series *Breaking Bad* and *Crash*, and multiple episodes of *Mad Men*.

**HOWARD CUMMINGS** (Production Designer) recently worked on David Koepp's wry comedy *Ghost Town*, having also collaborated with Koepp on his directorial debut, the thriller *Trigger Effect*, and on his next film, *Secret Window*.

Cummings' most recent credits include the film adaptation of the musical *Rent*, directed by fellow San Franciscan Chris Columbus and starring most of the original Broadway cast.

Cummings has worked with two other San Francisco-based directors - Terry Zwigoff on *Art School Confidential*, based on the outsider comic book by Dan Clowes; and with Francis Ford Coppola on *The Rainmaker*, based on the John Grisham novel and starring Matt Damon, Claire Danes and Danny DeVito. Cummings also worked with DeVito on *What's The Worst That Could Happen?*, as well as DeVito's *Death to Smoochy*, starring Edward Norton and Robin Williams.

Cummings provided the production design for Steven Soderbergh's dark thriller *The Underneath*. It was on this project that Cummings met Greg Jacobs, Soderbergh's assistant director, and when Jacobs directed the genre film *Wind Chill*, Cummings executed the production design. Cummings worked with John Schlesinger on his last film, the comedy/drama *The Next Best Thing*, and with Bruce Beresford on the thriller *Double Jeopardy*.

In the action/adventure world, Cummings provided the production design for Renny Harlin's *The Long Kiss Goodnight*. Cummings also designed Alan Rudolph's dark thriller *Mortal Thoughts*, and Bryan Singer's Oscar®-winning thriller *The Usual Suspects*, an ensemble drama for which Kevin Spacey won an Oscar.

For the American Playhouse series on PBS, Cummings designed Lanford Wilson's *Lemon Sky*, starring Kevin Bacon, Kyra Sedgwick, Casey Affleck and Lindsay Crouse, and Horton Foote's *On Valentine's Day*. He also designed PBS' *A Shock to the System*, starring Michael Caine, *Signs of Life* and *The Spitfire Grill*, which starred Alison Elliott.

Cummings' other television work includes the telefilms *Indictment: The McMartin Trial*, *A Dangerous Affair*, *Assault at West Point: The Court-Martial of Johnson Whittaker* and HBO's *Strapped*, an urban drama about illegal gun use, which was Forest Whitaker's directorial debut.

**PETER HONESS, A.C.E.** (Editor) recently edited Chris Weitz's epic fantasy *The Golden Compass*. Prior to that, he worked with Wolfgang Petersen on the thriller *Poseidon* and on his 2004 historical epic, *Troy*. He began his motion picture career editing low-budget films and documentaries, earning an American Cinema Editors Eddie nomination in 1974 for his editing of the documentary *Following the Tundra Wolf*. Honess briefly turned to feature film sound editing before becoming an assistant film editor on John Irvin's *Dogs of War* in 1981.

The list of films edited by Peter Honess suggests he is receptive to the collaborative nature of filmmaking, forming bonds with certain directors who seem to seek his services whenever possible. He edited four films directed by John Schlesinger: *The Believers* (1987); *Madame Sousatzka* (1988); *Eye For an Eye* (1996); and Schlesinger's final picture, *The Next Best Thing* (2000). Honess collaborated with director Fred Schepisi on four projects, starting with his feature film adaptation of David Hare's stage hit *Plenty* (1985), followed by *The Russia House* (1990), *Mr. Baseball* (1992) and his film adaptation of John Guare's acclaimed play, *Six Degrees of Separation* (1993).

Russell Mulcahy is another director for whom Honess edited four movies: *Highlander* (1986); *Ricochet* (1991); *The Real McCoy* (1993); and *The Shadow* (1994). Honess also worked on two more films with John Irvin, *Champions* (1984) and *Next of Kin* (1989). Additionally, Honess edited two for director Harold Becker: *Mercury Rising* (1998); and *Domestic Disturbance* (2001).

Honess' other credits include Curtis Hanson's critically acclaimed *L.A. Confidential* in 1997, which garnered him an Academy Award nomination and a BAFTA for Best Editing. More recently, he worked with director Jon Turteltaub on *The Kid* (2000), with Rob Cohen on *The Fast and the Furious* (2001), I Love You Beth Cooper's *Chris Columbus on Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets* (2002) and director Karyn Kusama on *Aeon Flux* (2005).

**KAREN MATTHEWS** (Costume Designer) designed the wardrobe for Paramount/DreamWorks' *Things We Lost in the Fire* and New Line Cinema's *The Last Mimzy*. Matthews was also responsible for costuming the surprise hit thriller *Snakes on a Plane*. Other feature credits include *White Noise*, *mem-(o)-re*, *Long Weekend* and *The Christmas Cottage*, the latter starring Peter O'Toole.

For the small screen, Matthews designed costumes for numerous television movies, including *Jack for Showtime*, *Return to Halloweentown* for Disney Productions, *Fishing With John* for WTN, *Harvey and Captains Courageous* for Hallmark Entertainment and *Stealing Sinatra*, starring William H. Macy and David Arquette, for Showtime.

Matthews also served as costume designer on the miniseries, *Dragon Boys*, *Voyage of the Unicorn* (Best Costumes Award winner, Canada's *The LEOS*) and *The Pictures of Hollis Woods*,

starring Sissy Spacek. Her series television credits include *The Mountain*, starring Barbara Hershey and Oliver Hudson for Warner Bros., and *Out of Order*, starring Eric Stoltz, Felicity Huffman and William H. Macy for Showtime.

**CHRISTOPHE BECK** (Composer) has composed scores for over 40 feature films and nearly 20 television shows. With more than 15 years of experience, Beck has scored a wide array of projects, including such action films as *The Sentinel* and *Elektra*; the comedies *Charlie Bartlett*, *The Pink Panther* and *Bring It On*; and such dramas as *Under the Tuscan Sun* and *Year of the Dog*.

Beck recently composed the action adventure *The Seeker: The Dark is Rising*; the comedies *The Hangover*, *Drillbit Taylor* and *What Happens in Vegas*; the drama *Phoebe in Wonderland*; the Sundance Film Festival Grand Jury nominee *The Greatest*; and the comedy sequel *The Pink Panther 2*.

His additional credits include *School for Scoundrels*, *License to Wed*, *We Are Marshall*, *Yours, Mine and Ours*, *Taxi*, *A Cinderella Story*, *Saved!*, *Garfield*, *Cheaper by the Dozen*, *American Wedding* and *Just Married*.

Beck's upcoming projects include *Post Grad* and *All About Steve*, both feature comedies scheduled for release this year from Twentieth Century Fox.

He began his scoring career on the Canadian television series *White Fang*, and from there went on to score three seasons of the hit television series *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, for which he won an Emmy Award for Outstanding Music Composition.

**PATRICK HOULIHAN** (Music Supervisor) has been programming non-score music for motion pictures for more than 15 years, starting out as a music coordinator on *The Sweetest Thing*, *Austin Powers: The Spy Who Shagged Me*, *Ready to Rumble*, *Charlie's Angels*, *Freddy Got Fingered* and *Bubble Boy*. He also had cuts on the soundtracks for *Senior Trip*, *A Walk to Remember* and the more recent *Just Friends*, starring Ryan Reynolds.

He rose to the position of music supervisor for the features *EuroTrip*, *Little Manhattan*, *Just Friends*, *The Wedding Weekend*, *My Super Ex-Girlfriend*, *Deck the Halls*, *Firehouse Dog*, *The Seeker: The Dark Is Rising* and *The Rocker*, headlined by Rainn Wilson from the hit series *The Office*. His work will next be heard in Fox Atomic's *Post Grad*, starring an ensemble cast that includes Alexis Bledel, Michael Keaton, Jane Lynch, Rodrigo Santoro and Carol Burnett.

© 2009 20th Century Fox