

# CLOSER

## SYNOPSIS

Academy Award®-winning director Mike Nichols follows the triumphant "Angels in America" with *Closer*. A bitingly funny and honest look at modern relationships, *Closer* is the story of four strangers (Julia Roberts, Jude Law, Natalie Portman and Clive Owen) – their chance meetings, instant attractions and casual betrayals.

Set in contemporary London, *Closer* is funny and powerful, and reminiscent of such Nichols' classics as *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf* and *Carnal Knowledge*.

Columbia Pictures Presents In Association With Inside Track *Closer* starring Julia Roberts, Jude Law, Natalie Portman and Clive Owen. The film is directed by Mike Nichols with a screenplay by Patrick Marber, based on his acclaimed stage production. The producers are Mike Nichols, John Calley and Cary Brokaw. The executive producers are Scott Rudin, Celia Costas and Robert Fox. The co-producer is Michael Haley. The director of photography is Stephen Goldblatt, ASC, BSC. The production designer is Tim Hatley. The film is edited by John Bloom and Antonia Van Drimmelen. The costume designer is Ann Roth.

*Closer* has been rated R by the Motion Picture Association of America for Sequences of Graphic Sexual Dialogue, Nudity/Sexuality and Language.

*Closer* will be released by Columbia Pictures on December 3, 2004

## BEGINNINGS, ENDS, MIDDLES

*“Closer concerns itself with the fact that, in love, we remember beginnings and endings and tend to edit out the middles. It asks interesting questions like ‘how do we really remember things and how does life really look to us?’” — Director Mike Nichols*

Patrick Marber’s comedy/drama “Closer” debuted in London in 1997 to rave reviews and won the Laurence Olivier/BBC Award for Best New Play and the London Critics Circle Award. The subsequent Broadway production was nominated for a Tony Award for Best Play and won the New York Critics Award for Best Foreign Play. It has since gone on to be produced in more than 100 cities around the world and translated into 30 different languages.

The playwright describes *Closer* as “a love story. It’s about other things of course—sexual jealousy, the male gaze, the lies we tell ourselves and those we are most intimate with, the ways in which people find themselves through using others. But in the end, it’s a nice simple love story. And as with most love stories, things go wrong...”

The title, he contends, is open to interpretation. “I wanted something ambiguous, that might give you a sense of mood without closing down the possibilities of what the story might mean.”

Seven years ago, when producer John Calley (who was then chairman of Sony Pictures Entertainment) first read Marber’s play he was “crazy about it,” he says. “It’s a remarkable document about our time, witty, immensely romantic and very dangerous — and I think, very important.”

What intrigued Calley and Sony Pictures chairman Amy Pascal was Marber’s witty and bitingly accurate dissection of romance in the modern era. “Marber underscores the complexity of contemporary relationships in which the

beginnings are so highly charged and exciting that the process of falling in love can become addictive. People can become falling-in-love junkies and find that habit difficult to kick. Throughout the play, Marber makes acute comments that are both witty and fun. The humor is always informed and sometimes heartbreaking.”

When Calley and Pascal met with Marber and expressed interest in turning his play into a movie, however, he turned them down, says Calley. “He was appropriately dismissive and wouldn’t sell it to us because he wanted a more fulfilled sense of who would be making the movie.”

Fortunately, years later, after its successful Broadway run, director Mike Nichols became interested in the project. Like his most recent adaptations of the widely acclaimed plays “Wit” and “Angels in America,” *Closer* dealt with intimate issues with humor and complexity. Nichols thought it would lend itself to film adaptation very well because its structure was innately cinematic and because it contained four leading roles which were interesting and complex, and whose personalities change and evolve through the course of the story.

Nichols seemed the ideal director for the project, since it bore similarities to some of his previous films including the acclaimed comedy/dramas *The Graduate*, *Who’s Afraid of Virginia Woolf* and *Carnal Knowledge*, in which he demonstrated an intuitiveness about relationships between men and women.

Beyond the specificity of Marber’s approach, Nichols says that the dynamic between men and women that the playwright addresses “is the center of our lives on earth,” he says. “It’s what most jokes are about, what most novels are about, what most music touches on. It is — for want of a better word — life. And it’s endlessly interesting.”

The project came full circle when Nichols approached Calley to finance the project. The two men have been the best of friends for the past 40 years. They met when Nichols was part of the acclaimed comedy team of Nichols and (Elaine) May and Calley briefly dated May. Calley produced one of Nichols' early films, an adaptation of Joseph Heller's classic *Catch-22*. They later worked together on such hit films as *Postcards from the Edge*, *Remains of the Day* and *The Birdcage*.

"When Mike came to me, I told him I was always crazy about the play, and of course, I've always been crazy about Mike," says Calley. "On stage and on screen, he has always had the marvelous ability to transmute the written word into drama in a way that can stop your heart."

What made *Closer* inherently cinematic, according to Nichols, was the fact that "it's told in the way that people remember things — in a telescoped way." Also, he adds, the element of intimacy in Marber's work lends itself better to the screen than the stage. "It's hard to present intimacy in front of a live audience, whereas in a movie the viewer is alone in the dark with the characters, which is in some ways more apt for intimacy, sex and love."

Marber was very excited by the idea of Nichols directing a film version of his play and was brought aboard to write the screenplay. He says he developed an intimate working relationship with the director, who "wanted me to be faithful to the play. Once he'd established the rule that we'd tell the story pretty much how it was told on stage — in fairly long sequences of time — the job became one of cutting, rewriting and a certain amount of restructuring within the sequences."

"Mike was fantastically good fun to work with," he continues. "I'm very fortunate to have learnt 'on the job' from a master. Added to that, the catering on a Nichols film is excellent."

Thematically, Marber asserts that *Closer* makes no moral pronouncements about the characters' behavior, allowing the viewer the latitude to make their own assessment. "I'm not concerned with 'good' or 'bad' here," he says, "nor in passing judgment on the characters. This is what they said. This is what they did. How they behaved is really none of my business. The audience will see them as they like, and may well disagree with each other, but hopefully they'll recognize something true. And laugh at a few of the jokes along the way."

The screenplay retains the acerbic wit of the play, the intertwining story of two couples, or what producer Cary Brokaw calls "a checkerboard of the relationships between two men and two women that evolves as part of the competition between the two men for each of the women at different times."

Adds executive producer Celia Costas: It's a hopeful piece in that the characters come to terms with themselves and change in very interesting ways. They learn something, which is really the most important thing in life.....and in movies."

## **UP CLOSE: The PLAYERS**

*"What's so great about the truth? Try lying for a change — it's the currency of the world."*

### **DAN (Jude Law)**

In *Closer*, Jude Law portrays Dan, an aspiring novelist who earns a living writing obituaries. Though Marber contends there is no protagonist in the story, Dan is the character through whom all the other characters are introduced. Law is no stranger to portraying vainglorious characters as he demonstrated in his Oscar® nominated performance in *The Talented Mr. Ripley* and, more recently, in *Alfie*. What drew him to *Closer*, which he had seen several times on stage and greatly

admired, was Marber's "extraordinary dialogue and its concentrated focus on these four characters who are the heart of the play," he says.

The intimacy of the situation was matched by the demands of working in close quarters with only three other actors. "There was never a day where you could kind of take it easy because virtually every scene has a definite emotional pitch," says Law. "You were either opening up and offering yourself to someone or closing yourself up and trying to get rid of someone. It was quite intense and demanding."

Reflecting on his character, who is a catalyst for much of the action, Law says, "Dan is someone who's really living in a sort of cocoon, a frustrated novelist, until he meets Alice, who becomes his muse. Through her, he blossoms. The relationship is really responsible for him coming out of himself, encouraging him to be confident enough to find the woman he really thinks he loves, Anna. Unfortunately, that relationship seems to be doomed from the get-go, and though it gives him some of the happiest days of his life, he eventually throws himself away by pouring himself so wholeheartedly into it."

While he sees Marber's play as basically a story about men and women falling in and out of love, it is also a battle between two male characters who become each other's nemeses. "There's a certain amount of ego going on between them. You could argue that for them it is almost more important that they're screwing over the other guy than getting the girl they're in love with."

*"Don't stop loving me. I can see it draining out of you. It meant nothing. If you love me, you'll forgive me."*

### **ANNA (Julia Roberts)**

For Julia Roberts, the character of Anna is a departure, says producer John Calley. "Julia is an astonishing actress who always does what she does

wonderfully. But in this case, she challenged herself to explore issues about a strong, intelligent woman in a way that beautifully demonstrates how her considerable talent has evolved over the years.”

“Anna is a compelling woman who understands what she wants, even as it changes and in playing her, Julia shows herself in a way we’ve never seen her before,” adds Brokaw.

At the start of the story, Anna is a successful photographer and a recent divorcee. After meeting and flirting with Dan, she marries Larry (Clive Owen), all the while carrying on a secret affair with Dan. Rather than back away from Anna’s more questionable behavior, Roberts was interested in exploring both her character’s strengths and her flaws. “I had a great amount of trouble with letting her be this incredibly flawed woman. I think she does some really awful things that even at my worst moments, I look like an amateur compared to this woman. She’s very devious, but I don’t think it’s really calculated.”

Overall, Roberts says she admires *Closer* because, “I think it’s about the plight of these people trying to be closer to each other, to be closer to something really valued in life, to be closer to a truth that maybe none of them will ever be. It’s really more about the intimacy of being compassionate human beings. That’s kind of what they’re secretly or unconsciously trying to attain.”

*“Where is this ‘love’? I can’t see it, I can’t touch it, I can’t feel it. I can hear it. I can hear some words, but I can’t do anything with your easy words.”*

### **ALICE (Natalie Portman)**

“The character of Alice is, in my opinion, Natalie Portman’s arrival as an adult actress,” says Brokaw. “You see her as a fascinating, somewhat mysterious, adult woman who is very sensual and complicated.”

Nichols had first worked with Portman in a production of Chekov's "The Seagull," when she was still in her teens. "People don't quite realize how remarkable an actress she is, because she looks so amazing," says Nichols, "but she is. I saw her in *Closer* right from the beginning and she was, in some ways, the beginning of my casting."

Portman admits, "this is definitely a new kind of role for me." The key to Alice, she says, is the conflict inherent in her character. "Alice is really alone when she comes to London, so she makes up her entire world, completely creates herself. Yet, she also has this childlike side. She's really honest and direct in her feelings, which distinguishes her from the other characters. So though she's lying about her persona, she's the most direct, honest character in the film."

Besides tackling the character of a multi-faceted adult woman, Portman also had to take lessons in pole dancing for the film, in which she goes to work in a posh London strip club. "It was fun. I have a whole new respect for pole dancers because it takes a lot of skill and is physically very demanding, a combination of dance and acrobatics," she says

Despite its risqué elements, for Portman, *Closer* is a very moral tale. "It examines the way people have relationships with each other and how they sometimes get so lost in them that they are sometimes insensitive to the other person's feelings. It's kind of like 'I'm in love. I can be irrational now. It doesn't matter who I hurt.' So love becomes this weird excuse for doing a lot of hurtful things to other people."

*"You don't know the first thing about love because you don't understand compromise."*

## LARRY (Clive Owen)

Clive Owen, who plays Larry, the handsome, self-assured dermatologist, originally played Dan in the original London stage production of "Closer." When he heard Mike Nichols was interested in casting him in the film, he asked if he could play Larry instead. "I loved playing Dan, but going back and playing Larry was a real treat," he says. "It was like starting all over again because when you play a part you see the whole thing through that character's perspective. Now I had to reevaluate everything that I thought when I originally did it, switch everything around and see it from Larry's point of view."

One thing that hasn't changed since he first read the play, is his admiration for Marber's material. "You don't often get dialogue like this in movies. It's wonderful to be able to get your teeth into some fantastic dialogue. It's so meaty with four fantastic parts. Playing any of them would be great."

"What's important," he continues, "is that you like all four characters. All the scenes are intense and for it to really work you have to keep swapping your allegiances. You have to keep empathizing and sympathizing with both sides."

And that is entirely appropriate to the nature of the story, Owen reasons, "because it's about human beings. It captures how people are behaving now, that's what's so exciting about it."

Larry is someone who gets his heart broken in the story and resolves to never be hurt again, he contends. In defending himself, he winds up hurting others. "These four people fall in and out of love and show how brutal and tough that can be. By the end you wind up thinking, 'Why do we do this to ourselves?'"

## WORKING WITH NICHOLS

The four principals on *Closer* enjoyed the rare luxury of having an extended rehearsal period of four weeks prior to the commencement of principal photography, enabling the actors and Mike to really discover these characters and identify them as people in all their different dimensions.

Nichols always rehearses his movies, but in a completely different way from how he rehearses a stage play. The process for movies takes into account the fact that the shooting of films is almost always in bits and pieces and out of sequence. “So the rehearsal process is to decide together what story we are telling,” he says. “The more interior a story, the more mysterious, the more necessary it is to figure out what happens next.”

In the case of *Closer*, that entailed figuring out what happens in the periods of time that the story skips, large gaps of a year or more between scenes. Another reason Nichols rehearses films is because it enables him to bring the actors together, “so they can explore how they’re going to be with one another, how they really feel about one another. The better the actors are — like the four actors I had for *Closer* — the better they are at turning what happens between them into the relationships in the film.”

Portman, who had previously worked with Nichols on a stage production of Chekov’s “The Seagull,” says the director’s rehearsal approach was different when they were preparing for *Closer*. “On stage it was much more about the process of rehearsals,” she says. “Mike just sat back and let everything grow. For the film he took a much more hands-on approach, with suggestions and leading conversations into certain areas. It was like being in a really interesting English class, analyzing the play during rehearsals, bringing in other literary references.”

Law, who says he sometimes enjoys the discoveries that take place during rehearsals more than the actual shooting of the film, found Nichols' approach to the process unique. "He works like no one else. The wonderful thing is simply to be in his presence, hear his stories, his wonderful references. It's a very subtle approach. Slowly, you become aware that through just conversing, he is steering you, almost subconsciously, in the direction he wants to take you. It brings out of you this sense of confidence, that you're the only person for the job so you should never question or doubt yourself."

The sense of optimism Nichols conveys, had a significant impact on Roberts, she says. "He's just so clear and enthusiastic. He's the best cheerleader you could ever want. He's so encouraging. It's just incredible. It really does stir up a lot of emotions and it stirs up a lot of conversation and a lot of thoughts. Mike is really profoundly astute at taking these dramatic scenarios that hold hostility and vulgarity and all this really kind of repellant stuff, and he can somehow, in the course of a story or just through his explanation, make it very much something that every person has done or said or experienced."

"We spent a lot of time talking about the bigger themes of the piece," says Owen, "how people behave under pressure, how they behave when they're in love, how they behave when they've been wronged. It's a very subtle approach, but has a way of seeping into your consciousness and coming back later when you start the actual filming."

Nichols rehearsal approach came to fruition during production, observes Owen. "Mike is so smart and the one thing you realize is that if a director is very smart, everything else falls into place," he says. "During shooting he does very few takes, which I think has to do with maintaining the freshness of it all, keeping it alive. When you do a number of takes, even though you can refine things, to a certain extent you start locking everything off. You can lose the spirit and life of a scene. But Mike keeps the air in it. There's also an odd pressure when you know

you're only going to get a couple of shots at any given scene. It adds this wonderful sort of adrenaline."

## **DRESSING UP AND DRESSING DOWN IN LONDON**

An additional element in *Closer* is its take on contemporary London and how the four central characters behave in that milieu. "London is such a fascinating, multifaceted city that there's always something new to explore in a filmic sense and we've done that with *Closer*," says producer Brokaw. "It shows a real contemporary London, not the romanticized city people of think of, but rather the city people who live here know in all its different colors and textures."

Mike Nichols sought out award winning theatrical production designer Tim Hatley to design *Closer*. Despite the fact that Hatley was relatively new to film design Nichols was so impressed with his theatrical work on recent productions of "Private Lives" and "The Crucible" that he had no qualms about bringing him aboard.

Hatley in turn hired Mark Raggett to be his Supervising Art Director, an artist with a long, impressive film resume behind him. Hatley read the play 15 times before he began to plan his design scheme and found "the answer to all my questions about the characters was right there in the text."

The look and feel of the film is the heart of present-day London. "The heart of the story is about four people in London, not the touristy, picture postcard city, but a London for real people like these people," says Hatley.

Hatley, Raggett and Set Decorator John Bush noted that every scene in *Closer* is rife with tension and the sets should reflect the intensity of the dialogue and the interactions. "The characters' relationships are quite claustrophobic," says

Raggett, “The sets we created and the locations we used all reinforce that feeling.”

For Dan, a poor journalist and unsuccessful novelist, Hatley designed a worn, cramped London flat, which is situated near a market with bookshops and a café.

Anna’s photo studio is also her home, and it changes as the story progresses. The loft-style apartment is rundown at the start of the film, but as Anna becomes more successful, it is transformed — from an eclectic, bohemian photo studio into an elegant workspace and home.

Both Hatley and Raggett say their biggest challenge was creating the lap dance club. Hatley conferred with Nichols, who didn’t want a typically seedy strip joint, but something a little more upscale. He and Raggett researched several London gentlemen’s clubs, and took their cue from The Reform Club with its heavy, detailed moldings, building it from scratch. “Tim created this surreal environment with a staircase of mirrors and translucent walls,” says Raggett. “It perfectly captures the reflective mood of the scene.”

Hatley also conferred with veteran costume designer Ann Roth, with whom Nichols has collaborated since the Broadway smash hit “The Odd Couple” in the 1960s. Traveling from London to New York with huge metal trunks stuffed with models, photographs and sketches, Hatley “laid out the models during the first script read-through, and Ann and I compared colors. It was amazing to work with such an extraordinary seasoned talent.”

Following her last, rather detailed, costuming job on Nichols’ six-hour production of “Angels in America” for HBO, Roth saw this project as a relatively simple four-character piece. “The most interesting character was Dan, played by Jude Law. He was so poor and his clothes were very ratty, dreary and cheap,” says Roth.

“They looked it. Yet, at the same time, Dan is a very sexy man, so that was part of the challenge of dressing him.”

Roth understood that, as a journalist, Dan usually had to appear in a shirt, tie and suit — though the clothing had to be inexpensive. “The job was to make him look good in a rotten suit and somehow we did that, fitting him in a mid ‘60s look.”

For Portman’s character Alice, Roth imagined her as a backpacker who traveled and lived out of a sack. “Alice is a free spirit who can just pick up and go. She just needed a pair of pants and a couple of t-shirts,” says Roth.

Anna and Larry were more affluent, but reflecting their generation, still tend to dress down more often than not, according to Roth, and her wardrobe choices reflect that lifestyle choice.

## **ABOUT THE CAST**

**JULIA ROBERTS** (Anna) is one of the world’s biggest box office stars. She is currently appearing in Steven Soderbergh’s *Ocean’s Twelve* and recently starred in the period drama *Mona Lisa Smile* and in George Clooney’s directorial debut *Confessions of a Dangerous Mind*.

Roberts received the Academy Award® and a Golden Globe Award for her portrayal of *Erin Brockovich*, which was directed by Steven Soderbergh. In addition, she starred with George Clooney, Matt Damon, Andy Garcia and Brad Pitt in Soderbergh’s hit ensemble crime caper, *Ocean’s Eleven*.

*Erin Brockovich* followed the success of two box-office smashes, *Notting Hill* directed by Roger Michell, in which she co-starred with Hugh Grant, and *Runaway Bride*, in which she was reunited with Richard Gere, her *Pretty Woman* co-star and their director Garry Marshall. More recently, Roberts starred in *The*

*Mexican* with Brad Pitt and James Gandolfini and *America's Sweethearts* co-starring Billy Crystal, Catherine Zeta-Jones, John Cusack and Hank Azaria.

Roberts has starred in many of Hollywood's most successful films. She first came to the attention of audiences with her critically acclaimed role in *Mystic Pizza*, then in *Steel Magnolias*, which led to her first Academy Award® nomination. Her next film, *Pretty Woman*, was the top-grossing film of 1990 and brought Roberts her second Academy Award® nomination. Her memorable performance was followed by a series of notable films including *Flatliners*, *Sleeping with the Enemy*, *Dying Young*, *The Pelican Brief* and *Something to Talk About*.

Roberts went on to star with Liam Neeson in Neil Jordan's *Michael Collins* and in Woody Allen's romantic musical comedy *Everyone Says I Love You*. In 1997, she starred in the box-office smash *My Best Friend's Wedding* directed by P.J. Hogan, as well as Richard Donner's thriller *Conspiracy Theory* opposite Mel Gibson. Roberts then starred with Susan Sarandon and Ed Harris in the Chris Columbus drama *Stepmom*.

Collectively, her films have grossed more than \$2.5 billion worldwide.

**JUDE LAW** (Dan) is one of the most sought after leading men today. Born in London, by age 12 he was appearing in England's National Youth Music Theatre. By 17, Law had joined the cast of a British TV series "Families." He began his London stage career in George Bernard Shaw's "Pygmalion" and appeared in several productions in the West End and at the National Theater in London.

He made his Broadway debut opposite Kathleen Turner and Eileen Atkins in "Indiscretions," which earned him the Theater World Award as well as a Tony nomination for Outstanding Supporting Actor. He originated the role of Michael in the same play in London, winning the Ian Charleson Award for Outstanding Newcomer.

Law made his film debut in 1992 in the British film *The Crane*, which was followed by *Shopping*. He was then in cast in a series of American films including *Gattaca*, *Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil*, *Wilde* and *eXistenZ*. For his scene-stealing role as Dickie Greenleaf in Anthony Minghella's *The Talented Mr. Ripley*, Law was nominated for both a Golden Globe and an Oscar® for Best Supporting Actor. He followed it up with memorable turns in *Enemy at the Gates*, *Road to Perdition* and *Artificial Intelligence: AI*.

His performance as a Civil War soldier in *Cold Mountain* brought him a second Academy Award® nomination, this time for Best Actor. In 2004 alone, in addition to *Closer*, Law has starred in *Sky Captain and the World of Tomorrow*, *Alfie*, *Lemony Snicket's A Series of Unfortunate Events*, *The Aviator* and *I Heart Huckabee's*.

Upcoming is a big-screen version of Evelyn Waugh's *Brideshead Revisited* with Paul Bettany and Jennifer Connelly and Columbia Pictures' *All the King's Men* alongside Sean Penn.

**NATALIE PORTMAN** (Alice) has demonstrated star quality since her first film role in Luc Besson's *The Professional* as the 10-year old apprentice to an assassin played by Jean Reno. Her auspicious debut led to roles in Michael Mann's *Heat*, *Beautiful Girls*, Woody Allen's *Everyone Says I Love You* and Tim Burton's *Mars Attacks*. She became a household name after starring as Queen Amidala in George Lucas' *Star Wars: Episode I —The Phantom Menace*, which became the third highest grossing film of all time. She subsequently appeared in *Star Wars: Episode II — Attack of the Clones* and the soon to be released *Star Wars: Episode III*. She made her Broadway debut in the title role of the revival of "The Diary of Anne Frank," garnering critical praise. Her other films have included *Where the Heart Is*, *Anywhere But Here* and *Cold Mountain*. She recently starred in Zach Braff's *Garden State*.

**CLIVE OWEN** (Larry) received wide acclaim for his starring role in Mike Hodges' *Croupier*. Born in Coventry, Warwickshire, England, he attended the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art. Over the past few years, Owen has amassed a long list of credits that include the feature films *Gosford Park*, *Beyond Borders*, *The Bourne Identity*, *Green Fingers* and *Bent*. He was seen most recently in Hodges' thriller *I'll Sleep When I'm Dead* and in the title role of *King Arthur* opposite Keira Knightley.

Owen's extensive television work on both sides of the Atlantic has included starring roles in the series "Chancer," "Sharman," "Split Second" and the BBC hit "Second Sight."

Owen also recently appeared in a series of unique Internet-based "mini-movies" for BMWfilms.com and executive producer David Fincher, portraying a character who recurs in each film. The shorts were directed by such filmmakers as Ang Lee, John Frankenheimer, Guy Ritchie and Wong Kar-Wai.

Owen will next be seen *Sin City* for director Robert Rodriguez.

## **ABOUT THE FILMMAKERS**

**MIKE NICHOLS** (Director, Producer) is a legend in the entertainment industry, honored for his contributions to both stage and screen, in front of and behind the camera. He was recently honored by the Directors Guild of America with its annual Lifetime Achievement Award in recognition of his contributions to the film medium over the past four decades. In September he received a Best Director Emmy for the HBO production "Angels in America," which won a record 11 Emmys.

Nichols was born in Berlin, Germany in 1931 to a Russian father and German mother. His family immigrated to the United States when he was seven and he

was brought up in New York City. He attended the University of Chicago where, together with Elaine May and Paul Sills, he founded the comedy group The Compass, later renamed Second City.

In 1957, the now legendary team of Nichols and May was formed. Starting at the Blue Angel in New York, they performed in nightclubs all over the country. Nichols and May created numerous television specials and appeared as guests on "Omnibus," "The Dinah Shore Show" and "The Jack Paar Show." In 1960, they brought "An Evening with Mike Nichols and Elaine May" to Broadway, where it ran for a year. The show was still selling out when the team decided to end the run and pursue separate careers.

Nichols turned to directing, winning the first of seven Tony Awards for Neil Simon's "Barefoot in the Park." He went on to helm an unprecedented string of Broadway hits including "The Knack," "Luv" (Best Director Tony), "The Odd Couple" (Best Director Tony), "The Apple Tree," "Plaza Suite" (Best Director Tony), "Prisoner of Second Avenue" (Best Director Tony), "The Gin Game" (1978 Pulitzer Prize) and "Streamers" (New York Drama Critics Award). He directed successful revivals of "The Little Foxes" and "Uncle Vanya" and the U.S. productions of "Comedians," as well as "The Real Thing" (Best Director Tony), "Hurlyburly," "Social Security," "Waiting for Godot" and "Death and the Maiden."

As a theatrical producer, he presented "Whoopi Goldberg on Broadway" and won the Tony for his blockbuster show "Annie." In 1987, Nichols received the George Abbott Award and in 1990 was honored by the American Museum of the Moving Image for his contribution to the film industry.

Nichols directed his first film, *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*, in 1966, for which he was nominated for an Academy Award® for Best Director, and for which Elizabeth Taylor won a Best Actress Academy Award.® In 1967, he directed *The*

*Graduate*, for which he won the Academy Award® for Best Director, the Directors Guild Award and the New York Film Critics Award. His subsequent films include *Catch-22*, *Carnal Knowledge*, *Silkwood* (Best Director Academy Award® nomination), *Working Girl* (Best Director Academy Award® nomination), *Biloxi Blues*, *Postcards from the Edge*, *Regarding Henry* and *Wolf*. He shared a nomination for Best Picture for James Ivory's *Remains of the Day*, on which he served as producer.

In recent years, he has reunited with former performance collaborator Elaine May who wrote the screenplays for Nichols' *The Birdcage* and *Primary Colors*.

Nichols directed Emma Thompson in the HBO Films production of "Wit," which won him the 2001 Emmy Award® for Outstanding Directing for a Miniseries, Movie or a Special, as well as the Emmy® for Outstanding Made for Television Movie. Nichols and Thompson also received the 2001 Humanitas Award for Best Screenplay for "Wit."

His most recent triumph was the HBO two-part presentation of Tony Kushner's Pulitzer Prize-winning epic "Angels in America," with Al Pacino, Meryl Streep and Emma Thompson leading an ensemble cast, which won him a DGA Award for his directing and received 21 Emmy nominations (winning 11 including one for Nichols as Best Director). The production also received five Golden Globe awards.

Nichols will next direct a musical stage version of *Monty Python and the Holy Grail* entitled "Spamalot."

**PATRICK MARBER** (Screenplay by/Based on the Play) was born in London in 1964. He began his career as a stand-up comedian, then began writing and appearing in the British radio and television show "Knowing Me, Knowing You".

His first play, "Dealer's Choice," debuted at London's Royal National Theatre in 1995, before transferring to the West End.

Marber's second play, "Closer," opened in London in 1997 and quickly became an international hit, produced in more than 100 cities and over 30 different languages across the world.

In addition to directing his own plays, Marber has directed productions of Craig Raine's "1953," Dennis Potter's "Blue Remembered Hills," David Mamet's "The Old Neighborhood" and Harold Pinter's "The Caretaker."

In 2000, he acted in the West End revival of David Mamet's "Speed-the-Plow."

He has won numerous awards for his radio, television and theatrical writing, including a BAFTA for Best Comedy Program and a Laurence Olivier Award for Best New Play for "Closer," which also garnered the London Critics Circle Award for Best New Play and the New York Critics Circle Award for Best Foreign Play.

*Closer* is Marber's first produced screenplay.

**JOHN CALLEY** (Producer) is a Hollywood movie mogul and beloved veteran producer. Calley began his ascent through the ranks of the entertainment industry in 1951 with NBC. He held a variety of jobs over his six-year stint with the Peacock. By 1957, Calley had moved onto Henry Jaffe Enterprises where he produced such classic American television shows including "The Chevrolet Variety Hour" with Dinah Shore, "The Shirley Temple Storybook" and "The Bell Telephone TV Hour." After a few years as advertising executive, he signed on as Executive Vice President at Filmways, Inc, where he developed feature films and television shows and produced of a number of feature films including *The Loved One*, *The Cincinnati Kid*, *Castle Keep* and *Catch-22*.

Calley joined Warner Bros. in 1968, where he held a variety of positions over the next 13 years ranging from President, Vice Chairman and Executive Vice President of World-Wide Production. While he was at the helm, Warner released such acclaimed films as *Dirty Harry*, *A Clockwork Orange*, *McCabe And Mrs. Miller*, *Deliverance*, *Enter The Dragon*, *Mean Streets*, *The Exorcist*, *Blazing Saddles*, *The Towering Inferno*, *Dog Day Afternoon*, *Superman*, and *Chariots of Fire*. In 1981, Calley moved to independent production partnering with Mike Nichols on such films as *Postcards from the Edge* and *Remains of the Day*. He returned to the executive suite as President and Chief Operating Officer of United Artists Pictures overseeing the production of *The Birdcage*, *Goldeneye*, *Leaving Las Vegas* and *Rob Roy*.

In 1996, Calley joined Sony Pictures Entertainment as Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, a position he held until last year, when he returned to independent production. His first film *Closer* will be followed by an adaptation of the international best-seller *The Da Vinci Code*, to be directed by Ron Howard.

**CARY BROKAW** (Producer) is a highly respected producer and film executive. He has been President and Chief Executive Officer of the Avenue Entertainment Group since 1994 and Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Avenue Pictures since 1987. After receiving his BA from the University of California at Berkeley and an MBA with honors from the UCLA School of Management, Brokaw began his career at 20th Century Fox, where he held various marketing and distribution positions and was integrally involved in overseeing the marketing and distribution of such motion pictures as *Julia*, *The Rocky Horror Picture Show*, *Breaking Away*, *All That Jazz* and *Star Wars*.

In 1980, he became Executive Vice President of the Cineplex Odeon Corporation. During his tenure, he initiated and oversaw the company's acquisition of Odeon Theatres and Plitt Theatres. In 1983, Brokaw was named President of Island Alive Films and subsequently Co-Chairman, President and

CEO of Island Pictures. While there he supervised the production, acquisition and release of such films as *Koyaanisqatsi*, *Choose Me*, *El Norte*, *Stop Making Sense*, *Kiss Of The Spider Woman*, *The Trip To Bountiful*, *Mona Lisa*, *Down By Law* and *She's Gotta Have It*. In 1986, Island Pictures films received seven Academy Award® nominations and won Oscars® for Best Actor (William Hurt) and Best Actress (Geraldine Page).

In 1987, Brokaw formed Avenue Pictures, which produced and released such films as Gus Van Sant's *Drugstore Cowboy*, James Foley's *After Dark*, *My Sweet*, *The Object Of Beauty* starring Andie MacDowell and John Malkovich, Jane Campion's *Sweetie* and Jim Sheridan's *The Field*. In 1992, Brokaw and Avenue produced Robert Altman's *The Player*, which was nominated for five Academy Awards® including Best Picture. Brokaw also produced *American Heart* starring Jeff Bridges, the Academy Award®-nominated *Short Cuts*, also directed by Altman and *Restoration*, the Academy Award®-winning epic adventure directed by Michael Hoffman and starring Robert Downey Jr., Meg Ryan, Hugh Grant and Sir Ian McKellen.

In recent years, Brokaw produced *Voices from A Locked Room*, *Finding Graceland* and *Letters from a Wayward Son* starring Harry Connick, Jr. Upcoming are *Mindhunters*, a thriller directed by Renny Harlin starring LL Cool J, Val Kilmer, Christian Slater and Kathryn Morris and a film adaptation of Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice* written and directed by Michael Radford and starring Al Pacino, Jeremy Irons and Joseph Fiennes.

Brokaw also supervises Avenue Pictures Television, which has produced six successful movies for television including *See Jane Run*, *A Stranger In Town*, *The Almost Perfect Bank Robbery*, *Two Mothers For Zachary* and *Tell Me No Secrets*. Upcoming movies for television include *The Chimes of Christmas* based on the Charles Dickens novel with a screenplay by Mark Medoff and *Special Occasions* adapted by the acclaimed playwright Bernard Slade from his

play. For cable, Brokaw and Avenue have produced *Amelia Earhart: The Final Flight* starring Diane Keaton, *Path To Paradise: The Untold Story of the World Trade Center Bombing* and *Time Shifters*.

Brokaw also produced several acclaimed films for HBO including the Emmy award winning *Wit* directed by Mike Nichols and starring Emma Thompson, the Emmy nominated *Path To War* directed by the John Frankenheimer starring Sir Michael Gambon, Alec Baldwin and Donald Sutherland, *Normal*, which was written and directed by Jane Anderson and starred Jessica Lange and Tom Wilkinson, which received six Emmy nominations, and most recently, *Angels in America*, which received 21 Emmy nominations and won a record 11 awards as well as five Golden Globes. Based on Tony Kushner's Pulitzer Prize-winning plays, the epic six-hour mini series was directed by Nichols and starred Al Pacino, Meryl Streep, Emma Thompson, Mary Louise Parker and Jeffrey Wright.

He lives in Los Angeles with his wife Christine, and their four daughters.

**SCOTT RUDIN** (Executive Producer) Films: *Team America: World Police*, *I ♥ Huckabees*, *The Village*, *The Manchurian Candidate*, *The Stepford Wives*, *School of Rock*, *The Hours*, *Changing Lanes*, *Orange County*, *Iris*, *The Royal Tenenbaums*, *Zoolander*, *Shaft*, *Sleepy Hollow*, *Angela's Ashes*, *Rules of Engagement*, *Wonder Boys*, *Bringing Out the Dead*, *South Park: Bigger, Longer & Uncut*, *The Truman Show*, *A Civil Action*, *In and Out*, *Ransom*, *Mother*, *Marvin's Room*, *The First Wives Club*, *Twilight*, *Clueless*, *Sabrina*, *Nobody's Fool*, *The Firm*, *Searching for Bobby Fischer*, *Sister Act*, *Sister Act 2: Back in the Habit*, *The Addams Family*, *Addams Family Values*, *Little Man Tate*, *Regarding Henry*, *Pacific Heights*, *Flatliners*, *Jennifer Eight*, *Mrs. Soffel* and *He Makes Me Feel Like Dancing* (Academy Award – Best Documentary). producer of diverse mainstream features whose most recent credits include *The Village*, *The Manchurian Candidate*, *I Heart Huckabee's*, *The Life Aquatic*, *Lemony Snicket's*

*A Series of Unfortunate Events*, *The Stepford Wives* and *School of Rock*. Theater: "Passion" (Tony Award – Best Musical), "Indiscretions," "Hamlet," "Seven Guitars," "Skylight," "A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum," "On the Town," "The Chairs," "The Judas Kiss," "Stupid Kids," "The Blue Room," "The Most Fabulous Story Ever Told," "Closer" (London and New York), "Amy's View," "The Wild Party," "The Ride Down Mt. Morgan," "Copenhagen" (Tony Award – Best Play), "The Designated Mourner," "The Caretaker" (London), "The Goat" (Tony Award – Best Play), "Medea," "Beckett/Albee," "Caroline, or Change" and "The Normal Heart."

Upcoming Films: Wes Anderson's *The Life Aquatic*, Brad Silberling's *Lemony Snicket's A Series of Unfortunate Events*, and Kenneth Lonergan's *Margaret*.

**CELIA COSTAS** (Executive Producer) began her career in foreign film distribution and as a research assistant for Universal Studios. After working with director Alan J. Pakula on *Roll Over*, the director hired her as his locations manager on *Sophie's Choice*, *Orphans*, *See You in the Morning* and *Presumed Innocent* and as a production manager on *The Pelican Brief* and *Consenting Adults*. Subsequent credits as a unit production manager include *Glengarry Glen Ross*, *To Wong Foo... and Night Falls on Manhattan*. She was an associate producer on *Meet Joe Black* and co-produced *A Lesson Before Dying*, *Private Parts*, *28 Days* and *Zoolander*. Most recently, she produced "For Love or Country" and "Angels in America" for HBO Films.

**STEPHEN GOLDBLATT, ASC, BSC** (Director of Photographer) began his career as a still photographer and documentarian, working on a variety of documentaries in England before turning to feature films.

He recently earned his third ASC nomination for HBO's adaptation of "Angels in America," Tony Kushner's Tony Award-winning epic drama as well as an Emmy nomination. Goldblatt earned ASC and Academy Award® nominations for his

work on *Batman Forever* and *The Prince of Tides*. He earned two additional Emmy nominations for the HBO telefilms "Path to War" (2002) and "Conspiracy" (2001).

Goldblatt includes among his credits *The Deep End of the Ocean*, *Batman and Robin*, *Striptease*, *The Pelican Brief*, *Consenting Adults*, *For the Boys*, *Everybody's All American*, *Joe Versus the Volcano*, *Lethal Weapon*, *Lethal Weapon 2*, *The Cotton Club*, *The Hunger* and *Outland*.

**TIM HATLEY** (Production Designer) trained at London's Central St. Martins College of Art & Design. He is best known for his award-winning theatrical stage sets in London and New York. On Broadway, he recently won the Tony Award for Best Scenic Design for "Private Lives." He was also awarded the Laurence Olivier Theatre Award for Best Set Designer for "Stanley and Humble Boy." Hatley's recent works includes the productions of "Last Dance at Dum Dum," "Suddenly, Last Summer," "The Three Lives of Lucie Cabrol," "Richard III," "Goodnight Children Everywhere" and "Talk of the City." For London Royal National Theatre, he designed "Humble Boy," "Hamlet," "Stanley," "The Caucasian Chalk Circle," "Flight," "Anthony & Cleopatra," "Sleep with Me" and "Darker Face of the Earth." His work on "Suddenly, Last Summer" and "Sleep with Me" won the 1999 Evening Standard Award for Best Stage Designer. He has also contributed production design to ballets and operas including "The Love for Three Oranges," "Carmen," "Orpheus in the Underworld," "The Return of Ulysses," "Unrequited Moments" and "Cinderella." He recently did the costume design for the period film *Stage Beauty* directed by Richard Eyre, and will be the set and costume designer for Mike Nichols' upcoming Broadway musical "Spamalot."

**JOHN BLOOM** (Edited by) has edited such films as *Shaft*, *Magic*, *Everybody Wins* and *Who'll Stop the Rain*, *The First Wives Club*, *Last Dance*, *Nobody's*

*Fool, Damage, Air America, Jackknife, Bright Lights, Big City, Black Widow, Under Fire, Betrayal, Dracula, The Ritz, Orca, The Lion in Winter and Georgy Girl.*

Bloom's work has been honored with three Academy Award® nominations for *The French Lieutenant's Woman, A Chorus Line* and *Gandhi*, for which he took home the Oscar®. In addition to working in a wide variety of feature films, Bloom also works regularly in television and won an Emmy nomination for "Masada." Most recently, Bloom worked with Mike Nichols on "Wit" (for which he won an Emmy) and "Angels in America" (winning an Eddie from the A.C.E. and earning an Emmy nomination).

**ANTONIA VAN DRIMMELEN** (Edited by) was nominated for an Emmy for her work on "Angels in America" and also edited *Shaft*. She was previously part of the editing team on *Thelma & Louise* (assistant film editor), *Camilla, Nobody's Fool, The First Wives' Club* (all as associate editor), *The Deep End of the Ocean* (first assistant editor) and "Wit" (associate editor).

**ANN ROTH** (Costume Designer) is a prolific designer who began her career as a scenery painter for the Pittsburgh Opera Company and whose career spans five decades.

Roth is a four-time Oscar® nominee for her work on *The Hours, Places in the Heart, The English Patient* and *The Talented Mr. Ripley*. She took home the Academy Award® in 1996 for Best Costume Design for *The English Patient*.

Her numerous film credits include *The Village, Cold Mountain, Signs, The Day of the Locust, Finding Forrester, In & Out, Sabrina, Nine to Five, Dressed to Kill, The Goodbye Girl, Klute, The Owl and The Pussycat, The Mambo Kings, The Unbearable Lightness of Being, Jagged Edge, The World of Henry Orient* and *Midnight Cowboy*.

She has a long association with director Mike Nichols, which began on Broadway in “The Odd Couple” and continued to the big screen for films such as *Primary Colors*, *The Birdcage*, *Regarding Henry*, *Postcards from the Edge* and *Working Girl*.

Roth recently designed the costumes for Nichols’ HBO film of “Angels in America,” which earned her an Emmy nomination. The legendary designer’s career spans over 50 years. Among her other Broadway credits are “Purlie,” “The Women,” “Play it Again, Sam,” “They’re Playing Our Song,” “The Best Little Whorehouse in Texas,” “The House of Blue Leaves,” “Hurlyburly,” and “The Tale of the Allergist’s Wife.” She received Tony Award nominations for “The Crucifer of Blood,” “The Royal Family” and “Present Laughter.”

“ACADEMY AWARD®” and “OSCAR®” are the registered trademarks and service marks of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences.”