

SHORTS

From filmmaker Robert Rodriguez, creator of the “Spy Kids” trilogy and “The Adventures of Sharkboy and Lavagirl in 3-D,” comes the family action-adventure “Shorts.”

Eleven-year-old Toe Thompson is the designated punching bag for the bullies of the suburban community of Black Falls, where his and everyone else’s parents work for Black Box Industries, makers of the do-it-all gadget that’s sweeping the nation. But during a freak storm, a mysterious Rainbow Rock, which grants wishes to anyone who finds it, falls from the sky. Suddenly, the neighborhood that Toe already thinks is weird is about to get a lot weirder. As the Rainbow Rock ricochets around the town—from kid to kid and parent to parent—wishes-come-true quickly turn the neighborhood upside down in a wild rampage of everything from tiny aliens to giant boogers.

The magical fantasy adventure “Shorts” is told through a series of interwoven not-so-tall tales that each brings to life the sometimes wonderful, often terrible, and totally out-of-control wishes that become far more than Toe and his neighbors ever imagined.

“Shorts” stars Jon Cryer, William H. Macy, Leslie Mann, James Spader, Jimmy Bennett, Kat Dennings, Jake Short, Devon Gearhart, Leo Howard, Trevor Gagnon, Rebel Rodriguez, and Jolie Vanier.

Written and directed by Rodriguez, the film is produced by Rodriguez and Elizabeth Avellán, with Dan Lin, Hunt Lowry, Mohammed Khalaf and Edward Borgerding serving as executive producers. As he often does, Rodriguez served as his own director of photography, editor, visual effects supervisor and composer on the film.

Warner Bros. Pictures presents, in association with Imagination Abu Dhabi and Media Rights Capital, a Troublemaker Studios Production, a Robert Rodriguez Movie, “Shorts.” The film has been rated PG by the MPAA for mild action and some rude humor.

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ABOUT THE PRODUCTION

WISHFUL THINKING

Filmmaker Robert Rodriguez has earned acclaim for a wide range of films, including such family hits as the “Spy Kids” trilogy and “The Adventures of Sharkboy and Lavagirl in 3-D.” His new family film, “Shorts,” unleashes the imagination around the central premise of a rock that can grant any wish. “That’s the ultimate playground,” he says. “With a story like this, you are challenging yourself to come up with the most amazing things you can possibly imagine. The Rainbow Rock is the ultimate in wish-fulfillment. I mean, you tell kids that concept and they immediately start dreaming about all the things they could wish for if they had that rock.”

Rodriguez is not only a do-it-all filmmaker but the father of five children. His action-packed family adventures are, at their core, contemporary fables, which are both inspired and informed by his own kids. Just as his son Racer had come up with ideas for “The Adventures of Sharkboy and Lavagirl in 3-D,” another of Rodriguez’s sons, Rebel, helped dream up “Shorts.”

Rebel suggested making a film with the kind of episodes his family loved watching on “The Little Rascals.” The director offers, ““The Little Rascals’ felt like real kids, but not exactly like real life. It was an idealized state, where they all mixed and matched through different adventures. I wanted to take that magical kids’ world a hundred times further and set it in suburbia.”

The original idea was to structure the film like a series of “Little Rascals” episodes. “They’d be completely separate stories but utilizing the same kids in the neighborhood,” Rodriguez explains. “Then, as the script evolved, I took one of the ideas Rebel had about a wishing Rainbow Rock and used that as the unifying element.”

The film’s episodic structure also mirrors the director’s experience with his kids when they want to share a story they’ve seen. “When my kids want to show me something funny they saw on TV, they’ll use the DVR to speed up to the good parts, so I see the story zipping by,” he notes. “Once they have me hooked, they’ll circle back and

show me the middle and, if I'm a good audience, they will rewind to the start. It's a lot of fun to tell the story by rewinding and fast-forwarding and juxtaposing scenes."

Rebel, who plays one of the neighborhood kids, also provided the title: "Rebel said, 'It's called "Shorts," because the stories are short, the kids are short, and they wear shorts,'" Rodriguez recalls with a laugh. "So for him to play one of the leads is a fair thing since it was his idea."

BULLIES, BROTHERS & BOOGERS

The tale unfolds through the eyes of friendless outcast Toe Thompson, played by Jimmy Bennett. "Toe is a nerdy kid who is always getting picked on," Bennett comments. "Every day he goes to school and they just keep picking on him and even dumping him in the trash can. But he was still a lot of fun to play."

Toe isn't the first to find the Rainbow Rock, but since the tale is told out of order at the whim of his own memory, Toe's episode marks the Rainbow Rock's entrance into the film when it gets lobbed at his head by a pack of bullies who are chasing him. Bennett continues, "They are throwing rocks at him and don't even think twice when they see the Rainbow Rock; they just throw it at him. When Toe picks it up, the rock tells him to make a wish, so he wishes for friends that are just as cool and interesting as he is. What he gets are these little alien friends who try to help him, although it doesn't always work out. They cause a real ruckus, but, just as he wished, they are really cool."

The 12-year-old Bennett already had numerous acting credits under his belt when he captivated the filmmakers with his audition for "Shorts." Rodriguez recalls, "Jimmy walked in and just floored me. He may be young, but he brings a lot to the table. He can already carry a film and that's no easy task in a big ensemble like this."

Making matters worse for Toe, his main nemesis is a girl. "Helvetica Black is the leader of the town bullies and Toe is her favorite target," Bennett allows. "But secretly Helvetica likes Toe, and he secretly likes her, even though they would never admit it, especially to each other. They each think the other one doesn't like them...sort of like real life."

Played by Jolie Vanier, Helvetica Black is the daughter of Mr. Black, who rules the town, so she naturally assumes she should rule the school. "Helvetica is an alpha

female,” affirms Vanier, who calls her character “the scariest girl on the planet. She’s really not afraid of anything...except maybe anyone finding out about her crush on Toe.”

Producer Elizabeth Avellán adds, “Helvetica is so sassy and kind of mean. But Toe has her number. He knows that there’s some reason why she keeps calling him on the phone and hanging up on him, and things like that.”

Vanier, who makes her feature film debut in “Shorts,” won the role by remaining in character through her entire audition. As Rodriguez details, “The character has to come off as a really spoiled, bad little girl. That’s where Jolie trumped everyone. She was acting from the moment she walked in until she left the room. I thought, ‘Wow, she’s perfect!’ This is Jolie’s first movie and she really does a terrific job.”

Helvetica’s bullying partner-in-crime is her brother, Cole Black, who shares his sister’s sense of entitlement because of their father’s wealth and power.

As Toe narrates the adventures unleashed by the Rainbow Rock, he rewinds to show how it first crashed to Earth—and into their lives—when it’s found not at the end but the beginning of a rainbow by the aptly named Lug, Loogie and Laser Shorts. In an story directly inspired by Rodriguez’s own sons, the Shorts brothers discover the Rainbow Rock during a treasure hunt. “The three characters who are actually based on my children are the Shorts brothers,” the director offers. “My children’s names are Rocket, Racer and Rebel so, in the spirit of alliteration, these three characters’ names are Loogie, Lug and Laser.”

Despite the fact that his father calls Lug Shorts “the complete opposite of Rebel,” Rebel Rodriguez was determined to play the videogame-obsessed Shorts brother. “I was very excited when I found out ‘Shorts’ was going to be an actual movie because our family had been working on the idea for a long time. And when my dad told me I had the part of Lug, it was really great!” says Rebel.

Robert Rodriguez reveals, “Loogie, who wants to go on an outdoor adventure, is actually based on Rebel, but we cast a young actor named Trevor Gagnon as Loogie. Leo Howard plays Laser. They are both great kids and, together with Rebel, they were a terrific trio.”

During a massive rainstorm, Loogie drags his brothers out of the house. Avellán remarks, “Where Toe is the conscience of the story, Loogie is the creative force. His message is ‘Let’s put away the videogames and go outside.’”

“Loogie is an adventurous kind of kid,” Gagnon agrees. “He always wants to get outside, while his two other brothers play videogames all day. But he gets them to go on this adventure and they end up finding the rock that creates all the havoc in the movie.”

“They see a rainbow, and they think they’re going to the end, but it’s really the beginning. And there’s this rock,” Rebel Rodriguez says. “Loogie picks it up and finds out it’s a wishing rock. He wishes for a castle and a moat, and this huge castle starts rising from the ground with a big canyon around it filled with crocodiles and snakes.”

Only Laser sees the potential for disaster. Leo Howard plays the smart and cautious older brother, who is the first one to realize that it’s very easy to misuse the rock’s powers for greed. “Every time Laser gets the rock, he tries to make the right wishes,” says Howard. “Laser is trying to keep the rock from others, so he ends up wishing for really long arms to keep it out of their reach, and his arms stretch to the ceiling, which is like ten feet.”

As it ricochets among the kids of Black Falls, the Rainbow Rock finds its way into the intensely germophobic household of Nose Noseworthy, played by Jake Short. “Nose is totally afraid of germs,” Short attests. “His dad has convinced him they need to live in a germ-free environment. Their house is wrapped in plastic; anyone coming to visit has to go through the Decontaminator. And Nose and his dad have to wear these crazy yellow suits to protect them if they go outside.”

Rodriguez remembers, “When Jake auditioned for Nose, he came in with these big glasses that he bought for himself, with his hair slicked back, and I said, ‘Oh, perfect, you can be the nerd,’ though in real life, he’s actually the cool kid in the group.”

Played by William H. Macy, Nose’s dad, Dr. Noseworthy, is the top scientist working for Black Box Industries and is busy trying to develop a new battery for the Black Box based on bacteria, but, as a result of his work, he has overreacted to the ubiquity of germs. “Dr. Noseworthy shows his love for his child by trying to protect him from everything in the world,” Avellán relates. “So Nose is basically a child in a bubble,

and all the other kids don't understand how that happened. He used to be part of their group, and now he's completely isolated."

One of Nose's most egregious habits—one his Dad is constantly trying to break him of—is that he's a nose-picker, and this proclivity leads to one of the most out-of-control wishes in the entire adventure: the Booger Monster. "Nose picks his nose and throws it into one of his dad's inventions by accident, and basically, the Booger Monster comes to life and tries to eat them, because it needs to keep feeding to stay intact," Jimmy Bennett describes. "For Nose and his dad, that's like their worst nightmare—a big, giant booger coming after them, full of germs and all this nasty stuff."

The kids aren't the only ones to have to contend with the Booger Monster. Nose's tutor, Stacey, is also confronted with the slimy menace. "It's just huge and creepy and slimy," says Kat Dennings, who plays Stacey. "Kids will love it."

The sarcastic Stacey Thompson also happens to be Toe's overbearing sister. Though she does so innocently, Stacey also manages to do some strange damage in the brief moments in which she holds the Rainbow Rock. "My character has time to make one wish, but it's kind of a whopper," says Dennings. "Stacey is holding the rock when she tells her ex-boyfriend that she wishes he would grow up. He does, but not quite in the way she had in mind."

To fill some of the other roles, Rodriguez again didn't look any further than his own family. "These movies are such family affairs for me. It doesn't feel right to me unless my family is there as support and inspiration. It's the way I've always done it."

His eldest sons, Rocket and Racer, play members of Cole Black's Bully Gang. Rodriguez's then-three-year-old daughter Rhiannon appears in the Black Box infomercial, as does his dog. Two of Rodriguez's sisters also make appearances: Angela Lanza plays the science teacher and Tina Rodriguez appears as a Black Box Industries employee. His niece Bianca Rodriguez, is seen as the baby sister.

There are two young characters in the film, called the Blinkers, who fail to notice the chaos unfolding around them because they're too busy staring at each other. Cambell Westmoreland and Zoe Webb play Blinker #1 and Blinker #2, respectively. Rodriguez says, "It's a game I always played with my brothers and sisters growing up, and now with my own kids. I've become a champion non-blinker myself."

Avellán pinpoints the individual aesthetic Rodriguez brings to his films that make them so engaging for kids of all ages. “Robert has such a unique point of view about life, about children, and about what’s fun. He also knows exactly how to behave with kids of all different ages. It’s really fascinating to watch.”

Devon Gearhart confirms, “We all thought of him as a little kid in an adult’s body, because he has the imagination of a little kid, and he can communicate with kids really well.”

His sentiment was shared among the adult cast members. Leslie Mann, who plays Mom Thompson, notes, “It’s great to have a kids’ movie that is fun for adults, too, because as parents we spend a lot of time at kids’ movies. When I met with Robert, he just blew my mind with his ideas for the film and I knew working with him would be wonderful.”

“He’s got an amazing mind,” adds Macy. “Anyone who has ever seen one of Robert’s movies knows he’s got a brilliant imagination. I mean, who else would put a nine-foot-two booger in a movie?”

The Rainbow Rock brings Nose and the Shorts brothers, and even Helvetica, together with Toe to help solve the insanity their own wishes bring into the world. Jimmy Bennett says, “Everybody thinks it’s going to be the most wonderful thing in the world, but when it gets in the wrong hands it doesn’t turn out so well.”

PARENTING SKILLS

When it comes to wishes-come-true, wisdom doesn’t necessarily follow age. In fact, the trouble really starts when the adults get their hands on the Rainbow Rock. “It gets passed from family to family, from kids to parents, and it wreaks complete havoc on the entire neighborhood because everyone wishes for the wrong things, for the wrong reasons, sometimes without even realizing they made a wish,” adds Rodriguez.

All of the kids’ parents in the neighborhood of Black Falls work for Black Box Industries, a monolithic corporation dedicated to creating and upgrading the newest do-it-all gadget that’s sweeping the nation, called, of course, the Black Box. Rodriguez sparked on the idea out of his own obsession with handheld devices. “For years I had to suffer as my boys got lost in their handheld videogames. But once I had mine, I could

say, 'This is dad's version!' On the flip side, the more 'stuff' we have, the greater the isolation or distraction that exists if you allow it to take over your life."

Toe's parents, Mom and Dad Thompson, played by Leslie Mann and Jon Cryer, are so busy creating a better Black Box that they barely acknowledge each other, preferring to communicate through texts and email. "I know I'm not alone here in saying we've become a little too in love with the gadgets that are supposed to help us in life," says Jon Cryer. "We're so busy trying to communicate that we aren't listening to each other."

In the film, "everyone is distracted with their Black Boxes," adds Leslie Mann. "It's an extreme version of reality because they aren't even pretending to pay attention to one another anymore."

To compound matters, their boss has made them an offer they can't refuse: come up with the next innovation for the Black Box...or be fired. Cryer offers, "It's a lose-lose situation for both of us, because if I win, she gets fired. If she wins, I get fired. I think it's a metaphor for the Catch-22 that a lot of working parents are caught in nowadays."

The Thompsons' relationship is truly tested during Mr. Black's costume party when Mom Thompson—dressed as a beauty pageant contestant, appropriately named "Miss Communication"—uses an unfortunate choice of words while in possession of the Rainbow Rock. She wishes that she and her husband were "closer," resulting in the two becoming conjoined. "Thankfully, we like each other," says Cryer. "Leslie is a terrific comedic actress and was lovely to work with. She has incredible patience."

Together, Mann and Cryer created exactly the kinds of parents Rodriguez envisioned for Toe. "I needed them to have warmth and also be good with physical comedy," he notes. "It's a physically demanding role because they spend part of the film strapped together in the most uncomfortable position. Leslie and Jon were just perfect. They effortlessly have the kind of timing of those old screwball comedies."

Mom and Dad Thompson both work for the powerful Mr. Carbon Black, played by James Spader. "Carbon Black owns a company called Black Box Industries in a town called Black Falls," says Spader. "Virtually everybody who lives in the community works for Mr. Black. He owns the business and, therefore, owns the town. When I read

the script, I thought it was tremendously imaginative so I thought it would be great fun to do, and it was really a romp.”

Rodriguez, who has long admired Spader, comments, “James plays Mr. Black in a great way. He’s not your typical villain. He’s just misguided, but he’s in a position of power so he can do a lot of damage.”

Avellán notes, “Mr. Black is always trying to improve on the Black Box for the convenience of mankind. But at the same time, he’s getting very wealthy off of it so there’s this duality about him. He also wants his kids to behave a certain way, but he doesn’t necessarily behave that way. It’s ‘Do as I say, not as I do.’ And the kids pick up on that.”

The final parent to get caught up in the mayhem unleashed by the Rainbow Rock is Nose’s dad and Mr. Black’s chief inventor, Dr. Noseworthy. “Noseworthy is a scientist who is trying to come up with a new-and-improved battery by using bacteria, but the job has also made him a germophobe because he realizes how dirty the world is,” says William H. Macy. “It was bizarre acting out of a Hazmat suit, but it was also freeing because I was able to make a lot of funny faces and do battle with a nine-foot tall booger. It was a blast!”

Rodriguez was thrilled to enlist an actor of Macy’s caliber to let loose in the film’s heightened reality. “Bill is such a talent, not just as an actor but as a writer and director himself,” the director notes. “I really enjoyed working with him because he has such a well-rounded view of the moviemaking process.”

“When I read the script, I thought it was adorable and loved the idea of working with Robert,” Macy remarks. “I have two little girls—a six-year-old and a seven-year old—so it’s grand to do something that you can take your kids to.”

THE LONG AND SHORT OF IT

“Shorts” was shot in and around Rodriguez’s home town of Austin, Texas, and within his Austin-based full-service production facility, Troublemaker Studios. Despite working on a tight shooting schedule, with a large cast featuring many child actors, the film was completed in just 42 shooting days, made possible by Rodriguez’s style of filmmaking, his facilities at Troublemaker, and his team of longtime collaborators.

“Robert has the good fortune to work largely on his own turf and with the same people over and over again,” says Macy, adding that a lot of those people are Robert himself. “He writes, he directs, he produces, he operates the camera, he cuts, he composes music... I think he also does craft services and paved the road to the set before the trucks arrived,” he jokes. “And he gets to sleep in his own bed.”

Cryer was equally impressed, noting, “Robert has built for himself the world’s biggest sandbox. It’s the dream of every guy who has ever wanted to direct to have this kind of setup. He gets to make the movies he wants how he wants them. Everything he does looks like fun.”

As a filmmaker who wears many hats, Rodriguez had the film mapped out in his head long before production began, which was especially important on a film told in such a non-linear way. Together with his team, the filmmaker designed the entire picture, using methods including traditional storyboards and cartoon-like previsualizations created by Troublemaker’s in-house visual effects department, led by visual effects producer Amber Kirsch.

The film is brimming with all manner of creatures, robots, aliens, monsters and augmented humans. Rodriguez accomplished the considerable visual effects load on the film using a combination of shots created by Troublemaker Digital, along with the Canadian effects company Hybrid.

The film’s predominant location is the neighborhood of Black Falls itself, which Rodriguez envisioned as a universal suburbia. “I wanted to have a very realistic world where all of this crazy stuff could happen,” he notes. “The wild ideas come from the Rainbow Rock. So, really, none of that color really hits until the rock hits.”

Production designer Steve Joyner and art director Caylah Eddleblute were able to help scout the ideal location within Austin. “We were lucky to find an Austin neighborhood that was spot-on based on the script description,” Joyner states. “And, even better, the interiors of these homes are all laid out the same.”

The uniformity of design within all the homes gave the designers a tremendous boost in efficiency. Eddleblute says, “One house plays for three families’ houses—the Thompsons, the Shorts and the Blinkers. We maximized our resources and really didn’t have to move locations.”

The complex sets for Black Industries and Noseworthy's laboratory were created within Troublemaker's own soundstages. Though Rodriguez had soundstages and a variety of local spots at his disposal, some of the best locations for the film turned out to be in his own backyard. "I built my house ten years ago knowing that some day I was going to make a movie there, so it's kind of built like a set," the director remarks. "And we finally got to do that on this movie, while going on this adventure."

The costumes provided a fun collaboration between the director, the design team and the cast themselves. Rodriguez's longtime costume designer, Nina Proctor, notes, "Robert has a very strong vision in mind when he starts a project and he has a great understanding of color and how to use it."

For the adults' work attire, Proctor incorporated mostly beige, black and gray. She explains, "With Black Box Industries, everything is black and grey. Mr. Black's employees wear grey while he wears black suits. It's about power."

Eddleblute adds, "For the overall color palette, we went with the concept that grown-ups are in muted colors, with the idea in mind that when you grow up your life loses some of its vibrancy, but when you're a kid everything is still colorful."

Proctor had a lot of fun creating the more colorful costumes for the kids, including the Shorts brothers, who, as predetermined by Rebel Rodriguez, all wear shorts. Helvetica Black's wardrobe proves she is definitely her father's daughter. Jolie Vanier enjoyed the character's look, noting, "Most of the outfits that Helvetica wears are pink and black. Her outfits are a little more snazzy than everybody else's. Mostly she wears black, because her last name is Black."

For the germ-obsessed Dr. Noseworthy and his son, Nose, Proctor created playful father and son costumes. In addition to their matching lab coats and sweater vests, the duo ventures outside their germ-free environment in specially designed Hazmat-like suits, which can function indoors and outdoors. This meant both that the actors would need to wear them in the Texas summer heat, and that the camera would need to be able to see and hear the actors when they were inside the suits.

Proctor and the special effects team worked together to design lights inside the suits so the actors would be fully lit at all times. They also created a cooling system

within the costumes, which allowed William H. Macy and Jake Short to flip a switch and get cool air.

The conjoined suit worn by Leslie Mann and Jon Cryer during Mr. Black's costume party proved to have a much more central role in the film than originally thought. Proctor says, "Robert is always full of surprises. This time it was that the merging of these two characters was going to be a costume, not CGI."

Proctor originally built the costume as a woman's pageant dress that had a male figure built onto it. Suddenly, Proctor says, "We had to consider everything that would happen while wearing it—yoga, flying into a fountain while riding a bike, waltzing—all while still making it look like a pageant dress."

Proctor's team created a number of different versions of the dress, including one in which Mann and Cryer were actually rigged in together. Another version had a fake head that looked like Cryer, which was interchangeable with a green tracking marker rig that would later be replaced with CGI.

Rodriguez relied on the mechanical effects team to create a plethora of outrageous gags for the film. Steve Joyner notes, "This movie is heavy on old-school mechanical effects. We were very lucky to have a really experienced mechanical effects crew headed by John McLeod."

One of the biggest pieces created was the "Decontaminator Booth" in the Noseworthy home. Joyner describes, "The Decontaminator is based on an experience Robert had at the airport when he went through one. He told us a story of going through it, his hair going up, and the sound. He thought it would be fun to incorporate it."

Kat Dennings, as Stacey Thompson, has to enter the Noseworthy house through a Decontaminator every time she tutors Nose. Dennings says it gave her quite a shock when she was hit from all sides by wind machines. "Robert thought it would be hilarious for me not to know what was going to happen when I got in there," she says, admitting, "I had to dig my nails into my palm so I wouldn't laugh."

Two central props that would drive the story—the Black Box and the Rainbow Rock—were conceived and created at Troublemaker, with Rodriguez collaborating with 3D visual effects artist Alex Toader on the concepts. For the multi-purpose Black Box, a language of cubes and squares was established. Several incarnations of the Black Box

were created based on what they needed it to function as, be it phones, calculators, a dog grooming tool, or a toaster. There were also several versions of the Rainbow Rock, including a spongy one that could land harmlessly on Toe's head.

The towering Booger Monster emerged from an idea hatched by Rodriguez over 20 years ago as part of a sequel to his award-winning short "Bedhead." "I had no idea how to make a giant Booger Monster, other than a lot of slime slathered over someone wearing a series of trash bags, so it's nice to know that 20 years later I could finally make the booger of my dreams. And yes, I know that's disgusting," he laughs.

Troublemaker's facilities streamlined the creation of mechanical effects and props on-site so that the production did not need to waste any time. "Troublemaker has everything Hollywood has," Joyner asserts. "For us, it's basically Santa's Workshop, which gives us a chance to develop things that are unique to Robert's stories."

Working in this environment was a refreshing change for the actors. "It's not a typical film studio," James Spader attests. "Robert has a wonderful imagination and loves to play, and that's abundantly clear just walking around. It's a wonderful environment to work in."

That sentiment was shared by the younger cast. "Robert has almost too much fun working with the kids," says Avellán. "There were days the kids were having such a terrific time, they didn't want to leave the set, which tells you that something good was going on."

Rodriguez hopes the fun shared by his cast and crew is also shared by the audience. He affirms, "I hope families walk away with a real sense of fun, not just in the idea of wish-fulfillment, but also in the way a story can be told—with the narrator zipping around as he remembers what parts of the story he wants to tell first, regardless of proper order," Rodriguez concludes. "It's very different, and that's what I like doing."

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ABOUT THE CAST

JON CRYER (Dad Thompson) has earned four consecutive Emmy nominations for his performance as Alan Harper in CBS's top-rated comedy series "Two and a Half Men." In addition to starring on the series, Cryer made his directorial debut on an episode of the show during its fourth season, and has since directed additional episodes.

Cryer recently filmed back-to-back movies while on hiatus from "Two and a Half Men." In addition to "Shorts," he appears in the Polish Brothers' upcoming feature "Stay Cool." Earlier this year, he made a cameo appearance in the independent feature "Weather Girl."

His other film credits include both major studio releases and acclaimed independent features. He first gained attention with a starring role opposite Demi Moore in 1984's "No Small Affair." Two years later, he starred as an endearing misfit in the iconic teen comedy "Pretty in Pink," written by John Hughes. His hilarious performance as Jim "Wash Out" Pfaffenbach in the 1991 comedy hit "Hot Shots!" marked his first teaming with Charlie Sheen.

Cryer first became known to television audiences playing the title role in the CBS comedy series "The Famous Teddy Z." He has since starred in the FOX series "Partners" and the ABC sitcom "The Trouble with Normal." In addition, he has had guest-starring roles on such series as "The Practice," "Andy Richter Controls the Universe" and "Mr. Show."

Also a gifted filmmaker, Cryer co-wrote, produced, and starred in two well-received independent films for director Richard Schenkman. The first, "The Pompatus of Love," explores the romantic floundering of four friends in their thirties. Cryer based his second film, "Went to Coney Island on a Mission from God...Be Back by Five," on the true story of a childhood friend who was homeless and living in Central Park. The film has garnered awards in film festivals both in the US and abroad.

On stage, Cryer has hit the boards on both sides of the Atlantic. He played David in Harvey Fierstein's "Torch Song Trilogy," bringing the role from Broadway to Los Angeles; starred on Broadway as Eugene Jerome in Neil Simon's "Brighton Beach Memoirs"; and played Jack in the Los Angeles premiere of "Boys' Life." In addition, he

earned applause from critics and audiences alike in the London and Los Angeles productions of “900 Oneonta.”

A native New Yorker, Cryer is the son of actor David Cryer and writer and actress Gretchen Cryer and did his first commercial at the age of four. He studied acting at Stagedoor Manor, a summer acting camp recently featured in Todd Graff’s Sundance favorite “Camp,” before being accepted to London’s prestigious Royal Academy of Dramatic Art.

WILLIAM H. MACY (Dr. Noseworthy), one of today’s most respected actors, has been honored for his work on stage, screen and television.

Earlier this year, he starred on Broadway in David Mamet’s “Speed the Plow.” On television, he reprised his Emmy-nominated role as Dr. Morgenstern in one of the final episodes of “ER.” For the big screen, Macy produced and starred in Peter Hewitt’s 2009 crime comedy “The Maiden Heist.” In addition, he recently starred in the indie film “The Deal,” which premiered at the 2008 Sundance Film Festival. Macy also co-wrote the screenplay, based on Peter Lefcourt’s novel, with his longtime writing partner Steven Schachter, who directed “The Deal.” Also in 2008, Macy starred in Brian Hecker’s indie “Bart Got a Room,” and lent his voice to the animated hit “The Tale of Despereaux.”

In 2007, Macy starred in the smash hit buddy comedy “Wild Hogs,” alongside John Travolta, Martin Lawrence and Tim Allen. His recent film work also includes a trio of acclaimed independent features: Jason Reitman’s “Thank You for Smoking”; a film adaptation of the David Mamet play “Edmond,” in which he played the title role; and Emilio Estevez’s “Bobby,” for which Macy shared in a Screen Actors Guild (SAG) Award® nomination for Outstanding Motion Picture Cast. Macy also served as an executive producer on the widely praised independent film “Transamerica,” starring his wife, Felicity Huffman.

Additionally, Macy recently earned a Golden Globe nomination for the role of the fast-talking Tick Tock McGlaughlin in the fact-based 2003 drama “Seabiscuit,” for which he also received a SAG Award® nomination as a member of the ensemble cast. He earlier received an Academy Award® nomination and won an Independent Spirit Award for his work in the Coen brothers hit “Fargo.” His performance as the hapless Jerry

Lundergaard in that film also brought him a SAG Award[®] nomination for Outstanding Supporting Actor and several critics groups' award mentions. He has garnered additional SAG Award[®] nods as a member of the nominated casts of the Paul Thomas Anderson-directed films "Boogie Nights" and "Magnolia," and two more Independent Spirit Award nominations for his work in "Oleanna" and "Homicide," both directed by Mamet.

Macy's wide range of film credits also includes "Sahara," "Cellular," "Spartan," "The Cooler," "Welcome to Collinwood," "Jurassic Park III," "State and Main," "Happy, Texas," "A Civil Action," "Pleasantville," "Wag the Dog," "Air Force One," "Ghosts of Mississippi," "Mr. Holland's Opus," "Murder in the First," "The Client," "Searching for Bobby Fischer," "Shadows and Fog" and "Radio Days."

For television, Macy has been recognized for his work on both sides of the camera. He won dual Emmy Awards, for Best Actor and Best Writing, for his work on the inspiring 2002 telefilm "Door to Door." Macy also won a SAG Award[®] and earned a Golden Globe nomination for his poignant portrayal of Bill Porter, who became a successful salesman despite having cerebral palsy. The co-writer of the project (with Schachter), he also earned a Writers Guild of America (WGA) Award nomination. "Door to Door" also won four more Emmy Awards, including Outstanding Television Movie, a Critics' Choice Award and a Peabody Award, among its numerous honors.

In 2004, Macy co-wrote, produced and starred in "The Wool Cap," earning Emmy, Golden Globe and SAG Award[®] nominations for his performance, as well as another WGA Award nomination. The telefilm also earned Emmy and Critics' Choice Award nominations for Outstanding Television Movie. Macy more recently earned his ninth Emmy nomination for his role in "Nightmares and Dreamscapes: From the Stories of Stephen King." He was also Emmy-nominated for his performances in the television movies "Stealing Sinatra" and "A Slight Case of Murder," the latter of which he also co-wrote with Schachter, as well as his roles on the series "Sports Night" and "ER."

His many other television credits include such acclaimed longform projects as "The Awakening Land"; "The Murder of Mary Phagan"; "Andersonville"; "The Writing on the Wall"; "Reversible Errors"; and "Out of Order," to name only a few. He also directed the HBO film "Lip Service," which won a Cable ACE Award.

Born in Miami and raised in Georgia and Maryland, Macy originally set out to become a veterinarian at Bethany College in West Virginia, but after performing in numerous plays, he transferred to Goddard College in Vermont, where he came under the tutelage of a theater professor named David Mamet, beginning their long association.

In 1972, Mamet, Macy and Schachter moved to Chicago, where Macy originated roles in several of Mamet's classic productions, including "American Buffalo" and "The Water Engine." Moving to New York in 1980, Macy continued to build his theatre repertoire with roles in a number of off-Broadway productions, including Mamet's "Prarie du Chen," "Oh Hell" and "Oleanna." He later appeared on Broadway in the revival of "Our Town." In 1985, he and Mamet founded the Atlantic Theater Company (ATC). Macy's more than 50 theatre credits also include the Donmar Warehouse revival of "American Buffalo," which later moved to the ATC for a record-breaking run. In addition, Macy has directed a number of plays, including "Boy's Life," at Lincoln Center, and ATC's production of "The Joy of Going Somewhere Definite."

LESLIE MANN (Mom Thompson) currently stars opposite Adam Sandler and Seth Rogen in Judd Apatow's "Funny People," which was released on July 31.

Earlier this year, Mann starred in Burr Steer's hit comedy "17 Again," opposite Zac Efron and Matthew Perry. Mann plays Scarlett, whose husband, played by Perry, wakes up to find he's 17 again, as played by Efron.

Mann will next star in Glenn Ficarra and John Requa's "I Love You Phillip Morris," opposite Jim Carrey and Ewan McGregor. Mann plays the wife of Carrey's character in the film, which premiered at the 2009 Sundance Film Festival and will be released on February 12, 2010.

Mann will next begin production on "What Was I Thinking?," in which she stars with Elizabeth Banks. Produced by Lynda Obst, the film centers on a quartet of girlfriends who take a hedonistic ski trip after one of them gets dumped.

In 2007, Mann starred in Judd Apatow's acclaimed smash hit comedy "Knocked Up," with Seth Rogen and Paul Rudd. Leslie's performance in the film garnered her rave reviews as well as a Best Supporting Actress nomination from the Chicago Film Critics Association. "Knocked Up" grossed more than \$300 million worldwide and won the

People's Choice Award for Favorite Movie Comedy. It was also nominated for a Critics' Choice Award for Best Comedy Movie and was named one of AFI's Top Ten Films of the Year.

Mann's other film credits include: "Drillbit Taylor," "The 40-Year-Old Virgin," "Big Daddy," "The Cable Guy," "Stealing Harvard," "Orange County," "Timecode," "George of the Jungle" and "She's the One."

JAMES SPADER (Mr. Black) has earned praise from critics and audiences for his film and television roles, many of which have explored the darker side of human nature.

This fall, Spader will make his Broadway debut starring in David Mamet's new play "Race." Mamet is also directing the production, which also stars Kerry Washington and Richard Thomas.

Spader has the rare distinction of winning three Best Actor Emmy Awards for the same role but on two different series. He won two Emmys for Outstanding Lead Actor in a Drama Series for his multilayered portrayal of Alan Shore, the ethically challenged attorney on David E. Kelley's widely acclaimed ABC series "Boston Legal." He had originated the role of Alan Shore on Kelley's series "The Practice," for which Spader won his first Emmy for Outstanding Lead Actor in a Drama Series.

Earlier in his career, Spader starred in Steven Soderbergh's controversial breakthrough film "sex, lies and videotape," for which he won the Best Actor Award at the Cannes Film Festival. He returned to Cannes for the premiere of David Cronenberg's "Crash," which won the festival's Special Jury Prize. Spader more recently starred opposite Maggie Gyllenhaal in the critically acclaimed independent feature "Secretary," directed by Steven Shainberg, which won the Sundance Film Festival Grand Jury Prize for Originality.

Over the course of his career, Spader has also starred in a number of major studio releases, including Roland Emmerich's sci-fi actioner "StarGate"; Mike Nichols's thriller "Wolf," with Jack Nicholson and Michelle Pfeiffer; Luis Mandoki's "White Palace," opposite Susan Sarandon; and "Less Than Zero," with Robert Downey Jr. Spader's credits also include such diverse films as "The Watcher"; Sidney Lumet's "Critical

Care”; John Herzfeld’s “2 Days in the Valley,” opposite Charlize Theron; “The Music of Chance,” based on the Paul Auster book; Tim Robbins’ political satire “Bob Roberts”; Herbert Ross’s “True Colors,” with John Cusack; and “Bad Influence,” for director Curtis Hanson, among many others.

JIMMY BENNETT (Toe Thompson) is a multi-talented young actor, who also wrote and sings the song “Summer Never Ends,” which is heard over the end credits in “Shorts.” He recently played the young James T. Kirk in J. J. Abrams’ hit sci-fi actioner “Star Trek.” He can also be seen this summer as a boy tormented by his adopted sister in Jaume Collet-Serra’s horror film “Orphan.” Bennett next stars in the independent film “Alabama Moon,” directed by Tim McCanlies.

His additional film credits include “Trucker,” opposite Michelle Monaghan; “Diminished Capacity,” with Matthew Broderick and Alan Alda; “Evan Almighty,” with Steve Carell and Morgan Freeman; Wolfgang Petersen’s “Poseidon,” alongside Kurt Russell, Richard Dreyfuss and Josh Lucas; “Firewall,” with Harrison Ford and Virginia Madsen; producer Michael Bay’s “The Amityville Horror”; and “Hostage,” in which he starred with Bruce Willis.

The young actor made his feature film debut in the hit comedy “Daddy Day Care,” starring Eddie Murphy, and then appeared in Asia Argento’s “The Heart is Deceitful Above All Things.” In addition, Bennett lent his voice talents to the animated holiday feature “The Polar Express,” starring Tom Hanks. He has also voiced characters for several popular children’s movies, including “I Want a Dog for Christmas, Charlie Brown,” “Fun with Roo (ABCs and 123s),” and “Springtime with Roo.”

Bennett also had a recurring role on the television series “Everwood,” and has appeared in the miniseries “Detective” and on such series as “CSI,” “Judging Amy,” “The Guardian” and “Strong Medicine.”

When not acting, Bennett enjoys playing the guitar and hanging out with his friends.

KAT DENNINGS (Stacey Thompson) delivered an acclaimed performance in last year’s “Nick and Norah’s Infinite Playlist,” for which she was nominated by the

International Press Academy for a Satellite Award for Best Actress in a Motion Picture, Comedy or Musical. Also in 2008, she was seen in the hit comedy “The House Bunny,” starring Anna Faris. Her upcoming films include Peter Stebbings’ “Defendor,” in which she stars alongside Woody Harrelson and Sandra Oh. She was most recently seen in the romantic comedy “The Answer Man,” with Jeff Daniels and Lauren Graham.

Dennings’ other film credits include the smash hit “The 40-Year-Old Virgin”; “Charlie Bartlett,” opposite Robert Downey Jr.; “Raise Your Voice”; “Down in the Valley,” with Edward Norton; “London,” with Chris Evans and Jessica Biel; and “Big Momma’s House 2,” starring Martin Lawrence. In 2005, she was selected to participate in the prestigious Sundance Filmmaker’s Lab, where she worked with Robert Redford on director Dante Harper’s “Dreamland.”

On the small screen, Dennings has appeared on some of television’s most popular and acclaimed series, including a recurring role on NBC’s “ER”; a guest-starring role on a highly publicized “CSI: NY/Miami” crossover episode; “Without a Trace”; and HBO’s “Sex and the City,” as a teen who hires Samantha Jones to do publicity for her Bat Mitzvah. She also starred opposite Bob Saget in the WB series “Raising Dad.” In addition, Dennings appeared in the television documentary “Wanderlust” for directors Robert Pucini and Shari Springer Berman.

Dennings currently resides in Los Angeles.

JAKE SHORT (Nose Noseworthy), now 12 years old, makes his feature film debut in “Shorts.” He will also be seen in the upcoming independent film “The Anna Nicole Smith Story,” as Smith’s son, Daniel, at age nine. Short’s television credits include an appearance on the Disney Channel’s “Zeke and Luther.”

Born in Indianapolis, Short divides his time between Los Angeles and his hometown.

DEVON GEARHART (Cole Black) started his career playing the young Bobby Jones in the film “Bobby Jones: Stroke of Genius,” directed by Rowdy Herrington and starring James Caviezel. The role eventually led Gearhart to become the youngest spokesman on behalf of Syringomyelia, the disease that afflicted Bobby throughout his

life. Gearhart was then fortunate enough to work with Christopher Reeve on the actor-director's last project, the true-life A&E film "The Brooke Ellison Story." Shortly afterwards, he appeared in the Emmy-winning HBO film "Warm Springs," alongside Kenneth Branagh, Cynthia Nixon and Kathy Bates.

Gearhart earned praise and a Young Artist Award nomination for his work in the award-winning indie film "Canvas," starring Marcia Gay Harden and Joe Pantoliano. The film is told from Gearhart's character's point of view as he deals with his mother's heroic struggle with schizophrenia, and Gearhart was subsequently appointed Vice President of "No Kidding – Me Too," an organization dedicated to removing the stigmas associated with mental illness.

Recently, he co-starred with Naomi Watts and Tim Roth in the suspense thriller "Funny Games," which *Entertainment Weekly* named one of the Top 10 films of 2008. Gearhart then appeared in a small but powerful role in Clint Eastwood's "Changeling," starring Angelina Jolie. For television, Gearhart's credits include guest leads on Showtime's "Weeds" and ABC's "Lost."

Gearhart currently resides in Los Angeles with his family. When not acting, he enjoys extreme martial arts, running track for his school, and spending time with his friends and beloved pets, including three leopard geckos, a bearded dragon, an African tortoise and a 75-pound Golden Doodle named Gillee.

LEO HOWARD (Laser) is one of the top martial artists in the country, having won several titles and world championships. A professional in extreme martial arts (martial arts combined with acrobatics), he has performed all over the country with the internationally known group Sideswipe, a finalist act in the popular television show "America's Got Talent."

On the acting front, Howard can be seen in this summer's actioner "G.I. Joe: The Rise of Cobra," directed by Stephen Sommers and starring Dennis Quaid, Sienna Miller and Channing Tatum. Howard will also be seen in the upcoming independent family film "Aussie and Ted," with Dean Cain and Beverly D'Angelo. Additionally, he voices a character in the upcoming animated adventure film "Around the World in 50 Years 3D."

For television, Howard hosts a Disney Channel show called “Leo Little’s Big Show,” which keeps viewers up to date on their favorite Disney stars, movies and programs. In addition, he has made guest appearances on “Corey in the House,” “Monk” and “Jimmy Kimmel Live!” and has been featured in many national commercials, as well as in various print ads.

TREVOR GAGNON (Loogie) is currently appearing in the hit comedy series “The New Adventures of Old Christine,” in which he plays the title character’s son, Ritichie, opposite Emmy-winning actress Julia Louis-Dreyfus.

Last summer, he was heard as the lead voice of Nat in the animated 3-D adventure feature “Fly Me to the Moon,” which hit screens and IMAX theaters in August 2008. The fantastic animated 3-D journey tells the tale of three ‘tween-aged flies stowing away aboard the Apollo 11 flight to the moon, and also features the voice talents of Nicollette Sheridan, Ed Begley Jr., Tim Curry, Christopher Lloyd, Kelly Ripa and astronaut Buzz Aldrin. Gagnon also voices a lead role in Cartoon Network’s animated series “Happy Monster Band,” as one of the silly monsters who teach pre-schoolers about the wonderful countries around the world.

Gagnon made his acting debut at the age of six in “Iron Jawed Angels,” a drama about the struggles of the Women’s Suffrage Movement in the early 1900s. The acclaimed HBO movie starred Hilary Swank, Angelica Huston and Patrick Dempsey.

He made his feature film debut in Tim Burton’s “Big Fish,” starring Albert Finney, Jessica Lange, Danny DeVito, and Ewan McGregor. Gagnon subsequently appeared in the films “Loggerheads” and “Southern Belles,” both of which were filmed near his hometown in North Carolina.

Since 2003, Gagnon has done several television commercials and print ads. He spent time on Dr. Phil’s television show as a celebrity guest, and has donated his time to such charitable organizations as the Ronald McDonald House, The Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS Foundation, and The Painted Turtle organization, started by Paul Newman, as a way to give back to the community.

REBEL RODRIGUEZ (Lug) most recently starred in Robert Rodriguez's "Planet Terror" as Tony, opposite Marley Shelton and Josh Brolin.

He made his first film appearance in 2001's "Spy Kids" as the baby on the cover of a magazine that Carla Gugino's character is reading. Since then, he has been a robot in "Spy Kids 3-D: Game Over" and played Sharkboy – Age 5 in "The Adventures of Sharkboy and Lavagirl in 3-D." He also performed stunts for "Spy Kids 2: Island of Lost Dreams."

Ten-year-old Rodriguez lives with his family in Austin, Texas and is an avid fisherman.

JOLIE VANIER (Helvetica Black) makes her film debut in "Shorts." Vanier divides her time between Los Angeles and her hometown of Scottsdale, Arizona, where she is a dedicated young community activist.

The 11 year old is involved with numerous charitable organizations. An animal lover, she has two dogs and a cat and makes donations from her allowance to the Arizona Humane Society and the ASPCA.

ABOUT THE FILMMAKERS

ROBERT RODRIGUEZ (Director/Writer/Producer) also served as director of photography, editor and composer on "Shorts."

In 1991, as a student at the University of Texas at Austin, Rodriguez wrote the script to his first feature film while sequestered at a drug research facility as a paid subject in a clinical experiment. That paycheck covered the cost of shooting his film. He planned to make the money back by selling the film to the Mexican home video market.

The film was "El Mariachi," which Rodriguez wrote, directed, photographed, edited and sound-recorded, all for \$7,000. Columbia Pictures then bought the rights and signed Rodriguez to a two-year writing and directing deal. "El Mariachi" premiered at the 1992 Toronto Film Festival and went on to win the coveted Audience Awards at the

1993 Sundance and Deauville Film Festivals. It was also honored at the Berlin, Munich, Edinburgh and Yubari (Japan) festivals. In addition, Rodriguez earned Independent Spirit Award nominations for Best Director and Best First Feature. “El Mariachi” became the lowest-budget movie ever released by a major studio and the first American film released in Spanish. Rodriguez wrote about these experiences in the book *Rebel Without a Crew*, published by Dutton Press.

Although it was an impressive debut, the 23-year-old Rodriguez was already a seasoned filmmaker. The third of ten children born to Cecilio and Rebecca Rodriguez in San Antonio, Texas, he had prepared for film production classes at UT by making a series of his own home movies. Family members were recruited as cast and crew. His three youngest siblings starred in “Bedhead,” a 16mm short film that was honored at many national and international festivals in 1991. Rodriguez also blossomed as a cartoonist at UT with “Los Hooligans,” a comic strip in the *Daily Texan*, featuring characters based on his brothers and sisters.

Rodriguez went on to write, produce, direct and edit the 1995 film “Desperado,” a sequel to “El Mariachi.” The film introduced American audiences to Antonio Banderas as a leading man, opposite Salma Hayek. Also in 1995, Rodriguez wrote, directed and edited “The Misbehavers,” one of four segments of the anthology film “Four Rooms,” again starring Antonio Banderas. Rodriguez then teamed up with Quentin Tarantino on the outrageous 1996 hit “From Dusk Till Dawn.” Rodriguez directed from a screenplay by Tarantino, who also starred in the film with George Clooney. Rodriguez also edited and served as executive producer on the film. His next directorial project was 1998’s “The Faculty,” starring Josh Hartnett, Elijah Wood and Jordana Brewster.

In 2000, Rodriguez and Elizabeth Avellán founded Troublemaker Studios, their Austin, Texas-based production company, of which he is co-owner and president. The studio includes a world-renowned visual effects studio and music and publishing arms. The studio has played a primary role in making Austin a filmmaking hub.

The following year, Rodriguez fulfilled a lifelong dream and created a family adventure film, “Spy Kids,” which was a critical and box office success. He followed with two hit sequels, “Spy Kids 2: The Island of Lost Dreams” and “Spy Kids 3-D: Game Over.”

His next film, “Once Upon a Time in Mexico,” was the third installment to the “El Mariachi” trilogy. In addition to writing and directing, Rodriguez shot, edited and scored the film. Opening at number one in September 2003, “Once Upon a Time in Mexico” marked his second film in a matter of months to open at the top of the North American box office, following “Spy Kids 3-D: Game Over.”

In 2004, Rodriguez began his next endeavor, “Sin City,” which was co-directed by Frank Miller, the creator of *Sin City*. “Sin City” featured an all-star cast, including Bruce Willis, Jessica Alba and Benicio Del Toro, among others. The critically acclaimed box office smash was released in April 2005.

Rodriguez returned to his love of family fare with “The Adventures of Sharkboy and Lavagirl in 3-D,” which was based on the stories and dreams of Rodriguez’s young son, Racer. Starring George Lopez, the film hit theaters in June 2005.

In the spring of 2007, Rodriguez released “Grindhouse,” an ode to exploitation double features of the 1970s, co-directed by his good friend and frequent collaborator Quentin Tarantino.

Upcoming projects for Rodriguez include the crime thriller “Machete” and the futuristic action thriller “Nerverackers,” both currently planned for release in 2010.

ELIZABETH AVELLÁN (Producer) has not only produced numerous films as co-owner and vice president of Troublemaker Studios, but has also played a primary role in developing Austin, Texas as a thriving film community.

In 1991, Avellán co-founded Los Hooligans Productions with Robert Rodriguez when the two began their first feature film project, “El Mariachi.” Winner of the Audience Awards at the 1993 Sundance and Deauville Film Festivals, the film launched her producing career.

Following the success of “El Mariachi,” Avellán co-produced the hit 1995 sequel “Desperado,” written and directed by Robert Rodriguez and starring Antonio Banderas and Salma Hayek. She also co-produced “From Dusk Till Dawn,” written by Quentin Tarantino, directed by Rodriguez and starring George Clooney and Harvey Keitel.

In 1998, Avellán produced “The Faculty,” written by Kevin Williamson and directed by Rodriguez, and starring Elijah Wood and Josh Hartnett. She also produced

the successful home entertainment sequels: “From Dusk to Dawn 2: Texas Blood Money” and “From Dusk to Dawn 3: The Hangman’s Daughter.” In addition, she served as an executive producer on “In and Out of Focus,” a documentary about balancing motherhood and a career in the film business.

In 2000, Avellán and Rodriguez founded Troublemaker Studios, their Austin, Texas-based production company. Troublemaker includes a world renowned visual effects studio as well as music and publishing arms. The 2001 smash hit “Spy Kids,” the first feature produced at Troublemaker, grossed more than \$112 million domestically. Directed by Rodriguez, the family film starred Antonio Banderas, Carla Gugino, Alexa Vega, and Daryl Sabara. Avellán next produced “Once Upon a Time in Mexico,” the third film in the “El Mariachi” trilogy, directed by Rodriguez and starring Banderas, Salma Hayek and Johnny Depp. Shortly after, she produced “Spy Kids 2: Island of Lost Dreams,” followed by the third and final installment, “Spy Kids 3-D: Game Over,” which introduced kids to a new dimension of moviemaking with its innovative 3-D technology.

In 2005, Avellán produced “Sin City,” the critically acclaimed adaptation of three of the popular graphic novels in Frank Miller’s *Sin City* series. Co-directed by Robert Rodriguez and creator Frank Miller, the film featured an all-star ensemble cast, including Bruce Willis, Clive Owen, Jessica Alba, and Benicio Del Toro, among others. That same year, she produced “The Adventures of Sharkboy and Lavagirl in 3-D,” which was based on a story idea by her then-seven-year-old son, Racer Rodriguez. Directed by Robert Rodriguez, the film starred George Lopez. In addition, Avellán executive produced “Secuestro Express,” a topical Venezuelan narrative about the dangerous trend of “express” kidnappings in her home country, starring Mia Maestro and Rubén Blades.

In 2007, Avellán produced “Grindhouse,” an ode to exploitation double features of the 1970s, directed by Rodriguez and Quentin Tarantino. That same year, she executive produced the documentary “The Truth in Terms of Beauty,” an intimate look at the life of photographer Herman Leonard. Avellán is currently in production on the hard-edged action film “Machete, in addition the new installment in the “Predator” series, “Predators.”

Avellán was born in Caracas, Venezuela, where her grandfather, Gonzalo Veloz, was the pioneer of commercial television. At the age of thirteen, she moved to Houston,

Texas with her family and later graduated from Rice University. She is on the board of several organizations, including the University of Texas College of Communication Advisory Board; Capital Area Statues, which commissions unique statues for the capital city; Thoughtful House, a center that fights for the recovery of children with developmental disorders; and SAFI Apparel Corporation, an Afghani company, which employs widows of the war-torn region. She is also a board member of the Austin Film Society. The mother of six children, Avellán resides in Austin, Texas.

DAN LIN (Executive Producer) is the CEO of Lin Pictures, which is based at Warner Bros., where it has an exclusive deal with Warner Bros. Pictures and New Line Cinema. Lin most recently served as an executive producer on the sci-fi actioner “Terminator Salvation,” starring Christian Bale and Sam Worthington.

Lin is currently producing three films due out later this year: “Sherlock Holmes,” directed by Guy Ritchie and starring Robert Downey Jr.; “The Invention of Lying,” directed by Ricky Gervais and Matthew Robinson and starring Gervais and Jennifer Garner; and “The Box,” directed by Richard Kelly and starring Cameron Diaz and James Marsden. In addition, Lin has a number of projects in development, including “Justice League,” “Tomb Raider,” “Jonny Quest” and “The Karma Coalition.”

Prior to forming Lin Pictures in January 2008, Lin served as Senior Vice President of Production for Warner Bros. Pictures. During his eight-year tenure at the studio, from 1999 to 2007, he oversaw the development and production of such films as Martin Scorsese’s Academy Award®-winning drama “The Departed”; “10,000 BC,” directed by Roland Emmerich; “The Aviator,” directed by Scorsese; “TMNT”; “Invasion”; “Unaccompanied Minors”; “Alexander”; “Scooby-Doo 2”; and “Torque.”

In September 2008, Lin was named one of *Variety*’s “10 Producers to Watch.” He had been profiled on *The Hollywood Reporter*’s “Next Generation List” in 2005.

Lin received his undergraduate degree from the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania before earning his MBA from Harvard Business School in 1999.

HUNT LOWRY (Executive Producer) is the CEO/ President of Roserock Films located on the Warner Bros. Studio lot. He recently put together a strategic partnership

between Warner Bros. and Abu Dhabi for the establishment of a Warner Bros. theme park, hotel, and theaters in Abu Dhabi, along with a film company and interactive games fund with Warner Bros. He is currently developing several feature film projects, including one based on John Grisham's bestseller *The Testament*, with producer Mark Johnson; and "The Emperor of Ocean Park," based on the best-selling Stephen L. Carter novel. He recently produced the standup comedy movies "Thou Shalt Laugh 1 and 2"; "Dreamer: Inspired by a True Story," starring Kurt Russell and Dakota Fanning; and the critically-acclaimed "Duma," directed by Carroll Ballard.

Prior to the formation of Roserock Films, Lowry served for five years as the CEO/President of Gaylord Films and its specialty division, Pandora. There, he structured a long-term co-financing and production deal with Warner Bros., and under the deal produced the box-office hits "A Cinderella Story," starring Hilary Duff and Chad Michael Murray; "What a Girl Wants," starring Amanda Bynes, Colin Firth and Kelly Preston; "A Walk to Remember," starring Mandy Moore and Shane West; "The Divine Secrets of the Ya-Ya Sisterhood," starring Ashley Judd, Ellen Burstyn and Sandra Bullock; and "White Oleander," starring Michelle Pfeiffer, Renee Zellweger and Robin Wright Penn. Lowry also produced "The Blue Collar Comedy Tour," starring Jeff Foxworthy; the sci-fi thriller "Cypher," starring Jeremy Northam and Lucy Liu; the teen skateboard comedy "Grind"; and "Welcome to Collinwood," starring William H. Macy, Sam Rockwell and George Clooney.

Lowry also executive produced the critically acclaimed film "Donnie Darko," starring Jake Gyllenhaal, Jena Malone, Drew Barrymore, Noah Wyle and Patrick Swayze. The film premiered at the 2001 Sundance Film Festival and was nominated for the Grand Jury Prize as well as three Independent Spirit Awards.

Prior to Gaylord Films/ Pandora, Lowry had a first look producing deal at Walt Disney Pictures, where he produced such films as "The Kid," starring Bruce Willis, and Jon Turteltaub's "Instinct," starring Anthony Hopkins, Cuba Gooding Jr. and Donald Sutherland. He also produced "Hounded" for the Walt Disney Channel.

In addition, Lowry produced "A Time To Kill," directed by Joel Schumacher and starring Sandra Bullock, Matthew McConaughey and Ashley Judd; "First Knight," directed by Jerry Zucker and starring Sean Connery, Richard Gere and Julia Ormond;

“Revenge,” starring Kevin Costner, Anthony Quinn and Madeline Stowe; “My Life,” starring Michael Keaton and Nicole Kidman; “The Last of the Mohicans,” directed by Michael Mann and starring Daniel Day Lewis and Madeline Stowe; and “Only the Lonely,” directed by Chris Columbus and starring John Candy. Lowry’s other film credits include serving as executive producer on “Career Opportunities,” “Top Secret” and “Get Crazy,” and as associate producer on “Airplane!,” starring Robert Hays and Julie Hagerty.

Lowry’s television executive producer credits include HBO’s “Baja Oklahoma,” and “Rascals and Robbers: The Secret Adventures of Tom Sawyer and Huck Finn,” for CBS. He also produced the CBS miniseries “Dream West,” and such telefilms as “His Mistress,” “Wild Horses” and “Surviving.”

STEVE JOYNER (Production Designer) has teamed with art director Caylah Eddleblute in the art departments of a variety of films over the past 20 years. They began working as set dressers together, before creating their own property department. Their first collaboration with Robert Rodriguez was on his 1995 release “From Dusk Till Dawn.”

They have since worked with Rodriguez on all his movies, including the three “Spy Kids” family hits, “Once Upon a Time in Mexico,” “Sin City” and “The Adventures of Sharkboy and Lavagirl in 3-D.”

They also collaborated with both Rodriguez and Quentin Tarantino on “Grindhouse.” In addition, they worked on Tarantino’s “Jackie Brown” and “Kill Bill: Vol. 1.” They most recently worked on Tarantino’s upcoming “Inglourious Basterds.”

ETHAN MANIQUIS (Editor) has repeatedly collaborated with Robert Rodriguez, most recently on “Planet Terror.” He previously served as associate editor on “Sin City,” associate editor and visual effects editor on “Once Upon a Time in Mexico,” and visual effects editor on “Spy Kids 2: Island of Lost Dreams” and “Spy Kids 3-D: Game Over.” His earlier films with Rodriguez include “From Dusk Till Dawn,” “Four Rooms” and “Desperado.”

Maniquis makes his directorial debut alongside co-director Rodriguez on the action thriller “Machete,” currently in production and due for release in 2010.

Maniquis’ additional credits as editor include the recent romantic comedy “The Other End of the Line,” the thriller “Secuestro Express” and the comedy “Real Stories of the Donut Men.”

NINA PROCTOR (Costume Designer) most recently served as the costume designer on the sci-fi thriller “Push,” directed by Paul McGuigan. She has collaborated with Robert Rodriguez on seven films, including “Planet Terror,” “The Adventures of Sharkboy and Lavagirl in 3-D,” “Sin City” and the “Spy Kids” trilogy.

Earlier in her career, she worked on such films as “The Return,” “Secondhand Lions,” “American Outlaws,” “Dr. T and the Women” and “All the Pretty Horses.”

CARL THIEL (Composer) has collaborated with Robert Rodriguez on the feature films “Planet Terror,” “The Adventures of Sharkboy and Lavagirl in 3-D,” “Sin City,” “Once Upon a Time in Mexico,” “Spy Kids 2: Island of Lost Dreams” and “Spy Kids 3-D: Game Over.” He composed the score to the acclaimed documentary “Before the Music Dies,” an exposé of the current American music scene, and his music can be heard on the soundtrack to the hit action comedy “Hot Fuzz.”

Additionally, he has served in such music capacities as recordist, editor, engineer and producer on several film projects, including “Ladrón que roba ladrón,” “Fighting with Anger,” “El cantante,” “Last Best Hope,” “Kill Bill: Volume 2” and “Miss Congeniality.” Thiel received a Latin Grammy Award nomination in 2007 for his engineering contribution to Spanish pop superstar Miguel Bosé’s album “Papito.”

GEORGE OLDZIEY (Composer) has served as a composer, orchestrator, score producer and conductor for a number of diverse film projects. He most recently composed the score for the upcoming comedy “God Thinks You’re a Loser.” His music has also been heard in such documentaries as “The American Widow Project,” “Swim,” “Year at Danger” and “Team Everest: A Himalayan Journey.” Oldziey has previously collaborated with filmmaker Robert Rodriguez on the features “Planet Terror,” “Sin

City,” “Once Upon a Time in Mexico,” “Spy Kids 2: Island of Lost Dreams” and “Spy Kids 3-D: Game Over.” He was also the orchestrator for Quentin Tarantino’s “Kill Bill: Vol. 2.” Additionally, he has composed music for many video and computer games, including the “Wing Commander” and “Ultima” series, as well as “SpongeBob SquarePants.”

Oldziewy is a part-time instructor of music and director of the Jazz Ensemble at Southwestern University in Georgetown, Texas, and is a popular freelance jazz pianist and accompanist in the metropolitan Austin area. In addition to his performance, teaching and film work, he has a recording studio at his home where he records and produces CDs for many local artists.

Oldziewy holds a Masters degree in composition from Texas State University and a Bachelors in trumpet performance from Manhattan School of Music. While attending the latter, he was the recipient of several awards, including the Kraueter Foundation Award for excellence in chamber music, and was one of 12 national recipients of a Yamaha Foundation performance award.

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