

SHALL WE DANCE?

About The Production

Chicago lawyer John Clark (RICHARD GERE) knows his life is almost perfect. He loves his beautiful wife (SUSAN SARANDON), he's built a successful career and raised two wonderful kids. And yet . . . the workday is always the same routine, the commute is a grind and the family's usually too busy to spend time together. Sometimes John wonders if this is all there is, until one evening on his way home from work he gets off his train and does the unthinkable. Without telling a soul, he secretly begins taking dance lessons. Suddenly, John is thrust into a whole new world – of motion, music, camaraderie and passion. As this very serious man becomes literally light on his feet, his whole life, and marriage, transforms.

The uplifting and comic story of a man's renewal, SHALL WE DANCE is inspired by the runaway Japanese hit of the same name. In this new version, starring Richard Gere, Jennifer Lopez, Susan Sarandon and Stanley Tucci, the tale of a quiet workaholic finding wild rapture on the dance floor is transported to the American search for happiness.

It all begins when John Clark is riding the evening train, and spots out his window a young dance teacher (JENNIFER LOPEZ) staring back at him from the run-down Miss Mitzi's Studio. Haunted by her gaze, John looks for her night after night. Finally, he gets off the train and signs up for the beginner's series of ballroom dance lessons. At his first class, John spends more time on the floor than gliding across it. Awkward and shy, it seems unlikely he'll ever find any grace at all. But soon, dance becomes John's obsession, his escape, his one means of pure joy. He's drawn further and further into this exotic realm, even discovering a fellow employee who's also hiding his ballroom dance habit (STANLEY TUCCI), while pretending to be a sports jock.

Yet John cannot seem to tell his wife Beverly about his new-found love out of fear that she'll think he's unfulfilled by their marriage. As he clandestinely prepares for Chicago's biggest dance competition, his secretive behavior causes Beverly to hire a detective, suspecting that John's having an affair. But John will soon discover that it isn't enough to chase his most private dreams – because the best part is sharing them.

“SHALL WE DANCE is not just about a restless man entering the seductive world of dance,” says director Peter Chelsom, “but about a whole group of people who through a kind of boot camp for dancers, get to explore who they really are and who they want to be. From the start of rehearsals I wanted us to acknowledge that the film should not be a story then a dance number, then more story

and so on, but that the story always continued through the dance scenes and most importantly the story was actually furthered by the dancing.”

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In 1996, the original SHALL WE DANCE (“Dansu Wo Shimasho Ka”), written and directed by Masayuki Suo, won the hearts of Japanese audiences with its story about an ordinary, hard-working Japanese salary man who, overcome by the feeling that something’s missing in his life and marriage, learns to ballroom dance on the sly. Soon, he has transformed from a wooden, melancholy recluse into someone touched by a sense of magic and possibility. Filled with comic characters and rousing dance sequences, the film touched a universal chord in anyone who had ever longed for something a little more. It went on to win an astonishing 13 Japanese Academy Awards, and travel the globe, becoming a hit with foreign film audiences across the United States and Europe.

Among those deeply touched by the original film was screenwriter Audrey Wells, who felt the delightful story deserved an even wider audience. Wells has long had a fascination with how people are able to find passion – whether romantic or creative – in the midst of today’s busy and distracted modern lives. She’s explored this theme in several films she’s written and directed including “Under the Tuscan Sun” and the award-winning “Guinevere.” But this story was different, she felt, because it wasn’t so much about finding conventional love, but more about rediscovering the joy of pursuing one’s most hidden dreams, and about reviving the spark and passion of a good but routine marriage in mid-life.

Wells began to adapt SHALL WE DANCE into an English-language film, but right away she realized much more than the language was going to have to change. The whole culture surrounding the story would become entirely new. In transferring the story’s location to the United States – with its far more open and diverse, yet often equally adrift, society – Wells also shifted the humor to a hipper, more American style; added Chicago color to the dance school’s comic-tinged patrons; and most of all, re-imagined the main character’s struggle. For John Clark isn’t caught up in the rigidity of Japanese society as in the original -- but in his own limited definition of who he can be beyond a father and lawyer. Wells created Clark as a typical American urban professional, “the type who can do everything extremely well but doesn’t remember how to dream, until he enters that studio.”

That same rediscovery of how to dream spreads out through the rest of the characters in SHALL WE DANCE as well, from Jennifer Lopez’s disillusioned champion dancer, who recovers her desire to compete again, to Stanley Tucci’s outrageous, disguised ballroom wanna-be, who finally learns how to be himself.

The one thing that didn’t change, however, that couldn’t change, was the script’s focus on the sheer thrills of flying around the room, ballroom style, in the arms of a partner who knows your every

move. Although the story has a different tone and feel, Wells keeps dance at the heart of the story, letting the gestures and moves of John Clark and his new friends tell part of the tale, and reveal the kind of ineffable feelings that go beyond language.

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The combination of buoyant dance sequences, spirited comedy and a moving storyline about contemporary lives compelled producer Simon Fields and director Peter Chelsom to immediately want to make the film as soon as Wells' script arrived at their office. They felt this new version of SHALL WE DANCE not only held out the promise of great fun, but hit upon themes not often seen at the movies.

“This is a story people can relate to,” explains Fields. “It isn't about a desperate man who unrealistically turns his life completely around. Instead, it's a story about a man who, like most of us, who is basically doing really well, who has a good job, a loving family and a successful marriage. But then one day he sees this amazing face through a window and he begins to wonder if there's somewhere higher he can go. I hadn't read anything like that before, that touched upon this question of what's really possible in an already pretty good life, and that was exciting. I also loved how the story juxtaposes the elegance and grace of ballroom dance against the normal routines of Chicago suburban life.”

Adds Chelsom: “What I liked about Audrey Well' take on SHALL WE DANCE is that these people go to miss Mitzi's expecting to learn to dance and yet emerge learning so much more. Each character is broken down. Each character seems to be carrying a secret they are not ready to share. And they all develop because one man one day got off a train in order to have one dance with one girl he saw at a window. I like the cause and effect of the premise.”

Fields and Chelsom were familiar with the original Japanese film but were impressed by how Wells had carefully relocated it across the Pacific ocean, allowing it to reflect a more American exuberance and perspective on seeking satisfaction beyond work and family life.

Observes Chelsom: “Much of the conflict in the original Japanese film stems from Japanese taboos about the public intimacy of dance. Obviously, this wouldn't work in an American setting. But the American taboo that's central in Audrey's screenplay is this idea that if you're living the American dream, then you don't have the right to hold up your hand and say 'hey, I'm unhappy.' What I loved about this story, and what I was so drawn to, is that it's about a restlessness that is all around us but not often talked about. In spite of having so much, John Clark is missing something. It's as if he's living an ideal, not really living his life. He realizes that even though he and his wife are always on the move, something inside them has just stopped, and he's driven to find some kind of passion. That's the beautiful subtlety of this movie for me.”

Chelsom was also compelled by the chance to capture the kinetic magic of ballroom dance on film as a director. As it turns out, Chelsom hails from Blackpool, England, the acknowledged Mecca of ballroom dancing and the annual site of its World Championship. Although Chelsom himself never danced professionally, no one escapes Blackpool without an undying appreciation for the infectious joy of waltzes, rumbas and foxtrots. Explains Chelsom: "Pretty much everyone in Blackpool has been sent to dancing lessons by age nine."

Fields, too, as a fellow Englishman, had fallen under the spell of ballroom dance as a child. He explains: "In England, ballroom dancing is very much a part of our culture, and is actually considered a big sport. When Peter Chelsom and I were growing up, every Sunday we had two hours of ballroom dancing on television. So to take on a film that is about the allure of dancing seemed, for us, almost second nature."

Surging in popularity in the U.S., ballroom is a uniquely transporting dance style – featuring a man and a woman gliding across a bare floor responding only to the music and one another. Each individual dance has its own creative personality, its own emotions and appeal to the spirit, from the raw eroticism of the rumba to the intimate charm of the waltz. With its inherent fluidity and romance, ballroom dancing is also a highly cinematic art-form, as Chelsom discovered as he set out to reveal its tenderness, its exhilaration and some of the suspense of dance competitions on screen.

"I've always felt that Ballroom is seductive and a little ridiculous at the same time and that makes for great comedy. It also makes for moments of extraordinary grace. It takes courage – especially if you're John Clarke. It's actually not about the dancing, it's about the daring. I had been looking to make a film about dance for many years.

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To play John Clark -- the quiet, hard-working lawyer who gets off his train one night and steps into a life-changing desire to dance -- the filmmakers knew they needed someone special. They wanted an actor so assured and charismatic that, right off the bat, most people would assume he *must* be happy – a significant switch from the low-key businessman of the Japanese film – and that he's the last person on earth who would seek out dance lessons in a dilapidated studio in a gritty part of town.

"We knew we didn't want a 'Willy Lohman' type or your average middle class man for John," explains Field. "Instead, we wanted someone who already appears fulfilled, a man clearly at the top of game. Then, when he takes this left turn that re-ignites his enthusiasm and revitalizes his marriage, it takes both the audience and him by surprise."

These criteria led the filmmakers to Richard Gere, who most recently won a Golden Globe Award for his role as the far slicker, soft-shoed lawyer in "Chicago." "We needed a very, very subtle performance from someone who could also learn to become a great dancer before the

audience's eyes," remarks Peter Chelsom. "What's interesting about Richard's character, John, is that he's a guy who's never really been the center of attention. He's always been the one keeping things together, being the dad, the boss. But now he has all this space just to be himself, and he's very self-conscious about it at first, until he starts to open up, which Richard captures beautifully."

The role appealed to Gere who, like his character, was initially drawn to the alluring image of a girl staring out the window – and all the *what-if's* and *what-might-have-beens* such an image arouses. "I felt that this was the kind of experience that everyone has had at one time or another, riding in a car, or in a plane or a train, where you suddenly see this person and you become aware of this whole other world out there that you could be a part of," Gere says. "The interesting part is that most of us turn away, while John decides to explore it which leads to something very positive for him."

He continues: "I don't think in the beginning John can even pinpoint anything that is wrong in his life or marriage. It's more of a distant dissatisfaction he can't put his finger on. And the challenge as an actor was figuring out how to show that. Melancholy isn't something you can play exactly – you can't paint melancholy on a face. So I approached the feeling inside John more as a kind of itch, a kind of inner agitation he doesn't really understand at first, that drives him to do something that seems pretty crazy in his world, but that expands his whole life in a new direction."

Gere was also drawn to the theme of *SHALL WE DANCE*, which he describes as "learning to become the person you dream of yourself being." He especially liked the idea of joining an ensemble of actors who each discover new sides to themselves – both comic and serious -- through their willingness to let it all go while they dance. "Every character at the studio has their own quirks and oddities, and Miss Mitzi's becomes its own wonderful little world of outcasts," comments Gere. "But there's also an honest camaraderie and acceptance of one another there. I think John comes to see that all the people at the studio from Paulina to Vern, once had dreams for their lives, but then they got to a point where they didn't believe in them anymore, or life's obstacles got in the way. In the course of the film, they all come face-to-face with their dreams again. I think, in fact, we all can."

Though Gere is not professionally trained, ever since his tap-dancing role in "Chicago," he has had his own love affair with dance, the freedom and fun of which he sees as a key to John Clark's transformation. "The emotional and psychological challenges of really opening yourself up to a dancing partner, of becoming sensitive to your every move, of accessing deeper emotions to express yourself, changes you," he comments. "That's why we still love Fred Astaire, because his grace and his open heart still move us today. There's just something about dancing that has that power."

Another aspect of the film that impressed Gere was the realistic treatment of John Clark's marriage, which is not so much troubled as it is just a little blasé after so many years of union. "It's

not the usual dysfunctional relationship,” Gere notes. “Really, I think the Clarks are typical of many American households, where nothing’s really wrong, but maybe you also have the feeling everything’s not quite as great as it could be. Susan Sarandon is wonderful as Beverly, John’s wife, because she’s so grounded and rooted and she sort of waits to see where her husband’s existential crisis is going to lead.”

The filmmakers chose Susan Sarandon for the role of Beverly because of her distinctive embodiment of feminine intelligence. Notes Chelsom: "Susan rides that fine line between revealing the depth of the film’s themes while also playing it for comedy. She really embraced the deep sorrow of being a wife who feels excluded from her husband's life, and at the same time, she captured this funny neurosis that escalates when you start to mistrust your spouse. It’s the goodness of her character that really breaks your heart. Because she’s done nothing wrong, but she isn’t sure what to do about her husband’s restlessness. She is type of wife who really takes care of her family and so it throws her to find out what her husband wants right now is something she cannot provide.”

To play Paulina, the dance teacher who has lost her inspiration until John Clark arrives, Peter Chelsom hoped to find an alluring actress who also had a significant background in professional dance – which led him to Jennifer Lopez. Chelsom considered her life-long passion for dance an invaluable asset to the film. “We thought it was vital to have an actress who understands with her body and soul what it is to dance and to live that kind of unpredictable, emotional life,” he says. “Jennifer embodies that, and she is such a terrific dancer that you really believe she could be a ballroom champion.”

While her counterpart in the Japanese film was more fragile, the filmmakers saw that Lopez could convey the vulnerability of the role while adding her own strong personality and open sensuality. "Jennifer has the same longing as the original Japanese character but she brings something more vibrantly American and fiery to it," says Fields.

Lopez was intrigued by the script not only because of the dancing, but because of its picture of ordinary people finding extraordinary inspiration in their lives. “I loved the portrait of these different types of people from many walks of life all coming together to fulfill some long lost dream,” she says. “The dance studio becomes a place where they can find out who they are, what they want and what’s missing from their lives. And, most of all, dance gives them a beautiful place to go, to forget about things, and just fly above it all.”

Another major influence on John Clark is Stanley Tucci in the role of Link Peterson, an office geek by day at John’s law firm who has an outrageous alter ego that emerges when he is practicing his beloved Latin dances at night. Tucci was eager to play the lively comic role that is a departure from anything he’s done before. "I love Link as a character, because to me, no one is just one person,

no one is just whom they present to the public or to their family. Everyone has some secret part of themselves they they've always wanted to express," he says. "To be able to play somebody who has two separate parts of himself that then merge into one whole person at the end, that is a thrill, it really is a thrill. And then there's the fact that it's an incredibly funny part."

Richard Gere got his own thrill from watching Tucci bring Link to life. "Stanley has brought so much invention, creativity and courage to playing this part, it's really something extraordinary. It reminds me of great characters Peter Sellers explored in his heyday, something really out there," he says. "It's not easy to be both goofy and controlled. His comedy has great verve to it, but I know the incredible skill that went into creating Link."

Among John's other comical fellow classmates at the dance studio is Chic, who signs up for lessons with the stated purpose of picking up women. Bobby Cannavale, who recently won acclaim in "The Station Agent," plays the character whom he calls "a walking hormone." Cannavale explains: "Chic's theory is that if he can somehow become a great dancer, he's going to have chicks dropping all over the place for him. But the beauty of the movie is that all these people who are taking the class are really in it for another reason, and through the dance they're able to express that. So it becomes much deeper than just about picking up girls for Chic in the end. There's an evolution inside him and learns to express himself in a completely different way that what's there on the surface."

In the role of Vern, who claims he's learning to dance for a mysterious fiancée, Chelsom and Fields cast a newcomer: Omar Miller who made his debut in "Eight Mile" and sent Chelsom and Fields an audition tape they felt was "phenomenal." Says Fields: "Omar brought a rawness and an enthusiasm that are a total asset to the ensemble."

For comedienne Lisa Ann Walter, the role of strident Bobbie, who reluctantly becomes John's competition dance partner, brought her back to her teenage years, when she did a stint teaching at the Arthur Murray Dance school during disco's heyday. She recalls: "I taught Fox Trot, Rumba, Waltz, Lindy, Quick Step, Swing and Double Time Swing -- until my mother found out that they expected you to go away to South America with these guys for competitions, and she said 'not my daughter!'"

Walter also had an innate understanding of Bobbi's own personal journey. "Bobbie is a woman who has been disappointed so many times in her life with men, she's just angry all the time. But she learns through dance that to succeed you have to trust. You have to trust that your partner's not going to bang your head into a pillar in the middle of the room or let you fall down or even let you look ridiculous. He's going to support you, and care for you. Bobbie needs to learn this and it's a really cool journey her character takes."

Says producer Simon Fields of Walter: “We needed a woman who has no control over the connection from her brain to her mouth but at the same time is able to be vulnerable, to be a mother, and at the zenith of her dancing performance. You need to be so much behind her and Richard as a couple when they get out on that dance floor – and Lisa just shone as the right person.”

Rounding out the cast are veteran character actor Richard Jenkins as the private detective hired to follow John Clark; teen sensation Nick Cannon as the detective’s witty assistant; and distinguished stage actress Anita Gillette as the namesake owner of Miss Mitzi’s fading dance studio – who herself is transformed as she trains a group of clumsy students for serious competition, and helps John Clark to let his passion for dance show.

For Gillette, the ultimate excitement in the film is what happens when the characters, no matter who they are, hit the dance floor. Gillette says: “I think the greatest thing about playing Miss Mitzi is that once she gets someone out on the floor, they begin to have fun, and they begin to open up, and then . . . anything can happen.”

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Once the cast was set, the really hard part began. For now the task was to take a group of highly regarded actors and turn them into top-notch dancers capable of showing the comedy, the grace and most of all the sense of possibility inherent in ballroom dancing. It wasn’t like a musical, where the cast members were asked to learn just one style of choreography – instead, each actor had to take on a rapid-fire education in ballroom dancing’s ten different styles.

To accomplish this tough mission, Peter Chelsom brought in acclaimed Australian choreographer John O’Connell to work his magic. O’Connell is one of filmmaking’s renowned dance masters, having previously choreographed Baz Luhrmann’s hit films “Strictly Ballroom” and “Moulin Rouge.” But this was unlike any job he had taken on before. Months before any cameras rolled, Chelsom and O’Connell began the involved process of training the actors at a kind of “ballroom boot camp.”

“We kicked things off with basic research, by going to ballroom competitions and interviewing real winners,” recalls Fields. “We were impressed right away with the immense level of devotion that these dancers have – and we started to realize what a gargantuan job it was going to be to teach actors to dance well enough to create excitement on the screen.”

But the actors approached the challenge with astonishing ardor, working for long hours over a period of months. Richard Gere began rehearsing with instructors in New York almost from the minute he was cast. Aside from his demonstrated flair for the soft shoe developed for “Chicago,” Gere had little previous dance training. But Gere does have a natural athleticism – he won a

gymnastics scholarship to college and avidly practices Tai Chi -- and John O'Connell says Gere's tremendous work ethic made him a star pupil.

Jennifer Lopez remembers hearing early buzz about Gere's strenuous rehearsals. "I was working on another film, and I would get reports of him dancing in New York," she recalls. "I kept hearing that he was rehearsing everyday for eight hours! I thought *Oh my God*, I'm going to have so much catching up to do when I get there."

During production it wasn't unusual for Gere to continue practicing after shooting wrapped, sometimes until 3 or 4 in the morning. Gere claims that when it comes to dancing on screen "fear is my greatest motivator." Yet, the more he learned about the difficulty of true competitive-style ballroom dancing, the harder he realized he was going to have to work. "I don't think most people understand how athletic you have to be to pull this stuff off," he explains. "I mean it's being considered for an Olympic sport, and as goofy as it can seem when amateurs do it, it's really serious stuff."

For Gere, the hardest dance to learn was the waltz, which is supposed to be John Clark's forté. "It's so slow and so graceful," he comments, "you have to have full body control to do it well. It's like doing Tai Chi, where you have to make it look very simple but at the same time you're using absolutely everything you have. I was often in a flop sweat after the waltz numbers, even though you're supposed to look like you're floating."

And then there was the late-night tango lesson he has with Jennifer Lopez. Chelsom added the scene to the film, believing it to be the right crossover for Richard and Jennifer – the tango is a classic art form with a language all of its own and as sexy and as hot as it becomes it keeps Jennifer in a the aesthetic place of dance. On the eve of the big competition, Chelsom wanted Richard to have a kind of masterclass in dancing with all of your emotions, a class in expression. Gere places the credit for the scene on Lopez. "To do this very intense tango with an amateur like me required a lot of generosity, patience and grace from Jennifer, which she gave to me. She made it a very good experience," he says. "I also learned that what makes a dance work is not the steps but whether it tells a story. That's what makes it come alive."

Earlier, during his experience making "Chicago," Gere had learned that hard work among a cast can develop a deeper bond on screen, which is something he saw repeated during the production of *SHALL WE DANCE*. "I like hard work," he comments. "And I also like the feeling of working hard with other people. You become very comfortable with people you sweat with and you get to know them in a more real way. It adds to the feeling of a communal effort, which was so important to this story of people coming together."

The entire cast felt the bonds . . . and the pressure. Choreographer John O'Connell notes: "Ballroom is a very different technique from other forms of dance because there is so much emphasis on precision, so we brought in a lot of trainers to help the actors every step of the way. Often, it was just a matter of tweaking the way someone was holding his head or her arms. It's also a dance between partners so it's different than dancing by yourself because you've got somebody else you have to learn to respond to and work with each other, which is the trickiest part of all. "

Even Lopez, who has danced all of her life, found the process of learning the strict discipline of ballroom dance to be highly challenging. "It's a totally different animal," she comments. "You can know several other types of dance, and you'll still feel like a baby when you start learning how to ballroom dance. But one of the things that struck me about it is how fun it was, and I was hoping that we could capture that in this movie. Once you get going, you feel like you're flying."

Lopez's favorite dance turned out to be the tango, which plays such a pivotal role in her character's friendship with Richard Gere's character. "The tango has a lot of grit to it, a lot of passion, and also it's a lot of fun to perform. You can really hit it hard, which is something Paulina tries to teach John."

For the rest of the cast, the learning process was enlightening but far more physically demanding than they had anticipated. Or as Stanley Tucci puts it: "I knew it was going to be hard, but I didn't know it was going to be *this* hard." Tucci's particular challenge was not just executing complicated routines – but also adding something extra to the performance to express the piercing humor of his character. O'Connell admits that Tucci was a favorite pupil: "I was very lucky to have someone like Stanley because an actor trying to be funny in dance could be a rather tragic situation if he didn't have an innate comic style himself, which Stanley does. I made suggestions to him, as in try these steps, but Stanley truly made the movements his own."

Bobby Cannavale started his dance lessons with no prior experience at all, but found he was a natural. Still, even though his feet took well to doing the steps, Cannavale had trouble getting his body and mind to work together. He says: "For me the hardest part wasn't dancing but getting into the character *while* doing the dancing, because for the first couple of months I was busy counting in my head, and the look on my face was one of pure perplexity instead of anything having to do with Chic."

However, once he overcame that stage, and learned to make the moves his own, Cannavale realized that dance is a formidable acting tool. "You can't just act with your face when you're dancing," he notes. "What's exciting, is realizing that the body can add so much to what the character is trying to say at all times."

Since Omar Miller was a late addition to the cast, he had some catching up to do in the dance training, but was pleased to discover that he too had an instant affinity for it. He recalls: "When I first signed on I was like wow, I imagine the dancing is going to be done with some kind of camera tricks or something like that, but no... no fakeness going on here. Do you see my feet twinkling around? That's me." Miller continues: "I had days at first where I might spend four hours just trying to do one single move but I kept trying and trying and then one day it started to work. I discovered that dancing is addictive."

Lisa Ann Walter thought she might have an advantage because of her past experience at the Arthur Murray Dance School, but the physicality of trying to achieve the extremely strict form and poised stillness of professionals proved difficult no matter her skill level going into the movie. "The body positions you see in real ballroom competitions are unbelievable," she comments. "You're bent in these entirely unnatural positions and you stay like that for hours. It's incredibly hard. But it's exciting because you're always improving. For me, I felt like every time I learned something new, I could get a hundred times better the next day."

Because the actors became more and more proficient at dancing throughout the film, an attempt was made to shoot as much of the dance as possible in sequential order, revealing the cast's growth from klutzy neophytes to contest-worthy performers, bit by bit. But, as it turns out, that wasn't always possible.

"We couldn't always shoot in order, so the cast had a tough challenge: going back and forth between being proficient dancers and comically bad ones," says Simon Fields. "They would have to wake up some days and have to be show-worthy, and then go back the next day to being utterly dreadful. Every time we began a scene we would have to have the choreographer come on board and coach them to go backwards or forwards to the appropriate level. It was really dizzying at times!"

Adds Richard Gere: "At first, we genuinely didn't know what we were doing. But once we learned the steps, it was much harder for us to dumb it down and make it purposely burlesque and funny. It turns out it's easier to learn how to dance well than it is learn how to dance badly."

Throughout the filming, the stars, very much like their counterparts in the film, found continuous inspiration from the sheer joy and liberation that the very act dancing can bring. Sums up Bobby Cannavale: "When you dance you discover it's not just about music and steps. It's about telling a story, about making that connection with passion and with the person you're dancing with. Watching that happen with the professional dancers on the set, feeling that happen when we danced ourselves, made the movie really come alive for me."

But the actors weren't the only ones who had to learn ballroom dance. Director Peter Chelsom decided to dive into lessons, too. "I had had a basic training in dance many years ago and it

helped me understand what the actors were doing. The difference is that no-one, and I mean no-one, is going to see me dance!”

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The physical world of *SHALL WE DANCE* traverses two distinct worlds – that of John Clark’s everyday work and family life and that of the dance studio where the outside world seems to just disappear. Linking these two realms is Chicago’s famous “El” train.

Despite the Chicago setting, much of *SHALL WE DANCE* was shot in Winnipeg, Canada, necessitating that production designer Caroline Hanania get very creative in her designs. “Luckily, there’s a lot of interesting turn of the century architecture in Winnipeg that has some of that Chicago feel,” says Hanania. “So that was a help, but we did end up building the whole understructure of an ‘El’ train and several building facades to recreate more of a stylish, urban Chicago setting.”

Still, Hanania, who has collaborated on all of Peter Chelsom’s films, knew the most important set had to be the inside of Miss Mitzi’s studio -- where so much that changes John Clark takes place. This world of glass, wood and sweat was built entirely on a Winnipeg soundstage. “We wanted the studio to both feel very real but also like somewhere John Clark could never imagine himself being,” she says. “It’s completely outside his normal experience and everything about it, from the colors to the furniture, contrast his life at home and at work.”

Another challenge for Hanania was creating a mirrored room that would work visually for Peter Chelsom and his director of photography John De Borman (“Ella Enchanted”), allowing them to intricately light the dance sequences. “What we did is build the mirrors so that they could be flipped up, down and sideways to get them out of the way, and we also had curtains we could pull over them,” she explains. “This way we could choose when and how to use the mirrors as needed.”

From the production design to the camera work, Chelsom says that, in the end, creating *SHALL WE DANCE* was “far more complicated than I had ever imagined.” Even the floors had to be specially created to be at once dancer-friendly and ready to accommodate rapidly moving cameras following on the heels of dancers. Says Chelsom: “I didn’t want too many camera tricks because the dance sequences I like best are when the camera is more of an observer standing back. And then going in very close to capture the thrill. There is no doubling of actors at in this film. Ever. They should be proud of that.”

ABOUT THE CAST

RICHARD GERE (John Clark)

Humanitarian, actor, and Golden Globe winner, Richard Gere is one of the most well-known and respected actors of his generation. He is renowned for roles in such films as AN OFFICER AND A GENTLEMAN, DAYS OF HEAVEN, AMERICAN GIGOLO, PRETTY WOMAN, FIRST KNIGHT and the courtroom drama PRIMAL FEAR.

Last year, Gere sang and danced his way onto the big screen in the highly acclaimed film adaptation of CHICAGO, playing the infamous lawyer Billy Flynn. In January of 2003, Gere won his first Golden Globe as Best Actor in a Musical or Comedy for his performance in CHICAGO. Last year Gere was also seen in the critically acclaimed thriller UNFAITHFUL, directed by Adrian Lyne and in MOTHMAN PROPHECIES opposite Debra Messing.

Born in Philadelphia, Gere showed his artistic ability at a young age, by playing a number of instruments and writing music for high school productions. Gere won gymnastics scholarship to the University of Massachusetts in Amherst, where he was philosophy major. Leaving college to pursue acting, Gere landed the lead role of 'Danny Zuko' in the London production of the rock musical "Grease" in 1973. He then spent sessions with the Provincetown Playhouse and Seattle Repertory Theatre, and performed in a number of New York plays, notably the title role in Richard Farina's "Long Time Coming and Long Time Gone," in addition to two plays by Sam Shepard, "Back Bog Beast Bait" and "Killers Head."

His career was further established with performances in the Broadway rock opera "Soon" and the New York production of the British farce "Habeas Corpus". Gere's other theatre credits include the Lincoln Center presentation of "A Midsummer Night's Dream" and London Young Vic Theatre Production of "The Taming of the Shrew." Gere returned to the Broadway stage in 1980 with "Bent," winning the Theatre World Award for his portrayal as a homosexual concentration-camp prisoner.

Gere's motion picture debut came in 1978 with Oscar-honored DAYS OF HEAVEN, for which he received the Italian equivalent of the Academy Award. His subsequent films include LOOKING FOR MR. GOODBAR with Diane Keaton, BLOOD BROTHERS, John Schlesinger's YANKS, and AMERICAN GIGOLO. His next film was the 1982 blockbuster AN OFFICER AND A GENTLEMAN, followed by BREATHLESS, BEYOND THE LIMIT, THE COTTON CLUB, POWER, NO MERCY, and MILES FROM HOME.

In 1990, Gere received box-office acclaim for his portrayal of a corrupt cop in INTERNAL AFFAIRS and starred opposite of Julia Roberts in the year's top-grossing picture, PRETTY WOMAN, which won the People's Choice Award for Best Movie. The following year, he made a guest appearance in Japanese director Akira Kurosawa's RHAPSODY IN AUGUST. Additional film credits include the political thriller RED CORNER, directed by Jon Avnet and the Michael Caton-Jones remake of THE JACKAL. Gere was also the first actor to agree to appear in AND THE BAND PLAYED ON, the HBO adaptation of Randy Shilts book about the first five years of AIDS in America. Gere played the role of a fictional choreographer. In 2000 Gere starred in the box-office hit RUNAWAY BRIDE, reuniting with Julia Roberts. Also in 2000, Gere starred as a Dallas gynecologist who is surrounded by adoring women in DR. T AND THE WOMEN directed by Robert Altman.

Off screen, Gere is an accomplished pianist and music writer. He is also actively involved in developing projects and has executive produced FINAL ANALYSIS, MR. JONES, and SOMMERSBY. A student and friend of His Holiness the Dalai Lama for over twenty years, Gere has made numerous journeys throughout India, Nepal, Zanskar and Tibet, Mongolia and China. He is an accomplished photographer who has worked extensively within these regions. His first book, *Pilgrim*, published in 1997 by Little, Brown and Company, is a collection of images that represent his twenty-five year journey into Buddhism. With a foreword by His Holiness the Dalai Lama, the book is Gere's personal vision of this ancient and spiritual world.

An outspoken human rights advocate, he is the founder of the Gere Foundation, which contributes to numerous health education and human rights projects and is especially dedicated to promoting awareness of Tibet and her endangered culture. The Foundation contributes directly to His Holiness the Dalai Lama, the Tibetan community-in-exile and to aid in the cultural survival of the Tibetan people. In 1987, Gere was the founding chairman of the Tibet House in New York. After leaving Tibet House in New York in 1991, he became an active member of the Board of Directors of the International Campaign for Tibet based in Washington D.C., and in 1996 became Chairman. Gere has testified on Tibet's behalf before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Congressional Human Rights Caucus, the European Parliament, and House International Operations and Human Rights Subcommittee.

JENNIFER LOPEZ (Paulina)

Jennifer Lopez earned widespread acclaim for her work in the title role of SELENA which brought her a Golden Globe nomination, and went on to garner extensive praise for her role opposite George Clooney in Steven Soderbergh's OUT OF SIGHT. In 2000, she starred in the box office hit THE CELL, and in 2001, Lopez made history when she became the first woman to have the number one movie and number one album in the same week. The romantic comedy THE WEDDING PLANNER co-starring Matthew McConaughey, was the nation's top grossing film while her second album "J.Lo" debuted at the top of the Billboard Top 200 Chart. She most recently starred in the romantic comedy MAID IN MANHATTAN co-starring Ralph Fiennes, Stanley Tucci, Bob Hoskins and Natasha Richardson and Kevin Smith's comedy JERSEY GIRL.

In 2002, Lopez was awarded "ShowWest Female Star of the Year." Additionally, the National Council of La Raza, the largest Latino advocacy group in the nation, named her "Entertainer of the Year" at the American Latino Media Arts Awards (ALMA) for TV and film.

Lopez made her feature debut in the highly acclaimed feature MI FAMILIA, garnering an Independent Spirit Award nomination for her role as the young mother 'Maria Sanchez.' Her other film credits include Oliver Stone's U-TURN, MONEY TRAIN, with Woody Harrelson and Wesley Snipes, Francis Ford Coppola's JACK with Robin Williams, BLOOD AND WINE opposite Jack Nicholson, Luis Mandoki's ANGEL EYES, Michael Apted's thriller ENOUGH and ANACONDA with Jon Voigt, Eric Stoltz and Ice Cube. Her voice can also be heard in the animated feature ANTZ opposite Woody Allen and Sylvester Stallone.

Lopez will next be seen opposite Robert Redford and Morgan Freeman in Lasse Halstrom's AN UNFINISHED LIFE and a supporting role in JERSEY GIRL, Kevin Smith's latest film. She also stars with Jane Fonda in the romantic comedy MONSTER-IN-LAW for director Robert Luketic (LEGALLY BLONDE).

SUSAN SARANDON (Beverly Clark)

Susan Sarandon brings her own brand of sex appeal and intelligence to every role from her fearless portrayal in BULL DURHAM to her Oscar-nominated performances in THELMA AND LOUISE,

LORENZO'S OIL, THE CLIENT, and ATLANTIC CITY and her Academy Award-winning and SAG Award winning role as Sister Helen, a nun consoling a death-row inmate, DEAD MAN WALKING.

Sarandon made her acting debut in the movie JOE, and her early film credits include THE GREAT WALDO PEPPER, LOVIN' MOLLY, THE FRONT PAGE and the 1975 cult classic THE ROCKY HORROR PICTURE SHOW. In 1978 she played Brooke Shields' mother in Louis Malle's controversial PRETTY BABY and went on to receive her first Oscar nomination in Malle's ATLANTIC CITY.

Sarandon's feature credits also include KING OF THE GYPSIES, THE HUNGER, THE SWEET HEARTS DANCE, COMPROMISING POSITIONS, THE JANUARY MAN, WHITE PALACE, THE BUDDY SYSTEM, A DRY WHITE SEASON, THE WITCHES OF EASTWICK, BOB ROBERTS, LIGHT SLEEPER, LITTLE WOMEN, and SAFE PASSAGE. Sarandon starred opposite Paul Newman and Gene Hackman in TWILIGHT; with Julia Roberts in STEPMOM; in the erotic farce ILLUMINATA, directed by John Turturro; Tim Robbins' drama CRADLE WILL ROCK; Wayne Wang's ANYWHERE BUT HERE; and Stanley Tucci's JOE GOULD'S SECRET. She provided one of the voices for the hit animated feature RUGRATS IN PARIS and served as narrator for Laleh Khadivi's documentary 900 WOMEN, about female prison inmates. She also starred in HBO's EARTHLY POSSESSIONS, based on the Anne Tyler novel. On Broadway, Sarandon appeared in "An Evening with Richard Nixon" and received critical acclaim for her performances Off-Broadway in "A Coupla White Chicks Sitting Around Talkin'" and the thriller "Extremities," and off-off-Broadway in "The Guys."

Recently, Sarandon has been seen in Brad Silberling's MOONLIGHT MILE, with Dustin Hoffman, in the comedy IGBY GOES DOWN with Jeff Goldblum and in THE BANGER SISTERS, with Goldie Hawn and Geoffrey Rush. She was also in "Children of Dune" for the Sci-Fi channel and in "Ice Bound" for CBS. Her forthcoming films include WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT ALFIE starring Jude Law, NOEL directed by Chazz Palminteri and John Turturro's ROMANCE AND CIGARETTES.

STANLEY TUCCI (Link Peterson)

An actor of tremendous diversity and energy, Stanley Tucci next stars in Steven Spielberg's THE TERMINAL with Tom Hanks and Catherine Zeta-Jones. He also recently earned his first Tony nomination for his stellar performance in the Broadway smash hit "Frankie & Johnny in The Claire De Lune." Tucci's recent screen performances include the sci-fi thriller THE CORE; Sam Mendes' ROAD TO PERDITION, co-starring Tom Hanks, Jude Law and Paul Newman; the Disney comedy BIG TROUBLE with Tim Allen, Rene Russo, Omar Epps, Janeane Garofolo and Jason Lee; Edward Burns' SIDEWALKS OF NEW YORK,; and AMERICA'S SWEETHEARTS, opposite Julia Roberts, John Cusack, Catherine Zeta-Jones and Billy Crystal. He also appeared alongside Kenneth Branagh and Colin Firth in the highly acclaimed HBO drama, CONSPIRACY, a film for which Tucci earned both an Emmy and Golden Globe nomination for Best Supporting Actor in a Made-for-TV-Movie or Miniseries, and played director Stanley Kubrick in HBO's THE LIFE AND DEATH OF PETER SELLERS.

In addition to his career as an accomplished actor, Tucci is a gifted writer, director and producer. BIG NIGHT, Tucci's first effort serving as co-director, co-screenwriter and actor on a film, earned him numerous accolades, including the Waldo Salt Screenwriting Award at the 1996 Sundance Film Festival, a recognition of Excellence by the National Board of Review, and Independent Spirit Award, The Critics Prize at the 1996 Deauville Film Festival and honors from the New York Film Critics and the Boston Society of Film Critics. Tucci's second project, THE IMPOSTERS, a film that he wrote, directed, co-produced and starred in, was an Official Selection at the 1998 Cannes Film Festival. His most recent directorial effort was USA Films' JOE GOULD'S SECRET, starring Ian Holm as the bohemian writer and Tucci as famed New Yorker writer Joseph Mitchell.

Tucci's previous film credits include Woody Allen's DECONSTRUCTING HARRY, William Shakespeare's A MID SUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM, THE ALARMIST, A LIFE LESS ORDINARY, THE DAYTRIPPERS, KISS OF DEATH, MRS. PARKER AND THE VICIOUS CIRCLE, IT COULD HAPPEN TO YOU, THE PELICAN BRIEF, PRELUDE TO A KISS, BILLY BATHGATE, IN THE SOUP and SLAVES OF NEW YORK.

He received a Golden Globe Award and an Emmy Award for his portrayal of Walter Winchell, a founder of American gossip, in the HBO original film, WINCHELL. His performance as the fast-talking tattler, whose exposure of secrets and scandals turned political, left audiences and critics alike singing his praises. Tucci's work on television includes his most recent appearance as a re-occurring guest star on TNT's BULL. He played 'Hunter Lasky,' a charming, conniving, power-player, one of Wall Street's best negotiation 'sharks.' His other television credits include appearances on EQUAL JUSTICE, WISEGUY, THE EQUALIZER, THIRTYSOMETHING and THE STREET. Tucci also starred as 'Richard Cross' in the Steven Bochco drama MURDER ONE, a performance for which he earned an Emmy Nomination.

On Broadway, Tucci has appeared in numerous plays, including "Frankie and Johnny in the Claire de Lune," "Execution of Hope," "The Iceman Cometh," "Brighton Beach Memoirs" and "The Misanthrope." He has also performed in a number of off-Broadway plays, at Yale Repertory Theater and SUNY Purchase, where he first studied acting.

BOBBY CANNAVALE (Chic)

Bobby Cannavale recently came to the fore as the motor-mouthed hot dog vendor who befriends an outsider in his small New Jersey town in Tom McCarthy's THE STATION AGENT, starring with Peter Dinklage and Patricia Clarkson. Best known to television viewers for his starring roles on such series as THIRD WATCH, A&E's 100 CENTRE STREET and KINGPIN, Bobby Cannavale's career began in the theatre and includes work with Lee Strasberg, Naked Angels, Circle Rep, The Public, Williamstown and the Roundabout.

Bobby started working on television when he met John Wells and took a recurring role on his NBC series TRINITY. After that Wells asked Bobby to star in THIRD WATCH, and since then he has also had a memorable role on HBO's SEX IN THE CITY, was added to the cast of ALLY MCBEAL in its final season and was seen in a recurring role on HBO's OZ.

On the big screen, Bobby has appeared in Spike Lee's 3AM, Kevin Costner's THE POSTMAN, NIGHT FALLS ON MANHATTAN and GLORIA for Sidney Lumet, alongside Angelina Jolie in THE BONE COLLECTOR as well as in THE DEVIL AND DANIEL WEBSTER for director Alec Baldwin. His recent work includes THE GURU with Heather Graham and Marisa Tomei and WASHINGTON HEIGHTS. He will next be seen in HAVEN with Bill Paxton and Orlando Bloom, the comedy HAPPY ENDINGS and John Turturro's ROMANCE AND CIGARETTES.

LISA ANN WALTER (Bobbie)

Lisa Ann Walter is a classically trained actress as well as a singer and comedian. She initially made a name for herself as a popular act on the comedy circuit, then became the star and creator of the ABC series, LIFE'S WORK, which took a comic look at the life of a frantically busy lawyer doing the '90s plate-spinning act of juggling job and family. She also received acclaim for her performance in the Fox Network comedy, MY WILDEST DREAMS. Recently she starred opposite Emeril Lagasse on EMERIL and on the critically acclaimed drama BREAKING NEWS on Bravo. On the feature side, Walter was seen in co-starring in BRUCE ALMIGHTY with Jim Carrey and Morgan Freeman and in THE PARENT TRAP as the nanny to Dennis Quaid's daughter. Prior to that, Walter played Whoopi Goldberg's sidekick in the comedy EDDIE.

OMAR BENSON MILLER (Vern)

Omar Benson Miller made his film debut in director Curtis Hanson's hit film 8 MILE, which starred hip-hop artist Eminem. He recently wrapped the film RABBI, in which he co-stars opposite Peter Weller for director Jeffrey Levy. Miller began his career in theater and has also appeared in the film SORORITY BOYS and on television in HBO's UNDEFEATED, directed by John Leguizamo.

ANITA GILLETTE (Miss Mitzi)

Anita Gillette studied at the Peabody Conservatory and came to Broadway when she was still a teen, making her debut in GYPSY. She went on to star in CHAPTER TWO, garnering a Tony nomination and L.A. Drama Critics Award, BRIGHTON BEACH MEMOIRS, THEY'RE PLAYING OUR SONG, JIMMY, CABARET, DON'T DRINK THE WATER, KELLY, MR. PRESIDENT, ALL AMERICAN, THE GAY LIFE, CARNIVAL, GYPSY, POCAHANTAS (London's West End) and SWEET BIRD OF YOUTH at the Royal Alex in Toronto with Joanne Woodward. Her Off Broadway, regional theatre and stock credits include hundreds of musicals, Chekhov and Shakespeare.

Movie audiences remember her best as Mona in MOONSTRUCK. She was Jennifer Anniston's mother in SHE'S THE ONE, Mary Louise Parker's mother in BOYS ON THE SIDE, Bll Murray's mother in LARGER THAN LIFE, Jack Black's mother in BOB Roberts, and the mother of Bobby Cannavale's love interest in THE GURU. On television, she played Quincy's bride, John Goodman's mother in NORMAL OHIO, David Chase's ALMOST GROWN, and the Hallmark Hall of Fame movies, THE SUMMER OF BEN TYLER with James Woods, and A CHRISTMAS MEMORY with Patty Duke. She appeared on many game shows, musical specials and was a regular on THE TONIGHT SHOW with Johnny Carson.

RICHARD JENKINS (Detective)

Richard Jenkins is well known to television audiences for his role as mortuary owner Nathaniel Fisher Sr. on HBO's critically acclaimed hit series, SIX FEET UNDER. His recent film work includes CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN with Steve Martin and Joel and Ethan Coen's INTOLERABLE CRUELTY. Additional film credits include THE MUDGE BOY, THE CORE, THE MAN WHO WASN'T THERE, CHANGING LANES, ME MYSELF AND IRENE, RANDOM HEARTS, SNOW FALLING ON CEDARS, THERE'S SOMETHING ABOUT MARY, ABSOLUTE POWER, FLIRTING WITH DISASTER (Independent Spirit Award Nomination for best supporting actor), THE INDIAN IN THE CUPBOARD, LITTLE NIKITA, THE WITCHES OF EASTWICK and WOLF.

On television, Jenkins has also been seen in SINS OF THE FATHER, THE BOYS NEXT DOOR and THE BAND PLAYED ON. For four years he was the artistic director of the Trinity Repertory Company in Providence, Rhode Island.

NICK CANNON (Scotty)

Nick Cannon is a multi-talented teen with success in film, comedy and music. In movies, he came to the fore as the star of the sleeper hit DRUMLINE, and most recently starred in the romantic comedy, LOVE DON'T COST A THING and played the voice of "Louis," a city mouse, in GARFIELD opposite Bill Murray and Alan Cumming. His forthcoming films include the comedy THE UNDERCLASSMAN.

On the music front, Nick's first rap album was released on Jive Records in the winter of 2003. The first single from Nick's album was heard as a featured song on the soundtrack DRUMLINE. The second single off the album, "Feelin Freaky," a collaboration with B2K, is currently in heavy radio rotation. He has recently been on tour with music sensations B2K for their "Scream III" tour.

On the small screen Nick is best known for being the co-creator, executive producer and star of his own sketch-comedy, variety show THE NICK CANNON SHOW on Nickelodeon. He won the 2002

Nickelodeon Kid's Choice Award for "Favorite Male TV Actor." Cannon started performing at the tender age of eight and by 12 took to the stage performing his music and stand-up routines. Soon after, Nick founded his San Diego-based rap duo Da Bom Squad, whose hip-hop rhythm rocked such venues as Billboard Live and shared the stage with musical performers Will Smith, Montell Jordan and LFO.

At 16, Nick headed for Hollywood to perform his stand-up routine at world renowned comedy venues including The Improv, The Laugh Factory and the Comedy Store. It was there that he caught the attention of his manager and landed his first industry gig with Nickelodeon, a relationship that grew and progressed into THE NICK CANNON SHOW.

ABOUT THE FILMMAKERS

PETER CHELSOM (Director)

Peter Chelsom was born in Blackpool, in the North of England. He trained as a photographer, but then won a place at London's Central School of Drama. For the next ten years he worked as an actor, playing leading roles in television series, films and in the theatre for the Royal Shakespeare Company, the National Theatre and the Royal Court Theatre. It was while his acting career was flourishing that he chose to turn to writing and directing. Between 1985 and 1989, Peter was a director of the film and television course at the Central School of Drama. He also taught at the Actor's Institute and ran a course for New York actors at Cornell University for the Royal Court Theatre.

In 1987, he was chosen as one of five directors for the Channel Four/British Screen project for cinema directors, writing and directing TREACLE, a film set in his hometown. Highly acclaimed, it won him a BAFTA nomination and invitations to festivals all over the world, including New York. His first full length feature was the very successful and critically acclaimed romantic comedy HEAR MY SONG, inspired by the life of a charismatic Irish tenor, played by Ned Beatty. The film's Royal Premiere was attended by Princess Diana and among its awards, the film garnered the Best Newcomer from the Evening Standard British Film Awards.

Chelsom's second film was FUNNY BONES starring Oliver Platt, Jerry Lewis, Leslie Caron and newcomer Lee Evans, which garnered more critical success and the Best Picture award at five European film festivals. It won him the Peter Sellers Award for comedy at the British Film Awards. He then directed THE MIGHTY, based on the best-selling, award-winning book *Freak the Mighty*, and starring Sharon Stone, Gillian Anderson, Gena Rowlands, Harry Dean Stanton and Kieran Culkin; and TOWN AND COUNTRY, which starred Warren Beatty, Diane Keaton, Goldie Hawn, Garry Shandling. Chelsom most recently directed the successful romantic comedy SERENDIPITY starring John Cusack and Kate Beckinsale as two people who test their love at first sight by letting destiny decide if they should be together.

AUDREY WELLS (Writer)

Audrey Wells was born and raised in San Francisco. She earned her bachelor's degree at UC Berkeley and her masters in film from UCLA. The recent romantic hit UNDER THE TUSCAN SUN, starring Diane Lane was her second effort as a writer/director. In 1999, Wells directed her first film, the independent feature GUINEVERE, from her own original screenplay. The film, which starred Stephen Rea and Sarah Polley, was awarded the prize for Best Screenplay at the Sundance Film Festival, the Jury Prize at the Deauville Film Festival, and was nominated for two Independent Spirit Awards before being released by Miramax. Wells is the author of many original screenplays, including The TRUTH ABOUT

CATS AND DOGS and THE KID. She also co-wrote the family comedy GEORGE OF THE JUNGLE. Wells lives in Los Angeles with her husband and three-year-old daughter.

SIMON FIELDS (Producer)

Simon Fields and director Peter Chelsom have collaborated since 1991, developing and producing feature films. Their projects together include the 1991 romantic comedy, HEAR MY SONG starring Ned Beatty, the 1994 comedy FUNNY BONES, THE MIGHTY starring Sharon Stone and TOWN & COUNTRY starring Warren Beatty, Diane Keaton, Goldie Hawn and Andie McDowell, released by New Line Cinema in 1999. In 2000, Fields produced and Chelsom directed SERENDIPITY starring John Cusack and Kate Beckinsale.

Born in London in 1955, Fields was educated at Stowe School. On leaving school in 1974, he spent six years in London working his way through the television commercial production ranks, becoming production manager for the Moving Picture Company. In 1978, he joined Jon Roseman Productions as a producer and within a year moved to Los Angeles to run their American division.

In 1981, he joined forces with Steven Barron to form Limelight. As President and CEO of Limelight, he oversaw growth of annual revenues from \$500,000 to \$50,000,000 with operations in Los Angeles and London. The company was active in music videos, television commercials, and feature films. During his twelve-year tenure at Limelight, Fields was a pioneer in the music video industry, garnering many awards and helping create media images for Michael Jackson, Madonna, Prince, and Peter Gabriel, among many others. The company also had an award-winning television commercial division, handling such prestigious accounts as Calvin Klein, Nike, and Budweiser. During that time, Fields also produced the feature films TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES and HEAR MY SONG.

MARI JO WINKLER (Co-Producer)

Mari Jo Winkler has served as a unit production manager on many films, including THE DUPLEX, THE SHIPPING NEWS, SERENDIPITY, THE ASTRONAUT'S WIFE, THE OBJECT OF MY AFFECTION and THE PALLBEARER.

JOHN De BORMAN, B.S.C. (Director of Photography)

John De Borman previously collaborated with Peter Chelsom on SERENDIPITY. He has also photographed THE FULL MONTY, PURE, NEW YEAR'S DAY, THERE'S ONLY ONE JIMMY GRIMBLE, HAMLET, SAVING GRACE, TROJAN EDDIE, MEDIUM RARE, SMALL FACES, GREGORY'S TWO GIRLS, HIDEOUS KINKY, THE MIGHTY, PHOTOGRAPHING FAIRIES, DEATH MACHINE, THE PASSION OF DARKLY NOON, MURDER BLUES, UNMASKED PART 25 and MURDER ON LINE ONE, which he also executive produced.

De Borman was nominated for an Independent Spirit Award for Best Cinematography for his work on HAMLET and won the Evening Standard British Film Award for Best Technical/Artistic Achievement for HIDEOUS KINKY. He received the San Sebastian Film Festival Concho D'Oro Award for TROJAN EDDIE. DeBorman also wrote, directed and photographed the short OUTING, which won the New York Film Festival's Gold Award.

CHARLIE IRELAND (Editor)

Charlie Ireland's credits as an editor include the features A VIEW FROM THE TOP, EARLY BIRD SPECIAL, LAST CALL, AFTER THE STORM, 3 STRIKES, INCONCEIVABLE and WITHOUT LIMITS. As an assistant editor, he has worked on such films as SERENDIPITY, TOWN AND COUNTRY, LOLITA, 101 DALMATIANS, WATERWORLD, and MAVERICK.

CAROLINE HANANIA (Production Designer)

Caroline Hanania has worked extensively with Peter Chelsom and has designed all of his feature films including HEAR MY SONG, FUNNY BONES, THE MIGHTY, TOWN AND COUNTRY and SERENDIPITY. Hanania was born in Lebanon, where her father was Dean at the American University of Beirut. Educated in England, she studied fine art at the Accademia di Belle Arti in Rome, Italy; where she spent a year working as assistant to surrealist artist Mayo, whose costume designs are a feature of Marcel Carne's classic film LES ENFANTS DU PARADIS (CHILDREN OF PARADISE). After completing her BA at Camberwell School of Art in London, Caroline began her design career in the London theatre culminating in a three-year term as resident designer with the Common Stock Theatre Company. She entered the film industry working with Production Designer Andrew McAlpine as Art Director on productions including THE HOUSE (Mike Figgis), HIGH SEASON (Clare Peploe) and SID AND NANCY (Alex Cox).

For over fifteen years, Caroline has worked as a Production Designer both in Europe and the U.S. Her design credits include PAPER MASK (Christopher Morahan), WILD WEST (David Atwood), MOLL FLANDERS (Pen Densham), LA WITHOUT A MAP (Mika Kaurismaki) and AUGGIE ROSE (Matt Tabak). She recently designed SURVIVING CHRISTMAS starring Ben Affleck due to be released in 2004.

SOPHIE de RAKOFF CARBONELL (Costume Designer)

Sophie DeRakoff Carbonell recently received much attention for her rwork on LEGALLY BLONDE AND LEGALLY BLONDE 2: RED, WHITE AND BLONDE. In the summer of 2003, Entertainment Weekly placed her on their "It List," enumerating "the 100 most creative people in entertainment." Carbonell's other film credits include the hit comedy SWEET HOME ALABAMA (also with Reese Witherspoon), ALL ABOUT THE BENJAMINS starring Ice Cube, Wayne Wang's THE CENTER OF THE WORLD, CRIME + PUNISHMENT IN SUBURBIA, SATURN, and *FOUR DOGS PLAYING POKER*.

Carbonell's credits also include music videos for Alanis Morissette, Candle Box, REM, Rod Stewart, Robyn, Ben Folds Five, Whitney Houston, Wyclef Jean, Meshell Ndegeocello and Enrique Iglesias. Before her foray into costume design, she was the West Coast Editor of Paper magazine.

JOHN O'CONNELL (Choreographer)

John O'Connell is an internationally acclaimed choreographer of numerous hit movies including MOULIN ROUGE, STRICTLY BALLROOM, MURIEL'S WEDDING and Baz Luhrmann's ROMEO & JULIET.

He has worked extensively in television, cabaret and stage, showing a versatile and extensive choreographic and performance range. He staged the Gordon/Frost critically acclaimed international production of the stage musical "South Pacific" and also "A Midsummer Night's Dream" for Opera Australia which went to the Edinburgh Festival where the production was awarded the Edinburgh Festival Critics Award. He has produced, written, choreographed, as well as starred in his own delightful 'how to dance' show "Mr. Cha Cha Says Dance."