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## Production Notes

**Rating R / 102 min**

ASPECT RATIO: Flat

SOUND FORMAT: Dolby SRD

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Trevor Reznik has not slept for a year.

His every waking minute has become an unrelenting nightmare of confusion, paranoia, guilt, anxiety and terror – each of which is part of an escalating series of clues that will lead to the source of his mysterious affliction in Brad Anderson’s inventive psychological thriller ***THE MACHINIST***.

### **THE MACHINIST**

*Who are you?*

- question found on Trevor Reznik’s refrigerator

### **Who is Trevor Reznik?: An Introduction**

“One day, I had this image of a sleepless, intensely private individual trapped in his own personal hell,” recalls screenwriter Scott Kosar (*Texas Chainsaw Massacre, Amityville Horror*). “Meanwhile, there is an area in my neighborhood that I always found poetically desolate – an industrial park lined by railroad tracks. Passing a machine shop, I looked inside and saw workers laboring at their tasks like extensions of their machines. I had to wonder what stories were cooking behind all that protective headgear and those greasy coveralls. Suddenly these two ideas collided and left me with a question: do machinists have existential crises?”

That query kicked off Kosar's own dive into the dark, swirling abyss of *THE MACHINIST* and its thematic meditations on identity, guilt, loss and knowledge. It was a frightening process even for the writer, but fortunately, he had some support along the way, looking to other artists who had gone down similar roads. "Some of my strongest influences include Roman Polanski's *The Tenant* and Wim Wenders' *The American Friend*," says Kosar, referring to Polanski's surreal psychological thriller about a man who believes his landlord and neighbors are trying to drive him insane; and Wenders' tale about an ordinary man's descent into a nightmare world when he is recruited as a killer – both richly metaphorical works that pit one man against a seemingly out-of-control outer world.

The story of *THE MACHINIST* turns the very nature of fright inside out, and exposes its inner workings, drop by drop, bit by bit, until a startling mystery is solved. Joining a tradition of psychologically probing thrillers such as *Vertigo*, *Repulsion*, *Peeping Tom* and *Memento*, this dreamlike story of a man's waking nightmare is not so much about external events – though it has its physical thrills – but the far more shocking and unsettling horrors that can boil over inside a man's own fragile mind.

Directed by Brad Anderson (*Next Stop Wonderland*, *Happy Accidents* and the cult hit *Session 9*) *THE MACHINIST* drops the film audience directly into the reality (or is it?) of a man who appears to be losing his mind. At the center of this uncanny world is Trevor Reznik, portrayed by a physically transformed Christian Bale, who has been suffering from an insidious form of ceaseless insomnia for a year. His nerves frayed, his body so gaunt he is accused by those around him of starting to disappear, it is all Trevor can do to make it to his job each day, toiling away in a grim, gray, dangerous machine shop where saw blades chatter rhythmically, men wear iron masks and electrical sparks are always flying through the air.

"*THE MACHINIST* is one of those classic stories in which a man goes out on a quest to solve a troubling mystery that ultimately leads right back to himself," says Anderson. "I wanted to tell Trevor's story in such a way that it would bring the audience directly into his head, and give them a glimpse of the nightmarish way he perceives his world."

This is no place to be hallucinating, but Trevor Reznik cannot necessarily trust his own bleary eyes anymore. When he meets a new worker at the shop, the brutal-looking, bald-headed Ivan (John Sharian), the man appears to come and go at will. It is while staring at his frightening new acquaintance, that Trevor makes an unforgivable mistake, resulting in a gruesome accident befalling his co-worker Miller (Michael Ironside). Despite his protestations, Trevor is clearly to blame for Miller's career-ending amputation.

Trevor's private hell now deepens. Ostracized by his fellow workers, eaten away by a devastating guilt, and increasingly paranoid that someone will try to exact revenge for his error, Trevor begins to suspect that nothing that has happened to him is a coincidence. Someone is clearly behind these terrible events, causing them to unfold, someone who wants to harm him, someone who has been leaving him mysterious notes, including an unnerving Hangman game that seems to taunt him, on his refrigerator door.

No one is exempt from Trevor's suspicion. The only two people Trevor trusts are a gritty call-girl (Jennifer Jason Leigh), who has fallen in love with him, and an alluring waitress and single mom (Spanish actress Aitana Sanchez-Gijon) with whom he carries on an almost fairy-tale romance, even as his life disintegrates.

Yet even when they begin to threaten him – with talk of mysterious exes and private phone calls that only stoke the flames of his apprehension – Trevor finds himself alone, hunted, without options. He loses his job, and all hope of love. He becomes obsessed with cleanliness, obsessively bleaching the floors and washing his hands with lye. Desperate for a rest, for a peace he simply cannot find, he is no longer sure what is up, what is down, what is real and what is imagined. All has turned to sheer madness.

It seems there is no way out of his spiraling descent, until Trevor uncovers a hint that is perhaps the key to what is happening to him. It lies not among the suspects he has been investigating, but is buried in his disquieted psyche.

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### **Mystery, Paranoia, Urgency: About the Film's Creation**

At the heart of *THE MACHINIST*'s wild ride through a man's ultimate nightmare is the idea that memory is the worst treachery. For Scott Kosar, the nightmare world of *THE MACHINIST* was born from his own personal struggles with grief and memory – and spiraled outward, becoming an inquiry into the very question of whether hell exists or is simply a place we create in our own heads. Kosar's haunting first vision of Trevor Reznik came to him while he was attending the Graduate Screenwriting Program at UCLA and looking for screenplay ideas. At the time, Kosar was still reeling from his mother's death the year before, and knew whatever he next wrote, it had to, as he says, "be completely from the gut, dealing with the grief and loneliness I was feeling." Yet, he was unprepared for the full impact of the character that came to him. "Something about those films spoke to me like soul mates," continues Kosar. "Dostoyevsky's *The Double* was another powerful influence, with its story about a man who is psychologically unhinged by encountering his double. These works were the thematic ancestors of the story I wanted to create, rife with obsessions, unpredictability and doubt. And stylistically I envisioned *THE MACHINIST* as 'the last Hitchcock film ever made.'"

To assure that the film would stand up stylistically to its carefully crafted structure and telescoping themes, Kosar's script ended up in the hands of Brad Anderson, a young director who first came to attention with the romantic comedy *Next Stop Wonderland*. Since then, however, Anderson has been exploring his life-long interest in one of American film's most daring genres: psychological thrillers and horror films, from the B-movie shockers to the sleek, sleep-interrupting classics. For Anderson, *THE MACHINIST* seemed to present an extraordinary tale from which to explore the very edges of the form, a story that would cause audiences' minds to race at the same feverish pace as the main character. It was also his first chance to direct something written by somebody else, focusing purely on the visual storytelling.

Anderson explains, "The film's style and structure aren't meant to be gimmicky. Rather, I felt this was the best way to tell this story in which you have a man whose conscience is literally consuming him alive, yet he's not even aware of the crime he's committed. This sense of mystery, lack of knowledge, paranoia and urgency to understand had to permeate every moment of the film the same way they permeate every moment of Trevor's existence."

Anderson and Kosar were committed to making the film exactly as it was written, without compromise. Yet when they first brought the completed script to various Hollywood producers the main response was (somewhat ironically) fear. "People didn't know what to make of it. They were drawn to it, but many felt it was too bleak. Some wanted to lighten it up," recalls Anderson. "I didn't want to do that. I was looking to tell the story the way Scott had written it."

To find the financing, Anderson kept going farther afield, ultimately finding what he was seeking in Spain, which not only has a dynamic and burgeoning film community, but is the center of a new renaissance of sophisticated, layered horror films, such as Alejandro Amenabar's *The Others*. The atmosphere of support and artistic openness in Spain's film industry allowed the filmmaker to go places rarely seen in American films. In Barcelona, Anderson found himself collaborating with Julio Fernandez, Carlos Fernandez and Antonia Nava of Filmax International, one of Spain's leading film production companies, which has a reputation for innovation.

Filmax immediately saw *THE MACHINIST* as an exciting project right up their alley, albeit a dark alley. "It is a film that we could really see making in Spain but that would be universal in its interest to audiences," says Carlos Fernandez. "We also truly believed in Brad's visual abilities to tell this complex story, and felt that he could bring the movie to life just as we had all imagined it."

Indeed, as Anderson now prepared in earnest to make *THE MACHINIST*, it became clear that his task was to turn a man's most secret and troubled imagination into an actual cinematic world.

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### **An Actor Willing To Disappear: Christian Bale and the Cast of *THE MACHINIST***

The first and most essential mission was to find the film's Trevor Reznik, and it was no easy task. Brad Anderson knew he needed something nearly impossible to find: more than just a performance from a talented actor, but a total immersion into the physical and psychological dissolution of Reznik as he fades from the inside out. The question remained, how many actors would be willing to go that far for a role?

Anderson discovered the intensity and commitment he was searching for in popular young star Christian Bale (*American Psycho*), who lost an astonishing 63 pounds off his already fit frame in preparation for the film, in a process of severe asceticism that gave both the actor and everyone around him an unexpected scare.

"When I first wrote the character, I assumed Trevor's shocking weight loss would be done with CGI or cleverly designed costumes," admits screenwriter Kosar. "Never in my wildest dreams did I think an actor would go so far as to actually starve himself. But Christian Bale made an astonishing transformation, at great personal risk, to properly capture the horror of Trevor's life. His commitment to the film was as breathtaking as his portrait."

Adds Brad Anderson: "In Scott's script, Trevor is described as a walking skeleton but Christian went well beyond the call of duty realizing this character. I could make a whole other movie on the subject of guilt just from my experience of watching this man reduce himself to 120 pounds.

Yet Bale simply sees the physical metamorphosis as what he had to do to truly inhabit Trevor Reznik. "I've always admired the idea of total immersion," he says. "But I don't believe in doing it just for the sake of doing it. You do it in the service of telling a great story, and *THE MACHINIST* called for behavior at the human extreme. I had to go there to understand this character. It also really helped me to portray Trevor, because when you're that skinny, you don't have any energy. You're exhausted by just walking a few feet across the room, and I think I was able to authentically convey that this is the state in which Trevor is maneuvering through a very dangerous world." (Asked about his diet for the film, Bale simply says: "I didn't eat; that was it.")

Bale was drawn to the character of Reznik because he is a man stripped to the barest bones, not just in his appearance, but also in his everyday life. Nothing is really left for Trevor but the ringing, unceasing questions of "who are you?" and "what have you done?" He has little in the way of furniture, friends, hobbies, and the usual means of identity in our society, and eventually he loses his job, companionship and even his hold on reality. For most of the film, he is a literal bag of bones desperately floating through empty apartments and industrial landscapes, a kind of postmodern ghost looking to make its peace.

"Trevor is imprisoned in his own mind," observes Bale. "He's consumed with anxiety and lives with this intense fear that something awful is always just about to happen. He fears he's the butt of some great cosmic joke. It's a terrifying place to be but I think we all have been there to a certain degree. We all know just how powerful a combination sleep deprivation and suppressed emotion can be. It takes him to places that are terrifying and monstrous, but also incredibly revealing."

For Bale, becoming Trevor Reznik was filled with travails but also a sense of triumph. "Ultimately, the role felt like a victory because I did really succeed in evaporating my physical body and stripping myself down to the point that I was sort of 'the man who wasn't there.' It left very little to explore except the world of the innermost soul. Ultimately, I feel it was a movie worth suffering for, because it's exactly the kind of challenging, mind-bending movie I would really want to see."

Although Trevor Reznik is increasingly alienated from the real world, he does for a time maintain a few relationships, albeit unconventional ones. His strongest human connection is with Stevie, a street-smart call girl who calls him "my best customer," which does not necessarily bode well for her business. Playing Stevie is one of independent film's most consistently surprising actresses, Jennifer Jason Leigh, who has played a vast range of characters, from junkies to sophisticates, in her prodigious career.

Brad Anderson always saw Leigh in the role. "She has that certain vulnerable quality," he muses, "and she has always been at her best when she's exposing the most tortured, fragile souls. I thought of her and knew she could get right to the heart of the character of Stevie."

Part of the attraction for Leigh was working with Christian Bale, and watching him take on the role of a lifetime. “Everyday, I was astonished by him,” says Leigh. “I think Trevor Reznik is really a classic character because he sees the world the way we all do when we don’t sleep and everything is slightly altered and off-kilter. It’s a really fascinating human study. Meanwhile, I think Stevie is interesting because she’s a touchstone for Trevor. She gives him one of the few places he can relax at all. At least for a little while, because in the end, there is no rest for Trevor.”

The counterpoint to Jennifer Jason Leigh’s Stevie is the airport waitress Marie played by Spanish actress Aitana Sanchez-Gijon (*I am Not Scared*). Stevie and Marie are as night and day, although in Trevor’s addled state it is hard to say which is which. Whereas Stevie is tough, war-weary and raw, Marie is enchanting, sweet, and to use a word Trevor applies, dreamy. Yet there is always something a little too perfect about Marie, as if something so beautiful and bright could not possibly fit into Trevor’s dark reality.

Brad Anderson had first seen Sanchez-Gijon in one of her earlier English-speaking roles: Alfonso Arau’s *A Walk in the Clouds*, in which she starred with Keanu Reeves. “I thought she was very good and also very endearing, which is the quality I wanted most for Marie. With Aitana, you can really understand why Trevor would go out of his way to come to this same café every night at the same time for the same coffee and pie: because he gets to see something so lovely, so radiant.”

To Aitana Sanchez-Gijon, having a foreign actress play the part – a part that is also a primary clue in the film’s psychological mystery – was a great idea. “Of course, the film is made in Spain so it’s good to have a Spanish actress,” she says, “but it is more than that. I think speaking in a language that is not your own changes things in an interesting way. The way you move, the way you express yourself, it’s all a little bit different. And in this case, I think it adds to the sense that Marie is part of a dream, something easy that Trevor cannot really have.”

Rounding out the cast as Trevor’s workmates is a group of actors that includes Michael Ironside (*Scanners*, *Top Gun*), often cast as the tough-guy villain, but here playing the ill-fated Miller, whose traumatic amputation haunts Trevor’s every move; and John Sharian as Ivan, the mysterious, menacing rebel who seems to show up in Trevor’s life at all the worst moments.

Yet perhaps the film’s most pervasive and revealing character is the visual atmosphere itself.

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### **The Look of Inner Fear: Creating Trevor Reznik’s World**

The world of Trevor Reznik was created to be at once eerily familiar and shockingly alien. Openly “sampling” some of the thriller’s greatest masters, Brad Anderson purposely wanted to play with the conventions of fear audiences are already used to – and push them to new levels. From the shifting camera angles of *Vertigo* to the bathroom neuroses of *Psycho*, there are moments that could easily feel at home in an Alfred Hitchcock film. Yet other moments reflect the more pervasive shadows and deep-perspective composition of Roman Polanski’s 1960s shockers; and still others recall the stark emotion and surrealism of such German Expressionist films as *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* and *Nosferatu*. The brutality, action and disorientation of Gothic Film Noir adds yet another layer to the mix.

The goal for Anderson was to create a feeling of being rooted in the machinations of fear but not in time itself. “I wanted the movie to feel out of time, other-worldly, from a different era or place,” explains the director. “You can never quite get a grip on where or when in time things are happening and that was intentional. It’s a modern Kafkaesque world, a nightmare dreamscape that draws horror from our everyday existence.”

In addition to Hitchcock, Polanski and film noir, Anderson acknowledges the inspiration he has found in the work of David Lynch as well as Hollywood B-movie master Val Lewton, who produced such films as *Cat People*, *The Seventh Victim*, *I Walked With a Zombie* and *The Seventh Victim*, which brought a visual elegance to then-daring themes of madness masquerading as voodoo.

To bring his dark, sinuous, urban-industrial neverland to life, Anderson brought in Spanish cinematographer Xavi Gimenez, who has worked with one of Spain's new horror masters, Jaime Balagueró on his features *The Nameless* and *The Darkness*, establishing a reputation for visual invention and shocking imagery. Gimenez shot the film in wide screen, using an extremely narrow color spectrum and chiaroscuro shadings to create a feeling of "disintegrating realism." Working in very low light and in spare, natural settings that ranged from parking lots to underground tunnels, Gimenez had to rely on old-fashioned cinematic instinct more than modern technology.

Yet, for Gimenez, it was exactly the kind of creative challenge for which he lives. "This movie was extremely complex to create, but it was never truly difficult because we were so swept up by the story physically and psychologically," says Gimenez.

Production designer Alain Baneé also faced unusual challenges, not the least of which was trying to make Barcelona appear to be an anachronistic Los Angeles. Explains Brad Anderson: "Every day in every single location, we had to be extremely careful not to reveal that we were actually in Spain." This meant paying attention to such details as Spanish stop signs and street signs that might appear at the edges of the frame but give the locations away.

"There was a lot of attention always focused on these details and that only added to the overall intensity we brought to the design," says Baneé. That intensity comes to the fore in the design of an amusement park ride, known as Route 666, that takes Trevor and Marie's curious young son on a frightening ride into a playground of debauchery and guilt, only to cause the boy to have an epileptic fit.

Says Christian Bale: "Route 666 is like the extra-strength version of a Disney ride – it takes you to places you don't want to go. I think the design is really clever – it's shocking, funny and all too realistically scary at the same time." The amusement park ride, which features a fork in the road, is echoed later in the film when Trevor, on the run, finds himself faced with a choice between two subway tunnels. This sequence was, by all accounts, one of the film's most harrowing to shoot. Shot underneath Barcelona, in the city sewer system, the sequence necessitated sending Christian Bale and a small crew into a swamp of human waste.

"When I first saw these tunnels I knew this is where Trevor had to end up," comments Anderson. "In the depths, in a pit. But I didn't really realize how hard shooting in a sewer would be until we were standing there with raw sewage flowing around our legs. This scene is another one that showed Christian's incredible commitment. We even offered him rubber boots to wear under his clothes, but he refused."

During the 40-day shoot, commitment was something that was repeatedly tested among both cast and crew, as the stress of the production . . . or something . . . seemed to be catching up with them. A series of mishaps that seem to mirror the film's preoccupation with accidents and human fragility plagued the shoot and left everyone jumpy.

"It was an unusually eventful shoot," admits Anderson. In fact, the director himself first sprained his ankle; ending up on crutches, then hurt his back so badly that he wound up directing part of the film literally from a flat gurney. Later, 104 degree August heat had cast and crew members swooning and passing out. (Although here, Christian Bale had an apparent advantage, saying: "One thing I learned is that when you're really, really thin, you can handle the heat.")

"Perhaps it was a case of no pain, no gain," laughs Anderson of the shoot's escalating physical and mental challenges. "It's a story that seemed to require a bit of sacrifice." For screenwriter Scott Kosar, it was exactly that sacrifice on the part of many that brought what began as an eerie vision to startling life. Says Kosar: "For me, *THE MACHINIST* was a lesson in the collaborative power of filmmaking. Everyone involved, from the producer to the soundman, gave a pound of their flesh to this film. And then Christian, of course, gave 63 pounds. All that devotion put together has resulted in a truly inspired work."

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### **Music That Enters the Psyche: Roque Banos' Score**

The hypnotic style of *THE MACHINIST* would not be complete without its grand, full-bodied orchestral score, which plays a crucial role in the development of the film's narrative, underlining the film's fevered emotions, inducing goose-bumps of abject terror and ceaselessly driving forward, just as Trevor drives forward on his quest to find the source of his terrible fear. A wall of sound that includes swirling strings, fractured melodies and a driving base line, the music is as rife with mystery as the story itself.

Brad Anderson purposely wanted the film's score to echo and hark back to the work of Bernard Herrmann, the legendary composer whose intense, suspenseful and eternally haunting orchestrations added a whole new layer to the work of Alfred Hitchcock with such unforgettable scores as *Psycho* and *Vertigo*. To create a score that would be at once nostalgic and fresh, Anderson brought in Roque Banos, an innovative composer who has been writing music for Spanish films over a number of years and is perhaps best known to U.S. audiences for his score for the award-winning British film *Sexy Beast*.

For Banos, the thrill was in attempting to revive the Grand Old Hollywood era of huge, omnipresent scores – and merge it with contemporary touches that give a sense of timelessness, with variations on themes that range from the romantic to the minimalist. Banos even highlighted the rarely used *Theramin* – an early electronic instrument that produces an inexplicable outer space type of sound – in his score.

“Like Trevor Reznik's life, Roque's score builds to a head and seems to spiral back in on itself,” says Brad Anderson. “It's great to experience something that can be so beautiful or sad at moments and then turn absolutely terrifying. It's music that enters the psyche.”

### **Insomnia: What it Really Does**

The world of Trevor Reznik is carved out of guilt, paranoia, forgetfulness, and, most of all, sleep deprivation. Science now knows that sleep deprivation has serious, sometimes even life-threatening, effects on human behavior and health. Though mild sleep deprivation is rampant in modern society, when pushed to extremes it can cause symptoms that mimic psychosis, ranging from hallucinations and memory loss to impaired judgment, mood swings, blurred vision, diminished mental capacity and extreme paranoia – all of which add up to Trevor Reznik's “reality.”

Studies reveal that accident rates skyrocket when workers are overtired and that those who are deprived of sleep for days on end have trouble forming new memories, both key factors that play a role in *THE MACHINIST*.

Is it really possible to not sleep for a year? There does exist in medical literature an extremely rare, genetic illness known as Fatal Insomnia, which causes progressive sleeplessness and eventually results in severe emaciation and death. In other studies, rats deprived of sleep for more than three weeks often deteriorated physically and died.

Outside of these illnesses and experiments, there have long been claims of adults not sleeping for weeks, months or even years, but it is believed that most people who make such claims actually engage in “micro-sleeping,” brief periods of sleep throughout the day that keep them from going completely insane. The causes of such severe insomnia range from the psychological to the inexplicable.

The current world record for scientifically recorded sleeplessness goes to Robert McDonald, who stayed awake for over 18 days, swaying in a rocking chair.

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## ABOUT THE CAST

### Christian Bale (Trevor Reznik)

Christian Bale's decade-plus career spans a unique variety and range. Bale will next take on the iconic role of Batman, the caped crusader, in Christopher Nolan's *Batman Begins* with Liam Neeson and Gary Oldman.

Born in Wales, Bale grew up in England, Portugal and the USA. He made his film debut in Steven Spielberg's World War II epic *Empire of the Sun*, drawing both critical attention and a special National Board of Review award for Best Performance by a Juvenile Actor. Bale continued to garner praise for his memorable portrayals of the passionately frustrated Ned Rosier in Jane Campion's *The Portrait of a Lady*, a cynical journalist in the glam rock epic *Velvet Goldmine*, a mentally slow runaway in *All the Little Animals* opposite John Hurt and a Victorian teenager in Christopher Hampton's *The Secret Agent*. In 1999, critics were unanimous in their acclaim for his gruesomely comic turn as a yuppie serial killer in the controversial *American Psycho*.

Most recently, Bale starred opposite Samuel L. Jackson in *Shaft*, Nicolas Cage in Captain Corelli's *Mandolin*, in apocalyptic fantasy adventure *Reign of Fire* and alongside Frances McDormand in *Laurel Canyon*.

Following the completion of filming on *Batman Begins*, Bale will take on the role of English tobacco planter John Rolfe in Terrence Malick scripted and directed film *The New World*.

**Jennifer Jason Leigh** (Stevie)

Jennifer Jason Leigh has been acknowledged as one of the most daring actresses of her generation. With a wide range of roles, she has proven herself a master of the most disparate kinds of characters, immersing herself both physically and psychologically in each of them.

In addition to her acting career, Leigh made her directorial debut in 2001 with *The Anniversary Party* for which she received a citation for Excellence in Filmmaking from the National Board of Review and was nominated for two Independent Spirit Awards: Best First Feature and Best First Screenplay.

Leigh was last seen starring with Meg Ryan and Mark Ruffalo in Jane Campion's thriller *In The Cut*. Her films include *A Thousand Acres* opposite Michelle Pfeiffer and Jessica Lange, *Georgia* which she also produced, *Mrs. Parker and the Vicious Circle* for which she won the National Society of Film Critics and Chicago Film Critics for Best Actress, the Coen Brothers' *The Hudsucker Proxy*, *Dolores Claiborne*, *Single White Female* and *Last Exit to Brooklyn* which garnered her the New York Film Critics Circle and Boston Society of Film Critics Best Supporting Actress Awards. More recently, she starred in the Dogma film *The King is Alive*, Tamra Davis' *Skipped Parts* and David Cronenberg's *eXistenZ*. Her forthcoming films include Todd Solondz's *Palindromes*, the comedy *Childstar* and the thriller *The Jacket*.

**Aitana Sanchez-Gijon** (Marie)

Best known for playing comic roles in her native Spain, Aitana Sanchez-Gijon won fans in the U.S. for her dramatic portrayal of a pregnant and abandoned winegrower's daughter who is helped by traveling salesman Keanu Reeves in Alfonso Arau's romance *A Walk in the Clouds*.

In Spain, Sanchez-Gijon has long been an extremely popular actress, both in films and on stage. She has won international attention for such features as Manuel Gomez Pereira's *Boca a Boca* and Bigas Luna's *The Chambermaid on the Titanic*.

In 1999, she received the San Sebastian Silver Shell for her performance in Luna's *Volaverunt*. In the same year, Sanchez-Gijon was named President of the Spanish Film Academy. Her most recent film in Spain is *La Puta y la Ballena* about a quest into the mountains of Patagonia.

**Michael Ironside** (Miller)

A seasoned character actor with a devoted cult following, Michael Ironside has starred in more than 100 feature films and is regularly seen on television. Born in Canada, he studied at the Ontario College of Art and Canadian National Film Board. After working on numerous Canadian film and television productions, both in front of and behind the camera, he came to the fore in David Cronenberg's sci-fi hit *Scanners*, garnering a Genie Award for Best Supporting Actor. This success was followed by roles in *Total Recall* and *Top Gun*. His many films include *The New Karate Kid*, *Fatherhood*, *Starship Troopers*, *The Perfect Storm* and *Crime and Punishment in Suburbia*. In 1998, he wrote and directed *The Arrangement*.

In 2002, Ironside starred as Bob Durrell in the Canadian mini-series *The Last Chapter*, for which he received a Gemini Award nomination, and he recently reprised the role in *The Last Chapter II: The War Continues*. Aside from his regular appearances on the hit drama *E.R.*, Ironside also recently starred on television in *Outer Limits*, as well as the mini-series *Nuremberg*, "V" and *Seaquest DSV*.

**John Sharian** (Ivan)

John Sharian's previous credits include *The Fifth Element*, *Saving Private Ryan*, *Do Not Disturb*, *Chicken Run*, *Calendar Girls*, *Love Actually* and most recently, the horror/comedy *Romasanta* with Julian Sands.

## ABOUT THE FILMMAKERS

### **Brad Anderson** (Director)

*The Darien Gap*, Brad Anderson's first feature, screened in competition at the 1996 Sundance Film Festival. Because of the film, he was honored by *Variety* in 1997 as one of the "Ten Leading New Independent Directors to Watch." In 1998, his film *Next Stop Wonderland* featuring Hope Davis and Phillip Seymour Hoffman, was picked up at Sundance by Miramax. It won the Grand Prix and Audience Award at the Deauville Film Festival and the Excellence in Filmmaking Award from the National Board of Review.

In 2001, he had the unusual experience of having two of his films simultaneously hit theatres, both to overwhelming critical praise: the romantic comedy *Happy Accidents* (IFC Films), which stars Marisa Tomei and Vincent D'Onofrio; and the psychological thriller *Session 9* (USA Films), starring Josh Lucas, David Caruso and Peter Mullan.

His television directing credits include episodes of *Homicide*; HBO's *The Wire*; and the FX hit *The Shield*.

### **Scott Kosar** (Screenwriter)

Scott Kosar attended USC Film School and holds an MFA in Screenwriting from UCLA. He made his feature film debut with the 2003 remake of the horror classic *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre*. He also wrote the forthcoming *The Amityville Horror*, to be directed by Andrew Douglas.

**Julio Fernandez (Producer)**

Julio Fernandez is Chairman of the Filmax Group, one of the leading Spanish companies creating, developing, producing and distributing feature films and television programs across the globe. Filmax also recently entered the exhibition sector with a 15-screen cinema complex in Barcelona.

Under the Castelao Productions company, Filmax has produced such films as Jaume Balaguero's *The Nameless*, awarded the Melies prize for Best European Fantasy Film and the hit family film *Manolito Gafotas*. Another Filmax project is the Fantastic Factory, an original idea by Julio Fernandez with the collaboration of American filmmaker Brian Yuzna to develop genre films. This label's early features include *Faust*, *Love of the Damned*, *Beyond Reanimator* directed by Brian Yuzna; *Arachnid*, directed by Jack Sholder; *Dagon* directed by Stuart Gordon; and Jaume Balaguero's *Darkness*. Their latest films include Paco Plaza's *Romasanta*; Brian Yuzna's *Rottweiler*, *The Nun* and *Still Waters*.

Filmax has also set in motion the new Fantastic Discovery label, which kicks off with the award-winning fantasy film *Second Name* directed by Paco Plaza, *Compassionate Sex* directed by Laura Maña and *The Heart of the Warrior* directed by Daniel Monzón. In the field of animation, the company's productions include the series *Goomer* and *Manolito Gafotas*, as well as the feature films *El Cid*, *The Legend* and *Nocturna*.

**Xavi Gimenez (Director of Photography)**

Xavi Gimenez was previously lauded for his innovative work on the horror thriller *The Nameless* directed by Jaume Balaguero and has also shot Balaguero's English language follow-up *Darkness* starring Anna Paquin and Lena Olin. His other films include the Spanish films *Domain of the Senses*, *Intact*, *Mortadelo & Filemon: The Big Adventure* and *Killing Words*.