

WATER FOR ELEPHANTS

Production Notes



Release Date: April 22, 2011

Studio: 20th Century Fox

Director: Francis Lawrence

Screenwriter: Richard LaGravenese

Starring: Reese Witherspoon, Robert Pattinson, Christoph Waltz

Genre: Drama

MPAA Rating: PG-13 (for moments of intense violence and sexual content)

Official Website: <http://www.waterforelephants.com/>

PRODUCTION INFORMATION

Based on the acclaimed number-one bestseller, WATER FOR ELEPHANTS presents an epic tale of forbidden love in a magical place filled with adventure, wonder and great danger.

A veterinary student from the wrong side of the tracks, Jacob, meets and falls in love with Marlana, a star performer in a circus of a bygone era. They discover beauty amidst the world of the Big Top, and come together through their compassion for a special elephant. Against all odds – including the wrath of Marlana’s charismatic but dangerous husband August – Jacob saves Marlana from an unhappy life and they find lifelong love.

When Sara Gruen’s novel *Water for Elephants* was published in 2006, it became a huge success, spending 12 weeks on the New York Times bestseller list. The book continues to be a huge paperback seller, remaining on the top of the charts. Readers around the world respond to Gruen’s characters’ joys, loves, redemptions and challenges. “*Water for Elephants* is about love in all its forms – between men and women, amongst families, and between people and animals,” says Gruen. “It’s about the different ways we treat each other; sometimes we do it well, and sometimes not.”

Among the book’s legions of fans is Reese Witherspoon. “It’s a wonderful story of love, hope, redemption, second chances and finding happiness,” the Oscar®-winning actor notes. “I got so pulled into the world Sara created.” Years later, Witherspoon would take on the role of the book’s heroine, Marlana, the star attraction of a fading circus. With Marlana’s shimmering eyes and hair, porcelain skin, pink sequins that make her glisten and sparkle, and her ability to connect with animals, she is a beautiful, natural and graceful performer. But Marlana’s personal life contrasts strongly with the joy she finds performing. She is trapped in a difficult and complex marriage with the circus ringmaster and owner, August, an imposing and charismatic presence who can charm, seduce, or attack with equal power.

Twilight star Robert Pattinson was another admirer of Gruen’s characters and world. “Someone sent me the book, and I immediately connected to it,” he remembers. Pattinson would later agree to portray Jacob Jankowski, who after a personal tragedy, wanders without destination before hopping aboard a random train, which turns out to be the home of The Benzini Bros. Circus. That fateful train ride ultimately takes Jacob to Marlana, and a romance and destiny that neither could have imagined.

Not long after the book’s publication, these beloved characters began their journey from the printed page to the big screen. In late-2008, producer Gil Netter (*Marley & Me*) approached director Francis Lawrence (*I Am Legend*) about turning *Water for Elephants* into a film. “I read the book in one sitting,” Lawrence recalls. “It was such a great visceral experience, and the story

existed in a very rich and detailed world. I loved the characters and the emotion.”

Lawrence focused on the relationship between Marlena and Jacob, and on recreating the magical world Gruen had detailed in her novel. “The relationship between Marlena and Jacob that we built in the movie is really one of my favorite things,” he explains. “It’s a really nice slow burn. I think Jacob falls instantly for Marlena’s beauty, magic, strength and confidence. But Marlena is guarded; she doesn’t trust many people. Jacob starts to break through that wall and he becomes someone quite unexpected for Marlena in her world. I think she falls for his morality.”

Like the characters he would be bringing to life on the screen, Lawrence was drawn to the world of the Big Top. “I have always been very intrigued by the circus, especially those of the 1920s and ‘30s,” he says. “There was something special about it then – the steam trains, the beautiful canvas tents, the elegant performers and the exotic animals.”

Lawrence and producer Erwin Stoff brought the project to noted screenwriter Richard LaGravenese, an Oscar nominee for his work on *The Fisher King*, to adapt Gruen’s book. They were well aware of the challenges and responsibilities of being entrusted with a beloved story and cast of characters, and of paring down a 400-page book into a workable screenplay. Lawrence explains: “This was my first time working with a screenwriter to adapt a book, and our approach was to try and stay true to its themes, tone and broad strokes. There were some key moments in the book that are important to get into the movie, but part of the fun is interpreting the original material and coming up with new ideas, as well.”

LaGravenese elaborates: “When a book is well-loved, it’s important to keep what readers expect, but at the same time you have to understand that, when reading a story, you’re seeing and hearing characters in your head, and everyone has their own versions in their own minds. When you see the story played on screen with real people it becomes literal – one version – and there are certain ideas that work in a book that wouldn’t work on screen.”

Working under Lawrence’s guidance, LaGravenese fine-tuned the screenplay over several drafts. Their key task, says LaGravenese, was “making the three principal characters more active, and re-inventing Marlena’s and August’s backstories. We wanted every character’s reasons to be understood, so that morally, who’s right and who’s wrong, is a little more complex. No one is 100 percent innocent.”

Reese Witherspoon sparked to this element. “Marlena was an orphan who was working as a seamstress in a dress shop where August discovered her when his circus visited her town,” she explains. “He became infatuated with Marlena, invited her to come along with the circus and became a kind of Svengali, training her as a horseback rider and performer.” Marlena trades her life of poverty for a chance at glamour and stardom – but there would be consequences to that

choice. August, too, had no family, and built a life for himself by rebuilding a dying show from the ground up.

Other changes from the book included combining two of Gruen's characters -- Marlena's husband August, who in the novel is the head animal trainer; and Uncle Al, the book's violent, abusive circus owner. "Combining August and Uncle Al made the August character more dangerous, which is always a good thing," notes LaGravenese. The screenwriter also reworked and enriched how a now-aged Jacob (portrayed by Academy Award® nominee Hal Holbrook) recounts his story of his experiences with the Benzini Bros. Circus and his relationship with longtime love, Marlena.

Gruen was impressed with the adaptation. "I thought the changes [in the screenplay] were brilliant," she says. "Writing a screenplay is a completely different set of skills than writing a novel. Francis and Richard took something that takes approximately 14 hours to read, and transformed it into something that can be watched in a couple of hours. They certainly did not diminish the story."

Even before work began on the script, Witherspoon became the first actor to join WATER FOR ELEPHANTS. "Reese was a true creative partner in the early days of putting the project together," says Lawrence. "She brought so much to the film and to the character of Marlena. Reese is a fantastic actress, beautiful and timeless, loves animals – and is fearless; she'll try anything. Marlena is a bit tough and hardened; she isn't a victim of August or anyone else. Reese, too, can be very strong."

Unlike Marlena, Jacob had a protected life with loving parents. But on the brink of graduating from Cornell University's veterinary school, Jacob's world is shattered when he learns of his parents' deaths in an automobile accident. Broken emotionally and financially, Jacob is forced to leave Cornell. He takes to the road, without direction. Impulsively, he boards a passing train that houses The Benzini Bros Circus. Nearly seven decades later, pondering that fateful moment, the now-aged Jacob would wonder, "Did I pick the train or did it pick me?"

With no other prospects, Jacob joins the troupe. At first, the once-sheltered young man is lost and even fearful for his life, among the chaos, color and danger that surround him. Jacob begins his tenure at the Benzini Bros. Circus on the bottom rung of the ladder, even lower than the roustabouts who handle the daily manual labor. When August, the ringmaster and circus master learns of Jacob's veterinary studies, he promotes him to tending to the medical needs of the animals. That, in turn, brings Jacob ever closer to Marlena, the show's star performer. His attraction to Marlena is immediate and electric. "Jacob notices Marlena's beauty and charisma right away," Pattinson says. "He also notes her strong bond with the animals she works with during her performances; that's another thing they share."

An already professed fan of the book, Pattinson became even more intrigued about a movie adaptation when he read the script. “Somehow, it seemed like Francis and Richard had added even more to the story,” says the actor. Francis Lawrence was convinced that Pattinson was right for the role after he discussed the project with him for several hours. “I thought Robert was Jacob Jankowski,” says the filmmaker. “It was difficult to find a young man of age 23 or 24 who didn’t seem too young for the part. Rob was already a man. He is thoughtful, intelligent, empathetic, strong, and confident.”

Pattinson’s quick grasp of the character was impressive. “Jacob is mysterious and quiet; he’s an observer,” says the actor. “He’s always watching people and he has an intuitive relationship with animals, and a deep understanding of human nature.”

All of Jacob’s traits and abilities come to the fore as he becomes increasingly close to Marlena. At first, she wants little to do with the newcomer, but when he comes to the aid of Marlena’s beloved and suffering horse, they share a moment of intimacy and tenderness that neither can shake. But there’s a powerful presence – almost a force – standing between them: August, who his employees call, with a mixture of fear and respect, “Lord and Master of the Known and Unknown Universe.” An imposing and charismatic leader, August runs the circus at times like a tyrant, and at others like a caring patriarch. Similarly, his love and kindness toward Marlena can morph – in a flash – to abuse, anger and unfathomable darkness. When Jacob witnesses August’s dark side, he does everything in his power to once and for all free Marlena from his tyranny.

Witherspoon praises Christoph Waltz, a Best Supporting Oscar winner for his work in *Inglourious Basterds*, for “really getting to the bottom of August’s darkness. He just does an extraordinary job of playing the character’s contrasting sides.” Adds Francis Lawrence: “Christoph came to us with such love for the character and the story, as well as for its world and themes. He was perfect for the role because of his electric charm and his danger. He brings a key mix of intelligence, sharpness and humor.”

Waltz himself hesitates to divulge much about his interpretation of August, instead hoping audiences will discover and make their own decisions about the character. But now having portrayed a ringmaster and animal trainer, the acclaimed actor is more expansive about his admiration for those who make their living training our four-legged friends. “I wouldn’t have the patience to train an animal, so I hardly have the patience to play an animal trainer,” Waltz jokes. “I admire [the production’s principal elephant trainer] Gary Johnson, who is calm, quiet, centered and patient. To be around Gary makes me calm and centered, and I can watch and learn,” he says with a laugh.

Amid the magical world of the circus and its bigger-than-life performers, the Big Top’s towering

star is Rosie the Elephant, who is nearly nine feet tall and weighs 9,000 pounds. August buys Rosie, a cast-off from a circus that has fallen to the hard times, in a last-ditch effort to save The Benzini Bros show. Little does he know that his new star animal attraction will not only bring him the financial success he craves, but serve as the catalyst that brings Marlena and Jacob together. Rosie is portrayed by Tai, age 42, a motion picture veteran (“Bigger than Life,” “The Jungle Book”), who lives in Perris, California with principal trainer Gary Johnson, of Have Trunk Will Travel Inc.®, an organization dedicated to providing the public with safe, educational and recreational access to elephants. Tai was an instant hit with all cast and crew members, who marveled at not only her thespian skills, but at the gentle giant’s calm amidst the controlled chaos of a bustling film set.

Witherspoon, who shares the most scenes with Tai, developed an especially close bond with the elephant. The two stars actually began work together long before cameras rolled on location in Piru, California. For three months prior to the start of principal photography, Witherspoon and Tai worked, says the actress, “on everything from her lifting me in the air to me learning how to flip backwards on Tai.” Even the simplest interactions were challenging. “I’m not very big and Tai is not very small,” jokes Witherspoon. “I had to learn how to step on her trunk and hurdle myself on top of her. It was very complicated, but I finally got it. It was one of my greatest accomplishments!” Witherspoon’s training at “circus school” also encompassed work with horses, and trapeze work.

Tai also wasn’t immune to the considerable charms of Robert Pattinson, and the elephant often playfully flirted with the actor, who often hid treats on his person for her to find. The feeling was mutual. Says Pattinson: “Rosie’s demeanor is so fascinating that it magnifies the characters’ experiences with her. And I felt exactly the same way working with Tai. I’ve never been next to such an enormous animal that is so graceful and careful around people.”

The filmmakers took extra-special care around Tai during the filming of scenes where August is abusive to Rosie. The visual effects team and elephant trainer Gary Johnson devised ingenious methods to make it appear as if Christoph Waltz’s August was striking the elephant – and appear as if Rosie was reacting to those fictional strikes – through digital wizardry and Johnson’s specially-designed series of behaviors for Tai. The elephant was never struck. “We never even used a rubber or a spongy hook with Tai,” says Lawrence. “The hook never got anywhere near her.” Animal Humane Association monitored these and all other scenes involving animals.

UNDER THE BIG TOP

In realizing Lawrence’s vision of circus life during the Great Depression, the director and his design chiefs worked to merge the rigorously authentic with the hauntingly romantic. “Everyone that came on board this movie loved the era and loved the circus,” notes Lawrence. “We wanted

WATER FOR ELEPHANTS to be real and genuine, but we also wanted to convey a very romantic notion of what circus life was like in the 1930s.”

The principal set was constructed in Piru, California. The Southern California location was chosen for its close proximity to the exotic animals required by the story, as well as for its access to railroad cars and tracks. The company also filmed in various other Southern California locations, including the Twentieth Century Fox backlot, which was home to a glorious circus parade. The production also made a quick stop in Chattanooga, Tennessee, to make use of some period trains.

The physical layout of the massive Piru-based production encompassed tents for the big top, a menagerie, a tent for the “Coochie Girls,” a star tent for Marlena, and several other smaller tents. The largest tent – the Big Top – measured 160-feet by 100-feet; its bleachers could hold up to 800 people. “One of our goals [in creating the fictional Benzini Bros. Circus] was to create our own version of a backlot where we would have complete freedom to shoot wherever we wanted and have lots of depth and authenticity,” Lawrence explains. “But we built our circus just as a second rate circus would have built theirs, back in its day. The tents were put up with the same rigging; the train cars were outfitted with the appropriate accessories; the costumes were all period-authentic; and the casting for our circus employees was top notch. All of these elements came together to create a beautiful, authentic atmosphere that inspired us. It was like time traveling to the ‘30s, every morning.”

The filmmakers already had been given a head start in their design work, courtesy of the sharp detail and descriptions in Sara Gruen’s novel, many of whose readers felt like they were experiencing the sights, sounds and smells of a struggling ‘30s circus. Production designer Jack Fisk, whose frequent collaborations with renowned filmmaker Terrence Malick are noted for their creations of natural, real and textured worlds; director of photography Rodrigo Prieto, whose meticulous attention to visual and dramatic detail are evident in such films as *Amores Perros*, *Brokeback Mountain* and the recent *Wall Street: Money Never Sleeps*; and costume designer Jacqueline West, a two-time Oscar nominee, most recently for *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button*, were instrumental in making WATER FOR ELEPHANTS’ Benzini Bros. look unlike any other fictional big screen circus.

When arriving each day at the set he had designed, Fisk shared Francis Lawrence’s feeling of having traveled through time. “There were moments when I walked into our Big Top – and with the practical lighting, the bleachers we built, and the smell of the animals – it was like going back in time. Those are moments I live for. That tent was alive.”

That realism stems in large part from Fisk’s prodigious research. He spent hours combing through books about the circuses of the era, and through tens of thousands of period

photographs. “Those old black-and-white photos of the canvas tents were beautiful because they’re lit in a beautiful tungsten light, but you can see the mold, dirt, footprints, grass stains, mud and dust,” Fisk recalls. “It looks very real and tactile, and that’s what we were aiming for with our circus.” The work of costume designer Jacqueline West was instrumental in creating the dichotomy between the circus glitter and the world outside the big top in Depression-era America. West’s designs for the principals, including August and Marlena, were vibrant with color, while the background audience wore a more muted, Depression-appropriate palette. “I wanted all the color and glitter to jump out of the circus itself, away from the more monochromatic crowd,” notes West.

Marlena’s outfits were based on those worn by 1930s film stars, as well on those that adorned real circus women of the era. “As Marlena, Reese’s outfits included a beaded evening dress and parade costume with marabou feathers made from vintage antique pieces put together in a patchwork. Her evening gowns reflect those she saw at the movies, worn by some of the period’s top stars, including Jean Harlow, Carol Lombard and Constance Bennett.”

A testament to the sets’ mix of period realism and glamour – as well as to the filmmakers’ devotion to the novel – was Sara Gruen’s reaction when she visited the set. “I was speechless,” she remembers. “You know, a few years ago, all of this was entirely in my head, and now here it is. It’s so close to what I had imagined. It’s a very surreal experience.”

From the scripting stage to pre-production, through production and the final touches of post production as WATER FOR ELEPHANTS neared its worldwide release, the filmmakers endeavored to bring to life this world, its characters, and a story of a forbidden attraction that becomes a lifelong love. “People have always wanted to have their ‘day at the circus’ – a joyful moment taking them outside their everyday lives,” notes Reese Witherspoon. “I hope that’s what we’ve done here: create something that people will enjoy.” Adds Francis Lawrence: “One of the reasons I did WATER FOR ELEPHANTS is because it has love, wish fulfillment, redemption, magic and beauty. I hope audiences latch on to all of those things.”

ABOUT CAST AND CREW

Academy Award® winner **REESE WITHERSPOON (Marlena)** has created the kind of unforgettable characters that connect with critics and audiences alike, making her one of Hollywood's most sought after actresses.

Her extraordinary performance as June Carter Cash opposite Joaquin Phoenix in the Twentieth Century Fox drama *Walk the Line*, earned her the 2006 Academy Award for Best Performance by an Actress in a Leading Role, a BAFTA, Golden Globe® Award, Screen Actors Guild Award®, New York Film Critics Award, Broadcast Film Critics Award, People's Choice Award – and 11 additional honors.

Since 2007, Witherspoon currently serves as Avon's Global Ambassador and Honorary Chairman of the Avon Foundation for Women representing a company with a conscience and strong rights for women's empowerment. Witherspoon strongly supports the passage of the International Violence Against Women's Act, which creates a comprehensive approach to combat violence. Although low key about her ongoing charity work, Witherspoon has been active on behalf of the Rape Treatment Center at the Santa Monica-UCLA Medical Center and Save the Children. She currently serves on the board of the Children's Defense Fund, with whom she has been involved for many years, raising money and awareness for their many programs. Last year, she went to New Orleans with a group of women to open the first "Freedom School" there, and they have since endowed thirteen more community centers in the area.

She was recently seen in *How Do You Know*, a romantic comedy centered on the love triangle between professional softball player Lisa Jorgenson, a corporate executive and a major league pitcher. Directed by Academy Award winning writer-director James L. Brooks, Witherspoon starred alongside Owen Wilson, Paul Rudd and Jack Nicholson.

Previously, Witherspoon starred in *Monsters vs. Aliens*. She voiced the role of Susan Murphy, who becomes the 49-foot tall Ginormica after the Earth is hit by a meteorite. She is rounded up and taken to a secret facility where she meets other monsters. In a desperate attempt to save the planet from impending destruction from outer space, the President asks this motley crew to help.

Before that, she starred opposite Vince Vaughn in New Line's hit comedy *Four Christmases*. The film follows a couple as they struggle to visit their four divorced parents for Christmas and the antics that ensue. To date, the film has grossed \$156 million worldwide. Witherspoon was nominated for a 2009 Kids Choice Award for Favorite Movie Actress.

Her illustrious career began when at the age of 14, she hoped to be an extra in Robert Mulligan's coming-of-age drama, *The Man in the Moon*, and unexpectedly landed the lead. Previous films

include the ensemble thriller, *Rendition*, directed by Gavin Hood, whose previous effort *Tsotsi*, won the Oscar for Best Foreign Film. With a cast including Jake Gyllenhaal, Meryl Streep, Peter Saarsgard and Alan Arkin, the film premiered at the 2007 Toronto Film Festival; as a spirit who refuses to accept her death in the romantic comedy, *Just Like Heaven*, and as one of the most indelible characters in English literature, the social climbing Becky Sharpe in Mira Nair's revisionist take on the Thackeray novel, *Vanity Fair*. She captures the hearts of girls everywhere with her endearing performance as Elle Woods in the surprise hit *Legally Blonde* and again two years later as both producer and star in *Legally Blonde 2: Red, White and Blonde*, in which Elle Woods takes on Washington politics in defense of her beloved Chihuahua, Bruiser.

Additional film projects include *Sweet Home Alabama*, which was the largest opening at the time for a female-driven romantic comedy; and *Election* as the indelible Tracy Flick, whose mere existence torments her teacher Jim McAllister (Matthew Broderick). Directed by Alexander Payne, this brilliantly reviewed satirically edged comedy earned Witherspoon a Best Actress Award from the National Society of Film Critics as well as a Golden Globe nomination. In addition, Witherspoon starred in Sony Pictures' teen cult classic *Cruel Intentions* in which she played the object of focus for an upper east side step-siblings' wicked games; *Pleasantville*, written and directed by Gary Ross, in which Witherspoon and Tobey Maguire played modern-day siblings who find themselves trapped in the wholesome world of a 1950's sitcom. In 1995, Witherspoon starred opposite Mark Wahlberg in the pulpy thriller, *Fear*, and received rave reviews for her performance in the independent feature, *Freeway*, a wildly conceived modern version of "Little Red Riding Hood" produced by Oliver Stone, which debuted at the Sundance Film Festival and aired to record-breaking numbers on HBO.

Witherspoon's production company, Type A Films, in addition to producing *Legally Blonde 2: Red, White and Blonde* and *Four Christmases* produced the modern fairy tale *Penelope*, starring Christina Ricci and James McAvoy.

ROBERT PATTINSON (Jacob) is best known for his portrayal of the vampire Edward Cullen in the *Twilight* saga. He gained industry notice at 19 years of age when he joined the Harry Potter franchise in Mike Newell's *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*, playing Cedric Diggory, Hogwarts' official representative in the Triwizard Tournament. Last year, Pattinson starred opposite Pierce Brosnan, Chris Cooper and Emilie De Ravin in the drama, *Remember Me*, directed by Allen Coulter. Upcoming is *Bel Ami*, a film based on the novel of the same name written by Guy de Maupassant, in which Pattinson plays a young journalist in Paris who betters himself through his connections to the city's most glamorous and influential women, played by Uma Thurman, Kristin Scott Thomas and Christina Ricci.

Pattinson began his professional career with a role in Uli Edel's *Sword of Xanten*, opposite Sam West and Benno Furmann. He also appeared in director Oliver Irving's *How to Be*, winner of the

Slamdance Film Festival's Special Honorable Mention for Narrative Feature. Pattinson played the lead role of Salvador Dali in *Little Ashes*, directed by Paul Morrison. His television credits include *The Haunted Airman* for the BBC.

As a member of the Barnes Theatre Group, Pattinson played the lead role in Thornton Wilder's *Our Town*. Other stage credits include Cole Porter's *Anything Goes*, *Tess of the D'Uberilles* and *Macbeth* at the OSO Arts Centre.

CHRISTOPH WALTZ (August) received Academy, SAG, BAFTA, Golden Globe and Cannes Film Festival awards for his portrayal of Nazi Colonel Hans Landa in Quentin Tarantino's *Inglourious Basterds*.

Earlier this year, Waltz portrayed the villainous Chudnofsky in Michel Gondry's *The Green Hornet*, alongside Seth Rogan and Cameron Diaz. Upcoming for Waltz is *The Three Musketeers* for director W. S. Anderson and Summit Entertainment. Waltz plays Cardinal Richelieu, and the film's international cast also includes Matthew Macfadyen, Mads Mikkelsen and Juno Temple.

Waltz's work in European television, film and theatrical productions spans three decades. His motion picture credits include *Gun-Shy*, the Berlin Film Festival entry *Lapislazuli Dorian*, *She*, *Falling Rocks*, *Ordinary Decent Criminal*, *Our God's Brother*, *The Beast*, *Berlin Blues* and *Angst*. On television, he appeared in the Adolf Grimme Award-winning films *Der Tanz mit dem Teufel – Die Entfuhrung des Richard Oetker* and *Dienststrese – Was fur eine Nacht Dienststrese*. For his work in *Du Bist Nicht Allein – Die Roy Black Story*, Waltz garnered Bavarian and German TV awards and the RTL Golden Lion.

HAL HOLBROOK's (Old Jacob) movie career began with *The Group* in 1966 when he was 41 years old. Since then, moviegoers have seen him in more than 40 films including *Magnum Force*, *Midway*, *All The President's Men*, *Capricorn One*, *The Fog*, *Creepshow*, *Wall Street*, *The Firm*, *Men of Honor*, *The Majestic*, *Into the Wild* (for which he received an Academy Award nomination), *That Evening Sun*, *Flying Lessons*, and *Good Day For It*. He has received five Emmy® Awards for a variety of television performances.

Throughout his long career, Holbrook has performed *Mark Twain* every year, including his third and fourth New York engagements in 1977 and 2005; and a world tour in 1985, which was the 150th anniversary of Mark Twain's birth. The latter tour began in London and ended in New Delhi. Holbrook has constantly returned to the stage. In New York, he appeared in *Buried Inside Extra*, 1983; *The Country Girl*, 1984; *King Lear*, 1990; *An American Daughter*, 1997. His regional theater credits include *Our Town*, *Uncle Vanya*, *Merchant of Venice*, *King Lear*, *A Life in the Theater*, *Be My Baby*, and *Southern Comforts*, the last two with his late wife, Dixie Carter. He also starred in a national tour of *Death of a Salesman*.

Holbrook has received Honorary Doctor of Humanities Degree from Ohio State University and the University of Hartford, an Honorary Doctor of Humane Letters from Ursinus College, an Honorary Doctor of Letters from Elmira College, and Honorary Doctor of Fine Arts Degrees from Kenyon College and his alma mater, Denison University. In 1996, he received the Edwin Booth Award, and in 1998, the William Shakespeare Award from The Shakespeare Theatre, Washington, D.C. In 2000, Holbrook was inducted into the New York Theatre Hall of Fame; in 2003, he received the National Humanities Medal from the president; and in 2010, he was honored with a medal from the American Academy of Arts and Letters.

FRANCIS LAWRENCE (Director) made his feature film directorial debut with *Constantine*, based on the Hellblazer comic book, starring Keanu Reeves and Rachel Weisz. He followed that film with the 2007 hit, *I Am Legend*, a science fiction/horror/action/disaster film adapted from the Richard Matheson novel of the same name, starring Will Smith.

Lawrence is also a noted music video director with a Latin Grammy® Award for his work with Shakira on “Whenever Whatever.” Lawrence worked with Lady Gaga on the video, “Bad Romance,” which won the Video Music Award of the Year at the VMA Awards. He has also worked with Jay Z, Britney Spears, Pink, Gwen Stefani, Jennifer Lopez, Aerosmith, Janet Jackson, among others, and has been awarded numerous video music awards.

On television, Lawrence was the director of the pilot and several episodes of the series *Kings*, on which he also served as executive producer.