

The Kite Runner

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Forward from Author Khaled Hosseini

One chilly morning in November of 2006, I stood beside my father and watched an actor peek through a set of metallic gates. We were in the city of Kashgar in western China, on the set of The Kite Runner, Marc Forster's film based on David Benioff's adaptation of my first novel. The actor was Khalid Abdalla, who plays Amir, the fallible, guilt-ridden central character in The Kite Runner. Amir has come back to Kabul after a two-decade long absence. While he was away, wars have swept through Afghanistan, a million people have died, countless have been displaced, and the country has fallen into the hands of the brutal Taliban regime. Now, Amir has come home to rescue a boy he has never met, but also to exorcise deeply personal demons and rescue himself, as he sees it, from damnation.

Watching Khalid Abdalla/Amir peeking sadly through the gates at the house where he was raised in the 1970's echoed with me in strange and almost disorienting ways. Like Amir, I too was born in Kabul in the mid 1960's, lived there in the 1970's, and came to the San Francisco Bay Area in the early 1980's to begin a new life as an immigrant. I too was away while Afghanistan was destroyed. And like Amir, I too went back to Kabul as a grown man to revisit the land of my childhood.

*In March of 2003, with *The Kite Runner* finished but three months from publication, I found myself tracing Amir's footsteps, sitting in the window seat of an Ariana Airlines Boeing 727 headed toward Kabul. The last time I had seen Kabul, I was an eleven-year-old, thin-framed seventh grader. I was going back now as a thirty-eight year old physician, writer, husband, and father of two. I remember gazing out the window, waiting for the plane to break through the clouds, waiting for Kabul to appear below me. When it did, a few lines from *The Kite Runner* came to me, and Amir's thoughts suddenly became my own: The kinship I felt suddenly for the old land . . . it surprised me . . . I thought I had forgotten about this land. But I hadn't. Maybe Afghanistan hadn't forgotten me either. The old adage in writing is you write about what you have experienced. I was going to experience what I had already written about.*

Given this unusual circumstance, my two-week stay in Kabul took on a surreal quality. Every day, I saw places and things I had seen months before with Amir's eyes. Walking through the crowded streets of Kabul for the first time, I was buoyed, like Amir, with a sense of coming home to an old friend. But also like Amir, I felt like a tourist in my own country. We'd both been away a long time. Neither one of us had fought in the wars; neither one of us had bled with the Afghan people. I had written about Amir's guilt. Now I tasted it.

*Soon, the line between Amir's memories and my own began to blur. Amir had lived out my memories on the pages of *The Kite Runner*. In Kabul, I found myself living out his. When I was driven through the once beautiful, now war-ravaged Jadeh-maywand Avenue, past collapsed buildings, piles of rubble, and bullet-pocked, roofless walls where beggars took shelter, I remembered my father buying me rosewater ice cream there in the early 1970's. And I remembered that Amir and his loving servant, Hassan, used to buy their kites on this same street, from a blind old man named Saifo. I sat on the crumbling steps of Cinema Park where my brother and I used to watch free un-dubbed Russian films in the winters, and where Amir and Hassan had seen their favorite film, *The Magnificent Seven*, no less than thirteen times. With Amir, I passed by smoke-filled, tiny kabob houses where our fathers – Amir's Baba and mine – used to take us, where sweaty men still sat cross-legged behind charcoal grills and feverishly fanned skewers of sizzling chopan kabob. Together we gazed up at sky over the gardens of the 16th-Century emperor Babur, and spotted a kite floating over the city. I thought of a sunny winter day in 1975, the day of the kite-fighting tournament. That was the fateful day that twelve-year-old Amir betrayed his adoring friend Hassan, the day that would draw him back to Afghanistan years later to seek atonement for his weaknesses. And as I sat on a bench at Ghazi Stadium and watched the New Year's Day parade with thousands of Afghans, I thought of my father and me watching a game of Buzkashi there in 1973. But I also thought of Amir, who had witnessed the Taliban stone a pair of adulterers in this same stadium, a scene rendered in Marc Forster's film with naked, unflinching brutality. That was at the south end goal post, where now a group of young men in traditional garments were dancing the traditional atan dance in a circle.*

But perhaps nowhere did fiction and life collide more dizzily than when I found my father's old house in the Wazir Akbar Khan neighborhood, the house where I was raised in the 1970's. It took me three days of searching -I had no address and the neighborhood had changed drastically- but I kept looking until I spotted the familiar arch over the gates.

I peeked through the metallic gates. In a way, I had already been there. Months before, I had stood beside Amir at the gates of his Baba's house -now overtaken by murderous Taliban soldiers- and felt his loss. I had watched him set his hands on the rusty wrought-iron bars, and together we had gazed at the sagging roof, the broken windows, and crumbling front steps.

Eerily, my father's house resembled Amir and Baba's old house. It too was the picture of fallen splendor. The paint had faded, the grass had withered, the trees were gone, and the walls were crumbling. And like Amir, I was struck by how much smaller the house was in reality than the version that had for so long lived in my memories.

And here I was now, three years later, on a movie set in China, watching Khalid Abdalla/Amir stepping through those gates, fusing my own past and present, my own reality and fiction. The sadness, the passage of time, and the sense of loss materialized on Khalid Abdalla's face. And echoed in my own mind all over again. I had written this scene, I had lived it, and now I was watching it performed before me.

Soon, across screens throughout the world, millions of people will stand beside Amir and peek through those gates. They will feel his loss. What they may not know is that they are feeling mine as well. And in a way, that of countless of Afghans who have seen their homeland ravaged.

Today, Afghanistan is still trying to recover from nearly three decades of war, famine, drought, massive human displacement and suffering. It cannot afford to be forgotten. It is my belief that Marc Forster's lyrical film, adapted with tenderness and affection by David Benioff, will make it difficult to forget about the Afghan people. Marc's film brings to life the forgotten, more innocent days of the pre-Soviet era, the struggles of the Afghan immigrants living abroad, fallen from grace, and the endless anguish of those who stayed behind and suffered at the hands of one unforgiving regime after another. It is my hope that this film –at a time that Afghanistan is fading again from the headlines- will bring back global attention to my homeland and to the needs of its vulnerable people.

About the Film

“There is a way to be good again.”

Based on one of the most acclaimed novels in recent memory, **THE KITE RUNNER** is a profoundly emotional tale of friendship, family, devastating mistakes and redeeming love. In a divided country on the verge of war, two childhood best friends, Amir and Hassan, are about to be torn apart forever. It's a glorious afternoon in Kabul and the skies are bursting with the exhilarating joy of an innocent kite-fighting tournament. But in the aftermath of the day's victory, one boy's fearful act of betrayal will set in motion a catastrophe ... and an epic quest for redemption. Now, after 20 years of living in America, Amir returns to a perilous Afghanistan under the Taliban's iron-fisted rule to face the dark secrets that still haunt him and take one last daring chance to set things right.

Golden Globe-nominated director Marc Forster (STRANGER THAN FICTION, FINDING NEVERLAND and MONSTER’S BALL) brings to life Khaled Hosseini’s bestseller on the screen with a globally diverse cast and crew, mixing a remarkable group of non-actors from Afghanistan and Central Asia with an accomplished international cast, and shooting on location in the Western Chinese desert bordering Afghanistan. The result is a journey into a new world -- through a universal human story that speaks to anyone who has ever yearned for a second chance to make a change and find forgiveness.

DreamWorks Pictures, Sidney Kimmel Entertainment and Participant Productions present **THE KITE RUNNER**, a Sidney Kimmel Entertainment Production and Parkes/MacDonald Production released by Paramount Classics. Directed by Marc Forster, **THE KITE RUNNER** is written by David Benioff (TROY, STAY) and is based on Khaled Hosseini's best-selling book. The film is produced by William Horberg (COLD MOUNTAIN, THE TALENTED MR. RIPLEY), Walter F. Parkes (GLADIATOR, CATCH ME IF YOU CAN), Rebecca Yeldham (THE MOTORCYCLE DIARIES) and E. Bennett Walsh (KILL BILL). Executive producers are Sidney Kimmel, Laurie MacDonald, Sam Mendes and Jeff Skoll.

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**From Fledgling Manuscript to Bestseller to Screen:
The Story Behind “The Kite Runner”**

In 2003, Khaled Hosseini’s The Kite Runner came out of nowhere as a debut novel and quickly shot to the top of best-seller lists around the globe, where it still remains four years later. A story suffused with the culture of Afghanistan -- the remote, war-torn country that, for decades, has been seen only as hotspot of global conflict -- it seemed an unlikely candidate for such stratospheric success. Yet, with its universal themes of family bonds, childhood friendship, the courage of forgiveness and the salvation only to be found in love, the story deeply touched people from every cultural and social background.

Written by a physician born in Afghanistan -- who, like his lead character, left Afghanistan for America as a boy and didn’t return for decades -- The Kite Runner took readers on a journey, across continents, into one man’s quest to right a terrible wrong that haunted him all his life. Deftly weaving the

personal with the political, Hosseini forged a tale as rife with suspense as it was with intensity of feeling. Though the story was fictional, Hosseini's intimate knowledge of growing up in Kabul when it was "the pearl of Central Asia," before the Soviet Invasion and the rise of the Taliban, as well as his experiences emigrating as a young man to America, lent his story an authenticity and humanity that deeply affected readers. The novel sold over eight million copies in more than 34 countries, leaping borders with the power of its storytelling.

For Khaled Hosseini, the ripple effect of The Kite Runner's popularity and now the imminent release of the motion picture based on it, have been extremely gratifying. "I'm continually astonished by how people have reacted to my novel," says Hosseini, "but I think it must be because there is a very intense emotional core to this story that people connect with. The themes -- of guilt, friendship, forgiveness, loss, the desire for atonement and to be better than who you think you are -- are not Afghan themes but very human experiences, regardless of one's ethnic, cultural or religious background."

It was these themes, long before the book had attained international best-seller status -- in fact when it was merely an obscure and as-yet-unpublished manuscript -- that drew the attention of producers William Horberg and Rebecca Yeldham, who were previously partnered at DreamWorks SKG. While reading Hosseini's unadorned pages, Horberg and Yeldham realized they were in the midst of something quite extraordinary. "It was one of the most powerful and cinematic pieces of literature that I had ever read. It was magical," says Yeldham. "We were so in love with it that we couldn't imagine it not getting made. It's a story that's told in the most lyrical, evocative and beautiful way, one that lends itself to a visual interpretation; as you're reading, you literally *see* its events unfold."

Adds Horberg: "Reading The Kite Runner was a wonderful experience. The story has such a strong emotional hook with its central idea that, no matter what you've done in the past, there's a way to be good again. It draws you in as a reader and taps into the secrets and scars that we all have in our history. You go on a journey with these two boys, a journey into a culture, into a family and into redemption for the character of Amir. I found it to be an incredibly moving experience and one that promised a lot of potential as a movie."

Horberg and Yeldham brought the Kite Runner to the attention of Walter Parkes and Laurie MacDonald, who were then beginning their transition from co-heads of production at DreamWorks to independent producers. The filmmakers joined forces to secure the rights to the forthcoming novel and development on the screenplay was begun. For Parkes, the heart of the book lay in the mysterious, albeit fragile, bonds of childhood friendships that are same the whole world over. "I thought right away of my relationship with my best friend when I was 10 or 11 and the kind of private, extended fantasy world young boys occupy in their friendships," reflects Parkes. MacDonald adds, "It is very much about the resiliency of children. There is something about a child's ability to find friendship and adventure in his own private

universe with other children, which is so true and so heartbreaking and ultimately gives us hope. And that is the core value that spoke to me in the book.”

Meanwhile, the filmmakers enlisted Khaled Hosseini himself as an active partner in transforming the novel into a film, making sure he remained on the inside of the entire creative process. “Khaled was our ambassador into this world which none of us were from,” explains Horberg.

With the film in mid-development, Horberg and Yeldham left DreamWorks in 2005. Horberg joined Sidney Kimmel Entertainment (SKE), which has a reputation for working with esteemed filmmaking talent and high quality stories, and Sidney Kimmel, in turn, became an enthusiastic supporter of the project and Horberg’s ongoing roles as producer of the film. Jeff Skoll of Participant Productions -- the fast-moving young company whose motto is “changing the world one story at a time” -- was another early and passionate fan of the book, and now joined with SKE as co-financiers.

In the midst of all this, the book burst onto bookstore shelves with an unexpected force, turning the novel into a cultural phenomenon, as it spread like wildfire from the hands of one exhilarated reader to the next. Critics were equally impressed. As award-winning writer Isabel Allende summarized of the novel: *“It is so powerful that for a long time everything I read after seemed bland.”* The filmmakers were at once astonished and thrilled at its sweeping popularity.

“Truthfully I don’t think any of us had any suspicion that The Kite Runner would catch on in such a mainstream way,” confesses Parkes. “It was a great story that had a heroic, cinematic size to it and dealt with essential themes of redemption and coming to grips with who you really are -- wonderful, classic themes. But to assume that it would become a hit book and then some, and that years later, the environment of American mainstream film would become so open to these kinds of multicultural stories? Nobody could predict that.”

**From Indelible Words to Images:
Adapting THE KITE RUNNER**

Now, with the book having worked its way into the hearts of so many, the producers set out to find a screenwriter who could take the rarely seen world Khaled Hosseini had brought so richly to life on the page and transform that into an epic, cinematic experience, all the while sustaining the uniquely intimate tone of the book.

Horberg and Yeldham brought in screenwriter David Benioff who, as a novelist himself (Benioff made his screenwriting debut with the adaptation of his novel THE 25TH HOUR, directed by Spike Lee), came into the project filled with original ideas about how to morph the 400-page novel into a taut, riveting script and structure it in a vivid new form.

“Everyone was very open to different ideas and angles, but the one commonality we all shared was a desire to do justice to Khaled’s beautiful story and to try to retain as much of the book’s humanity and spirit as possible,” says Benioff. “I always saw this as a story about cowardice and courage, and the journey between them. And also I wanted to make sure it remained a story of Afghanistan, of Afghans, of a people enduring the worst possible times, endless wars and poverty -- yet within that national horror, still finding the possibility of grace, beauty and love.”

Benioff utilized Hosseini in myriad ways while creating the adaptation. “Khaled could not have been more generous with his time and expertise, answering all my questions about life in Afghanistan,” he comments. “I grew up in New York City and a Kabul childhood was very far from my own experience, yet Khaled clarified any moments I found confusing. More than that, these characters are his babies and Khaled knows them better than anyone, so he was always very good at explaining why a character would or would not do something.”

One of the biggest challenges for Benioff was simply carving the sweeping, three-decade-long events of Amir’s story into a two-hour motion picture. “Time jumps are difficult to navigate in a movie,” explains Benioff, “and because the novel covers almost 30 years, figuring out an efficient screenplay structure wasn’t easy. The novel shows Amir at many different ages, but I decided early on that I wanted only two actors playing the role. Any more than that and I think you might lose the connection to this wonderful character. So the screenplay streamlines the novel’s narrative – it incorporates almost all of the major beats but simplifies the chronology. Luckily, the heart of Khaled’s story is so strong I believe it maintains its power even within the restrictions of space and time of the screenplay format.”

Khaled Hosseini was ultimately very impressed with how the screenwriter re-invented his story as a cinematic experience. “My hat is off to David,” says Hosseini. “He had a job cut out for him. This is a novel that structurally is a challenge, spanning 30 years in time. There are flashbacks, the characters age, and we move from Kabul as a thriving cosmopolitan city to this basically destroyed landscape that Amir goes back to. But David pulled it off and made it seem very seamless so that when I read the final version of the script, I said ‘This is going to be a beautiful movie.’”

Now came the task of finding a director. The producers knew they needed someone with both the cultural sensitivity and the far-reaching imagination to wrap his mind around a story that traverses from Kabul to California, from the shame and devastation of war to the opportunities of starting over in America, from the stultifying effects of violence and intolerance to the triumph of honor and hope.

They chose Marc Forster, largely because he has brought a lyricism and humanity to every film he has made, no matter the genre, ranging from the powerful emotions of *MONSTER’S BALL* to the enchantment of *FINDING NEVERLAND* to the inventive comedy of *STRANGER THAN FICTION*. He had also worked with David Benioff before, on the time-shifting psychological thriller *STAY*.

“Marc was someone whose work we admired greatly,” says William Horberg. “Whatever world he goes into, he always finds characters that audiences understand and relate to deeply. He has a real sense of both beauty and curiosity in his filmmaking. And, because this story was so different than anything he had done before, we felt it would also be a compelling challenge for him.”

It quickly became clear that Forster had the deep affinity for the material the producers were seeking. “In his fearless way, Marc had no qualms about making a movie about a culture that is not his own,” notes Rebecca Yeldham. “He embraced obstacles that would have unhinged others. And he was able to cut straight to the heart of the story and the reasons why it touched him and so many millions of people.”

For Forster, the story of Amir and Hassan’s idyllic childhood friendship and the dramatic turn of events that would come to shadow Amir’s brand new life in America, was irresistible. “I just fell in love with this story,” the director says. “Reading the book was such an emotional and beautiful experience that I knew right away I wanted to be involved. Like *MONSTER’S BALL*, yet in a very different way, it is a story about breaking the cycle of violence and about the sustaining possibilities for redemption. For me, the challenge would be creating this incredibly epic journey while bringing the audience inside a very intimate story about a few individuals and the profound effect they have on each other’s lives. That mix is the real beauty of the novel.”

Yet, even Forster was not prepared for how intense an experience making this film would ultimately be, taking him from Europe to Kabul to Pakistan and China on an eye-opening and, at times harrowing, journey that would, in all of its own imagery and emotion, come to inform every frame of the film.

From the beginning, Forster understood that in order to bring the film to life he must penetrate the dense and complex fabric of Afghan culture and experience. As he began preparing the project, he shared his vision of the film with Khaled Hosseini, which helped to forge a great kinship.

“I was very happy to hear that Marc would do everything in his power to make this movie as authentic as possible from a cultural standpoint and that Marc really wanted to show something to the audience that had never been seen before,” says Hosseini. “He spoke to me with such passion, integrity and honesty about the book, and he told me how fearful he was of not doing justice to it and me. But I was not worried because I saw how enamored he was with the story, how completely invested in it he was and, watching him on the set, I saw how talented he is.”

Says Forster, “David was masterfully able to capture the spirit of **THE KITE RUNNER** in his adaptation. The main thing was always not to let Khaled down because ultimately it is his vision and, as a director, I wanted to serve the vision of the original author who touched so many people.”

***From English To Dari:
Making THE KITE RUNNER In An Afghan Tongue***

While David Benioff was still writing the screenplay, a decision was made to shoot the film in the Dari language, one of two main tongues spoken in Afghanistan. “I felt that shooting the film in any other language other than Dari would be a mistake,” says Marc Forster. “If you have kids in 1970s Afghanistan speaking English, it just would not be right. You need that emotional connection to something real.”

The decision, though logistically daunting, was celebrated by author Khaled Hosseini. “When Marc said he was going to shoot the film in Dari, it won me over and I said he really means to do well by my book, because it was so important for me that the characters be believable,” he says.

Benioff and Forster had extensive discussions about which lines in the film should be spoken in Dari and which in English. Then, when the intricate translations of Benioff’s screenplay were completed, they sent the script back to Khaled Hosseini, who lent his own poetic ear to the tweaking of various lines and the adding of various phrases that add the more natural and realistic feeling of a native speaker. The result was a screenplay that is, according to Hosseini, “credible and beautiful Dari.” (There are also a few lines in Pashto, a language spoken by the Taliban, and the Pakistani language, Urdu.)

To keep the language faithful to the material once production began, the filmmakers hired a team of native Dari speakers who coached the non-native actors on pronunciation and inflection, and were on set each day to make sure lines were spoken just as they would be in Kabul. On-the-fly translations on the set were handled by Ilham Hosseini, a UC Berkeley Law School student who escaped with her family from Afghanistan – and is also the younger cousin of Khaled Hosseini.

In addition to the native Dari-speaking language and dialect coaches, the production hired several cultural advisors who were on hand throughout the filming to validate the most nuanced details of the film’s production. Scores of researchers were also consulted throughout the filmmaking process to ensure the verisimilitude of the film’s content and representations.

***From London To Kabul:
Casting the First-Time Child Actors at the Heart of “The Kite Runner”***

Marc Forster was determined to cast the book’s beloved characters with as much realism and integrity as possible under the unique circumstances. This was especially true when it came to casting young Amir and Hassan – the two boys, one privileged, the other from the servant classes, whose friendship is torn asunder in a catastrophic instant, setting in motion Amir’s perilous search for redemption as a grown man. Forster knew he needed two extraordinary young actors who could truly understand Amir and Hassan’s cultural background, yet who would also have the skills to breathe raw life into their boyish dreams and camaraderie and draw the audience into their innocent world of kites and fairy tales and sling-shot heroics.

To find this daunting mix of qualities somewhere on earth, Forster recruited Kate Dowd, the London-based casting agent who previously had worked with the director casting FINDING NEVERLAND.

Dowd is known for her deft instincts but **THE KITE RUNNER** would see her heading off on one of the most epic casting quests yet, one that would span several continents and eventually lead all the way to the war-torn streets of Kabul, Afghanistan. “Kate found the remarkable children in **FINDING NEVERLAND**,” says Forster, “and I knew she would bring that same sensitivity in finding the young boys for **THE KITE RUNNER** – but I didn’t yet realize it would mean going to Kabul.”

The filmmakers placed their faith in Dowd’s ability to find hidden talents in very young, inexperienced children. Explains William Horberg, “We knew that **THE KITE RUNNER** as a movie experience was going to hang on finding the purity of the two boys that Khaled describes in the book – two boys who could embody that sense of class tension that they have, the ethnic differences between them, but also the chemistry of brotherhood that they have. We knew it would be like catching lightning in a bottle.”

Dowd’s hunt for that lightning began in the Afghan communities of Europe, the U.S. and Canada, and extensive open calls in London, Birmingham, Hamburg, Amsterdam, Toronto, New York, San Francisco and Virginia. But, despite the hundreds of children of Afghan background they saw, the filmmakers continued to feel something was missing. While many of the boys who auditioned could speak some Dari, their speech was already inflected with the regional accents of wherever they lived. “Out came the accents of England or the U.S.,” recalls Dowd, “and it just wasn’t the right sound. That’s when we realized we had to go to Kabul to find our boys and much of the cast as well. We were not going to find them anywhere else!”

So it was that Dowd wound up on an odyssey literally to the other side of the globe to search for the right actors. Producer E. Bennett Walsh, who also served as unit production manager on **THE KITE RUNNER**, was instrumental in organizing Dowd’s trip to Afghanistan and making many of the introductions to lead her on her quest.

For an entire month, Dowd canvassed schools, orphanages and even the playgrounds of bomb-shattered Kabul searching for the ideal Amir, Hassan and also Hassan’s eventual son, Sohrab. She met one extraordinary, persevering child after another, and began shipping footage of the boys she met back to the U.S. Slowly but surely, she weeded down her list of candidates to a promising group of remarkably natural and soulful children, and then invited Forster, already on his way to Kabul, to make the final decision.

Forster was profoundly moved by the experience of coming to Kabul for the first time. Once legendary for its beauty and hospitality, the city has become a symbol over the last two decades of turmoil, tyranny and war – yet the warm spirit of the people still rises above it all. “This journey was essential for me to understand the Afghan culture, how people speak and relate to one another, and simply to see and feel what Kabul is like today,” says the director.

Rather than hold formal auditions, the first thing Forster did with the local Afghan children Kate Dowd had picked out was bring them outside to fly kites, to see them in a relaxed, playful, outgoing state of mind. It was then that he made his final casting decisions. Zekiria Ebrahimi, a 5th grader whom Dowd

uncovered in the local French Lycée, would play Amir. Ahmad Khan Mahmoodzada and Ali Danesh Bakhtyari, who were both found through ARO, the Afghan Relief Organization, would play Hassan and Sohrab.

As Amir, young Zekiria would have to traverse a lot of difficult emotions, from a yearning for acceptance from his stern father to the shame of betraying his closest friend in his time of greatest need, as well as the exhilaration of becoming the kite-flying champion. Yet, despite his lack of acting experience, he was a natural. "When I first met Zekiria, he was very shy and didn't say much," recalls Forster. "But there was something in his demeanor that was intriguing to me, a bit of a sadness somewhere. His father was killed before he was born, and his mother abandoned him. And it was because of this inherent sadness that I felt he would be the right choice to play young Amir who lost his mother and felt his father didn't love him."

Forster was equally compelled by the personalities of Ahmad Khan Mahmoodzada, who so movingly brings to life the spirit and resilience of Hassan, even in the face of his unjust fate; and of Ali Danesh as Hassan's son, Sohrab, who seems to be following in his father's unlucky footsteps until Amir comes to his rescue. Forster says: "Ahmad had an unbelievable spirit of life, a fighting spirit of sorts. He had energy and vitality and conveyed a sense of not being afraid of anything, of being willing to take a big bite out of life, which was so important for portraying Hassan. And Ali Danesh made me very emotional just looking at him. He has an incredible warmth and beauty and yet there is a distance you feel with him, an emotional wall, which is shared by Sohrab."

The moment of finding the boys resonated thousands and thousands of miles away. "Marc called with that hair-raised-on-the-back-of-your-neck voice and said 'I think I found the ones,'" recalls William Horberg. "And everyone who saw the boys knew right away he was right. Now we had a movie."

The book's author, Khaled Hosseini, who had poured so much of his heart into creating Amir and Hassan as characters, was equally pleased with the casting selections. He observes: "Ahmad Khan who plays Hassan, is like a little man in a boy's body and has this luminous face. When he smiles it just melts you and when you look at him you believe there's somebody who is very pure, good and strong."

He continues: "Zekiria, who plays Amir, has a fragile, wounded quality about him that is just beneath the surface yet shines through every once in a while. He also has that slightly shifty quality about him that Amir has as a little boy in the book. And of course being from Kabul, he's a boy of 11 who has lived a lifetime. He's been through some difficult personal hardships that most of us will never see and he brings that with him to this role."

Hosseini concludes: "Danesh, who plays Sohrab, really impressed me with his intelligence and professionalism. Between takes, he is a playful and mischievous young boy who likes to goof around and play practical jokes. But when the word 'Action' comes out of the bullhorn, he instantly slips into character. It was uncanny to see how he was able to tap over and over again, in the blink of an eye, into the despair,

melancholy and isolation of the Sohrab character.”

To gain permission to release the children from school and to wrangle travel passports for them, extensive negotiations over endless cups of tea and paperwork were required. “After Marc made his casting selections in Kabul, it took us three months just to process the cast!” recalls E. Bennett Walsh. “No one had birth certificates or ID cards, so we found ourselves in multiple meetings with government departments to get permission for issuing their passports.” With assistance from many people and agencies across Afghan society as well as through circuitous diplomatic and ministerial channels, everything finally came together.

Meanwhile, while still amidst the rich human resources of Kabul, Forster did additional casting. “We cast all the Afghan parts in the week that we were in Kabul,” recalls Walsh, “and it was an incredible accomplishment. I have never seen a director work before the way that Marc did. It was a very intense experience. Marc had never been in Afghanistan, so it was entirely new terrain and very gutsy of him.”

While in Kabul, Nabi Tanha, who has appeared on the Kabul stage and has directed and acted in several local movies, was cast in the role of Ali, who is both Baba’s servant and Hassan’s father. The veteran Afghan actors Abdul Qadir Farookh and Maimoona Ghizal also joined the cast as General Taheri and Jamilla, the San Francisco-based parents of Amir’s wife, Soraya. Abdul Salam Yusoufzai, an electrical engineer and furniture maker who has dabbled in the Afghan film industry, was cast as the adult Assef. In addition, numerous amateur Afghans, most of whom had never acted before, let alone been in front of a camera, were cast in other supporting roles in the film.

Kate Dowd tried to prepare the actors for the often-surprising experience of their auditions. “Many of the Afghan actors have been influenced by Bollywood and have a much more theatrical style, so I had a few sessions with the ones I liked before I introduced them to Marc,” she explains. “In the end about 75% of the actors in the film came from Kabul and we were very happy about that.”

***From Boys to Grown-ups:
Casting the Adult Leads***

Meanwhile, the filmmakers also set out on an extensive global search to find a mix of actors who could embody the complex, intercontinental lives of the main adult characters, including: the San Francisco writer whom Amir ultimately grows up to become; his noble but stubborn father Baba, who comes to find pride in Amir, yet holds back a secret about their past; Rahim Khan, the wise friend who gives life-altering advice to Amir; Amir’s wife Soraya, whose love helps him to make the decision to return to Afghanistan; and Farid, the driver who will take him into the heart of Taliban territory on the journey of his life. They scoured the U.S., Europe, Turkey and Iran, ultimately pulling together a remarkably diverse, yet highly accomplished, roster of men and women who each came to the project with a very personal relationship to the story.

The most important part of all was that of the adult Amir, whose momentary failing as a child will cause a heavy stone of shame to weigh down his heart throughout his life until he finally gathers the courage to set things right. Amir's journey will take him through many of life's core experiences – from experiencing loss to finding love, from realizing his dreams to closely escaping death, from forgiving his own human flaws to ultimately, paying the debt he owes to the man he comes to understand should have always have been his brother.

To play this central role the filmmakers chose Khalid Adballa, who had come to Horberg's attention when he made an auspicious motion picture debut in *UNITED 93* in the haunting role of the hijacker Ziad Jarrah. "A real piece of serendipity occurred when we were working on *UNITED 93*, which SKE co-financed with Universal," explains Horberg. "There was a young actor who was part of that brilliant ensemble who had made a deep impression on me: Khalid Abdalla. I recommended that Marc and Kate check him out."

The 25 year-old actor of Egyptian ancestry then blew Forster away in his audition. "I thought he was charismatic and brilliant," says the director. "What's going on in his eyes is tremendous and he can say vast amounts while being completely still. He conveyed all the layers I ever imagined Amir to have, and you see in him the spirit of a writer."

"Khalid is an extraordinary young man and what he has done to reinvent himself as Amir in this film is just mind-boggling," adds Rebecca Yeldham. "He really has become the character in the most heartfelt way and has given us a very sensitive and noble Amir."

For his part, Abdalla was deeply drawn to this complex character, who like all of us, is driven by a yearning to be understood and loved. "I believe the burden Amir carries is on account of his love," he says. "He did something that's inexcusable, and some will blame him, but he was just a kid, and I think the guilt he carries suggests that ultimately, his sense of things is right. To me his personal journey to confront his past and live up to what his father wanted from him, and to live up to all that Rahim Khan hoped for from him, is a very courageous one."

Prior to starting production on **THE KITE RUNNER**, Abdalla had never spoken a word of Dari, but he would have to speak both fluent Dari and English in the film, so he spent an entire month living in Kabul intensively learning the language. He succeeded to the extent that members of the Afghan community on the production couldn't tell he wasn't an Afghan. Abdalla did more than just absorb the language; he toured the city every day, soaking up the culture, and even receiving first-hand lessons in Afghan kite flying.

"When I was in Kabul I let the novel be my tour guide," recalls Abdalla. "I went through the book and sought out every single detail of place, culture or food in Kabul and then went see what all these things looked like, tasted like or felt like."

Khaled Hosseini was very impressed with the commitment and passion Abdalla brought to creating his portrait of Amir. “In my mind right now I can’t think of the adult Amir without thinking of Khalid Abdalla,” he muses. “It would be a great injustice if I didn’t mention the amazing thing he managed to pull off in going to Kabul for a month and learning the Dari language to the point that he is utterly and completely conversant. But most of all, when he went before the camera, the burden, the uncertainty, the trepidation, the guilt and troubled nature of Amir just came to life. He became somebody who is not comfortable in his own skin -- which is not like him at all in real life.”

Much of Amir’s psyche has been formed in the shadow of his proud, strong-willed, academic father, Baba, who flees Afghanistan with his son when the Soviet Invasion threatens their world. To play the man whose love the young Amir feels he can never quite win, the filmmakers chose Iranian actor Homayoun Ershadi, who was educated in architecture at the University of Venice but presently lives in Tehran. Ershadi began acting in 1993 and it was his lead role in the acclaimed Iranian film *A TASTE OF CHERRY*, winner of the Palme d’Or at the Cannes Film Festival, which launched his professional career.

Ershadi was challenged with creating a man who is fiercely intelligent and decent yet unable to connect with the son who he sees as so unlike him – only to come around years later to find a connection with him and express his love. “When I met Homayoun, I immediately felt there was an emotional quality in him that was very important for the character of Baba,” comments Forster. “If he didn’t have that ability to make people care for him in his most crucial scenes later in his life, then his strong characterization in the beginning of the film would not work. Homayoun makes that transition beautifully.”

A fan of the novel, Ershadi traveled all the way to Kabul to convince Forster he was right for the role. “I think one of the reasons Marc chose me is that he saw I’m acting from inside. I’m not acting from outside with my face or my body,” says Ershadi. Of his character’s transformation over the years, he says: “Baba is a very strong man but the problem with Baba is he doesn’t see himself in his son Amir. He sees himself more in Hassan than in Amir. He loves both of them and wants to see himself in Amir but he doesn’t so it makes him angry. In the end, everything has changed and Baba no longer needs to see himself in Amir. He’s a real father who shows his love.”

Khaled Hosseini was won over by Ershadi’s portrayal. “In the novel, Baba is this 6’5” guy who wrestles bears and he’s this big, larger-than-life character and Homayoun is not that,” he notes. “But he still conveys that gravitas, that sense of strength and presence. And when you see him scold Amir on the screen, you get the sense that this is truly somebody to be reckoned with.”

Meanwhile, to play Baba’s judicious friend, Rahim Kahn, who becomes the catalyst for Amir’s one last shot at redemption, the filmmakers turned to Shaun Toub, who gave a riveting performance as Farad in the Oscar®-winning *CRASH*. “The first time I saw Shaun Toub in person, I instantly thought of him as

Rahim Khan,” says Forster. “He has that mix of calmness, wisdom and kindness. Rahim speaks the truth and he is about the truth – and Shaun had all the qualities that could embody and convey his spirit and soul.”

Toub admires the way Rahim handles Amir’s emotions, as both a boy and a young man. “Rahim Khan is there to hold Amir’s hand, get him through the tough days, and make sure the love between Baba and him stays there,” he observes. “It’s really important to him to also make Baba understand that Amir is just not like him. I think he also helps Amir to understand that Baba truly does love him.”

Says Khaled Hosseini: “In the novel, Baba and Rahim Khan are life-long friends who know each other’s secrets, each other’s strengths and weaknesses and they’ve developed this shorthand language between them. Homayoun Ershadi and Shaun Toub have this same chemistry and rapport. They convince you these are people who have a great love and friendship between them.”

Also joining the cast is Atossa Leoni, an actress of Afghan and Iranian descent who has worked in film, television and theatre throughout North America and Europe, in the role of Soraya, who marries the adult Amir and supports him with great love on his journey to find himself. “Soraya is a very honest character,” says Marc Forster, “and for me Atossa really embodies that. She reveals a woman of many different layers: a traditional Afghan woman living in America, a portrait informed by being half Afghan and half Iranian herself, as well as someone with a wilder side. Not only did I feel all the turmoil in her character’s life but also a genuine connection between her and Amir.”

Says Leoni of the role: “I really admire Soraya and feel like I’ve learned so much from her. She’s sensitive, vulnerable and strong at the same time, and she’s a very classic female character. She has that ability to put admiration onto her husband without losing herself at the same time, and I find that very extraordinary. Her love story is a kind of search and I think a lot of people will identify with that search.”

Rounding out the main cast in the role of Farid, who leads Amir through a perilous Afghanistan during the time of the Taliban, is Saïd Taghmaoui, a seasoned actor of Moroccan ancestry who lives in France. Forster had seen him in “La Haine” and “Three Kings” and been impressed with his work. “He has an incredible power and strength. Saïd was a boxer and came from the street, lived on the street, and understands street life which was key for Farid,” the director comments.

Taghmaoui loved the part his character plays in Amir’s quest to face up to the consequences of his past. “He’s like a mirror to Amir,” he comments. “Farid is very frank, very real and very simple, and he tells the truth. It’s difficult to hear the truth especially when a guy like Amir is on his way to redemption. But when Farid brings Amir to see his old enemy Assef, he knows Amir has to face this alone to get back his respect and dignity and redeem himself.”

When he saw the entire cast assembled on the set as the living, breathing characters who had for so long existed only in his imagination, Khaled Hosseini was taken aback. “When I wrote the novel, I had a very clear mental image of what these characters looked like, how they walked, how they looked at you,”

he says. “But once I walked on the set, it was as if none of that existed. Suddenly my own mental image was supplanted and replaced by the faces, mannerisms, rhythm and speech of these actors. That speaks volumes about their ability as performers. It’s a remarkable thing that happened.”

***From Afghanistan To Uighur:
Filming A Lost Kabul in The People’s Republic of China***

From the earliest stages of “The Kite Runner,” the question of where to shoot the film loomed over the production. The story would require the wholesale re-creation of several disparate worlds that no longer exist, including the vibrant Kabul of the 1970s – steeped in the thrilling and exotic atmosphere of many cultures freely co-mingling -- which was all but eradicated during the Soviet invasion; and the Taliban-ravaged Kabul of 2000, at a time when the repressed country had become a dark shadow of its former self.

But where could the filmmakers possibly find the landscapes, architecture and settings of 3,000 year-old Kabul, the utterly unique Silk Road frontier town, in a place also capable of handling the logistical needs of a major film production? E. Bennett Walsh spent a year exploring some 20 different potential countries, but the surprise answer ultimately turned out to be Western China. Walsh was no stranger to China, having brought Quentin Tarantino’s KILL BILL VOL. 1 to shoot in that country, but it was in far-flung Central Asia, in the vast, sparsely populated Xinjiang Province, where he had never shot before, that he found the elements needed to realize Marc Forster’s vision for **THE KITE RUNNER**.

Walsh sent back photographs that revealed a majestic and haunting desert landscape between the ancient cities of Kashgar and Tashkurgan. They were starkly reminiscent of Afghanistan, which not coincidentally, it borders. This far-flung section of the fabled Silk Road (once the link between the Roman and Chinese Empires) is today a vibrant Islamic centre within Chinese society, where Indian and Persian influences abound. In the desert oasis city of Kashgar, a melting pot of cultures and colorful bazaars lend magic to a terrain that varies from the arid moonscapes of the Taklimakan Desert (which ominously means “enter and never leave”), to the dizzyingly high mountain ranges that surround it.

Still, bringing a feature film production to this remote area would be no easy undertaking. “Once we decided on China, there was an enormous amount of scouting and location work to actually come up with a plan,” says Walter F. Parkes. “That was as exciting and harrowing a ten days as I ever spent scouting a location. I don’t think I’ve been to a place that felt more foreign. There were moments, particularly when we would visit markets outside the main city, that you honestly felt you stepped into the 18th Century.”

When Marc Forster journeyed to Kashgar, he knew, that despite the obvious challenges the location would create, he had found the production’s main home. “I’d seen lots of photos of Kabul in the 1970s and, after visiting Kashgar, I knew it was right. It had everything we needed to make it real and authentic including the architecture, landscape and scope, as well as the extras,” he says.

Old Town Kashgar would ultimately serve as the prime location for most of the scenes of Kabul in the 1970s and in the year 2000, while the side streets across from the impressive and massive Id Kah Mosque stood in for Pakistani streets in Peshawar including Rahim Khan's tea house. Constructed in 1442, the mosque is one of the largest in China, able to accommodate 10,000 worshippers.

For the dangerous escape of Baba and the young Amir from Afghanistan to Pakistan, as well as Amir's journey back again decades later with Farid to rescue Sohrab, the production shot on locations along the famed Karakoram Highway, the highest paved road in the world, which weaves precariously through some of the most breathtaking mountain passes in the world. Additional scenes were shot at Karakul Lake at 13,000 feet of elevation, where cast and crew were housed in yurts, the typical tent-like homes of that area.

The smaller city of Tashkurgan, known as "the Stone City" for its 2,000 year-old ruins, became the setting for additional street scenes of Kabul in the 1970s as well as the haunting Kabul Cemetery, which Amir visits so movingly on his return. In addition, the production filmed for two weeks in Beijing -- which momentarily became San Francisco. Three hours outside of Beijing, the production shot the terrifying scene of a Taliban stoning in Kabul's Ghazi Stadium at the Baoding Stadium with 1,000 extras filling the seats.

After shooting nearly three months in China, the production moved on to the real San Francisco where they filmed the kite scenes that bookend the film at Berkeley's Cesar Chavez Marina Park.

Keeping the entire production focused and tightly knit in the midst of long journeys and profound culture shock became a key component of the production. "I think the story was what kept the cast and crew going," says E. Bennett Walsh. "When things got hard, people knew they were telling a universal story that was important. Knowing we had something very special kept us together through the hard patches."

Forster's distinctive mix of skillful organization and openness to spontaneity also helped to keep the difficult path smooth. "Marc is a meticulously well-planned filmmaker and he pre-visualized the movie in his mind to an amazing degree," says William Horberg. "He used all of that but also had the ability to really let go to find those happy accidents and serendipitous moments."

"Shooting in these areas, you had to be open to the idea that anything could happen at any moment," acknowledges Forster. "You had to be open to altering plans very quickly. It was the first time I felt pushed to the edge as a filmmaker because at times I wasn't sure what was going to happen tomorrow."

Intent upon leaving no negative trace on the local populace wherever the production traveled, Forster was thrilled at the cooperation that greeted the production at every turn. "It's pretty amazing the impact the film had on areas where people hadn't seen movie cameras, let alone too many Westerners," continues the director. "There was a lot of curiosity, but overall they were just very welcoming and warm."

With over 28 countries represented on the cast and crew, the languages spoken on the set spanned from English (from the US, UK, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa) to Dari and Pashto, Farsi (from Iran), Urdu (from Pakistan), Uighur (from Xinjiang Province), Tajik (Tashkurgan), and Mandarin and

Cantonese Chinese, in addition to German, Spanish, French and Italian. It was sometimes only through charades that communication and collaboration somehow kept flowing.

Notes Rebecca Yeldham: “It did provide great humor at times, as you witnessed a Swiss director communicating to an Afghan Dari interpreter as well as to his 1st AD who is American and to a Chinese AD who speaks Mandarin, who is communicating to an AD who is speaking Uighur, who is communicating to extras who maybe only speak Tajik!”

Sums up Forster: “I’m very proud of the cast and crew who gave their best even under these tough circumstances. I was very pleased with the performances, the landscape and everything we found in Western China, but truly it was the human connections we encountered there that shone.”

From the Epic to the Intimate:
The Design of *THE KITE RUNNER*

The full power of **THE KITE RUNNER** is brought to life not only through the performances but also via the painstaking design of the film, which attempts to bring a world and a culture rarely experienced by a Western audience to the big screen. To achieve this, Marc Forster recruited a crack team of artisans, including director of photography Robert Schaefer, ASC and costume designer Frank Fleming – both of whom have previously worked with Forster – as well as production designer Carlos Conti.

When it came to the film’s visual design, Marc Forster’s modus operandi continued to be the search for authenticity – which meant finding the means both to recreate the external details of Kabul and the internal emotions that underlie the mood of the story. He explains: “The challenge was in using color contrast, images and angles to convey the rich emotions of Hosseini’s story while also achieving a completely naturalistic look.”

The considerable task of recreating two Kabuls – one a burgeoning, colorful city in the 1970s, the other a shattered place of fear and oppression in 2000 -- in the Western Chinese boomtown of Kashgar fell to production designer Carlos Conti, whose credits include *THE MOTORCYCLE DIARIES* and the Ellis Island epic *THE GOLDEN DOOR*. “We went after Carlos because when you look at his body of work, he has done amazing things on films of limited resources, where he’s gone out into the real world and found ways to modify and build on that to create great verisimilitude,” says William Horberg. “Carlos was masterful in his ingenuity on this film, finding details in China that have a real truth to them.”

Continues Rebecca Yeldham, who worked with Conti on *THE MOTORCYCLE DIARIES*: “I’ve had the pleasure of seeing over and over again how Carlos so selflessly services the production with his relentless attention to detail. His is the kind of design that is often underappreciated because of its simple elegance and because it is so singularly dedicated to serving the movie as a whole.”

Marc Forster explains their process: “Carlos and I began by looking at images and reference pictures of Kabul and Peshawar and by the time we came to China, we had a very clear vision of what we wanted. We developed the idea of using contrasting colors -- to make the 1970s as beautiful as possible and then by 2000, to make everything gray, draining the color out of it to reflect the starkness of the times.”

Once in Kashgar, one of Conti’s biggest challenges was finding the right location for Baba’s house, which represents the epitome of Kabul’s sophistication, class and style in its heyday. “We looked at a lot of photographs of homes in the once prestigious Wazir Akbar Khan District of Kabul, where Baba and Amir lived in the story,” says Conti. “We then created our own house in the architectural style of Kabul in the 1970s -- but with the color schemes that we envisioned for the movie. We built the entire house in 8 weeks on an empty lot that previously had donkeys, sheep and chickens there. We built every piece of furniture and even created the paintings. The Chinese and Uighur crew were terrific.”

The true test came when Khaled Hosseini visited the set. “The house transported me right back to 1970s Kabul,” remarks the author. “Baba’s House is a very faithful re-imagining of what a house in Kabul belonging to people of a certain economic caliber looked like. It took me back to that time when Kabul was a cosmopolitan city, Afghanistan was at peace, and the image of Kabul that a lot of people are now familiar with did not even exist. It was moving to see the house, the city and the era of my childhood not necessarily replicated but re-imagined. It evokes a happier time in the country’s past.”

Another major location the production design team labored over was Kabul’s Kite Square, in which the spectacular kite-fighting tournament turns all eyes to the sky for the suspenseful battles. The scene was shot in Kashgar’s Ostangboye Square. “When I saw the square for the first time, I knew it was where the kite tournament should be. It was pure instinct,” says Forster.

The scene was a special thrill for Khaled Hosseini to watch unfold before his very eyes. “The kite flying tournament had to be one of the central visuals of the movie,” he says. “But what took me a couple of pages to write took an army to film, with 300 extras and people on rooftops, streets and phone poles. I was just in awe of how Marc was able to manage the logistics of what seemed to me unmanageable. I think in the final image, people will be able to really see how beautiful it was to have Kabul with the snow on the rooftops and children running around, and these multi-colored kites jostling in the sky.”

When Amir and Farid return to a very different Kabul, living under the steel-fisted Taliban rule, Conti’s idea was to contrast the bursting energy of children playing in the streets and vendors hawking their wares in the 1970s with an eerie, pained silence and stark nothingness. “I discussed with Marc the idea of having very little in the frame and no cars in the scene when Amir and Farid return. That creates a strong impression of a time when no one was allowed to fly kites, play music, watch television or go to the movies. It’s an image that, in a few seconds, allows you to understand what happened in Afghanistan. My goal was to work in these simple, strong images throughout the design,” he explains.

Also contributing to the naturalistic look of the film is the powerful work of director of photography Roberto Schaefer, who has collaborated with Forster on all his films, garnering a BAFTA nomination for FINDING NEVERLAND. Schaefer mixed the raw and the epic, relying largely on the existing lighting conditions available to him in Kashgar while at the same time filling the screen with sweeping imagery rife with awe-inspiring landscapes, textures and colors.

“The budget wasn’t epic but Marc and I both thought this should still feel like an epic film,” says Schaefer. “He wanted it to be as big and rich as possible, so I made the most out of everything that was available to us in order to show off the different periods, locations and landscapes to give the film scale.”

Shooting in the rugged deserts of Xianjiang posed numerous challenges, as the harsh reality behind the stunning vistas was often searing heat, lens-clouding dirt and the occasional rogue dust storm. With his reliance on natural light, Schaefer also often found himself doing battle with the sun’s ever-shifting directions, but he always found solutions. “Tough as they were, I never felt intimidated by the locations,” he explains. “We just figured out how to make them work the best way possible.”

Ultimately, the design and imagery of **THE KITE RUNNER** became far more than just the backdrop to the story. Rather, they are integral to the intended effect of allowing the audience to leave behind the familiar world for another. “I think what this movie can do is to make Afghanistan a real place for people,” says Khaled Hosseini. “I hope when people walk away from seeing **THE KITE RUNNER**, Afghanistan will seem to them like a place with hopes and illusions and dreams and wishes just like everywhere else in the world.”

Sums up Marc Forster: “In telling the story of **THE KITE RUNNER** we all went through our own emotional and personal journey that was filled with struggles and changes and realizations, and sometimes not knowing what was going to happen the next day. We got a glimpse of lives that are incredible, painful and hard in an Afghanistan that has endured 30 years of war. But at the same time, we encountered so many people with extraordinary resilience. And that is what stays with you – that people always have this ability to rise above.”

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ABOUT THE FILMMAKERS

MARC FORSTER (Director)

Prior to the *THE KITE RUNNER*, his most recent directorial endeavor was the imaginative comedy, *STRANGER THAN FICTION*. Starring Will Ferrell, Maggie Gyllenhaal, Dustin Hoffman, Emma Thompson and Queen Latifah, *STRANGER THAN FICTION* premiered at the 2006 Toronto International Film Festival to critical and audience acclaim, culminating in a Golden Globe® nomination for Ferrell.

In 2001, Marc Forster directed *MONSTER'S BALL*, which was a critical and commercial success, receiving two Oscar® nominations with Halle Berry winning for Best Actress. The film offered a powerful glimpse into the legacies of race, loss and redemption, as well as commanding performances by Berry, Billy Bob Thornton, Heath Ledger, Peter Boyle and Sean Combs. In *FINDING NEVERLAND*, Forster recreated turn-of-the-century London,

crafting the semi-autobiographical story of the inspiring friendship between J.M. Barrie, author of Peter Pan, and the four young boys and single mother who lived next door to him. Starring Johnny Depp, Kate Winslet, Radha Mitchell, Dustin Hoffman and Julie Christie, “Finding Neverland” was one of the most celebrated films of 2004, touching audiences and critics alike as well as being recognized as Best Film of the Year by the National Board of Review. The film received seven Academy Award® nominations, five Golden Globe® nominations, and 11 BAFTA® nominations, all including Best Picture. Forster himself acquired a Best Director nomination by his peers at the DGA.

Forster’s next film was the reality-bending thriller STAY, starring Ewan McGregor, Naomi Watts and Ryan Gosling. Forster earlier came to the fore with the award-winning MONSTER’S BALL, which received two Oscar® nominations with Halle Berry winning for Best Actress. The film offered a powerful glimpse into the legacies of race, loss and redemption, as well as commanding performances by Berry, Billy Bob Thornton, Heath Ledger, Peter Boyle and Sean Combs. The seeds of Forster’s aesthetic were sown in his first film, EVERYTHING PUT TOGETHER, which he also co-wrote. A psychological horror story, EVERYTHING PUT TOGETHER premiered at the 2000 Sundance Film Festival before earning Forster the Movado Someone to Watch/Independent Spirit Award.

Born in Germany in 1969 and raised in Switzerland, Forster came to the United States in 1990 to attend NYU Film School, graduating in 1993.

He is currently shooting the 22nd James Bond film for Sony in London, which will star Daniel Craig as Bond and is slated for release in November 2008.

DAVID BENIOFF (Screenwriter)

David Benioff worked as a nightclub bouncer in San Francisco, a radio DJ in Wyoming, and an English teacher/wrestling coach in Brooklyn before selling his first novel, The 25th Hour. He later wrote the screenplay for Spike Lee’s adaptation starring Edward Norton and Phillip Seymour Hoffman. Viking published in 2005 Benioff’s book of short stories, When the Nines Roll Over.

His screen credits include TROY, directed by Wolfgang Petersen, and STAY, directed by Marc Forster. Jim Sheridan will commence production in November on Benioff’s screenplay BROTHERS, and Hugh Jackman is set to reprise his role as the clawed mutant in Benioff’s WOLVERINE. Viking will publish his upcoming novel, City of Thieves, in May 2008.

KHALED HOSSEINI (Novelist)

Khaled Hosseini was born in Kabul, Afghanistan in 1965. He is the oldest of five

children, and his mother was a teacher of Farsi and History at a large girls high school in Kabul. In 1976, Khaled's family was relocated to Paris, France, where his father was assigned a diplomatic post in the Afghan embassy. The assignment would return the Hosseini family in 1980, but by then Afghanistan had already witnessed a bloody communist coup and the Soviet invasion. Khaled's family, instead, asked for and was granted political asylum in the U.S.A. He moved to San Jose, California with his family in 1980. Khaled attended Santa Clara University and graduated from the University of California, San Diego School of Medicine. From 1996 until December 2004, he had been in practice as an internist. In addition to his writing, Khaled presently is working as a goodwill envoy for UNHRC, the United Nation's refugee agency. He is married and has two children (a boy and a girl, Haris and Farah). The Kite Runner was his debut novel.

Khaled Hosseini's new book, A Thousand Splendid Suns, was published in the spring of 2007 and quickly ascended to the top of the bestseller lists.

WILLIAM HORBERG (Producer)

William Horberg has been President of Production at Sidney Kimmel Entertainment since August 2005. During his tenure, the company has made UNITED 93, BREACH, DEATH AT A FUNERAL, CHARLIE BARTLETT, MARRIED LIFE, TALK TO ME, LARS AND THE REAL GIRL and the upcoming SYNECDOCHE, ADVENTURELAND and MANAGEMENT.

William came to Sidney Kimmel Entertainment after two years heading Wonderland Films, his independent production company that had a first look deal with DreamWorks SKG. Prior to Wonderland, Horberg was partnered with Sydney Pollack and Anthony Minghella in their film and television production company Mirage Enterprises for eleven years. During his tenure at Mirage, he produced Minghella's COLD MOUNTAIN, his earlier film THE TALENTED MR. RIPLEY, as well as THE QUIET AMERICAN, HEAVEN, SLIDING DOORS, BLOW DRY and SEARCHING FOR BOBBY FISCHER. In television, he was executive producer of "Poodle Springs," directed by Bob Rafelson for HBO, and was the creator and producer of "Fallen Angels," an anthology series of hard-boiled crime stories for Showtime. Prior to working at Mirage, Horberg joined Paramount Pictures in 1987 as a Creative Executive and was eventually promoted to Senior Vice-President of Production. During his tenure at Paramount he oversaw the development and production of such films as THE ADDAMS FAMILY, DEAD AGAIN, REGARDING HENRY, NAKED GUN 2 1/2, SOAPDISH, GODFATHER III and GHOST, among others.

WALTER F. PARKES (Producer) and LAURIE MACDONALD (Executive Producer)

Walter F. Parkes and Laurie MacDonald are two of the most active motion picture producers working in Hollywood today. Films produced or executive produced include the MEN IN BLACK series, THE RING series, CATCH ME IF YOU CAN, GLADIATOR, MINORITY REPORT, AWAKENINGS, AMISTAD and LEMONY SNICKET'S A SERIES OF UNFORTUNATE EVENTS. They have collaborated as producers with director Steven Spielberg on four films: AMISTAD, MINORITY REPORT, CATCH ME IF YOU CAN and TERMINAL.

Earlier in this year, Parkes and MacDonald produced THE LOOKOUT, launching the directing debut of Scott Frank. Next up for the team is the screen adaptation of Stephen

Sondheim's award-winning musical thriller SWEENEY TODD, starring Johnny Depp and to be directed by Tim Burton.

In addition to their producing work, Parkes and MacDonald served as the co-heads of DreamWorks Pictures from the inception of the studio until mid-2005. They were responsible for the development and production of the company's diverse slate of film which achieved both box-office success and critical acclaim including – for only the second time in the history of the Motion Picture Academy – three consecutive Best Picture Oscar® winners: AMERICAN BEAUTY, GLADIATOR and A BEAUTIFUL MIND, the latter two produced in partnership with Universal. Other critics and commercial successes produced during their tenure include Cameron Crowe's ALMOST FAMOUS, Robert Zemeckis' WHAT LIES BENEATH, Adam McKay's ANCHORMAN: THE LEGEND OF RON BURGUNDY, Michael Mann's COLLATERAL and Steven Spielberg's Academy Award® and Golden Globe® winning drama SAVING PRIVATE RYAN, which was the top-grossing film domestically of 1998.

MacDonald began her producing career as a documentary and news producer at KRON, the NBC affiliate in San Francisco. She later joined Columbia Pictures where she served as Vice President of Production. After four years, she started a production company with Walter Parkes. Immediately prior to joining DreamWorks, MacDonald oversaw development and production at Amblin Entertainment.

Parkes is a three-time Academy Award® nominee, earning his first nominations as the director/production of the 1978 documentary CALIFORNIA REICH, which exposed neo-Nazi activities in California. He garnered his second Oscar® nomination for writing (with Lawrence Lasker) the original screenplay for WAR GAMES, and his third nod for his work as producer on the Best Picture nominee AWAKENINGS. Parkes also co-wrote and produced the thriller SNEAKERS starring Robert Redford and Sidney Poitier.

REBECCA YELDHAM (Producer/2nd Unit Director)

Rebecca Yeldham is an independent producer currently working on a variety of feature and documentary projects including the recently completed KITE RUNNER and director Walter Salles' next two features, LINHA DE PASSE (which just completed production in Brazil) and ON THE ROAD (which will shoot in '08). Yeldham also served as Executive Producer on THE MOTORCYCLE DIARIES (directed by Walter Salles and released in the US by Focus Features). The film received two Academy Award® nominations and won an Oscar® for Best Original Song, and a Golden Globe® nomination for Best Foreign Film.

Prior to the production of THE MOTORCYCLE DIARIES, Yeldham was Senior Vice President, Production at FilmFour (the film division of the British broadcaster Channel 4) and ran its U.S. production wing. She had previously served as Senior Programmer of the Sundance Film Festival (1996-2001) overseeing world cinema programming and selecting dramatic and documentary features for the festival. She also served as Associate Director of the Sundance Institute's International Programs organizing initiatives to support screenwriters, producers and directors throughout the world.

In the '90's Yeldham worked extensively in the areas of independent and international cinema developing, acquiring and working in production on dramatic and documentary films. Between 1990 and 1994, she worked for the New York based independent distributor Fox/Lorber

Associates as the Director of Acquisitions and Business Affairs acquiring such films as John Woo's THE KILLER and George Sluizer's THE VANISHING.

Yeldham currently serves on IFP/LA's Executive Board and has served on several international film festival juries and selection committees, including; the Edinburgh Film Festival, the Independent Spirit Awards, and the Buenos Aires International Film Festival. Born and raised in Australia, she studied law at Sydney University transferring to Brown University's Modern Culture and Media (Art/Semiotics) department where she graduated magna cum laude.

E. BENNETT WALSH (Producer/Unit Production Manager)

E. Bennett Walsh has worked in numerous capacities in the film world – from producer to cameraman to art director. He recently served as producer on DreamWorks' DISTURBIA and, in addition to producing THE KITE RUNNER has executive produced GHOST RIDER, starring Nicholas Cage and Eva Mendes. He previously was executive producer on Quentin Tarantino's Vol. 1 & 2 of KILL BILL as well on Columbia Pictures' ENOUGH. Bennett was co-producer on GLITTER and TURN IT UP for producers Madonna and Guy Oseary, and the well-received Wall Street thriller BOILER ROOM. He was co-producer/unit production manager on COMING SOON, TOO TIRED TO DIE and producer/UPM on A BROTHER'S KISS, produced by Norman Jewison.

SIDNEY KIMMEL (Executive Producer)

Sidney Kimmel is chairman and CEO of Sidney Kimmel Entertainment, the Los Angeles and New York-based production, finance and distribution company. Active in the motion picture industry for more than 20 years, Kimmel is responsible for such pictures as BLAME IT ON RIO 9½ WEEKS and THE EMPORER'S CLUB. His passion as an independent producer eventually led to the founding of Sidney Kimmel Entertainment in October 2004. Producing up to ten features per year, the company works with esteemed filmmaking talent to create quality, commercial films.

Kimmel and Sidney Kimmel Entertainment, in association with Universal Pictures, recently financed Paul Greengrass' critically acclaimed UNITED 93 as well as executive producing Billy Ray's BREACH, starring Chris Cooper, Ryan Phillippe and Laura Linney released February 16, 2007. Kimmel also produced Nick Cassavetes' ALPHA DOG, the controversial film starring Emile Hirsch, Bruce Willis, Sharon Stone and Justin Timberlake and Kasi Lemmons' TALK TO ME, starring Don Cheadle and Chiwetel Ejiofor; and Frank Oz's DEATH AT A FUNERAL, starring Matthew Macfadyen, Peter Dinklage and Ewen Bremner.

Forthcoming are: Jon Poll's CHARLIE BARTLETT, starring Anton Yelchin, Robert Downey Jr. and Hope Davis; Ira Sachs' MARRIAGE, starring Pierce Brosnan, Chris Cooper, Patricia Clarkson and Rachel McAdams; and Craig Gillespie's LARS AND THE REAL GIRL, starring Ryan Gosling.

Kimmel saw the release of COPYING BEETHOVEN, directed by Agnieszka Holland and starring Ed Harris, through MGM on October 13, 2006. This was the first film released under Sidney Kimmel Entertainment's distribution deal at MGM.

In addition to his success in filmed entertainment, Kimmel founded Jones Apparel Group in 1975, which has since grown into a \$4.5 billion diversified fashion industry empire. Still active as the chairman of Jones' board of directors, he has also established the Sidney Kimmel Foundation and its subsidiary, the Sidney Kimmel Foundation for Cancer Research, which is one of the nation's largest individual donors to cancer research. Kimmel is extremely involved in philanthropic endeavors benefiting his hometown of Philadelphia as well as Jewish education and continuity. He recently oversaw the opening of the Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts in Philadelphia, home of the world-renowned Philadelphia Orchestra. He is also a partner in Cipriani International, the acclaimed international restaurant and catering establishment, and is a part owner of The Miami Heat.

SAM MENDES (Executive Producer)

Sam Mendes founded and ran the award winning Donmar Warehouse. During his tenure, Donmar productions included "Assassins," "Translation," "Cabaret," "Glengarry Glen Ross," "The Glass Menagerie," "Company," "Habeas Corpus," "The Front Page," "The Blue Room," "To the Green Fields Beyond," "Uncle Vanya" and "Twelfth Night" which transferred to The Brooklyn Academy of Music in 2004. He has also produced in tandem with his associate Caro Newling over 60 plays, many of which have transferred to New York including "Electra," "True West," "Juno and The Paycock," and the Tony Award winning "The Real Thing." He also directed "Gypsy" with Bernadette Peters on Broadway. His current production "The Vertical Hour" starring Julianne Moore opened Broadway this past November.

His work for the Royal Shakespeare Company includes "Troilus and Cressida," "The Alchemist," "The Tempest" and "Richard III." For the National Theatre, he directed "The Sea," "The Rise and Fall of Little Voice," "The Birthday Party" and "Othello." In the West End, he directed "The Cherry Orchard," "The Plough and the Stars," "Kean," "London Assurance" and "Oliver!" He also directed the Broadway productions of "Cabaret" which received four Tony Awards including "Best Musical," and David Hare's "The Blue Room" which starred Nicole Kidman.

In 1999, Mendes made his film directorial debut on AMERICAN BEAUTY, for which he received a Golden Globe® Award and the DGA Award for Outstanding Director. The film garnered five Academy Awards® including Best Picture and Mendes received the award for Best Director. In 2002, Mendes brought to life Max Collins graphic novel ROAD TO PERDITION starring Tom Hanks and Paul Newman. The film earned seven Academy Award® nominations and was a big international hit.

Mendes most recently directed the Academy Award® nominated Gulf War memoir JARHEAD, starring Jamie Foxx and Jake Gyllenhall. He recently begun filming the UNTITLED RUFUS WAIWRIGHT PROJECT, which re-creates Judy Garland's 1961 Carnegie Hall performance.

Mendes is a graduate of Magdalen College School in Oxford and the University of Cambridge. Sam married English actress Kate Winslet in 2003 and they have one son together.

JEFF SKOLL (Executive Producer)

Jeff Skoll founded Participant Productions in January 2004 and serves as Chairman.

Skoll's vision for Participant is to create a long term, independent, global media company focused on long term benefit to society. Citing classic films such as TO KILL A MOCKINGBIRD, GANDHI and ERIN BROCKOVICH as examples, Skoll most recently served as executive producer on Participant films GOOD NIGHT AND GOOD LUCK, NORTH COUNTRY, SYRIANA, AMERICAN GUN, AN INCONVENIENT TRUTH, THE WORLD ACCORDING TO SESAME STREET and FAST FOOD NATION.

Skoll has been a leader in technology and philanthropy for many years. In 1996, Skoll joined eBay as its first President and first full-time employee and developed the company's business plan. After helping to bring CEO Meg Whitman to the company in 1998, Skoll became the VP of Strategic Planning and Analysis at eBay and led the company's acquisition, community development and new business efforts through 2001. In the months before eBay went public in 1998, Skoll led the company's effort to give back to the community, creating the eBay Foundation through an allocation of pre-IPO shares, an innovation that inspired a wave of similar commitments nationwide. But Skoll didn't stop there. In 1999, he launched his own philanthropic organization, the Skoll Foundation for which he serves as founder and chairman. He created the foundation in alignment with his core believe that it is in everyone's interest to shift the overwhelming imbalance between the "haves" and the "have-nots." The foundation takes up this challenge by focusing on social entrepreneurs – people who couple innovative ideas with extraordinary determination, tackling the world's toughest problems to make things better for us all.

In five short years, Skoll and the foundation have emerged as social sector leaders; in 2002 through 2005, Skoll was recognized as one of today's most innovative philanthropist by Business Week, and he is frequently cited for his leadership in advancing the works and field of social entrepreneurship. His recent honors and awards include Time Magazine's 100 People of the year (2006), the National Leadership Award for Commonwealth Club Silicon Valley (2004), the Outstanding Philanthropist Award from the Silicon Valley chapter of the International Association of Fundraising Professionals (2002). In addition, in 2003, Jeff was awarded an honorary Doctor of Laws degree from the University of Toronto. In April 2005, Skoll launched the Gandhi Project in partnership with Silicon Valley entrepreneur Kamran Elahian. Working with Palestinian voice actors and artists, an award-winning director dubbed the epic film into Arabic. It is being screen throughout Palestine in order to advance civil society goals of peaceful resistance, self-reliance, economic development and local empowerment, and plans are under way to expand the screenings throughout the Arab world.

Skoll holds a Bachelors degree in Electrical Engineering from the University of Toronto, and an M.B.A. from the Stanford Graduate School of Business.

ROBERTO SCHAEFER, ASC (Director of Photography)

Roberto Schaefer, ASC has worked with director Marc Forster as director of photography on STRANGER THAN FICTION, STAY, FINDING NEVERLAND, MONSTER'S BALL and EVERYTHING PUT TOGETHER. He also shot AT LAST in New Orleans, the first film for director Tom Anton, and served as director of photography on director Christopher Guest's feature films FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION, AT LAST and BEST IN SHOW. Among the many other features he shot are WAITING FOR GUFFMAN, JUST YOUR LUCK, FLIES IN THE HEAD and EDGE OF NIGHT. He also shot the NBC TV pilot "Robbery Homicide Division/LA" with Michael Mann and Stephen Gyllenhaal.

Schaefer majored in conceptual and installation art and minored in photography at art school before transitioning into motion picture production and eventually cinematography. An

avid traveler, Schaefer has crossed seven continents for adventure and work, filming documentaries, commercials and movies in places as varied as Mauritania, Ethiopia, New Guinea, Russia, Peru, Tahiti, Australia, Europe and China.

Roberto began his career as a cameraman shooting documentaries and news on film and video for most of the major European news channels. Moving on to music videos, television commercials and feature films, Schaefer on occasion has returned to video to experiment in new media.

CARLOS CONTI (Production Designer)

Carlos Conti left his hometown of Cordoba in Argentina where he studied astronomy and headed for Paris where he established himself an international reputation as one of cinema's leading production designers. He first collaborated as a set decorator on Jean-Jacques Beineix' celebrated film, DIVA. He thereafter launched his career in production design.

Carlos has designed many of France's most famous and acclaimed films of recent years such as Beineix' BETTY BLUE, Andre Techine's MA SAISON PREFEREE, and Claude Sautet's NELLY ET MONSIEUR ARNAUD. With his experience in contemporary French cinema and his knowledge of filmmaking in Argentina, Carlos served as production designer on THE TANGO LESSON, which was filmed in Buenos Aires and Paris allowing him to rediscover his roots: Argentina and the tango.

Carlos was production designer on MOTORCYCLE DIARIES, which THE KITE RUNNER producer Rebecca Yeldham also produced. With a career in production design, art direction and set decoration spanning over 25 years, Carlos has worked on numerous motion pictures worldwide including THE GOLDEN DOOR, QUEENS, LES SOEURS FACHEES, YES, L'AMERICAN, LE BOULET, LA BOITE, THE MAN WHO CRIED, SIX PACK, QUASIMODO D'EL PARIS, CORAZON ILLUMINADO, PEDALE DOUCE, GAZON MAUDIT, GROSSE FATIGUE, MAX & JEREMIE, LE RETOUR DE CASANOVA, SAM SUFFIT, THE FAVOUR THE WATCH AND THE VERY BIG FISH, UN COEUR QUI BAT, RUE DU BAC, WILD ORCHID, ROSELYNE ET LES LIONS, DROLE D'ENDROIT POUR UNE RENCONTRE, QUELQUES JOURS AVEC MOI, LES KEUFS, JAUNE REVOLVER, SAC DE NOEUDS, MARCHE A L'OMBRE, SARAH, LEGITIME VIOLENCE and FERNAND.

MATT CHESSE' (Film Editor)

Matt Chessé began his creative partnership with Marc Forster on the 2000 film EVERYTHING PUT TOGETHER, and the two have shared a close collaboration for the last six years. His relationship with Forster has yielded MONSTER'S BALL, for which Halle Berry won the Best Actress Oscar®, followed by FINDING NEVERLAND, for which Chessé himself received an Academy Award® nomination for Best Editor. He also cut STAY and STRANGER THAN FICTION for the director. Matt's other credit's include co-producer and editor of the 2005 Sundance film ELLIE PARKER directed by Scott Coffey, and a producer on the documentary BEN JOHNSON: THIRD COWBOY ON THE LEFT by Tom Thurman.

Matt began his editing career making “mixed” tapes for girls he fancied. He elevated this hobby to a fine art, and was pleasantly surprised to discover that this skill set he had developed translated perfectly to film editing. Born into a family of actors, painters, and puppeteers in the San Francisco Bay Area, Matt was raised on steady diet of Spike Jones records, J.D. Salinger novels, and Preston Sturges films. His love of literature won out over his obsession with films, and he planned on becoming a writer. Attending San Francisco State University, he majored in English Literature and minored in Photography, putting himself through college being a production assistant in the San Francisco Bay Area film business. This led to an invitation to relocate to Los Angeles to assist commercial director Peter Kagan at Stiefel and Co., and then an invitation to assist editor Angus Wall at commercial editorial shop Rock, Paper, Scissors.

Bitten by the bug, he began cutting anything he could get his hands on, quickly graduating to full fledged editor under the tutelage of his mentors David Lee and Lauren Zuckerman. A synthesis of his background in film, theater, music and literature, editing proved to be the perfect vehicle for Chessé to express himself, and bring his taste and storytelling chops to the party. In his off hours, he has found time to collaborate with his wife, Gillian and together they have produced two award-winning short girls.

FRANK FLEMING (Costume Designer)

Frank Fleming, who lives in New York City, served as the costume designer on Marc Forster’s STRANGER HAN FICTION, STAY and MONSTER’S BALL, as well as on THE WOODSMAN, NO SUCH THING and the upcoming films AUGUST RUSH, directed by Kristen Sheridan and THE PLEASURE OF YOUR COMPANY, directed by Michael Ian Black.

Fleming also has worked extensively with directors such as Tim Robbins, Steven Spielberg, John Singleton, Michael Apted, Jodie Foster, Brian De Palma, Ridley Scott and Spike Lee, among others. In particular, he participated early in his career in the design of MALCOLM X and AMISTAD, both of which earned Academy Award® nominations for costume designer Ruth E. Carter. Frank’s experience extends to celebrity styling and commercial ventures including highly creative work with Jonathan Glazer (in a series of ads starring Samuel L. Jackson) and Spike Lee.

KATE DOWD (Casting)

Kate Dowd previously worked with Mark Forster casting his feature film FINDING NEVERLAND. Casting for THE KITE RUNNER was a year-long process and the net was spread throughout the world targeting all the Afghan communities. Much territory was covered before heading off to Afghanistan where she spent several months in Kabul searching for the young male leads and supporting characters for THE KITE RUNNER.

Frequently called upon for casting feature films from the U.S. and throughout Europe, Kate’s recent work includes RENDITION (casting in progress), THE HALF LIFE OF TIMOTHY BERIZAN, TRISTAN AND ISOLDE, LOVE AND OTHER DISASTERS and KINGDOM. Other films worked on include PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN, THE BOURNE IDENTITY, GANGS OF NEW YORK, THE BARBER OF SIBERIA, SABRINA, XXX, EVERYTHING IS ILLUMINATED, THE TRUTH ABOUT CHARLIE, THE QUIET

AMERICAN, MOULIN ROUGE, SABINA SPEILRUN, X-MEN, U-571, THE PRINCE OF JUTLAND and MAP OF THE HUMAN HEART.

Kate also worked as Casting Director for the Royal Court Theatre in London and as a Casting Assistant for the Royal National Theatre, and the Casting Associate for the Manhattan Theatre Club in New York.

KRISTINA VOGEL (Hair and Make-Up Department Head)

Kristina Vogel recently served as hair and make-up department head on the motion pictures DISTURBIA, STEALTH and LALAWOOD. Among her many other motion picture credits in make-up are WHEN A STRANGER CALLS, MATCHSTICK MEN, THE PATRIOT, RUSH HOUR 2, MASKED AND ANONYMOUS, A TIME FOR DANCING, BROKEN VOWS, GIDEON'S WEB, SANTA FE, TRUTH OR CONSEQUENCES, THE KILLING JAR and TOMBSTONE.

In 2000, she won an Emmy® for Best Make-Up for "The Martin Short Show," and another Emmy® in 2003 for "Prime Time Glick." In addition, she won a Make-Up Guild Award in 2002 for an A&E Special starring Martin Short. Among her major television credits are "What About Brian," HBO's "The Comeback," Spelling's "Summerland," "Comedy Central's "The Hollow Men," "The Tracy Morgan Show," "Grounded for Life" and earlier in her career, Aaron Spelling's "Beverly Hills 90210," HBO's "Indictment," produced by Oliver Stone," and three seasons of "MAD TV," produced by Quincy Jones.

CHRIS MUNRO (Sound Mixer)

Chris Munro won an Academy Award® for Best Sound for BLACK HAWK DOWN and an Oscar® nomination for THE MUMMY. For BLACK HAWK DOWN, he was also recognized with nominations from BAFTA, Motion Picture Sound Editors (MPSE) and Cinema Audio Society (CAS). In addition, he received a MPSE Golden Reel® Award for SCARLETT, and nominations for two James Bond films: THE WORLD IS NOT ENOUGH and TOMORROW NEVER DIES, as well as a BAFTA nomination for BACKBEAT. Munro was honored with the BKSTS Charles Parkhouse Award for technical achievement and development of the Magless Dailies System.

With over 30 years experience in motion picture sound, Munro, who lives in London, has worked on numerous feature films, among them the James Bond Films CASINO ROYALE and DIE ANOTHER DAY, UNITED 93, LADY IN THE WATER, LARA CROFT: TOMB RAIDER, VAN HELSING, WHERE THE TRUTH LIES, CHOCOLAT, 102 DALMATIONS, EVENT HORIZON, ROBIN HOOD: PRINCE OF THEIVES and A FISH CALLED WANDA.

He recently wrote and directed his first feature length film, BACK IN BUSINESS. Prior to that, he wrote and directed the 30-minute short film "Road to Damascus" which was considered by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts & Sciences in the Short Film category and which played theatrically in Los Angeles to enthusiastic critical and audience reviews.

ALBERTO IGLESIAS (Composer)

Alberto Iglesias, Spain's most acclaimed composer, has solid classical training that includes piano, guitar, composition and counterpoint, as well as electronic music studies. His considerable experience in film composition began in 1980.

He has composed scores for such avant-garde Spanish directors as Pedro Almodóvar (THE FLOWER OF MY SECRET, LIVE FLESH, ALL ABOUT MY MOTHER, TALK TO HER, BAD EDUCATION, VOLVER), Julio Médem (VACAS, LA ARDILLA ROJA, TIERRA LOS AMANTES DEL CÍRCULO POLAR, SEX AND LUCIA), Iciar Bollain (TAKE MY EYES), Bigas Luna (LA CAMARERA DEL TITANIC), and Carlos Saura (DIAPARA).

Mr. Iglesias also composed scores for the films COMANDANTE (Oliver Stone), THE DANCER UPSTAIRS (John Malkovich) and THE CONSTANT GARDENER (Fernando Meirelles).

He recently won the World Soundtrack Award for Soundtrack Composer of the Year and Best Original Soundtrack of the Year (Flanders International Film Festival, Ghent) as well as earlier nominations for both an Academy Award® and a BAFTA® for THE CONSTANT GARDENER, the only Spanish composer to achieve that status. He has also been awarded seven Goyas (last one for VOLVER) and numerous European accolades.

His latest work is the composition of the original film score for Marc Foster's THE KITE RUNNER, based on the best seller by Khaled Hosseini that will be released on December 14, 2007.

He has also been awarded at the San Sebastián Festival this September 2007 with the National Award of Cinematography (Premio Nacional de Cinematografía).

A composer for the concert hall (orchestra, ensemble and string quartet), Alberto Iglesias' work in ballet also includes original scores for dancer/choreographer Nacho Duato and his National Dance Company. He wrote and produced "Cautiva," (1992), "Tabulae" (1994), "Cero Sobre Cero" (1995) and "Self" (1997), all of which were performed worldwide.

ABOUT THE CAST

KHALID ABDALLA ("Amir")

Khalid Abdalla, most recently starred in Paul Greengrass' UNITED 93, winning critical acclaim for his portrayal of Ziad Jarrah. The 25 year-old actor hails from a theatrical background having starred in and directed stage productions in London, Cambridge and Edinburgh.

Khalid became captivated with acting when, at the age of 15, he was approached by his high school teacher to perform in one of his productions He was cast in a lead role and from his

experience on stage, he became interested in further pursuing his acting talents. Two years later in 1998, he directed one of the Edinburgh Festival's most successful five-star productions, "Someone Who'll Watch Over Me." He participated in the Edinburgh Festival starring in productions for four consecutive years among them "Inside the Island," "The Zoo Story," "Bellavita" and "The Imbecile."

His love of the theatre continued at Cambridge University where he studied English Literature and starred in a number of stage productions, among them "Othello," "Equus," "Glengarry Glen Ross," "Britannicus" and "The Duchess of Malfi." Khalid also set up the Ecco Theatre Company at Cambridge for which he directed a production of "Whose Afraid of Virginia Woolf?" and starred in the production of "Bedbound," winning Best Actor from the National Student Drama Festival.

Following Cambridge, Khalid played the lead role in Christopher Marlowe's "Tamburlaine" at London's Rose Theatre, the first play in 400 years on the site of the original Rose Theatre. Next up was his performance in "Cue Deadly," which was mounted theatrically through an Oxford Samuel Beckett Trust Award. He continued his acting career under the tutelage of Philippe Gaulier at the prestigious Ecole Phillippe Gaulier in Paris, home to alumni such as Sacha Baron Cohen, Helena Bonham Carter, Emma Thompson and Roberto Begnini. While attending the school, he was cast in a lead guest role in the acclaimed BBC-TV series "Spooks."

Khalid, who is of Egyptian ancestry, was born in Glasgow and moved at the age of four with his parents, both doctors, to London where he presently resides.

HOMAYOUN ERSHADI ("Baba")

Homayoun Ershadi was born in 1947 in Iran. He studied architecture at the University of Venice in Italy graduating in 1970, and worked in the field before becoming an actor. He moved to Canada in 1980, moved back to Iran in 1991 and now divides his time between both countries visiting his children and grandchildren who live in Vancouver, B.C.

Homayoun began acting in 1993 but launched his professional film-acting career in 1996 with the lead role in A TASTE OF CHERRY, directed by Abass Kiarostami, which won the Palm d'Or at the Cannes Film Festival. Among his other motion picture credits are LOST LOVE, PEAR TREE, which won a Silver Hugo at the Chicago International Film Festival, RED FLOWER, TROUBLESOME, FIFTH REACTION, PORTRAIT OF A LADY FROM FAR AWAY, TRAVEL TO HIDALO, HAVANA FILE and WET DREAM. He has also done numerous TV series and made-for-television movies, as well as short films.

ZEKIRIA EBRAHIMI (Young "Amir")

Zekiria Ebrahimi was born in 1996 in Kabul, Afghanistan and raised by his aunt and uncle since his infancy due to his father being killed by a rocket on the streets of Kabul in wartime. He also has a 14 year-old sister. He enjoys playing soccer and volleyball in his spare time. Zekiria hopes to be either a doctor or an actor when he grows up but whatever path he selects, he wants to be a positive role model to other youngsters in Afghanistan. THE KITE RUNNER is his first acting experience.

AHMAD KHAN MAHMOODZADA (Young “Hassan”)

Ahmad Khan Mahmoodzada, whose family comes from Parwan Province in Afghanistan, was born in 1994. He enjoys soccer, kite flying and bicycling. After school, he works with his father in a sweets shop. His mother is a homemaker, and Ahmad is the oldest of four brothers and one sister. He aspires to be an airline pilot. Ahmad is making his acting debut in “The Kite Runner.”

SHAUN TOUB (“Rahim Khan”)

Shaun Toub gave a haunting and riveting performance as Farhad in the Oscar® winning Best Picture CRASH, which brought him to the forefront with audiences in America and around the world. Prior to starting production on THE KITE RUNNER, Shaun completed his acting assignment as the Virgin Mary’s father in the feature film NATIVITY, released in December 2006. Among his other notable motion picture credits are BAD BOYS, BROKEN ARROW, HBO’s LIVE FROM BAGHDAD and PATH TO PARADISE.

He has a recurring role as Jerry Sawyer on the CBS-TV series "Smith," starring Ray Liotta and Virginia Madsen. In addition, Shaun stars as a key FBI informant in the ABC-TV six-hour miniseries "Path to 9/11" starring Keitel and Patrician Heaton. He also has received accolades for several of his appearances in over 100 television episodes including “Seinfeld,” “The Sopranos,” “ER,” “Just Shoot Me,” “Nash Bridges,” “JAG,” “The Bold and the Beautiful,” “The New Adventures of Superman” and “Married With Children,” as well as various made-for-television movies.

Of Persian heritage, Shaun Toub was raised in Manchester, England. At the age of 14, he moved to Switzerland and after a two-year stay there, he went to Nashua, New Hampshire where he completed his last year of high school. Shaun graduated from University of Southern California in Los Angeles and through a chance encounter with a talent agent, he broke into the Hollywood acting scene.

NABI TANHA (“Ali”)

Nabi Tanha was born in 1968 in Kabul and presently resides in Parwan Province in Afghanistan. He graduated from the Faculty of Fine Arts in directing. Upon his graduation, he starred in ten movies including MY LOVE, MY COUNTRY, GREEN MAGICIAN, ACENSION and BUL-BUL, which he also directed. He also was on stage in Kabul in the productions of LOVE’S LABOUR’S LOST and THE WHIP.

ALI DANESH BAKHTYARI (“Sohrab”)

Ali Danesh Bakhtyari was born in 1994 in the Jughateo district of Ghazni Province in Afghanistan. At the age of seven, he moved with his family to Kabul where they presently live in Karti Sih Kabul. He has five brothers and three sisters and is the next to youngest in the family. The 7th grader, who attends Said Jamaluddin Afghani High School excels at geometry, physics and math and enjoys playing soccer as well as calligraphy and painting. Ali Danish is making his acting debut in THE KITE RUNNER.

SAÏD TAGHMAOUI (“Farid”)

Saïd Taghmaoui, born in France to Moroccan parents, was first noticed by film enthusiasts for his role as the Arab punk in LA HAINE, which debuted at the Cannes International Film Festival in 1995. The film went on to win many awards around the world at various film festivals as well as earning him a Cesar (France’s equivalent to the Academy Award®) nomination as Most Promising Newcomer.

With many French films to his credit, his first English language role was a Kate Winslet’s lover in HIDEOUS KINKY, which led to him being cast as the brutal Iraqi officer in David O. Russell’s THREE KINGS. He has since starred in Neil Jordan’s THE GOOD THIEF, David Mamet’s SPARTAN, HILDAGO, opposite Viggo Mortensen, and most recently, in the role of Suarez in VANTAGE POINT. He reunited with David O. Russell in I HUCKABEES.

A former boxer who was ranked second in his division at the height of his athletic career, Taghmaoui chose acting as a different option thanks to his friendship with writer/director Mathieu Kassovitz. Together they wrote the French film LA HAINE, which Kassovitz directed and Saïd starred. The film went on to win the Best Director Award at Cannes and three Cesar Awards for Best Picture, Best Producer and Best Editor when it debuted in 1995. Taghmaoui also was honored with the Golden Pyramid at Cairo’s International Film Festival, presented to him by Omar Sharif, as the youngest and most valued international Arab actor.

ATOSSA LEONI (“Soraya”)

Atossa Leoni has worked as an actress in motion picture, television and theatrical productions throughout Europe and North American. Of Afghan and Iranian descent, Atossa was born in Berlin and brought up in Germany, Italy and the USA, and can speak Farsi and Dari as well as English, German, French and Italian.

Acting professionally during her childhood, Atossa played the lead in a television series in Germany at the age of 12 and has continued to work in film, television and numerous theatre performances throughout Europe ever since. She played the female lead role of Maryam in the motion picture AMERICA SO BEAUTIFUL along with Oscar® nominated actress Shohreh Aghdashloo. Directed by Babak Shokrian, the film was featured in the Panorama section of the Berlin Film Festival in 2002 and was released in cinemas in the USA in March 2003. On television, Atossa played Princess Zayn in the NBC television movie THE PRINCESS AND THE MARINE, and guest starred in the ABC-TV series “Eyes.”

In 2006, she performed in the play “Beneath The Veil” and received critical acclaim and special praise for her dual portrayal of the roles of Melody and Rika. The play premiered at the Edge Fest in Los Angeles.

ABDUL QADIR FAROOKH (“General Taheri”)

Abdul Qadir Farookh was born in 1948 in Kabul where he was raised. Abdul has been acting since the age of seven years old and since that time has acted in over 100 plays and directed more than 30 stage productions in Afghanistan. He also has acted in over 35 motion pictures including HOT, HOT AUTUMN OF KABUL and NELOFAR IN THE RAIN, and also

in German, French and Russian films. He has directed documentary movies as well as heading the stage the M. Farukh Theater Organization in Kabul. Presently, he is the head of the Arts section of Afghan National TV as well as working part-time for the BBC in Kabul.

MAIMOONA GHIZAL (“Jamilla”)

Mai Moona Ghizal was born in 1958 in Kabul and began her acting career when she was a high school student. Since then, she has acted in numerous movies and numerous theatrical productions in Kabul. Maimoona is working at BBC Radio as an actor and as program director, and also for Afghan National TV.

ABDUL SALAM YUSOUFZAI (“Assef”)

Abdul Salam Yusoufzai was born in 1967 in Kabul, Afghanistan. During the arrival of the Taliban, he left Afghanistan for Iran where he remained for three years, returning to Kabul to live and to attend to family matters. Dabbling in films in the Afghan film industry, Abdul acted in two motion pictures, the most notable being EARTH & ASHES, and also served as a grip on three other Afghan productions. He studied electrical engineering in Russia, and, prior to filming THE KITE RUNNER, worked making furniture in Kabul. Abdul is married and has two young sons and an infant daughter.

ELHAM EHSAS (Young “Assef”)

Elham Ehsas was born (with a twin sister) in 1990 in Kabul, Afghanistan. He and his family moved to London in late 1999. He has lived in Peshawar, Pakistan for nearly half his life and is fluent in Persian, Pashtu, English, German and Urdu. His father is a well-known journalist and writer in Afghanistan and works for the BBC in London. His mother is a teacher.

Elham currently attends the Kingsbury High School in London and is an excellent student spending his free time doing Tae-kwon Do, playing soccer, drawing and digital graphics. Elham also enjoys writing short stories and poems in English, and one of his articles won a prize in the Guardian’s journalism competition this past year in London. He also likes debating and came second place in the London ESU Debate finals in 2006.

BAHRAM EHSAS (“Wali”)

Bahram Ehsas was born in 1992 in Kabul, Afghanistan and has been living in London with his family since late 1999. He has lived in Peshawar, Pakistan for nearly half his life and is fluent in Pashto, Persian and English. His father is a well-known journalist and writer in Afghanistan and works for the BBC in London. His mother is a teacher.

Bahram attends the Kingsbury High School in London and has excelled in his academic studies as well as in his extra-curricular activities that include Tae-Kwon Do, soccer, drawing and digital graphics.

TAMIM NAWABI (“Kamal”)

Tamim Nawabi, of Afghan ancestry, was born in 1991 and lives with his family in Bay Point, California. The 9th grader at Concord High School, is the youngest of two brothers and one sister. Since the age of seven, he has appeared in drama, comedy and movies for Afghan TV in Northern California where his father works in motion picture production. He also enjoys playing sports especially football.

SAYED JAFAR MASSIHULLAH (“Omar”)

Sayed Jafar Massihullah was born in 1993 in Kabul, Afghanistan where he presently lives with his family and his older brother. The 8th grader, who attends Ismail Balkhi High School, enjoys stage productions as well as geography, history and soccer. He aspires one day to be an engineer. THE KITE RUNNER marks his movie-acting debut.

ABDUL AZIM WAHABZADA (“Karim”)

Abdul Azim Wahabsada was born in 1962 in Parwan Province, Afghanistan. He has acted in two motion pictures one being the Afghan film EARTH & ASHES. He presently lives in Khair Khan.

NASSER MEMARZIA (“Zaman”)

Nasser Memarzia graduated from Tehran University and completed an MA in 1979 in Theatre Studies at Leeds University in the U.K. He since has worked internationally as an actor, playwright and director of drama. His acting career took root on the stage, performing a diverse repertoire of characters in theatres across the UK where he also made frequent TV appearances. In the film industry, his acting credits include LEAVE TO REMAIN, MILLIONS, KINGDOM OF HEAVEN, HAMBURG CELL, MUNICH, and THE SITUATION. Nasser is an award-winning playwright winning the LWT Plays on Stage Award for “Dusky Warriors,” and a BAFTA nomination for “A Breath of Life.” He is Artistic Director of Cherwell Theatre Company in Oxfordshire.

Cast:

Amir	KHALID ABDALLA
Soraya	ATOSSA LEONI
Rahim Khan	SHAUN TOUB
Omar	SAYED JAFAR MASIHULLAH GHARIBZADA
Young Amir	ZEKIRIA EBRAHIMI
Young Hassan	AHMAD KHAN MAHMOODZADA
Business Man in Baba’s Study	MIR MAHMOOD SHAH HASHIMI

Baba	HOMAYOUN ERSHADI
Ali	NABI TANHA
Young Assef	ELHAM EHSAS
Wali	BAHRAM EHSAS
Kamal	TAMIM NAWABI
Uncle Saifo the Kite Seller	MOHAMAD NABI ATTAI
Spice Merchant	MOHAMAD NADIR SARWARI
Party Worker	MUSTAFA HAIDARI
Birthday Singer	AHMAD YASAR SHIR AGHA
Mahmood	MOHAMMAD AMAN JOYA
Karim	ABDUL AZIM WAHABZADA
Soviet Union Soldier	VSEVOLD SEVANCHOS
Burly Man In Truck	SAYED MIRAN FARHAD
Young Wife in Truck	MURINA ABUDUKELIMU
Soviet Union Officer	IGOR RADCHENKO
Gast Station Customer	LARRY BROWN
Dean of Students	L. PETER CALLENDER
Man at Bar	JESSE ROBERTSON
Pool Players	JOSH CHAMBERLAIN
	MARCO MAZARIEGOS
	SHAAN PRICE
General Taheri	QADIR FAROOKH
Flea Market Customer	PEG McKIBBIN
Dr. Starobin	CHRIS VERRILL
Dr. Amani	AMAR KUREISHI
Jamila Taheri	MAIMOONA GHIZAL
Wedding Singer	MOHAMMAD ESHAN AMAN
Cemetery Mullah	YUNUS OSMAN
Pakistan Taxi Driver	MEHBOOB ALI
Farid	SAÏD TAGHMAOUI
Zaman the Orphanage Director	NASSER MEMARZIA
Assef	ABDUL SALAM YUSOUFZAI
Taliban Stadium Speaker	MOHAMAD AMIN RAHIMI
Assef Guards	AZIZ RAXIDI
	KHALIL AHMAD NOORYAN
Sohrab	ALI DANISH BAKHTY ARI
Rahim Khan's Neighbor	HAMEEDA HAMRAZ

Man at Mosque KAISER DOULAT-BEEK
Man in the Park AHMAD SHAH ALAM
Doctor in the Park KHALED HOSSEINI
Park Kite Seller HABIB ZARGI
Kite Flyer Kid HOUSHMAND HABIB
Kite Spooler Kid LUKAS FERREIRA

Stunt Coordinator WANG HAI
Stunts LU JIN CHAO
NING JUN

Crew:

Directed by MARC FORSTER
Screenplay by DAVID BENIOFF
Based Upon the Book by KHALED HOSSEINI
Produced By WILLIAM HORBERG
WALTER PARKES
REBECCA YELDHAM
E. BENNETT WALSH
Executive Producers SIDNEY KIMMEL
LAURIE MacDONALD
SAM MENDES
JEFF SKOLL
Co-Executive Producer BRUCE TOLL
Director of Photography ROBERTO SCHAEFER, ASC
Production Designer CARLOS CONTI
Edited by MATT CHESSE´, A.C.E.
Unit Production Manager E. BENNETT WALSH
First Assistant Director MICHAEL LERMAN
Second Assistant Director PETER THORELL
Music by ALBERTO IGLESIAS
Costume Designer FRANK FLEMING
Casting by KATE DOWD
Associate Producers KWAME L. PARKER
LESLIE McMINN
Visual Effects Supervisor KEVIN TOD HAUG
Art Director KAREN MURPHY

Set Decorators	CAROLINE SMITH MARIA NAY
Camera/Steadicam Operator	JIM McCONKEY
First Assistant Photographer	ZORAN VESELIC
Still Photographer	PHIL BRAY
Script Supervisor	MASSOUMEH EMAMI
Production Sound Mixer	CHRIS MUNRO
Chief Lighting Technician	IAN R. KINCAID
Key Grip	HERBERT LEE AULT
Costume Supervisor	SUSAN J. WRIGHT
Makeup Department Head	KRISTINA VOGEL
Key Hair Stylist	TERESA MAREE HINTON
Production Coordinator	DAMIANA KAMISHIN
Production Accountant	TISH JOHNSON
Production Liason	S. DYLAN KIRKLAND
Afghan Cast Interpreter	ILHAM HOSSEINI
Supervising Location Manager	DOUGLAS DRESSER
Unit Publicist	BLAISE J. NOTO
Transportation Coordinator / Unit Manager	HENRY DRAY
Transportation Coordinator	DEREK RASER
Casting Executive	LESLEE FELDMAN
Assistant to Mr. Forster	JILLIAN KUGLER
Assistant to Mr. Horberg	CHANTAL NONG
Assistant to Mr. Parkes	RIYOKO TANAKA
Assistant to Ms. Yeldham	LAURENT McCLARD
Los Angeles Office Assistant	ADAM BAYLESS

China Unit

Production Supervisor China	HUANG FAN “NINA”
First Assistant Director	ZHANG JIN ZHAN
Second Assistant Director	QIAO HEPIN

Assistant Production Manager	ADA SHEN
Xinjiang Production Manager	AKBAR YIMING
Art Director	OLEH SOKOLOVSKY
On-Set Props	ROBERT “MOXY” MOXHAM
	RICHARD CROWE
Assistant Art Directors	MICHAEL TURNER
	XIN YAN RONG
A Second Assistant Photographer	LEE JAKE MARIANO
B Camera Operator	LAM FAI TAI
B First Assistant Photographer	BRETT MATTHEWS
B Second Assistant Photographer	LESLEY WATSON
Film Loader	ROWENA MOLLIKA
Camera Department Translator	ABDUKADER MAMAT
Boom Operator	STEPHEN FINN
Utility Sound	YANG FAN
Video Assist	MICHAEL TAYLOR
Assistant Video Assist	ZECHARIAH KATZ
Chief Lighting Technician	KANG XIAO TIAN
Assistant Chief Lighting Technicians	MARK HADLAND
	CAO XUE ZHONG
	WANG JUN XI
Lighting Technicians	SUN BING RUI
	SUN CHEN YANG
	SUN GEN SHANG
	LI SI GUANG
	ZHANG TAO
	CAO ZHONG XUE
	CAO YONG JIE
	LI CONG LI
	CAO WEI DONG
Chief Rigging Technician	KIM K. KONO
Second Company Grip	DUSTIN AULT
Dolly Grip	TIM CHRISTIE
Grips	SANLANG
	SUN HONG YANG
	CAO WU TONG

	XIN HONG BIN
	SUN JUN YANG
	KANG HAI LIANG
	CHEN KAI
	LIU YANG
	ZHANG QUAN
	BIA HONG QUN
	MAO WAI QIN
	SI XUE WEN
Translator	QI ZI YIN “FIONA”
Rigging Key Grip	SKYLER TEGLAND
Property Master	SUE BOWCOTT
Property Buyer	LI MING SHAN
Assistant Property Master	HOU YI
China Casting	ERIKO MIYAGAWA
Background Casting	FANG DAN RUI “ZOE”
Xinjiang Background Casting	XIRELI ABUDUREXITI
	MARIDEL AISAM
	ABLIZ ABDIRIXIT
	MUHAMD ALI
	YUKESAIKE XIJAET
	AKEMUSULITAN SULAIMANXIA
	DALI MAITUXIA
	NIYAT ULLAH BAIG
Beijing Background Casting	MO LAN
Dari Language Teachers	SALAH YAFTALI
	MASOUD FARAND
Kite Master	BASIR BERIA
Armourer	YU XIAO MING
Art Department Coordinator	JEREMY BALL
Construction Coordinator	ZHU BAO SHENG
Construction Forepersons	ZHU GUANG TAI
	LI GANG
Special Effects Coordinator	KEN DUREY
Special Effects Snow Master	DAGAN JURD
Smoke & Fire Master	XU REI XIANG
Special Effects Translator	JOEL ROSEN

Special Effects Propmaster	LIU SHAO CHUN
Assistant Special Effects	LIU HONG HAI
Propmaster	
Assistant Costume Designers	LISA FRUCHT XIE MENG “MEG”
Costume Construction Supervisor	JULIE YRJANSON
China Wardrobe Supervisor	GUO LEI
Ager/Dryer	ANNA MUNRO
Key Costumers	HILARY MIEDERER BAI LU
Beijing Wardrobe Assistants	QI XU DONG YANG DAN WU YIN HAO GUAN JUN SONG LIN WEI
Wardrobe Coodinator	QIAO JIN FANG
Xinjiang Wardrobe Supervisor	ABDULLAH HAPIZ
Xinjiang Wardrobe Assistants	GAI LILI YANG FANGZHENG JIANG FENGMEI SAWUT CHAWAR
Key Makeup Artist	LESLIE DEVLIN
Makeup Artists	WANG XIN “CHRISTIE” ZHANG SHU PING HUANG PING
Hair Stylist	FAN YONG JIE “ER GE”
Assistant Hair Stylists	CHE YU LIU YAN XIA
Beard Makers	JIANG CUN LIANG HAI MAN GUO XIAO LAN HU REI GE XIU MEI LIU SHU HONG
Happy Pictures Production	MA ZHENG QIANG
Manager	
Xinjiang Assistant Production	OMAR OTKUR

Coordinator	
China Travel Coordinator	CHEN YI SONG “SCARLET”
China Production Secretaries	LUO SHAN “KATE” ZHOU YUAN
First Assistant Accountant	LAURA WILLCOX
Second Assistant Accountant	KRISTINE BOCHUM
Assistant Accountants	RETHA GELDENHUYS SHAUNA CHO ZHANG XIU JIN “CANDY” XIONG WEN PING WAN XU JUAN “JO” DILINUOER
Cashier	ZHEN XIAO “MICHELLE”
Beijing Location Managers	PENG RONG FANG YINCHUN
Xinjiang Assistant Location Manager	KAMIL ZUNUN
Second Second Assistant Director	ALYSON LATZ
China Additional Assistant Directors	SU HAO QI LI KAI YIMIGJAN TRDI PAN YING “STEPHANIE”
Beijing Production Assistants	CHEN XU YE LU LI XIAO WANG SHENG WEN BIN LU LU KONG MIN GOU CHUAN YONG YAMA RICKY
Xinjiang Production Assistants	KAIYUM TUDAJI MIRADEL KARSYM JIANG
Kashgar Production Office Translator	ELHAM MOHAMMED

Production Assistants

SUI DONGMING
JILJIANG
YANG HAI BING
MAIYINO KASIMU
PATRICK McDONALD
MIKEY EBERLE
LIU YONG TAO
WANG XIANG
AMWER
LIU DIAN JUN
ELHAM JAN
MA XIN LIN
LU QING LONG
KASEM TURSUN
KYLE JOHNSON
ANDY MORA
ROMAN LUO
JEFF WEIL

Researchers

SHAHRUKH GRAN
DONNA SAMMANDER
RAMEEN MOSHREF JAVID
YAMA RAHMI

Flying Cam Pilot

EMMANUEL PREVINAIRE

Flying Cam Operator

CHONG SZE KWAN "QUINCY"

Flying Cam Assistant

MARC ASMODOE

Beijing Transportation Captain

LU YU

Xinjiang Transportation Captain

WU ZHEN YUAN

Picture Car Coordinator

DAVID HARRIS

Beijing Drivers

ZHANG LEI
TIAN HAI QIANG
WANG BIN
WU XIAN ZHONG
MA JIAN TAO
LIN ZHI QIANG
FENG ZHENG QI
ZHANG LIAN YI
GUO YUN FENG

Xinjiang Drivers

YOU GUANG SHENG

ABDUKADIR

LI YONG QI

CHEN XING JIANG

ZHANG SHENG XI

WANG HUI

YANG ZHONG ZHI

ZHAO SHENG XIANG

ARKIN A

MA JIAN MIN

ARKIN E

TURSUN

ABDUSATTAR TURDE

ABLIMIT KADER

MIJIT MAHMUT

Mechanic

DI XIAO HONG

Animal Handler

MIJITI

Tutors

MOHAMMAD AMAN JOYA

KERRY BOE

Assistant to Mr. Jianxin

CAI XIAO KUI

Medic

TONY EVANS

Western Catering & Craft

CINDY HAMILTON

Chinese Catering

GUO TIAN HE

Visual Effects Assistant

REN CONG "NEO"

Proof Pre-Visualization Lead

JOTHAM HERZON

Artist

Proof Pre-Visualization Artists

ALEXANDER VEGH

PARKER SELLERS

Afghanistan Unit

Kabul Logistical & Travel

TOLO TELEVISION

Support

SAAD MOHSENI

ZAID MOHSENI

JAHID MOHSENI

Production Coordinators	SEKANDER SALEH AMIR SHAMIL
Production Support	SOPHIE BARRY
Casting Associates	KRISTY KINNEAR MUSTAFA HAIDARI
Kabul Casting Support	FOUNDATION FOR CULTURE AND CIVIL TIMOR HAKIMYAR
Script Translator	MARIAM MAHMOUD

Post Production

First Assistant Editor	ALEX OLIVARES
Assistant Editor	ROBIN GONSALVES
Editorial Translator	NABILA ASLAI
Post Production Supervisor	CAREY LEN SMITH
Post Production Coordinator	LEILANI GUSHIKEN
Post Production Assistant	ROB WILSON
Archival Research	ADELE SPARKS
Supervising Sound Editor	FRANK EULNER
Sound Designer	STEVE BOEDDEKER
Re-Recording Mixers	LORA HIRSCHBERG MICHAEL SEMANICK
ADR Editors	GWENDOLYN YATES WHITTLE MARILYN MCCOPPEN
Dialogue Editors	MARSHALL WINN KAREN SPANGENBERG
Assistant Supervising Sound Editor	ANDRÉ FENLEY
Dialogue / ADR Assistant Editor	L. CHINO
Foley Artists	JANA VANCE ELLEN HEUER DENISE THORPE
Foley Editor	KEVIN SELLERS
Foley Mixer	FRANK AGLIERI-RINELLA
Foley Recordist	SEAN ENGLAND
Mix Technician	TONY SERENO
Recordist	NATHAN NANCE
Digital Transfer	JONATHAN GREBER

	CHRISTOPHER BARRON
	JOHN COUNTRYMAN
Engineering Services	JIM AUSTIN
	DOUG FORD
	HOWARD HAMMERMANN
Digital Editorial Services	DAVID HUNTER
	LEFFERT LEFFERTS
ADR Mixer	MICHAEL MILLER
ADR Group Coordinator	L.A. MAD DOGS
Additional Voice	IQBAL THEBA
Re-Recorded at	SKYWALKER SOUND, a Lucasfilm Company, Marin County, California
Music Recorded and Mixed by	JOSÉ LUIS CRESPO DUEÑAS
Music Editor	JAY B. RICHARDSON
Music Contractors	SANDY De CRESCENT
	PETER ROTTER
Music Assistants and Additional Arrangements	JORGE MAGAZ
	JOSE VILLALOBOS
	DAVID CERREJÓN
Music Performed by	THE HOLLYWOOD STUDIO SYMPHONY
Orchestra Conducted by	MICHAEL NOWAK
Santur, Oud, Lyre of Crete, Rubab	DIMITRI PSONIS
Bansuri, Ney, Turkish Clarinet	JAVIER PAXARIÑO
Electric and Acoustic Guitar	JOHN PARSONS
Nylon	JAVIER CRESPO
Guitar	HEITOR PEREIRA
Solo Violin	ARA MALIKIAN
Solo Viola	JULIA MALKOVA
Cello	MARTIN TILLMAN
Bass	VICTOR MERLO
Snare Drum	ANGEL CRESPO
Alto Flute	GERI ROTELLA
English Horn and Duduk	CHRIS BLETH
Piano	BRYAN PEZZONE
Harp	JOAN TUROVSKY

Hand Percussion	ALEX ACUNA
Tabla	SATNAM RAMGOTRA
Male Vocal, Ney	MAJID JAVADI
Female Vocal	SUSSAN DEYHIM
Assistant Engineers	RAUL QUILEZ
	RUBEN SUAREZ
	DIEGOT BLADUQUE
Music Recorded at	CATA STUDIOS (Madrid)
	WARNER BROS.
	EASTWOOD SCORING STAGE

Xinjiang Second Unit

Director	REBECCA YELDHAM
Director of Photography	RICHARD BOWEN
First Assistant Director	LAM SUK CHING "SHARON"
Third Assistant Directors	KUER BAN JIANG
	ABUDULI AIZIZE
	ABU DOULI
	BA YAN
First Assistant Photographer	NGAI MAN YIN
Second Assistant Photographer	WU YONG BO
Set Lighting Technicians	CAO DAWEI
	ZHU YANLIN
	KANG JIANGCHENG
	CAO HONGAN
Key Grip	DENG JUN
Grips	ANG HAILIANG
	FAN YITA
	LI XIANG
	QI YUE
Wardrobe Supervisor	CAROLINE ESELIN
Kite Assistant	ALIJAN XIRLAJI
Location Assistant	ABLIMIT
Assistant Hair Stylist	CHE YU
Assistant Makeup Artist	HUANG PING
Props	ZHANG WEI CHAO
	HU YANWU

Video Assist	MATTHEW WAKAI
Assistant Location Manager	MATTHEW WERSINGER
Script Supervisor	REBECCA JIANG
Sound Mixer	WU LING
Production Coordinator	SABRINA POURCHASSE
Production Associate	FEI WONG
Production Assistants	EKHBAR ABUDU LUSULI SUDEEP MATHUR ABUDU REYIMU ABUDU WEILI
Transportation Coordinator	DAVID HARRIS

San Francisco Unit

Art Director	DOUGLAS CUMMING
Production Coordinator	RACHAEL LIN GALLAGHAN
Assistant Production Coordinators	SHARLENE F. DUALE DIONNE LOTIVIO CHRISTOPHER BENNETT
First Assistant Accountant	RYAN WHAN
Payroll Accountant	DAVID HICKEY
Art Department Coordinator	MAYA OWINGS
Art Department Production Assistant	MICHELE KITAGAWA
A Second Assistant Photographer	MARK GILMER
B Camera Operator	SIMON JAYES
B First Assistant Photographer	DON STEINBERG
B Second Assistant Photographer	KENNY BAZAL, JR.
Film Loader	COURTNEY L. HARRELL
Casting	NINA HENNINGER
Background Casting	SARAH KLIBAN
Catering	GALA CATERING
Construction Coordinator	BEN NICHOLS
Lead Painter	DALE HAUGO
On-Set Painter	TOM RICHARDSON
Craft Service	SANDY REED
Lead Greens	JAMES BURKE

Key Grip	DON L. HENDERSON
Grips	BROOK JOHNSON BRAD MARTINEZ GREG CHILDERS IAN CHRISS J. CHUCK BIAGIO JOSEPH J. ALLEN TOBY LAWRENCE
Hair Department Head	JENNIFER TREMONT
Key Hair Stylist	YVETTE RIVAS
Makeup Artist	GRETCHEN DAVIS
Location Manager	ERNEST BELDING
Assistant Location Managers	FELIX GEHM MATTHEW RIUTTA PETER MOODY
Property Master	PATRICK LUDDEN
Assistant Property Master	ANNIE MUELLER
Props	GRETCHEN SCHARFENBERG
Lead Person	JOHN MICHELETOS
Set Dressers	LAWRENCE HORNBECK MIKE HELBIG PETER HUDSON DAN MOLNAR LOU VISCO LEIGHANNE HADDOCK
Set Costumers	VALERIE WHITE KATHLEEN GIORDANO DEIRDRE SCULLY
Set Lighting Technicians	CHRIS SHELLENBERGER JEFF GILLIAM SPENCER MULCAHY ZACH LOVE DAN C. FERREIRA MARK NAKAHARA
Production Sound Mixer	NELSON STOLL
Boom Operator	BRIAN COPENHAGEN
Utility Sound	STEPHEN BALLIET

Special Effects Coordinator	THOMAS F. SINDICICH
Production Assistants	JEFF KRAMER JENNIFER JOURDAN AARON C. FITZGERALD MATT LAKE JAMIE L. GAINES JIM SERCHAK NATASCHA DIMITRIJEVIC ANTONIO G. GRAÑA RAMSAY WILLIAMS
Studio Teacher	BONNIE HUDSON
Transportation Captain	DON FEENEY
Transportation Co-Captain	FRANKLIN J. ROCHA
Drivers	TONY DINGMAN BOB BARBOSA CHRIS DEGUZMAN JOHN BRADLEY JOHN BROMSTEAD, JR. TOMMY RIZZO TONY PONTECORVO WILLIAM J. ROGERS WILLIE BROCK
Video Assist	JOHN TRUNK
Visual Effects by	CAFÉ FX INC.
Visual Effects Supervisor	DAVID EBNER
Visual Effects Producer	LES G. JONES
Animation Lead	LEIF EINARSSON
Animators	RON FRIEDMAN NEIL LIM SANG JASON THIELEN VINVENT DELAY OMRA MENKES
Matte Painters	LEI JIN DYLAN COLE REN CONG BRANDON KACHEL
2D Plate Reconstruction	LINDSAY ANDERSON

Rotoscoping	EDDIE SORIA
Compositing Lead	ROBIN GRAHAM
Compositors	ED MENDEZ
	CHRIS PINTO
	RICHARD REED
	JEFF ARNOLD
	SEAN COONCE
2D Artist	CHRIS BALL
3D Modeling/Texturing	STEVE ARGUELLO
	MIKE FISCHER
	JOE HOBACK
	GARBRIEL VARGAS
	TIM ALEXANDER
	ALEX FRIDERICI
	STEVE HUTCHINS
	OLEK LYZWANSKI
Massive Crowds	TIM LeDOUX
3D Lighting Lead	TODD PERRY
3D Matchmovers	KEVIN HOPPE
	ANDY BYRNE
	FATIMA MOJADIDDY
Visual Effects Managing Editor	DESI R. ORTIZ
Visual Effects Editors	KEVIN LaNEAVE
	LIBOR ZEDNICEK
Visual Effects Coordinator	MARTY HOLTHAUS
Visual Effects Production	SHANNON KRUEGER
Assistant	
Data I/O	CALEB KIRBY
Rendering	BRIAN OPENSHAW
	SAY RINTHARAMY
Production Executives	JEFF BARNES
	O.D. WELCH
Executive Producer	VICKI GALLOWAY WEIMER
Opticals & Digital Film	LASER PACIFIC MEDIA CORPORATION, a Kodak Company
Recording	
DI Colorist	MIKE SOWA
Color Science	DOUG JAQUA

DI Project Managers	NANCY FULLER JAKE RICE MIKE BROSIUS
Digital Data Management	VINCE LAVARES JEFF CHARLES
Digital Data Conform	VALANCE EISLEBEN STACY UNDERHILL PAUL GRENVILLE CARRIE OLIVER
Digital Subtitle Compositing	WILLIAM MISSETT MICHAEL CASTILLO
DI Editorial	LINDA WILLIAMS
Camera Cranes & Dollies by	CHAPMAN/LEONARD STUDIO EQUIPMENT, INC.
Main Title Design	MK12
End Titles by	PACIFIC TITLE ART & DESIGN
Color Timer	HARRY MULLER