

Because of Winn- Dixie

Based on the perennial best seller, BECAUSE OF WINN-DIXIE tells the story of a lonely young girl who adopts an orphaned dog she names Winn-Dixie (for the supermarket where she found him). The bond between the girl and her special companion brings together the people in a small Florida town and heals her own troubled relationship with her father.

Twentieth Century Fox and Walden Media present BECAUSE OF WINN-DIXIE a Wayne Wang Film adapted from the popular and much-honored novel of the same name by Kate DiCamillo. Among the book's awards is the coveted Newbery Honor. Wang directs from a screenplay by Joan Singleton. The Producers are Trevor Albert and Joan Singleton, and the Executive Producer is Ralph Singleton.

The village of Napoleonville, Louisiana stands in for the story's fictional Naomi, Florida. Sleepy Naomi is a place where people have forgotten how to share their sadness and their joy. But Opal and Winn-Dixie might have something to say about that.

Jeff Daniels, Cicely Tyson, Dave Matthews and Eva Marie Saint star as the somewhat eccentric adults who benefit from Opal and Winn-Dixie's bumpy summer of discovery.

Newcomer AnnaSophia Robb won the role of Opal following an intensive talent hunt. "Opal and Winn-Dixie have something in common," says AnnaSophia. "She doesn't have a mother and he doesn't have a home. They both want somebody to love and somebody to love them. And, as a team, they begin to realize that other people just might want the same things."

Winn-Dixie guides Opal into places where magic dozes under a coat of dusty disappointment and awakens the people hiding there. Things begin to change day by day

under the summer sun – in a funky pet store, a musty library, a drab mobile home, a ramshackle house and a convenience store-turned temple of worship.

BECAUSE OF WINN-DIXIE is director Wayne Wang's fourth film based on a well-known book or story, following "The Joy Luck Club," "Anywhere But Here" and "Smoke" (the latter based on the short story "Auggie Wren's Christmas Story").

A cursory glance at Wang's body of work, which also includes "Maid in Manhattan," and "Chinese Box," seems to offer little common ground. On closer examination, a simple thread is found throughout his work. "I generally make movies about something that is missing in our lives, empty places that we're trying to fill," says Wang. "I am always attracted to stories about people longing for and finding deep contact with others, about lonely people struggling for some sense of connection. In Opal's case, she has experienced the unexplained loss of a parent.

"This book really touched me in a way that is difficult to describe," Wang elaborates. "It has humanity and a simplicity that profoundly affected me."

Because Of Winn-Dixie, published by Candlewick Press, was Kate DiCamillo's first book. It was a *New York Times* bestseller and recipient of the prestigious Newbery Honor in 2001. It was awarded a Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books Blue Ribbon, placed on the New York Public Library 100 Books for Reading and Sharing list, was a Parents' Choice Gold Award Winner, a Publishers Weekly Best Book Of The Year and a School Library Journal Best Book Of The Year. The author's subsequent books are *The Tiger Rising*, a National Book Award finalist, and *The Tale Of Desperaux*, which earned the 2004 Newbery Medal.

"*Because of Winn-Dixie* is the result of my own longings," says DiCamillo. "I'm from Central Florida, where the winters are mild, but found myself living in Minneapolis during the worst winter on record. And it was the first time in my life that I didn't have a dog. I was desperate for the companionship of a dog. So the book was born out of my homesickness and dog-sickness."

Adults customarily recommend literature to young people. However, in the case of this book, it seems to be the other way around. A story that speaks to those of all ages, *Because of Winn-Dixie* began its journey to Hollywood when producer/screenwriter Joan

Singleton purchased a handful of books for her younger daughter, Elizabeth, then 9, to read on vacation.”

Elizabeth was immediately drawn to *Because of Winn-Dixie* because of the girl and the dog on the cover. However, when she began reading it, she was so touched by the story of Opal and Winn-Dixie that she couldn't put the book down, finishing it in one day. She then insisted that I read it, and wouldn't let me rest till I did. Children need stories that inspire them as this one does. And so do adults. My 80-year old father had the same heartfelt reaction to reading the book as did (then) 9-year old Elizabeth. Kate DiCamillo's magical and lyrical writing touched me, too, and I knew I couldn't rest until I had made this into a movie.”

For all its optimism, the story springs from loss, disappointment and heartbreak. It is about a little girl whose mother walked away and she doesn't know why. It has left her with an emptiness that sees little hope of being filled.

Producer Trevor Albert explains: “The best stories, like this one, have lightness and darkness, naïve innocence and a textural depth. As the father of two young girls, I'm constantly surprised at the threshold they have for comprehending and processing danger and fear, and wanting to know about life's mysteries. They are curious about things beyond their life experience. The best literature mixes both the joy and the sadness of life.”

Director Wayne Wang suffered a great personal loss as he began the challenge of translating Kate DiCamillo's book to the screen. His father died suddenly and unexpectedly. “*Because of Winn-Dixie* helped me through a very difficult period in my life,” he says. And in another way, my difficulties helped me absorb the deeper aspects of the book.”

The film marks Wang's first extended experience directing children and animals. “Working with kids and animals presents a daily unpredictability,” says Wang. “Sometimes, the going is slow. But, then, suddenly something magical happens that you couldn't possibly have planned or anticipated.”

Nine-year-old AnnaSophia Robb of Denver, Colorado was an untested actress as Wang began directing her in a film in which she is the primary focus and principal character. The filmmakers viewed videos of approximately 650 young girls. Then they

met the most promising candidates in person. Finally, three young actresses were screen tested before AnnaSophia got the nod.

Winning the coveted role presented AnnaSophia with an unusual challenge. She appears in almost every scene in the movie, rare circumstances for even the most experienced star, and she does it alongside a popular veteran actor, two actresses of legendary standing, one of entertainment's most beloved musicians, and a new, four-legged star.

"I knew AnnaSophia was very bright and intuitive," says Wang. "When I asked her to try a lot of different approaches to a scene, she was always happy to jump right into it and explore those new territories. She always came up with fresh and lively ways of playing the scenes. She was afraid of nothing."

"Opal has a lot of love in her heart and she just wants to give it to people," says AnnaSophia. "She's just at the beginning of her life, but after moving to a new town she feels lonely, like it's almost the end of her life. She needs somebody to love, and Winn-Dixie does, too. Then he teaches her not to judge people by what they look like when you first meet them."

The hunt for a canine to play the title role was nearly as extensive as the casting search for Opal. Wang wanted a lovable mutt, like the one pictured on the book's cover. "The problem was," he explains, "that when we found suitable candidates, they were one-of-a-kind originals and we were unable to locate a few look-alikes to serve as back-up. The picture's insurers insisted we have several understudies because the dog is in virtually every scene. If he got sick or disappeared or suddenly didn't feel like working one day we would have to shut down the picture."

Wang and veteran Head Animal Trainer Mark Forbes considered several large breeds until they came upon one particular Picardy shepherd. "Though the Picardy is a noble breed, it has the likable look of a mutt," Wang says. "He looks like a dog with a sense of humor, a sense of mischief, a curiosity and goodness." Ultimately, the dog, who had never attended a drama class, had to be brought to Louisiana from France – along with several stand-in Picardys – and given a crash course on acting.

"Only when we decided on the Picardy did we learn how very rare the breed is," Forbes says. "We found only two or three in all of California. We located only about 12

breeders in Europe, mostly in France. And no dog we found had any acting experience. We had to bring them over from France and cram 16 weeks of training into about 10 weeks. We only had about a week and a half to get AnnaSophia and the dog acquainted. These dogs definitely need to be properly introduced to people. They don't particularly take to new humans quickly. But, as planned, she became a safety area for Winn-Dixie."

AnnaSophia describes the Picardy as "really big, with a huge nose, perky ears outlined in black and thick hair that is reddish, grayish, brownish and orange-ish. And the sweetest eyes I ever saw."

Wang assembled a distinguished ensemble to portray the characters Opal and Winn-Dixie encounter during their summer adventure. "It was easy to get the cream of the acting crop," Producer Trevor Albert says. "They all expressed a real desire to work with Wayne because of his wonderful body of work."

Jeff Daniels plays the Preacher, Opal's single parent whose religious calling precludes typical parental involvement in his daughter's life – until a smelly, rambunctious dog tugs him from his shell. Daniels' many films include "Terms Of Endearment," "Heartburn," "Speed," "Fly Away Home," "Radio Days," "Dumb & Dumber," "Pleasantville" and "Blood Work."

Daniels says, "The Preacher is in a lot of pain about his wife, who had left him years earlier. He's trying to shield his daughter and raise her as best he can under not-so-great circumstances. He loves Opal so much, but there's a wall between them. And then this funny stray dog shows up and just pounds away until the wall starts to crumble. BECAUSE OF WINN-DIXIE is much more than a film for the entire family; it's a movie about the power of communication and universal feelings of love."

For the role of Miss Franny, the town's aristocratic and eccentric librarian, Wang paged Eva Marie Saint, who won an Academy Award® for her first movie, "On the Waterfront." Saint's screen appearances include "A Hatful Of Rain," "Raintree County," "Exodus," "North By Northwest" and, more recently "I Dreamed Of Africa."

Eva Marie Saint describes Miss Franny as "a lady who busies herself with her memories and her books. When she was a little girl her wealthy father asked what she wanted and she responded, 'My own library'. So she's been a librarian since she was 11 and never married. Then, one day, a little girl and a big dog show up. Miss Franny loves

telling stories and Opal loves hearing them. They add richness to each other's lives. Eventually, Opal and Winn-Dixie bring together an unlikely ensemble of lonely people."

The acclaimed actress adds, "It's not a sentimental story as directed in the skillful hands of Wayne Wang. It's a wonderful uplifting film for every member of the family."

Cicely Tyson, who was honored with an unprecedented two Emmys® for "The Autobiography of Miss Jane Pittman" and an Academy Award nomination for "Sounder," was signed to portray reclusive Gloria Dump, who local kids call the wicked witch of Naomi. She lives alone with her tamed demons and failing eyes until Winn-Dixie enters her tangled yard and it becomes a place of growth and discovery.

Popular musician Dave Matthews portrays Otis, a loner and pet store clerk who magically charms the animals with his music and gives Opal her first summer job. Until she and the dog show up, all Otis has is his music and his bad luck.

Of the mysterious Otis, Matthews says, "He's obviously had a troubled past and seen a lot of ugliness and he's been burdened by it. He's comfortable with animals and music, but that's about it."

"I did some acting in Virginia – small theatre stuff – before music stole most of my time," Matthews continues. "But I enjoy keeping up with movies and I'm sent quite a few scripts. I was drawn to this project because I'm a big fan of Wayne Wang's work. And I didn't want to play a musician. I sing just a little bit in the picture, but I liked the chance to play an interesting role in a rich ensemble of characters."

The young actors playing Opal's small town peers are Courtney Jines as bossy, sad Amanda; Elle Fanning as knuckle-chewing, dog obsessed Sweetie Pie; and Nick Price and Luke Benward as the taunting Dewberry brothers, Dunlap and Stevie.

All the actors and filmmakers found the experience of turning *Because of Winn-Dixie* into a major motion picture to be a rewarding, if daunting experience. Author Kate DiCamillo set the bar high, creating a magical story about, in her words, "hope and love and comfort and joy."

For Singleton, both as Producer and Screenwriter, translating DiCamillo's beloved novel and keeping its multitude of fans happy, were formidable challenges. "Millions who have read and loved this book have such high expectations," says Singleton. "Our mandate was to live up to all those expectations. But in this day of big,

action packed, explosive entertainment, it's gratifying to be involved in such a heartfelt story that can touch people of all ages."

ABOUT THE CAST

JEFF DANIELS portrays Preacher, Opal's father and dedicated shepherd of the small flock at Naomi, Florida's Open Arms Baptist Church.

An actor of enormous range, Daniels launched his film career as the self-involved semi-intellectual who cheated on his ill wife in James L. Brooks' Oscar®-winning "Terms Of Endearment." Two years later he solidified his reputation, playing the smug actor who steps off the screen to woo Mia Farrow in Woody Allen's "The Purple Rose Of Cairo." In 1986 he scored with the critics as a man caught up in the dangerous world of a free-spirited woman in Jonathan Demme's "Something Wild." His other films during the eighties include "Marie" with Sissy Spacek, Mike Nichols' "Heartburn," Woody Allen's "Radio Days," "Checking Out," "The House On Carroll Street" and "Sweethearts Dance."

His subsequent film roles included "The Butcher's Wife," "Arachnophobia," "Welcome Home, Roxy Charmichael," "Love Hurts," "Gettysburg," "Speed," "101 Dalmatians," "Fly Away Home" and, of course, "Dumb & Dumber." Among his other credits are "2 Days in The Valley," "Trial And Error," "Pleasantville," "It's The Rage," "My Favorite Martian," "The Hours," "Gods and Generals" and Clint Eastwood's "Blood Work." As an actor/writer/director, Daniels' credits include "Escanaba in Da Moonlight" and "Super Sucker," winner of the Audience Award for Best Comedy and the U.S. Comedy Arts Festival.

Raised in Michigan, where he currently resides, Daniels attended college planning a teaching career while minoring in theatre. A role in a college production of "Summer And Smoke," guest directed by Marshall W. Mason of New York's Circle Repertory Company, led to a career change and a move to New York. As a member of Circle Rep, Daniels made his mark in the role of Jed in Lanford Wilson's "Fifth Of July." He performed the play in productions Off-Broadway at Los Angeles' Mark Taper Forum, as well as on Broadway. In 1982 he was honored with an Obie® Award for his stunning one-man performance in "Johnny Got His Gun." Other Broadway credits include A. R.

Gurney's "The Golden Age" with Irene Worth and Stockard Channing, and Lanford Wilson's "Redwood Curtain," a role he reprised in a Hallmark Hall Of Fame television adaptation. Other television work includes A&E's "The Crossing, "Cheaters" on HBO, two guest hosting stints on "Saturday Night Live" and, most recently, TNT's new version of Neil Simon's "The Goodbye Girl."

In 1991, Daniels founded the Purple Rose Theatre Company in Chelsea, Michigan. A nationally recognized regional theatre company known for the development of new American plays, Daniels himself has written eight plays for the company, "Shoe Man," "The Tropical Pickle," "The Vast Difference," "Thy Kingdom's Coming," "Escanaba in Da Moonlight," "Apartment 3A," "Boom Town" and "Across The Way," the latter nominated as a 2002 Best Play Finalist by the American Theatre Critics Association.

CICELY TYSON portrays Gloria Dump, one of Naomi's more eccentric citizens and a mysterious character who sees better with her heart than her eyes.

The actress is a multiple Emmy® Award winner and an Academy Award nominee. She also has been honored for her humanitarian work.

Her performance in "Sounder" brought her nominations for the Academy Award and Britain's coveted BAFTA Award. She was also named Best Actress by the Atlanta Film Festival, the National Society of Film Critics and the New York Film Critics.

In addition to "Sounder" she starred in "The Heart is a Lonely Hunter," "A Man Called Adam," "The River Niger," "Hoodlum" and "Fried Green Tomatoes."

Ms. Tyson is perhaps best known for her performance in the title role of "The Autobiography of Miss Jane Pittman," in which she played a slave woman ranging in age from 19 to 110. She was honored with two Emmys for the performance, one as Best Actress and the other as Actress of the Year. She also won an Emmy for "The Oldest Confederate Widow Tells All" and nominations for "A Lesson Before Dying" and for the series "Sweet Justice."

Other memorable television work, all earning her Emmy nominations, includes playing Harriet Tubman in "A Woman Called Moses," for which she received the Nymph Award as Best Actress Internationally in 1979; Binta, the mother of Kunta Kinte, in

“Roots”; the title role of an innovative Chicago teacher in “Welcome To Success: The Marva Collins Story”; and Coretta Scott King, wife of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., in “King.”

Ms. Tyson has starred in a number of major television movies, including “Acceptable Risks,” “Samaritan; The Mitch Snyder Story,” “Intimate Encounters,” “Playing With Fire,” “The Women Of Brewster Place,” “Blessed Assurance,” “The Road To Galveston” and “Mama Flora’s Family.” She received a CableACE Award for “Heat Wave” in 1990, a docudrama marking the 25th anniversary of Los Angeles’ Watts Rebellion. She starred in the mini-series “Aftershock” in 1999 and “Jewel” in 2000. In 2002 she starred in “The Rosa Parks Story.”

A highlight of her stage career was starring on Broadway in “The Blacks.”

In her humanitarian endeavors, Ms. Tyson has been called to service by U.S. presidents Jimmy Carter, George Bush and Bill Clinton, President Mugabe of Zimbabwe, and Madame La President Houphouet-Boigny of the Ivory Coast. She traveled throughout Africa as Chairperson of UNICEF and has worked around the world on behalf of children. Each year she sets aside one month to talk to students on college campuses across the country, having spoken at over 500 institutions on current topics of concern.

Ms. Tyson is a founder of the renowned Dance Theater of Harlem, now in its 30th year. She has been deeply involved in the work of the American Film Institute, Urban Gateways, NAACP Legal Defense and Education Fund, Atlanta’s National Black Arts Festival, Archbishop Tutu Peace Foundation, Women’s Campaign Fund, Coalition For A Healthy And Active America and the National African American Museum Of History And Culture

Ms. Tyson holds a record 12 Image Awards as Best Actress and has been honored by the National Council of Negro Women, PUSH, CORE, SCLA and the Martin Luther King Jr. Center. Harvard University celebrated Cicely Tyson Day, Sony named her 1990 Master Film Innovator and The Smithsonian hosted a retrospective of her film career.

In 1996 The New Jersey Board Of Education unanimously voted to designate a public middle and high school as The Cicely Tyson School of Performing and Fine Arts. Located in East Orange, the student body of 700 of mostly underprivileged students continues to benefit from Ms. Tyson’s master class in acting.

In 2003, she was selected by the Metropolitan Museum of Art to provide audioguide narration for its exhibition “African-American Artists 1929-1945: Prints, Drawings & Paintings.”

DAVE MATTHEWS plays Otis, the shadowy helper at Gertrude’s Pet Shop. Though short on words, the character is someone “who can sing most anything.” BECAUSE OF WINN-DIXIE marks the popular musician’s first appearance in a major motion picture.

Matthews moved from his native South Africa to New York when he was two years old, but finished high school in Johannesburg. Returning to the U.S., he settled in the historic university community of Charlottesville, Virginia and in 1990 assembled a multiracial musical ensemble called The Dave Matthews Band. Its first performance was at a Charlottesville private party on May 11, 1991. Its first public show was at the city’s 1991 Earth Day Festival. Word of the group’s contagious new sound spread quickly through the region.

Building a solid local reputation with club dates, the band embarked on a punishing tour schedule that ultimately resulted in impressive sales for their self-produced and financed debut 1993 recording, “Remember Two Things.” It was certified gold by the RIAA, a significant accomplishment for an independent album.

Courted by major labels, The Dave Matthews Band signed with RCA Records, where their first offering, *Under the Table and Dreaming*, entered the Billboard charts in 1994 at number 34. Their second album for RCA, *Crash*, immediately went to number two on the U.S. chart, confirming the band’s arrival as one of the top rock acts of the ‘90s. In 1997, a double-disc live Dave Matthews Band album titled *Live at Red Rocks 8-15-95* debuted at number three on the Billboard chart and was instantly certified platinum. Their third studio album, *Before These Crowded Streets*, debuted in the number one spot, deposing the *Titanic* soundtrack. In 1999 Dave Matthews’ lasting popularity was confirmed when “Live at Luther College: An Acoustic Performance by Dave Matthews and Tim Reynolds” debuted at number two.

The band’s next two recordings, *Everyday* and *Busted Stuff*, both went straight to number one on the sales charts. Their third in the live album series was released in 1999

and titled *Listener Supported*. The double disc album was quickly certified double-platinum and a video of the performance sold well over a million copies.

Dave Matthews and Tim Reynolds toured as an acoustic duo during the winters of 1996, '97 and '99. In 2000, The Dave Matthews Band ranked as the top-grossing tour band in the U.S.

His most recent hot-selling CD is titled "Some Devil." It is his solo debut recording. Matthews also oversees ATO Records.

EVA MARIE SAINT plays Miss Franny, one of the memorable characters in BECAUSE OF WINN-DIXIE. She is the proprietor and sole staff member of the Herman W. Block Memorial Library.

Ms. Saint's distinguished film career began opposite Marlon Brando in "On the Waterfront," for which she was honored with an Academy Award. She went on to star in several other memorable movies, including "A Hatful Of Rain," "That Certain Feeling," "Raintree County," "Exodus," "North By Northwest," "All Fall Down," "The Russians Are Coming! The Russians Are Coming!" "Grand Prix," "The Stalking Moon," "Loving," "Nothing In Common" and "I Dreamed Of Africa."

The actress grew up in Delmar, New York and attended Bowling Green State University in Ohio, planning to become a school teacher. Trying out for a school play on a dare, she won the leading role and changed the direction of her life. The University has honored her with an honorary Doctor of Fine Arts degree and renamed its main campus theatre The Eva Marie Saint Theatre.

Upon graduation from Bowling Green, she went to New York City and studied at The American Theatre Wing and with Lee Strasberg at The Actors Studio. Launching her career during the golden age of live television, Ms. Saint was Emmy-nominated for several memorable TV presentations and moved to Broadway in "The Trip To Bountiful," receiving the Drama Critics Award and Outer-Circle Critics Award for her performance. Director Elia Kazan saw her in the play and cast her in "On The Waterfront."

In television, Ms. Saint's first Emmy nomination was for Philco Playhouse. She sang the role of Emily in the live TV musical adaptation of Thornton Wilder's "Our

Town” with Frank Sinatra and Paul Newman, winning another Emmy nomination. Her third Emmy nod came for the Hallmark Hall Of Fame presentation of “Taxi,” and a fourth nomination came for the mini-series “How the West Was Won.” In 1990, on her fifth Emmy nomination, she won the coveted award for the mini-series “People Like Us.”

Her many other TV appearances include playing Cybill Shepard’s mother on the “Moonlighting” series, “The Titanic” mini-series, “Time To Say Goodbye? The Klooster Family Story,” “Jackie’s Back,” “Fatal Vision,” “When Hell Was In Session,” “The Last Days Of Patton,” “The Achille-Lauro Affair,” “Best Little Girl In The World,” “Where’s Jimmy,” “My Antonia” and “Open House.” She also starred in four memorable holiday specials, “A Christmas to Remember,” “I’ll Be Home For Christmas,” “Breaking Home Ties” and “Papa’s Angels.”

In addition to “The Trip to Bountiful,” she starred on the New York stage in “The Lincoln Mask” and “Duet for One,” and on major stages across America.

Ms. Saint and her husband, Director Jeffrey Hayden, produced the PBS television documentaries “Primary Colors: The Story of Corita,” which she narrated, and “Children in America’s Schools” with Bill Moyers.

Saint recently completed the feature film “Don’t Come Knocking” with Sam Shepard, directed by Wim Wenders, to be released next fall.

ANNASOPHIA ROBB, who takes on the central role of India Opal Buloni, decided to become an actress when she was three years old. But it took her all the way until age nine to launch her career. She took an acting class for young children and was spotted and signed by a Hollywood agent who saw her in her hometown of in Denver, Colorado in 2002.

On her very first professional audition, she won a spot on a national radio commercial. While this marks her professional acting debut, she appeared in a short film titled “Daddy’s Day” by a Denver filmmaker. In May of 2003 she was seen in a national television commercial for McDonald’s and Bratz Dolls. The only child of an architect and an interior designer, she turned 10 in December of 2003 and was in the fourth grade while making BECAUSE OF WINN-DIXIE.

ABOUT THE FILMMAKERS

WAYNE WANG (Director) has spent a rich career alternating between major high profile Hollywood studio fare such as “The Joy Luck Club” and “Maid In Manhattan,” and personal independent works typified by “Smoke.”

Wang was born in Hong Kong after his family fled from China following the Communist takeover in 1947. He graduated from Wah Yan Jesuit High School and came to the United States at the age of 18 to study film at California College of the Arts And Crafts in Oakland.

Wang’s first feature film was his graduate student project, “A Man, A Woman, A Killer,” co-directed with Rick Schmidt. He returned to Hong Kong with a Masters degree and went to work at the public broadcasting outlet R.T.H. (Radio and Television Hong Kong), which had become a launching pad for young film school trained directors known as the “Hong Kong New Wave.” While there, he directed several episodes of the landmark realistic drama series “Below the Lion Rock,” about the daily lives of ordinary Hong Kong citizens.

Returning to the U.S., he moved to San Francisco and worked for a time with new immigrants from Asia. The experience inspired his second feature film, the critically acclaimed “Chan Is Missing,” in which he used a thriller plot as a vehicle to explore social conflicts and political divisions in Chinatown. Made in 16mm black and white for only \$27,000, “Chan Is Missing” was a decade ahead of the recent wave of “micro-budget” successes such as “El Mariachi” and “Clerks.”

Wang’s third feature, “Dim Sum: A Little Bit Of Heart,” had its world premiere in the Director’s Fortnight at the Cannes Film Festival and received a British Academy Award nomination as Best Foreign Film. He next directed the thriller “Slamdance,” starring Tom Hulce, Mary Elizabeth Mastrantonio and Virginia Madsen. New York’s Chinatown was the setting and the subject of his subsequent “Eat a Bowl of Tea,” a period drama set in the 1940s and starring Wang’s wife Cora Miao and Russell Wong.

This was followed by “Life Is Cheap...But Toilet Paper Is Expensive,” a gangster comedy filmed in Hong Kong.

Wang’s first major studio film was “The Joy Luck Club,” an extremely popular picture based on the best-selling novel by Amy Tan. He next directed Harvey Keitel, William Hurt and Forrest Whitaker in “Smoke,” from novelist Paul Auster’s original screenplay. The picture won the Silver Bear Award at the Berlin Film Festival and was nominated for France’s Cesar Award for Best Foreign Film. It was an enormous box-office success in Europe and Asia. Wang and Auster subsequently co-directed “Blue in the Face,” a second story employing many of the same actors and settings as “Smoke.”

More recently, Wang directed “Chinese Box,” a romance set in Hong Kong starring Jeremy Irons and Gong Li; “Anywhere But Here,” starring Susan Sarandon and Natalie Portman; and “The Center Of The World,” a digitally shot independent film starring Molly Parker and Peter Sarsgaard.

TREVOR ALBERT (Producer) began preparing BECAUSE OF WINN-DIXIE after producing the large-scale “The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen” for Twentieth Century Fox.

Albert’s producing credits include “The First \$20 Million is Always the Hardest,” “Bedazzled,” “Multiplicity,” “Stuart Saves His Family” and “Groundhog Day.” He began honing his filmmaking skills on “National Lampoon’s Vacation” and was Associate Producer on “Club Paradise.”

As a journalism and film major at The University of California At San Diego, Albert worked his way through college as a journalist for the San Diego Reader. Upon graduation, he moved up the California coast to pursue a film career in Los Angeles. After working as a film researcher at Universal Pictures and Warner Bros., he accepted a position with Producers Jon Peters and Barbra Streisand. He was assigned to work with Harold Ramis on Ramis’ directorial debut, “Caddyshack.” This marked the beginning of a long and successful working relationship between Albert and Ramis.

In 2002 Albert launched Weekend Films, based at Twentieth Century Fox. He is currently developing a wide slate of feature film projects.

JOAN SINGLETON (Screenwriter, Producer), with a varied background in the film industry, secured the screen rights to Kate DiCamillo's beloved book, wrote the screenplay and sold the project to Twentieth Century Fox.

Remarkably, it was the first screenplay she had written, just as the book that inspired it was DiCamillo's debut effort.

Singleton, who was Associate Producer on Stephen King's "Graveyard Shift," served as an executive at Warner Bros., where she discovered a script that ultimately became (for another company) the hit film "First Blood.

She and husband Ralph Singleton, Executive Producer of BECAUSE OF WINN-DIXIE, formed Lone Eagle Publishing, which specialized in professional books for the movie industry. Their best-selling *Film Directors: A Complete Guide*, was published annually, along with directories on screenwriters, cinematographers and other creative movie and television people. Their books on scheduling, budgeting, acting, and screenwriting are used as textbooks at major universities around the world. They sold Lone Eagle in 1999.

Joan recently optioned movie rights to bestselling novelist Meg Cabot's young adult book *Teen Idol*, as well as her new adult book *Every Boy's Got One*. Singleton will write the screenplays and she and her husband Ralph Singleton will produce. *Teen Idol* was #1 on *The New York Times* Bestseller List. *Every Boy's Got One* (Avon) will be published January 2005. Meg Cabot is best-known for her book, *The Princess Diaries*, which became a highly successful film from Disney based on her book.

RALPH SINGLETON's (Executive Producer) credits as Executive Producer, Producer or Co-Producer include "The Jackal," "Last Man Standing," "Graveyard Shift," "A Clear And Present Danger," "Murder At 1600," "Leap Of Faith," "Another 48HRS." "Harlem Nights," "Juwanna Mann" and "Supernova." His extensive television work includes an Emmy Award for "Cagney and Lacey" as Best Dramatic Series in 1986, plus two additional Emmy nominations. He also directed Stephen King's "Graveyard Shift" and episodes of "Cagney and Lacey."

Singleton co-founded Lone Eagle Publishing Co. with his wife Joan, a Screenwriter and Producer on BECAUSE OF WINN-DIXIE. The company became the

largest niche publisher of entertainment reference directories and trade textbooks. He is the author of five respected books on film production, *Film Budgeting: Film Scheduling: Or, How Long Will It Take To Shoot Your Movie?; Film Scheduling/Film Budgeting Workbook; Filmmaker's Dictionary; and Movie Production & Budget Forms.*

He also ran Francis Ford Coppola's Zoetrope Studio in Los Angeles.

KARL WALTER LINDENLAUB, ASC, bvk (Director of Photography) worked with BECAUSE OF WINN-DIXIE director Wayne Wang on "Maid in Manhattan." Other recent Lindenlaub credits include "The Banger Sisters:" and "City by the Sea."

Among his earlier work as a cinematographer are "Moon 44," "Eye Of The Storm," "Universal Soldier," "CB4: The Movie," "Stargate," "Rob Roy," "Up Close And Personal," "Independence Day," "Red Corner," "The Jackal," "The Haunting," "The Princess Diaries" and "One Night At McCool's."

Lindenlaub studied in Germany at the Munich Film and Television School and at England's National Film And Television School. He is head of the camera department at the Hamburg Film School, where he returns twice a year.

DONALD GRAHAM BURT (Production Designer) previously teamed with director Wayne Wang on the motion pictures "The Joy Luck Club," "Anywhere But Here," "Center Of The World."

Burt was also Production Designer on "White Oleander," "In an Instant," "A Cool, Dry Place," "Donnie Brasco," "Kazaam" and "Dangerous Minds."

DEIRDRE SLEVIN (Editor) was part of director Wayne Wang's film editing team on "Maid in Manhattan." She edited Susan Seidelman's "Gaudi Afternoon," a European film made in Spain, and was Associate Editor on "K-PAX."

Slevin was First Assistant Editor on "The Perfect You," "Blue Moon" and "A Map Of The World," and earlier gained experience working on "Stepmom," "The Siege," "Practical Magic" and "Cop Land."

She recently edited the independent film titled "Water," now making the rounds of major international film festivals.

BECKI CROSS TRUJILLO (Co-Producer) was, from 1997 until 2001, vice president of feature production at Twentieth Century Fox. She subsequently served as Co-Producer on “Daredevil.”

Trujillo joined Orion Pictures in 1989, serving as feature production executive on such pictures as “Bill And Ted’s Bogus Journey,” “Clifford,” “Mystery Date” and “There Goes My Baby.” She then became vice president of feature production at TriStar Pictures, involved in the making of “Cliffhanger,” “Cops And Robbers,” “Devil In A Blue Dress,” “Guarding Tess,” “Hideaway,” “Look Who’s Talking Now,” “Mr. Jones,” “Only You,” “Philadelphia,” “The Quick And The Dead,” “So I Married An Axe Murderer” and “Three Ninjas Kick Back.”

She was executive in charge of production at Dreamworks Television before moving to Twentieth Century Fox, where her projects included “From Hell,” “Big Momma’s House,” “Dude, Where’s My Car?” “High Crimes,” and “Black Knight.”

HOPE HANAFIN (Costume Designer), an Emmy nominee and winner of the Costume Designers Guild Award, has designed for the feature films “My Favorite Martian,” “Bean,” “House Arrest,” “Kazaam,” “Faithful” “A Simple Twist of Fate,” “The Air Up There,” “Mortal Thoughts” and “After Dark, My Sweet.”

She received Emmy nominations for “Winchell” and “A Lesson Before Dying.” She won the Costume Designers Guild Award for “Geppetto,” for which she was also Emmy nominated. Other television credits include “John Grisham’s A Painted House,” HBO’s “King Of Texas,” “My Sister’s Keeper,” “When Billie Beat Bobbie,” “Running Mates” and “Cupid & Cate,” “Normal,” “For Love Or Country: The Arturo Sandoval Story” and “Vendetta.”

Hanafin’s earlier credits include the mini-series “J.F.K.: Reckless Youth” and “The Jacksons: An American Dream.”

RACHEL PORTMAN (Music) is the first female composer to win an Academy Award, for Douglas McGrath's 1996 drama *Emma*. She received Oscar nominations for her scores for Lasse Hallström’s “The Cider House Rules” and “Chocolat.”

Portman started composing on piano at the age of 13, and eventually gained a formal education in composition, orchestration and classical music at the University of Oxford.

In 1988, she won the British Film Institute's Young Composer of the Year award, followed by the Carlton Television Award for Creative Originality for Women in Film.

Her early career was marked by her consistent work for BBC films. She received Best Score nominations from the British Academy of Film and Television Arts for her scores to "The Woman in Black" and the BBC drama "Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit." She was honored with a third nomination for her score to "Where Angels Fear to Tread."

Portman's feature film credits include "Mona Lisa Smile," Jonathan Demme's "The Trouble With Charlie," Robert Benton's "The Human Stain," McGrath's "Nicholas Nickleby," Robert Redford's "The Legend of Bagger Vance," "The Closer You Get," "Ratcatcher," "The Other Sister," "Home Fries," Demme's "Beloved," "Addicted to Love," "Marvin's Room," "Palookaville," "The Adventures of Pinocchio," "Smoke," "To Wong Foo, Thanks for Everything, Julie Newmar," "A Pyromaniac's Love Story," "The Road to Wellville," "Sirens," "Only You," "The War of the Buttons," "Friends," "Benny & Joon," Wayne Wang's "The Joy Luck Club," "Used People," "Antonia and Jane" Mike Leigh's "Life Is Sweet," and "Experience Preferred ... But Not Essential."

KATE DI CAMILLO, author of *Because of Winn-Dixie*, was born in Philadelphia, raised in Florida and currently lives in Minneapolis, Minnesota. She has a degree in English from The University of Florida and writes for both adults and children.

Her short stories for adults have appeared in *The Greensboro Review*, *The Nebraska Review*, *Water-Stone* and *The Alaska Quarterly Review*. She has written three extremely popular books for children, *Because Of Winn-Dixie* (a Newbery Honor book), *The Tiger Rising* (a National Book Award finalist) and *The Tale Of Despereaux* (winner of the 2004 Newbery Medal).

Before making her living as a writer, she told people to watch their step at Walt Disney world, sold tickets at Circus World, called bingo at a campground and grew variegated philodendrons in a greenhouse.

She is currently at work on a new novel for young people and a collection of short stories for grownups. Her special canine pal these days is a poodle/Cairn terrier mix named Henry.

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