



FOX SEARCHLIGHT PICTURES and REGENCY ENTERPRISES Present

A BONA FIDE Production

A SIEGEL / McGEHEE Film

RICHARD GERE

JULIETTE BINOCHE

Bee Season

FLORA CROSS

MAX MINGHELLA

Directed by	SCOTT McGEHEE & DAVID SIEGEL
Screenplay by	NAOMI FONER GYLLENHAAL
Based upon the novel by	MYLA GOLDBERG
Produced by	ALBERT BERGER & RON YERXA
Executive Producers.....	ARNON MILCHAN
.....	PEGGY RAJSKI
.....	MARK ROMANEK
Director of Photography.....	GILES NUTTGENS
Production Designer	KELLY McGEHEE
Film Editor	LAUREN ZUCKERMAN
Costume Designer	MARY MALIN
Music by.....	PETER NASHEL

Rated PG-13

SYNOPSIS

*“My father told me once, that I could reach the ear of God...
that words and letters would be my guide and like the ancient mystics,
God would flow through me.”*

—Eliza Naumann, **BEE SEASON**

Eliza Naumann spells words. Lots of words. Hard words. Long words. And with an effortless understanding that surprises everyone around her. Her teachers, her fellow students. But especially those closest to her: her father, mother and brother. The people whose lives Eliza’s newfound genius will irrevocably change. **BEE SEASON** is the kaleidoscopic portrait of a modern American family whose picture-perfect surface conceals an underlying world of secret turmoil.

As Eliza Naumann (FLORA CROSS) trains for the ultimate test of her spelling powers -- the pressure-packed National Spelling Bee in Washington D.C -- her family simultaneously begins to fall apart. Indeed the more amazing the words are that Eliza learns to spell, the more communication seems to break down all around her. Her father Saul (RICHARD GERE), a religious studies professor, sees something transcendent in Eliza’s magical gift, and begins to teach her the secrets of Kabbalah. He becomes obsessed with her victories, living vicariously through her path to God. Her mother Miriam (Oscar® winner JULIETTE BINOCHE) finds Eliza and Saul’s shared focus a painful reminder of the connection she once had with her husband and her own parents, who died tragically when she was a young girl. Meanwhile, Eliza’s older brother Aaron (MAX MINGHELLA), once her father’s favorite, rebels against his withdrawal of affection, experimenting with other religions, and eventually seeking out a connection with a beautiful Hare Krishna (KATE BOSWORTH). With her family disintegrating before her young eyes, it’s up to Eliza -- and an unexpected act of selflessness and love -- to put the broken pieces of her world back together.

The film is the third feature from directors Scott McGehee and David Siegel, who previously won critical acclaim with the intense psychological thrillers **THE DEEP END** and **SUTURE**. The screenplay, based on the bestselling novel by Myla Goldberg, is by Naomi Foner Gyllenhaal (**LOSING ISAIAH**, **RUNNING ON EMPTY**). A Bona Fide production for Fox Searchlight Pictures and Regency Enterprise, **BEE SEASON** is produced by Albert Berger and Ron Yerxa. The executive producers are Arnon Milchan, Peggy Rajski and Mark Romanek.

BEE SEASON stars Richard Gere, Juliette Binoche, Kate Bosworth and introduces two promising newcomers in their first major films roles: Max Minghella and Flora Cross as Aaron and Eliza Naumann.

BEE BEGINNINGS: THE PERFECT FAMILY UNRAVELLED

“We can restore what has been shattered.”

-- Saul Naumann, **BEE SEASON**

At the heart of **BEE SEASON** lies a powerful thread of modern American family life: the yearning for perfection. On the surface, the Naumann family appears to be ideal – upper middle-class, highly accomplished, deeply spiritual, and seemingly tightly knit. But the film gradually reveals that the picture-perfect family is, in fact, comprised of individuals on disparate (and often desperate) paths toward their own notions of transcendence – quests that lead them to pursue intense and even dangerous spiritual experiences. Eliza’s unlikely emergence as the ‘family star’ has the effect of tearing the fragile fabric that has thus far held them together. Through the glare of approbation that her anomalous spelling genius has brought her, Eliza nonetheless manages to discern that it’s up to her to restore what has been shattered – a feat she accomplishes through an act that can be interpreted either as a reclaiming of her self (and a tacit rejection of God’s voice), or, alternately, as a selfless channeling of God’s profound love.

The film is a screen adaptation of Myla Goldberg’s recent, critically acclaimed novel of the same name, which won many fans with its unexpected mixture of themes – from the power of language, to the elusiveness of communication; from the subtleties of parent-child relationships, to the terrifying specter of family breakdown; from the inchoate, consuming desires that plague adults, to children’s clear-eyed ability to see their parents’ acts of desperation for what they are.

These same rich themes captivated producers Albert Berger and Ron Yerxa – whose recent films include such wide-ranging works as the Civil War love story **COLD MOUNTAIN** and Alexander Payne’s contemporary satire **ELECTION**, both based on acclaimed novels. “We were attracted to Myla Goldberg’s wonderful novel because it took such a fresh route to exploring what makes a family,” says Yerxa. Adds Berger: “Certainly a lot of films have tackled families falling apart before, but this story really seemed to dive into new terrain. It’s rare to find a story that probes a family’s inner dynamics so deeply, yet does so in an accessible and gripping way, with such unforgettable characters.”

Goldberg’s novel, which was inspired by an article she read about the nerve-racking and hyper-competitive world of children’s spelling bees coupled with her own fascination with family dynamics was a page-turner – but it was also intensely internal, with much of the action and suspense taking place inside the characters’ hearts and minds. The producers realized from the start that it

would take a deft screenwriting hand to bring the story's psychological complexity to a vibrant new visual life. So they brought the story to screenwriter Naomi Foner Gyllenhaal, who previously demonstrated keen sensibilities for probing high-tension family dynamics in such films as the River Phoenix drama *RUNNING ON EMPTY* and the adoption tale *LOSING ISIAH* with Jessica Lange and Halle Berry.

As they expected, Gyllenhaal managed to tease out a whole new aspect to the story. "I really saw the film as being about how families can become dangerous," she explains. "I think *BEE SEASON* is a scary story in a lot of ways about how parents, even with the best of intentions, can become too attached to their kids' successes and their own dreams for their kids. I was really fascinated by Eliza as a unique heroine, because she is a little girl who has been put in what might even be mortal peril but ultimately decides to save herself – and by extension she winds up saving her family. This was key to the story. I think ultimately the Naumanns start to realize they are each trying to get to the same place. They're each on completely different journeys, but what Eliza does allows them to see that they all really are hungering for the same things."

As she delved into researching the intense world of spelling bees, as well as the 13th century Kabbalistic practices that Saul introduces to Eliza, Gyllenhaal became more and more caught up in the lives of the characters Goldberg had created. Eventually, she and the filmmakers would make some minor changes – shifting the father's profession from a temple cantor to a college professor, for example, and moving the story's suburban Pennsylvania location to an idyllic Northern California college town – but Gyllenhaal was determined to stay true to the emotional complexity that had initially attracted her to *BEE SEASON*. She hoped that the film would provoke a wide range of thoughts and feelings on subjects vital to modern life – from parenting to spiritual yearning to sibling competition and even mental illness – just as the novel had.

Sums up Gyllenhaal: "I wanted this to be the kind of movie from which you leave the theatre dying to talk about everything that happened, to ask questions of others about it, to debate the ideas in it and really get into great discussions. I hope a lot of this comes out of the ending, which is very strong and definitive, but also purposely ambiguous. The idea is that it's not really the end of something, but the beginning. Eliza's act perhaps brings with it a seed of new hope."

While Gyllenhaal wrote, Yerxa and Berger searched for a director who could bring a fresh eye to this already unconventional material. As it turned out, they found two: the filmmaking team of Scott McGehee and David Siegel. Siegel and McGehee's two previous films – *THE DEEP END* and *SUTURE* – had also explored themes of identity, communication and family sacrifice with a stylistic verve that pulled audiences into the emotional turmoil of the characters. Says Ron Yerxa: "We had wanted to work with them for a long time because they are such terrific visual filmmakers

whose style is always so beautiful and distinct. And fortunately they responded very strongly to the material.”

Scott McGehee explains the duo’s attraction: “We have always been interested in stories that center around identity and the interior lives of characters and we felt that *BEE SEASON* took an unusual route into these themes. It’s very much about four people in a family who are reaching out for God, but ultimately find one another. We found that very appealing.”

BEE THEMES:
ABOUT SPELLING BEES AND KABBALAH

*You know, many cultures believe that letters are an expression of a kind of special, powerful energy;
that when they combine to make words they hold all the secrets of the universe.*

-- Saul Naumann, **BEE SEASON**

BEE SEASON takes audiences into two fascinating worlds rarely visited on screen: that of competitive spelling bees and that of Kabbalah, an ancient and once-highly secretive form of Jewish mysticism that involves meditative and magical practices designed to bring the practitioner closer to God.

The Spelling Bee ...

Once used as a fun way to teach young children to spell, spelling bees have evolved into a popular competitive event, with the annual National Spelling Bee now regularly airing on ESPN before a vast global audience. Spelling bees have even started to filter into popular culture, becoming the subject of an Academy Award-winning documentary, **SPELLBOUND**, as well as a hit Broadway play, “The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee” (winner of two Tony Awards in 2005). Known as “the Olympics of spelling,” the National Spelling Bee offers a prize of \$12,000 to the winner, who must be under the age of 16. Out of the roughly 10 million kids that compete in local, state and regional spelling bees, only 250 of the very best spellers – hard-working, laser-focused kids who not only have supreme gifts for memory and language, but also nerves of steel -- make it to this final event, which unfolds with all the drama and exhilaration of a major sports championship.

Sitting on a bare stage, one by one, the competitors must rise to their feet, make their way to the microphone and, standing in the spotlight before a hushed audience, spell a word that your average college professor would be hard-pressed merely to define. A single misstep – a failure to discern a counterintuitive diphthong, a momentary confusion with a homonym – and they’re instantly eliminated.

Says David Siegel: “I loved the spelling bee angle in **BEE SEASON** because it’s great to see kids competing in something that is so intense and suspenseful, yet it isn’t sports.”

To learn more about what the National Spelling Bee is like up close and personal, Siegel and McGehee traveled to Washington D.C. to experience it for themselves. After watching kids ranging in age from 8 to 15 on the stage, as well as behind the scenes, the directors felt even more excited about taking on the challenge of using the inherent suspense of the spelling bee to help weave together the many strands of **BEE SEASON**’s story.

“It was really fascinating to see the real thing,” observes Siegel, “and there were also a lot of surprises for us. For one thing, the atmosphere was a lot more human than either of us expected. There’s definitely some nerve-jangling moments for the kids but it’s also a lot of fun for everyone involved. Most people there were really into the spirit of learning and having a great time and we definitely saw a lot of support for the children competing.”

McGehee continues: “We really enjoyed experiencing the National Spelling Bee and we think it’s generally a great thing. Of course, Eliza’s experience is very different from most of the kids that we saw because the pressure on her to perform is so incredible and emerges from so much turmoil within her family, as well as from the mysticism she has begun to explore. I think in our film, the National Spelling Bee functions more as a metaphor for this idea that in the Naumann family, people are great at using words and spelling words -- but they are somehow failing to communicate with them.”

Kaballah and other Judaic concepts in BEE SEASON

It is nine year-old Eliza’s savant-like gift for spelling that inspires her father Saul to take her under his wing and begin to expose her to the arcane, mystical practices of Kabbalah, an undertaking that brings them closer together, but which ultimately brings Eliza into dangerously deep spiritual waters. When Saul begins to realize that Eliza’s skill for spelling goes beyond rote memorization, or even some specialized intelligence -- that she can, rather, literally experience the essence of words -- his obsession with her talent is piqued. The more he tutors her in Kaballistic exercises and practices, the more firmly he believes that Eliza has a gift shared by only a handful of prophets throughout the ages – the ability not only to make oneself heard by God, but also to personally receive God’s voice.

Considered part of Jewish oral law, Kabbalah is a many centuries old mystical approach to the Torah (the five original books of the bible), which places a special emphasis on probing the origins of the universe, the meaning of life, the laws of cause and effect, and the cosmic source of creation. It is said that a Kabbalist has two primary aims in life: to attain a union with God while also maintaining a strong family life, both of which are goals that Saul Naumann thirsts for, despite his seeming inability to achieve either. Kabbalah places a particular importance on the power of language and especially on the individual letters of the alphabet themselves. In Kabbalah, letters and words are not mere representations -- they have an inherent magical power and holiness all their own.

Saul tutors Eliza in the rituals outlined by the groundbreaking 13th century Kabbalah scholar Abraham Abulafia, who collected exercises that he believed would facilitate reaching a state of mystical connection called *Shefa*, or “God-knowledge.” In Abulafia’s philosophy, taking certain

Hebrew words apart and reorganizing them into divine names could have profound spiritual effects. But like all spiritual quests, Abulafia's exercises are also rife with physical and metaphysical dangers. Ultimately, the closer Eliza gets to God, the closer she gets to losing her self and her family.

"Part of the idea is that Saul pushes Eliza to mystical places that put her in peril. There is a famous suggestion that if you're not ready for these Abulafia exercises then your mind can be literally blown out, like a fuse," explains Naomi Foner Gyllenhaal. "In *BEE SEASON*, I always saw the way Saul drives Eliza to speak directly to God as a unique metaphor for the ways that parents sometimes force their children to try to attain what they couldn't."

Though Siegel and McGehee were fascinated by the Kabbalistic rituals, they hoped to bring them to the screen not so much in authentic detail as in a larger context of storytelling. Says Siegel: "The film isn't intended to be about Kabbalah, but more about the desire to reach toward something higher. We didn't want to get too caught up in the specifics of mystical Judaism and all its complexities but rather, we wanted to explore a more universal and accessible vision of what an internal spiritual quest of any kind might be like."

Another universally intriguing concept of Judaism that comes to the fore in *BEE SEASON* is one that seems to drive much of the Naumann family's actions and especially Eliza's course-changing act at the climax of the film – the notion of *Tikkun Olam*, a Hebrew phrase which literally means "to repair the world." First used in the 3rd century, Tikkun Olam later became a precept of Kabbalism and today is associated in Judaism with acts of giving, justice and compassion. But again, the filmmakers see it as something that goes beyond one particular form of faith.

"I think the concept of repairing what has been shattered in the world, whether in your own personal life or the social world at large, is something that many people of all faiths and backgrounds can relate to," says McGehee. "The film is a portrait of a family trying to find their way back to each other, and to also find their way to something more meaningful in their own lives, and the way those two quests intertwine is something I think most of us encounter in life."

BEE-ING THE NAUMANNS:
ABOUT THE CAST AND CHARACTERS

Why can't you live your own stupid, lonely life?
Why'd you have to pull me and Elly into it?
-- Aaron, **BEE SEASON**

From the minute they took on **BEE SEASON**, directors Scott McGehee and David Siegel knew that the primary key to the entire production would be creating a palpably real family on the screen. As they began to cast the film, they focused not only on finding the right actors for each role, but the right *quartet* who could together reveal the unspoken conflicts that hide just underneath the placid, smiling surface of a lovely, and loving, family portrait.

At the center of the Naumann family is Eliza's father, Saul, a powerful and charismatic figure who acts as a sort of brilliant sun around which the rest of the family revolves. A highly intelligent academic who yearns for states of religious, artistic and social perfection, he is at once the family's revered leader and a hard-to-reach narcissist who controls his children by turning on and off his affection and admiration for them.

The filmmakers knew the role would require a highly nuanced performance to reveal that, at heart, the ambitious, searching Saul is essentially a good man uncertain of how to reach out to his family. "Saul actually goes through a very tortured journey, thinking his daughter is going to provide for him an experience he can't attain himself while watching his wife fall apart," explains David Siegel. "We were so fortunate to have Richard Gere in the role because his performance manages to be both aggressive and strong, but also truly heartbreaking. He really poured himself into becoming Saul Naumann."

Gere was attracted to **BEE SEASON** the minute he read the script. "I'm always interested in stories that explore the complexities of life and the gray areas that we live in," he says. "The characters and situations in **BEE SEASON** seemed very true to my own human experience – and I really think a lot of people are going to relate to this film especially because family dynamics are pretty peculiar in all families, and everyone has secrets they keep from their loved ones."

He continues: "The quick snapshot of the Naumann family looks great – but, like a lot of families, it's only when you get really deep inside the house that you see that it's filled with all kinds of secrets and conflict. But then, if you look even further, you find you have four people who are searching for some kind of holiness, grace and redemption. I was very impressed with the way the script structured all these revelations and themes together."

Saul, in particular, appealed to Gere because the character reminded him a bit of his own father. “I really believe that Saul is the last one to know what’s going on with his family. He’s a very solid guy in a lot of ways – very strong and intelligent – but he’s a bit mystified by the needs of those around him,” he observes. “One of the lines I wanted to try to illuminate is that he is very loving, but at the same time very controlling. So he’ll do the cooking, he’ll wash the dishes, he’ll wash the car. He sees these as his contribution, but the rest of the family kind of chafes underneath his dominance.”

Strained as Saul’s relationship with his wife and children may have been before, a whole new dynamic emerges when Eliza reveals herself to have an uncanny gift for words – and for Gere this is where the portrait became really interesting. “It isn’t the spelling itself that amazes Saul,” he explains, “but it’s the magical process he sees her going through that makes these words available to her. He feels that Eliza is breaking through the illusion of reality and getting closer to God – something he has wanted to do all his life. Of course the greatest love and joy of a father’s life is seeing his children succeed. But Saul takes that a step further. He begins to see Eliza as able to fulfill his own dreams of transcendence. I think he wants to be her spiritual teacher, but he doesn’t see the effect on her and the family. For me, the scenes with Flora Cross and the Abulafia exercises in the reading room were the most intriguing, because here Saul crosses over from just being a happy father to trying to take Eliza into his personal spiritual quest.”

To learn more about Kabbalah, Gere consulted with as many experts as he could find. “I probably spoke to every Rabbi in America,” he laughs. “And I read a lot of the books. The more I learned, the more interesting I found it, and I was able to relate a lot of it to my own knowledge of and 30 years of practice in Vajrayana Buddhism.”

To add further authenticity to the role, Gere even learned to play the violin, an instrument that demands the kind of precision and soulfulness to which Saul Naumann aspires. “In the beginning, I thought violin, schmiolin – I can learn this,” laughs Gere. “So I started taking violin lessons from a really great teacher in Europe, but as the production approached, it became more and more clear that I wasn’t exactly ready to play in the film. But I was glad to have taken the lessons. It taught me a lot and helped me to fake it quite well!”

Playing opposite Gere as Saul’s brilliant, complex yet mysteriously troubled wife, Miriam, is Oscar winner Juliette Binoche. Gere was thrilled to have the chance to work with her. “Juliette is one of a handful of actresses who literally seems to be able to do anything. She very much locks into her characters and she works from an amazing mix of experience, research and her gut. She’s really a deep diver and there’s nothing fake or superficial about what she does,” he says. “But of course, her relationship with Saul isn’t entirely happy. I think she always saw him as the man who talked of

fixing the world, and she thought he could fix her, could heal her, and there's this unspoken sadness between them that it never really happened."

Binoche had a visceral reaction to reading the script. "When I finished it, I just wanted to jump in and be inside it," she says. "It broke my heart, I couldn't get over it and I felt like I just had to make this movie. It felt very personal and there was something that reminded me of my relationship with my own mother. I wanted to do it and dedicate my performance to my mother."

She also felt a great deal of sympathy for Miriam, in spite of the character's unusual, possibly even criminal, secrets. "Miriam is someone who is very lost. She lost her parents when she was young, she feels now like she's losing touch with her daughter and her husband, and she's looking for some way to make everything right again, to regain some control of her world," explains Binoche.

A central theme for Miriam becomes the kaleidoscope from her childhood that she brings to Eliza – and it was one that especially moved Binoche. "The kaleidoscope is so important to Miriam because it is a device that gathers shards together and no matter how you move them, they stay together," she explains. "When Miriam gives the kaleidoscope to Eliza after the spelling bee I think her feeling is that she wants to share this very important and precious secret of how to survive."

As a European, Binoche had never encountered a spelling bee before and was surprised to learn how intense and serious they can be for the youngsters competing in them. "All that concentration and focus with such little kids!" she remarks. "It was quite amazing. But that's part of what I loved about doing this film – it led me to so many totally new encounters."

Binoche even consulted several psychiatrists to probe further into the reasons for Miriam's seemingly inexplicable behavior. "The doctors explained to me that someone like Miriam really isn't interested in committing crimes, and wouldn't even see what she is doing as criminal. For her, it is a kind of poetry, although the doctors would call her an obsessive-compulsive. For me, she isn't really crazy," says the actress. "She might do some crazy things, but she is just looking for a way to fulfillment and happiness, the same as everyone else. The things she does are scary, but I think things just like it happen to people all the time in real life."

For the filmmakers, Binoche brought just the right sensibility to capture Miriam's mix of light and dark. Says Albert Berger: "Miriam definitely has a dangerous side to her but we also thought it was critical that you really see how deeply and sincerely she loves her children and husband. Juliette brought so much humanity to the character that I think it helps you to understand what she's going through."

Meanwhile, for the role of Eliza Naumann, the filmmakers embarked on a nationwide search – hoping to find that rare, precocious pre-teen actress who might be capable of taking on the enormous complexities and intelligence of the character. Although the casting team filed through

mountains of resumes and pictures, eleven year-old Flora Cross -- with her luminous face and quiet intensity -- emerged within the first month of the search. “At the time, we didn’t know who we were casting for the role of Miriam, but we joked ‘that little girl would be perfect if we cast Juliette Binoche,’” recalls Scott McGehee. “So we didn’t cast Flora right away, but the more serious we got about Juliette joining the cast, the more we thought of her. At first it was just the resemblance to Juliette that we found so remarkable, but as we saw Flora at work, we soon fell in love with her as a remarkable young actress.”

BEE SEASON marks Flora Cross’ acting debut, though she hails from a theatrical family, following in the footsteps of her actor brothers, Harley Cross and Eli Marienthal. Born in France, Flora has lived in Paris, Panama, Haiti, Jerusalem, New York City and Argentina, giving her a worldliness and maturity beyond her years. Notes David Siegel: “Since Flora really hadn’t had any experience on a film set, all the actors rallied around her and became a family of support for her. It was easy to nurture her, though, because she was so determined to do her best.”

Flora was won over by her character. “I think there’s really two people inside of Eliza, but one of them is really, really courageous,” she says. “Sometimes she’s scared to say anything or do what she knows is right but other times she’s willing to give up everything for her family, which is really brave.” Despite the very grown-up nature of the role, which includes scenes of potent mystical experiences, Flora was undeterred. “It was never that difficult because I had faith in myself and I know if I have faith in myself, I can do most anything,” she says.

The only thing that really intimidated Flora was the prospect of having to become a champion speller – but she quickly developed her own linguistic prowess. “In the beginning, I couldn’t spell ‘puppy,’” she notes, “but now I can spell ‘pharmacopeia!’”

Working closely with Flora Cross throughout was another young actor who comes to the fore as her on-screen brother Aaron: Max Minghella, who also takes the lead in this season’s *ART SCHOOL CONFIDENTIAL*. Though he grew up in England, Max auditioned for the film using an American accent – and the filmmakers then asked him to use that same accent 24-7 throughout production just to really nail a specifically American personality.

“Max is a naturally gifted mimic,” says David Siegel. “We never had to use a dialect coach because he was spot-on right from the beginning. And outside of his accent, his performance is remarkable. I think he shows himself to be a very talented and unique screen presence and someone we’ll be seeing a lot more of.”

Minghella found that the script really stood out from others he had read. “I was just so fascinated by the paths the different characters in the story take,” he says. “And I think it explores something about family relationships that you rarely see in films, which is that thing where kids

become completely besotted by their father, where they have this intense, platonic admiration and just yearn for his affection and when they can't get it, things get very cold. It's about that – and it's about a lot of other things like love and spiritual enlightenment and other things that just aren't brought up enough in any of today's art media.”

It is Max's character Aaron who suffers a dramatic loss of attention when Eliza, out of the blue, demonstrates a genius that sparks her father's imagination. “What's so hard for Aaron is that he was always the gifted child of the family. And then suddenly, Eliza's brilliance takes over and leaves him very lost,” he explains. “I do think he wants to be supportive of Eliza but he's also facing up to seeing some truths about his father for the first time, seeing his selfishness and narcissism, which is a huge thing.”

Turning away from the family, Max takes refuge in the least expected of places – with his new Hare Krishna girlfriend, Chali. To learn more about the Hare Krishna temple and its appeal, Max visited a local chapter. “I spoke to some of the members, saw a service and talked to some experts who helped to explain what the devotees do, how they act and what kind of things they go through. I had known very little about it, so it was actually really fascinating and they treated us very well,” he recalls.

For inspiration in taking on the roiling emotions that Aaron faces between his spiritual and familial confusion, Minghella looked no further than his co-stars. “It was just incredible to be working with Richard Gere and Juliette Binoche,” he says. “It's great to work with people who are not doing it for vanity reasons but are there entirely because they love to do it. They are so dedicated, serious and present, just watching them work was hugely influential for me and I felt really lucky.”

Minghella also greatly enjoyed working with Kate Bosworth. Bosworth, who received international attention as the lead in the hit surfing movie BLUE CRUSH and went on to star most recently with Kevin Spacey as Sandra Dee in BEYOND THE SEA, had come to the attention of Siegel and McGehee, who were drawn to her at first because her face was the spitting image of a fresh-faced young woman they had seen in a Hare Krishna brochure. “Kate has that incredible glow about her,” points out McGehee, “and you really feel that there is something spiritual emanating from her. She's the kind of person you look at and wonder: what *is* that thing that's making her feel so happy and connected.”

Adds Siegel: “At the same time, I think what also attracted us so strongly to Kate is that there's also something very vulnerable about her. I mean she's definitely a very beautiful young woman, but there's also something very human and fragile inside her that we felt captures what it is that Aaron becomes attracted to.”

Bosworth's attraction to the screenplay was equally enthusiastic. "I felt like I'd never read anything like it before," she says. "It's filled with these really rich, fascinating characters who are each on a search, so the subject matter dives really deep into spiritual fulfillment and family relationships. I was completely captivated by it."

Like Max Minghella, Bosworth spent time hanging out at the Hare Krishna temple in Berkeley to better understand the religious sect and her character's total devotion to it. "They were really generous and open with me at the temple," she says. "Because I really didn't know anything about what they believed in and they really took the time to explain everything in a way that made sense, and that helped me a lot to understand Chali."

She continues: "For me, it was all part of coming to see what the story of *BEE SEASON* is really about – which is that we all have our different ways of searching for meaning, for God, for love, for whatever it is you want to call it. That hunger is something that so many people have, I think it's really a great subject for a movie."

BEE IS FOR BEAUTY:
CREATING A VISUAL KALEIDOSCOPE

“Elly, when you’re trying to spell a word, what happens when you close your eyes?”
-- Miriam, **BEE SEASON**

To bring the world of **BEE SEASON** to life on the screen, Scott McGehee and David Siegel knew they would have to find unique visual methods of communicating the thoughts and emotions held captive inside the minds, hearts and experiences of the Naumann family.

Siegel and McGehee reunited with several of the same artists who helped them to create the visually captivating, anxiety-producing style that had won over critics and audiences in **THE DEEP END**, including cinematographer Giles Nuttgens; production designer Kelly McGehee (who is also Scott’s sister), editor Lauren Zuckerman and composer Peter Nashel.

The directors spent months prior to filming just talking with Giles Nuttgens about the look of the film, knowing that Nuttgens’ trademark talents for manipulating subtle layers of light and shadow would be key to bringing visual excitement to the film. Through Nuttgen’s imagery of kaleidoscopes, shards of glass and permuted letters, the Naumann world emerges as an extraordinary mosaic, delicately balancing on the edge of everyday suburban reality and mystical surrealism.

“It was wonderful to be able to work with Giles Nuttgens again,” says Scott McGehee. “He is a remarkably creative person. And we trust him. He’s able to communicate visually so beautifully. On such a high level.”

BEE SEASON, filmed mostly on location in Northern California’s Berkeley, Oakland, Alameda and Piedmont areas, was a return home for both directors who had spent time at university there. “We finally realized we couldn’t shoot the film in Pennsylvania (where the novel takes place) in the dead of winter because it was going to present far too many difficulties, so we thought of the Bay Area, because we knew it so well,” explains McGehee “The background of hills and bridges gave us what we were looking for – a kind of three-dimensional, very sculptural feeling to the environment -- and the Berkeley area gave us the kind of college-town academic feeling as well. We didn’t want it to be a typical San Francisco film, so the emphasis is on outlying areas and the eye of the camera is always moving towards the hills, and the interior, rather than the bay.”

The production took advantage of the UC Berkeley Campus – where Saul Naumann lectures on the concept of repairing the world in LeConte Hall, and Saul and Eliza study together in the campus’ Doe Library. David Siegel even arranged for Richard Gere to sit in on lectures given by his former philosophy professor John Searle and later cast Searle in a bit part. Ultimately, Richard Gere’s passionate teaching sessions were filmed in the same classrooms where Siegel had taken his first-semester course with Searle. “There was a great synchronicity about it,” says Siegel. “It felt like a kind of complete circle in my life.”

In addition to UC Berkeley, the filmmakers traversed the East Bay, also shooting at Oakland’s bucolic Lake Merritt and around the historical Ascension Greek Orthodox Church in the Oakland hills. Piedmont High School housed the Greater Sacramento Delta Regional Spelling Bee. Then, for the scenes in the Hare Krishna temple where Aaron falls in love with Chali, the filmmakers invited some 40 Hare Krishna devotees from around the state of California to create an authentic “*kirtan*” – or chanting ceremony – on an Oakland-based set.

But when it came to creating the Naumann’s very cloistered and private domestic family world, production designer Kelly McGehee chose to build the Naumann’s book-lined, music-filled house pretty much from scratch, designing every room in order to leave special camera conduits for Giles Nuttgens to shoot with the versatility on which he thrives. “Kelly designed really useful pass-throughs from room to room that allowed for the complex lighting and camera work that set the tone for the film,” observes producer Albert Berger. “Those interior scenes take on a distinctive intensity that works to build the story.”

Also central to the film’s design was creating the chain of spelling bees that Eliza enters – each one more competitive and tense than the last. For these sequences, the filmmakers had to recruit some 700 school-aged children to serve as spellers, audience members and extras.

“Because each group of kids had to be different for each bee, we needed lots and lots and lots of children. And, of course, we did have some trepidation about working with so many kids,” Siegel admits, “but we had a blast with them. Each of the kids had his or her own little quirks and idiosyncrasies that really brought something enjoyable to this very emotional story.”

But even as the production journeyed around Northern California, the film’s directors remained most concerned with journeying *inwards*. In some of the film’s most riveting visual sequences, the camera seems to journey into Eliza’s thought processes as she sees letters spinning into words – or, more precisely, the *essence* of words – around her. “Our hope is that the audience will be really surprised by what they’re witnessing in these scenes,” says McGehee. “It evokes one of the big questions that the film asks: where do gifts like the one Eliza has come

from? Is it where her imagination is taking her or is there something transcendent she is tapping into?”

On the set, Siegel and McGehee shared creative duties in their usual way – placing performance and visual creativity at the forefront. “It’s a very unusual thing to work with two directors, but these guys really have a way of making it seamless,” says producer Albert Berger. “David is usually right in the middle of the action, working with the actors and the cameras, while Scott tends to stand back a bit, taking in the big picture – and then they have a great way of sharing what they each see from their own perspective. What’s amazing is that despite being completely individual on the set, when it comes to the footage, they truly speak with one, clear voice.”

In the case of *BEE SEASON*, that voice was most focused on creating a very strong emotional experience. “I hope that what people take away from *BEE SEASON* is the idea that when people really reach out for one another, they eventually find a way to connect. When you strip everything else away – the spelling, the academics, the personal troubles – the love in this family is what you’re left with and the feeling that they ultimately find each other again,” voices Siegel.

“I agree with David completely,” Scott McGehee concludes, “and I’m sure that people will also leave the theatre having learned to spell a really unusual word or two.”

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ABOUT THE CAST

RICHARD GERE (Saul Naumann)

In 2002, Richard Gere won his first Golden Globe Award for his portrayal of Billy Flynn in the Academy Award-winning film adaptation of “Chicago.” He also shares an ensemble Screen Actors Guild Award with the all-star cast including Catherine Zeta Jones and Renee Zellweger.

Gere was most recently seen opposite Susan Sarandon and Jennifer Lopez in the romantic comedy SHALL WE DANCE? His other recent films include the critically acclaimed dramatic thriller UNFAITHFUL directed by Adrian Lyne; the psychological thriller MOTHMAN PROPHECIES opposite Debra Messing; the box-office hit RUNAWAY BRIDE; and Robert Altman’s DR. T AND THE WOMEN.

Gere’s motion picture debut came in 1978 with the Oscar-honored DAYS OF HEAVEN, for which he received the Italian equivalent of the Academy Award. His career highlights include LOOKING FOR MR. GOODBAR, AMERICAN GIGOLO, AN OFFICER AND A GENTLEMAN and 1990’s top grossing picture PRETTY WOMAN, which won the People’s Choice Award for Best Movie. His film credits also include BLOOD BROTHERS, John Schlesinger’s YANKS, BREATHLESS, BEYOND THE LIMIT, THE COTTON CLUB, POWER, NO MERCY, MILES FROM HOME, Akira Kurosawa’s RHAPSODY IN AUGUST, the political thriller RED CORNER, directed by Jon Avnet, and Michael Caton-Jones’ remake of THE JACKAL and the HBO film “And The Band Played On.” Additionally, Gere is actively involved in developing film projects and served as executive producer on FINAL ANALYSIS, MR. JONES and SOMMERSBY.

Gere spent two years at the University of Massachusetts in Amherst on a gymnastics scholarship before leaving to pursue acting. In 1973, he landed the lead role of Danny Zuko in the London production of the rock musical “Grease.” After acting at several regional playhouses, he performed in a number of New York plays notably the title role in Richard Farina’s “Long Time Coming and Long Time Gone,” as well as Sam Shepard’s “Back Bog Beast Bait” and “Killers Head.” His career was established with performances in the Broadway rock opera “Soon” and the New York production of the British farce “Habeas Corpus.” Gere’s other theatre credits include the Lincoln Center presentation of “A Midsummer Night’s Dream” and London’s Young Vic Theatre Production of “The Taming of the Shrew.” Gere returned to the Broadway stage in 1980 with “Bent,” winning the Theatre World Award for his portrayal of a homosexual concentration-camp prisoner.

Gere's first book, Pilgrim, published in 1997 by Little, Brown and Company, is a collection of images that represent his 25-year journey into Buddhism. With a foreword by His Holiness the Dalai Lama, the book is Gere's personal vision of this ancient and spiritual world.

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

JULIETTE BINOCHÉ (Miriam Naumann)

In 1996 Juliette Binoche won the Oscar, the BAFTA Film Award, the European Film Award, the National Board of Review Award for Best Supporting Actress and the Silver Bear Award from the Berlin Film Festival for her role in THE ENGLISH PATIENT. Her lead performance in 2000 in CHOCOLAT earned her an Oscar nomination as well as two Screen Actors Guild Award nominations and her third Golden Globe nomination. Binoche has been nominated for eight César Awards and won one for her performance in TROIS COULEURS: BLEU.

Binoche first earned recognition in 1985 for playing a modernized, teenaged version of the Virgin Mary in Jean-Luc Godard's controversial JE VOUS SALUE, MARIE/HAIL MARY. The actress became a bona fide French star the same year with an acclaimed performance in André Téchiné's RENDEZ-VOUS and gained true international acclaim when she played Tereza in Philip Kaufman's THE UNBEARABLE LIGHTNESS OF BEING in 1988. Binoche starred in filmmaker Leos Carax's chilling MAUVAIS SANG/BAD BLOOD and his LOVERS ON A BRIDGE.

Her career highlights include starring opposite Jeremy Irons in Louis Malle's DAMAGE; playing the lead role in Krzysztof Kieslowski's BLUE as well as appearing in his RED and WHITE; starring opposite William Hurt in UN DIVAN A NEW YORK; collaborating with director Téchiné on the romantic drama ALICE ET MARTIN; a daring and intense performance

as 19th century literary icon George Sand in the drama CHILDREN OF THE CENTURY; a lighthearted performance opposite French icon Jean Reno in the romantic comedy JET LAG.

Her additional film credits include: LE HUSSARD SUR LE TOIT/THE HORSEMAN ON THE ROOF; THE WIDOW OF SAINT-PIERRE, CODE UNKNOWN. She was most recently appeared with Samuel L. Jackson in director John Boorman's political oriented drama IN MY COUNTRY.

Binoche is currently filming Anthony Minghella's BREAKING AND ENTERING, opposite Jude Law; and in September will begin filming QUELQUES JOURS EN SEPTEMBRE, opposite John Turturro. She will next be seen in Michael Haneke's HIDDEN and Abel Ferrara's MARY, opposite Matthew Modine.

FLORA CROSS (Eliza Naumann)

The result of a nationwide casting call, *BEE SEASON* marks Flora Cross's first major feature film. Born in Paris, Cross speaks French as her first language along with English. She has lived all over the world and also speaks fluent and idiomatic Spanish. With acting, she follows in the footsteps of her brothers Harley Cross and Eli Marienthal, both well respected actors in their own right.

MAX MINGHELLA (Aaron)

This fall Max Minghella will burst onto the big screen with two other feature films in addition to *BEE SEASON: ART SCHOOL CONFIDENTIAL* and *SYRIANA*.

In Terry Zwigoff's *ART SCHOOL CONFIDENTIAL* Minghella stars as Jerome, a student convinced that art school will put him on the path to fame. But Jerome must come to terms with his anemic talent as he watches the girl of his dreams fall in love with another student. Then, strangely, he's arrested as a suspected murderer -- only to discover that crime might actually pay. Minghella stars opposite John Malkovich, Anjelica Huston, Steve Buscemi and Jim Broadbent.

Minghella will then be seen in a small but pivotal role in *SYRIANA*, directed by Stephen Gaghan. Minghella will portray George Clooney's son in a first-person account of the CIA's false confidence concerning the future of the Middle East after the end of the traumatic Cold War.

KATE BOSWORTH (Chali)

Kate Bosworth is currently in production on *SUPERMAN* for director Bryan Singer, starring as the iconic Lois Lane. She most recently starred as Sandra Dee opposite Kevin Spacey

as Bobby Darin in BEYOND THE SEA. Bosworth made her feature film debut in Robert Redford's film, THE HORSE WHISPERER and has been working steadily ever since. She also recently starred in Robert Luketic's comedy WIN A DATE WITH TAD HAMILTON

Her other credits include John Stockwell's BLUE CRUSH, WONDERLAND with Val Kilmer, Roger Avary's RULES OF ATTRACTION and the Jerry Bruckheimer feature REMEMBER THE TITANS starring Denzel Washington. Earlier, she garnered acclaim on the small screen with her television debut in the series "Young Americans" for the WB.

ABOUT THE FILMMAKERS

SCOTT MCGEHEE and DAVID SIEGEL (Directors)

In 2001, Scott McGehee and David Siegel turned Elisabeth Sanxay Holding's 1947 novel The Blank Wall into the mesmerizing contemporary suspense thriller THE DEEP END, their second feature together. The film won numerous critics awards and was nominated for a Golden Globe (for lead actress Tilda Swinton), the Sundance Film Festival Grand Jury Prize, the Grand Special Prize at the Deauville Film Festival and two Independent Spirit Awards.

Siegel and McGehee began making short films together in San Francisco just out of graduate school, then embarked on their first feature, the critically acclaimed thriller SUTURE. After premiering at the Telluride Film Festival, SUTURE went on to Toronto, Sundance, and Cannes before its domestic release by the Samuel Goldwyn Company in 1994. The film won accolades for its smart, savvy exploration of identity and memory through the story of an amnesiac accused of murder.

David Siegel received a BA in Architecture at UC Berkeley before pursuing an MFA in Photography and Painting at the Rhode Island School of Design. Scott McGehee received a BA in English from Columbia University, then went on to graduate studies in Film Theory and Japanese Film History at UC Berkeley. Both Siegel and McGehee have recently relocated to New York.

NAOMI FONER GYLLENHAAL (Screenwriter)

Naomi Foner Gyllenhaal was nominated for an Academy Award for Best Original Screenplay, and received the PEN West Screenplay Award and the Golden Globe Award, for her screenplay RUNNING ON EMPTY. She also wrote and produced A DANGEROUS WOMAN, starring Debra Winger, Barbara Hershey and Gabriel Byrne and LOSING ISAIAH with Jessica Lange and Halle Berry. Gyllenhaal recently completed GRACE, a biography of Grace Metalious, the author of Peyton Place, for Sandra Bullock and Fox 2000 and is at work on a film about Victoria Woodhull.

Gyllenhaal was involved with the development of Sesame Street and The Electric Company at the Children's Television Workshop and has an ongoing interest in progressive politics. She is actively involved with the Sundance Institute's Writer's Laboratory, has served on the Board of Directors of the Writers Guild of America, West and is currently a member of the WGA Screen Council. Her children Maggie and Jake are actors and her husband, Stephen Gyllenhaal, is a director.

ALBERT BERGER (Producer)

Albert Berger is partnered with Ron Yerxa at Bona Fide Productions. Together they produced the Steven Soderbergh drama KING OF THE HILL; ELECTION, directed by Alexander Payne; THE WOOD, directed by Rick Famuyiwa; and PUMPKIN, directed by Tony Abrams and Adam Broder. They executive produced I'M TRYING TO BREAK YOUR HEART, which was directed by Sam Jones. Berger also served as executive producer of the award-winning documentary Crumb.

Last year Berger and Yerxa produced COLD MOUNTAIN, Charles Frazier's #1 bestseller, written and directed by Oscar winner Anthony Minghella for Miramax. In addition to BEE SEASON, they have also just completed THE ICE HARVEST for Universal Focus based on the novel by Scott Phillips, screenplay by Robert Benton and Richard Russo, directed by Harold Ramis and starring John Cusack and Billy Bob Thornton. Both are due out this fall.

After graduating from Tufts University, Albert Berger returned to his native Chicago where he owned and managed the Sandburg Theatre, a revival showcase for obscure and classic films. He attended Columbia University film school before moving to Los Angeles to write scripts for Paramount, TriStar, MGM, Orion, and producer Roger Corman. Berger went on to serve as vice president of development for Marvin Worth Productions at Paramount Pictures, where he worked on several projects, including Malcolm X.

Bona Fide is currently in production on LITTLE CHILDREN, starring Kate Winslet and Jennifer Connelly, based on the Tom Perrotta novel and directed by Todd Field for New Line. Also in production is LITTLE MISS SUNSHINE starring Steve Carell, Toni Collette, and Greg Kinnear, directed by Jonathan Dayton and Valerie Faris.

Development projects include NEBRASKA, a screenplay by Robert Nelson and to be directed by Alexander Payne at Paramount; THE LANGLEY MUSIC PROJECT to be written and directed by Steve Zaillian; and ADULT WORLD for Paramount and MTV Films.

Bona Fide made a first-look deal at Paramount starting in 2005.

RON YERXA (Producer)

Ron Yerxa and Albert Berger formed Bona Fide Productions as partners in 1993. Their producing credits include Steven Soderbergh's KING OF THE HILL (1993), Alexander Payne's ELECTION (1999), Rick Famuyiwa's THE WOOD (1999), and Tony Abrams and Adam Broder's PUMPKIN (2002). They executive produced Sam Jones' I AM TRYING TO BREAK

YOUR HEART (2002). Yerxa also served as executive producer on JACK THE BEAR, starring Danny DeVito (1992).

Bona Fide produced COLD MOUNTAIN, based on Charles Frazier's acclaimed novel, written for the screen and directed by Oscar winner Anthony Minghella for Miramax. In addition to BEE SEASON, they have just completed THE ICE HARVEST for Universal Focus with a screenplay by Robert Benton and Richard Russo, directed by Harold Ramis and starring John Cusack and Billy Bob Thornton.

Ron Yerxa graduated from Stanford University before working as a journalist and an inner city high school teacher in East Los Angeles. He joined Time-Life Films as a story analyst and then worked as an executive at CBS and Sovereign Films before becoming an independent producer.

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ARNON MILCHAN (Executive Producer)

Arnon Milchan is widely renowned as one of the most prolific and successful independent film producers of the past 25 years, with over 70 feature films to his credit. Born in Israel, Milchan was educated at the University of Geneva. His first business venture was transforming his father's modest business into one of his country's largest agro-chemical companies.

Soon, Milchan began to underwrite projects in areas that had always held a special interest for him – film, television and theater. Early projects include Roman Polanski's theater production of "Amadeus," "Dizengoff 99," "La Menace," "The Medusa Touch" and the mini-series "Masada." By the end of the 1980s, Milchan had produced such films as Martin Scorsese's THE KING OF COMEDY, Sergio Leone's ONCE UPON AT TIME IN AMERICA and Terry Gilliam's BRAZIL.

After the huge successes of PRETTY WOMAN and THE WAR OF THE ROSES, Milchan founded New Regency Productions and went on to produce a string of successful films including J.F.K, SOMMERSBY, A TIME TO KILL, FREE WILLY, THE CLIENT, TIN CUP, UNDER SIEGE, L.A. CONFIDENTIAL, THE DEVIL’S ADVOCATE, THE NEGOTIATOR, CITY OF ANGELS, ENTRAPMENT, FIGHT CLUB, DON’T SAY A WORD, DAREDEVIL, MAN ON FIRE, GUESS WHO and MR. & MRS. SMITH.

Upcoming projects include: LITTLE MANHATTAN, a romantic comedy starring Bradley Whitford, Cynthia Nixon, and Josh Hutcherson, written by Jennifer Flackett and directed by Mark Levin; STAY, a reality-bending thriller starring Ewan McGregor, Naomi Watts and Ryan Gosling, directed by Marc Forster; THE FOUNTAIN, a sci-fi fantasy starring Hugh Jackman and Rachel Wiesz and directed by Darren Aronofsky; BIG MOMMA’S HOUSE 2, a comedy based on the smash hit 2000 original, starring Martin Lawrence and Nia Long, directed by John Whitesell; UNTITLED ROMANTIC COMEDY, a spoof of romantic comedies directed by Jason Frieberg and Aaron Seltzer; THE UNTITLED LINDSAY LOHAN ‘LUCKY’ PROJECT, a comedy starring Lindsay Lohan and Chris Pine, directed by Donald Petrie; and THE SENTINEL, a thriller starring Michael Douglas, Kiefer Sutherland, Eva Longoria and Kim Basinger, directed by Clark Johnson.

Along the way, Milchan brought on board two powerful investors and partners who share his vision: Australian businessman Kerry Packer’s Nine Network and Twentieth Century Fox. Fox distributes Regency movies in all media worldwide (excluding an output arrangement Regency has in Germany), U.S. pay television, and international pay and free television.

Milchan also successfully diversified his company’s activities within the sphere of entertainment, most specifically in the realm of television through Regency Television (“Malcolm in the Middle,” “The Bernie Mac Show,” “Listen Up” and “Living with Fran”) and sports through a strategic alliance with PUMA, the worldwide athletic apparel and shoe conglomerate based in Germany. In addition, Regency has worldwide television rights to Women’s Tennis Association events from 1999 through 2007.

PEGGY RAJSKI (Executive Producer)

Peggy Rajski won the Oscar for Best Short Film/Live Action in 1995 on her directorial debut, TREVOR. The film earned many other accolades including the Sundance Film Festival’s Special Jury Prize and the Berlin International Film Festival Teddy Award for Best Short Film.

As a producer, Rajski’s filmography includes a long association with filmmakers John Sayles and Jodie Foster. She produced HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS, LITTLE MAN TATE, USED

PEOPLE, MATEWAN and THE BROTHER FROM ANOTHER PLANET. She also had fun co-producing THE GRIFTERS and EIGHT MEN OUT.

MARK ROMANEK (Executive Producer)

Mark Romanek wrote and directed Fox Searchlight's ONE HOUR PHOTO. The film starred Academy Award-Winner Robin Williams, Connie Nielsen and Michael Vartan. ONE HOUR PHOTO had its world premiere (out of competition) at the 2002 Sundance Film Festival. The film received the Prix Du Public, Prix Premiere, and the Prix Du Jury awards at the 2002 Deauville Festival of American Film.

Romanek has directed music-videos for such diverse artists as: Fiona Apple, Beck, David Bowie, Johnny Cash, Coldplay, Janet Jackson, Michael Jackson, Mick Jagger, Jay-Z, Lenny Kravitz, Madonna, Nine Inch Nails, No Doubt, R.E.M., Red Hot Chili Peppers, and Linkin Park.

Romanek's music videos have received numerous awards, including more than 20 MTV awards, three Grammys, a Country Music Association award, and three Billboard Music Awards. In 1997, MTV presented him with its Video Vanguard Award for his overall contribution to the medium.

Romanek has also directed several TV spots for such clients as: Apple, Nike, Calvin Klein, American Express, Saturn, Acura, and Cirque Du Soleil.

GILES NUTTGENS (Director of Photography)

Giles Nuttgens joined the British Broadcasting Corporation in the UK in 1981 as Assistant Film Cameraman working worldwide on documentaries for the renowned Natural History Unit. At the age of 26 he became one of the youngest Film Cameramen ever in the BBC and over the next few years shot many documentaries on environmental and social issues, working in locations ranging from the Amazon rainforest to the depressed urban jungle of Glasgow. In 1989 he shot his first feature for Film Four International on location in India, a place that was to become a second home over the next decade.

At the beginning of the 90's he started working for Lucasfilm on The Young Indiana Jones Chronicles and continued shooting in Asia on BANDIT QUEEN (1990) for Shekhar Kapur and FIRE (1994) for Deepa Mehta, two films that caused great political upheaval in India (ironically cinemas were burnt down for projecting FIRE). Alongside the continuing work for Lucasfilm, he shot various seasons of TV police shows for British television and several films for cinema including EARTH for Deepa Mehta and as 2nd Unit Director of Photography on Episode I of STAR WARS.

In 2000, Nuttgens joined forces with Scott McGehee and David Siegel for *THE DEEP END*, which won him the cinematography award at Sundance the following year. 2002 brought a new connection when Nuttgens photographed *YOUNG ADAM* starring Ewan McGregor, the first of his films for David Mackenzie. Over the last two years he shot both Episodes II and III of *STAR WARS* with George Lucas; photographed *WATER*, the third of Deepa Mehta's elemental trilogy (opening the Toronto Film Festival this year); and *ASYLUM*, starring Ian McKellen once again for director David Mackenzie (due for release in the fall).

KELLY MCGEHEE (Production Designer)

Production designer Kelly McGehee has been collaborating with Scott McGehee and David Siegel (her brother) since they began making their first short films in San Francisco. Trained as a visual artist, she became involved with both *SUTURE* and *THE DEEP END* at very early stages, and was instrumental in developing and realizing the look of both films.

McGehee's recent credits include the production design of *BOOK OF LOVE*, *X,Y*, *PSALMS*, *HOPSCOTCH* and *WTC VIEW*.

LAUREN ZUCKERMAN (Editor)

Lauren Zuckerman previously collaborated with Scott McGehee and David Siegel on their critically acclaimed *THE DEEP END* as well as their debut *SUTURE*. She has been working as a film editor since 1991, when she cut her first film, Jefery Levy's award-winning *DRIVE*. She has since edited numerous feature films, documentaries and experimental works, including Jane Weinstock's *EASY*, Lucas Reiner's *GOLD CUP*, Levy's *S.F.W.*, Sarah Kelly's *FULL TILT BOOGIE* and Shu Lea Cheang's *FRESH KILL*.

MARY MALIN (Costume Designer)

Mary Malin won an Emmy in 1997 for her design of the costumes for the television mini-series "The Inheritance."

Her credits for feature film costume design include *KARATE KID II*, *LETHAL WEAPON*, *LOSING ISAIAH*, *BETSY'S WEDDING*, *LIFE STINKS*, *HOT SHOTS*, *HOT SHOTS PART DEUX*, *TRIAL BY JURY*, *BROKEN ARROW*, *MAFIA*, *DEAD SOLID PERFECT*, *JACK THE DOG*, *DOUBLE BANG* and *MANHOOD*.

In addition to *BEE SEASON*, Malin most recently designed costumes for CBS' "Heartless," starring Melanie Griffith.

Malin has also worked extensively in the theatre, designing acclaimed productions of “Last Summer at Blue Fish Cove,” “They’re Playing Our Song” and “Salome.”

She began her career as a set designer in the New York theatre world. Once moving to Los Angeles, she worked with Costume Designer Ann Roth on such films as COMING HOME, MURDER BY DEATH, THE WORLD ACCORDING TO GARP, PLACES IN THE HEART and SWEET DREAMS.

PETER NASHEL (Composer)

Composer Peter Nashel made his feature-length film score debut with Scott McGehee and David Siegel's THE DEEP END. Following BEE SEASON, he composed the score for the upcoming THE NIGHT LISTENER starring Robin Williams, Toni Collette and Sandra Oh. Nashel's filmography as a composer also includes the documentaries THE TRIALS OF HENRY KISSINGER, OVERNIGHT and DEADLINE.

Nashel has collaborated with various artists including Duncan Sheik , Ivy, and Ben Lee. Nashel works out of New York-based Duotone Audio Group.

CAST

Saul.....	RICHARD GERE
Miriam.....	JULIETTE BINOCHÉ
Eliza.....	FLORA CROSS
Aaron.....	MAX MINGHELLA
Chali.....	KATE BOSWORTH
National Spelling Bee Pronouncer.....	COREY FISCHER
National Spelling Bee Judge.....	SAM ZUCKERMAN
Ms. Bergermeyer.....	JOAN MANKIN
Dr. Morris.....	PIERS MACKENZIE
Ms. Rai.....	LORRI HOLT
Mr. Julien.....	BRIAN LEONARD
Wiseacre Boy's Mate.....	JAMAL THORNES
Regional Bee Pronouncer.....	KATHY MCGRAW
Regional Bee Judge.....	JOHN EVANS
Young Miriam.....	ALISHA MULLALLY
John R. Searle.....	JOHN R. SEARLE
Priest.....	SEAMUS GENOVESE
Young Aaron.....	ANDREW MURRAY
Tiger.....	TIGER
State Bee Pronouncer.....	DICK MARTIN
State Bee Judge.....	OLIVIA CHARLES
Indian Woman.....	SUJATA BALU
Sergeant.....	STEVEN ANTHONY JONES
Nurse.....	DAVID RYAN SMITH
Hotel Housekeeper.....	VELINA BROWN
CLASS BEE SPELLERS.....	
Melanie.....	ROBYN BLAIR
Kevin.....	JUSTIN ALIOTO
SCHOOL BEE SPELLERS.....	
Sinna Bhagudori.....	ALEX KEEL
Li Chan.....	JUSTIN PING YUAN
DISTRICT BEE SPELLERS.....	
"Sequel" Speller.....	ANTHONY YBARRA
"Orangutan" Speller.....	BEN JOHNSON
"Coyote" Speller.....	TAYLOR KANE
"Oasis" Speller.....	DEREK WONG
"Usurper" Speller.....	SOPHIE TAMIKO ODA
"Staccato" Speller.....	ANAND ZALA
"Hoodlum" Speller.....	SAMUEL RICHMAN
"Macramé" Speller.....	SHAWN SMITH
REGIONAL BEE SPELLERS.....	
"Lorgnette" Speller.....	MICKEY BOXELL
"Daguerreotype" Speller.....	MAYA RAMCHANDRAN
"Glissando" Speller.....	NEIL CHALAKA
STATE BEE SPELLERS.....	
"Selenic" Speller.....	GAAYATRI KAUNDINYA
"Duvetyn" Speller.....	CHARLOTTE MUSENGWA
"Peripatetic" Speller.....	NIKIL BALAKRISHNAN
"Thoracic" Speller.....	ISAIAH AGLIBOT BRYANT
NATIONAL BEE SPELLERS.....	
National Spelling Bee Winner.....	ALISON DOYLE
"Iridian" Speller.....	EMILY TRUMBLE
"Ecchymosis" Speller.....	NATHAN CALIXTO
"Succotash" Speller.....	SIMON M. EHRlich
"Abiogenist" Speller.....	NICK TABER
"Strongylid" Speller.....	GAUTAM KRISHNAMURTHI
"Noctivagant" Speller.....	COREY RATEAU
Voice Actors.....	PATRICIA R. FLOYD
.....	TIMOTHY GULAN
.....	BETSY HOGG

.....	JENNIFER PERITO
.....	KRISTIN REEVES
.....	ROSE STOCKTON
.....	MARLON SUSON
.....	MICHAEL TOMMER
.....	ARDEN WINANT
.....	BRUCE WINANT
Extra Special Voicing	VANESSA LEMONIDES
.....	DANN FINK
Stunt Coordinators	ROCKY CAPELLA
.....	TOM FICKE
Helicopter Pilots	MIKE PHILLIPS
.....	ROBERT M. ZAJONC

CREW

Unit Production Manager	SUSAN McNAMARA
First Assistant Director	MIKE TOPOOZIAN
Second Assistant Director	GREGORY KENT SIMMONS
Additional Editing by	MARTIN WALSH
Associate Producers	MIKE TOPOOZIAN
.....	RACHEL HUDGINS
Associate Editor	SHELLY WESTERMAN
Post Production Supervisors	STUART MACPHEE
.....	KATIA MILANI
Supervising Sound Editor	WARREN SHAW
Art Director	MICHAEL E. GOLDMAN
Set Decorator	KRIS BOXELL
Set Designer	ARIC CHENG
Leadman	DONALD McMILLAN
Associate Set Decorator	NANCI WENZ
Set Dressers	BILL McGIRR
.....	DWANE B. PLATT
.....	JOHN LISTER
On-Set Dresser	NATE BELOVE
Research Consultant	CHRISTINA SOLETTI
Art Department Coordinator / Graphics Designer	KANA TAKAHASHI
Art Department Production Assistant	CHRISTIAN POWELL
MIRIAM'S PROJECT	
Miriam's Project - Assistant Art Director	SUSAN ALEGRIA
Project Assistants	KATHERINE COVELL
.....	DAVID LOYA
.....	STACI SOUTHWICK
.....	BEN FLAX
.....	CARMEN ALVAREX
.....	CAROL CHOW
Property Master	PATRICK LUDDEN
Assistant Property Master	ANNIE MUELLER
Second 2nd Assistant Director	MICHAEL McCUE
First Assistant Camera	PATRICK McARDLE
Second Assistant Camera	LESLIE HAMILTON
Camera Operators	CHRIS HAYES
.....	LOU WEINERT
Additional 2 nd Assistant Camera / Loader	TIM GUFFIN
Additional Loader	JEPH FOLKINS
B Camera – 1 st Assistant Camera	PATRICK RILEY
.....	PAIGE THOMAS
B Camera – 2 nd Assistant Camera	ANNE LEE
Video Assist	JOHN TRUNK
Script Supervisor	MARY CYBULSKI
Still Photographers	PHIL BRAY
.....	RICHARD FOREMAN, JR. SMPSP
2 ND Assistant Editor	KIERSTEN HARTER

Apprentice Editor	ABBI JUTKOWITZ
Sound Mixer	NELSON STOLL
Associate Mixer	STEPHEN BALLIET
Utility	BRIAN COPENHAGEN
Chief Lighting Technician	LOUIS DI CESARE
Assistant Chief Lighting Technician	JOHN LACY
Electricians	MARK NAKAHARA
.....	GARY McCLENDON
.....	TERRY SULLIVAN
.....	MICHAEL SCANLON
.....	CHRISTOPHER SHELLENBERGER
.....	RICK TAYERLE
Key Grip	DAVID CHILDERS
Best Boy Grip	PATRICK FIGUEROA
Dolly Grip	JOHN SPEZZANO
Company Grips	JAMES BEAUMONTE
.....	GREGORY CHILDERS
Rigging Key Grip	DUANE ROBINSON
Assistant Costume Designer – NY	MICHELLE MATLAND
Assistant Costume Designer – LA	ANTONIO MARTINEZ GARCIA
Costume Supervisor	MICKEY CARLETON
Costumers	MICHAEL BECKER
.....	VALERIE WHITE
Costume Assistant	TABITHA JOHNSON
Makeup Department Head	MINDY HALL
Makeup	GRETCHEN DAVIS
Hair Department Head	CATHERINE CHILDERS
Hair	PEGGY FORCELLINI
.....	YVETTE RIVAS
Mr. Gere & Ms. Binoche's Hair Design	LYNDELL QUIYOU
Mr. Gere & Ms. Binoche's Makeup	LUANN CLAPS
Location Managers	JONATHAN SHEDD
.....	RORY ENKE
Key Assistant Location Manager	NANCY K. WONG
Assistant Location Managers	FELIX GEHM
.....	ROWDY KELLEY
Head Greensperson	JODY WEISENFELD
Production Coordinator	SHARLENE F. DUALE
Assistant Production Coordinator	CATHERINE LEYBA
Production Office Assistants	KAREN L. BAKER
.....	KAREN JINE
.....	CHRISTINE WILCOCK
Set Production Assistants	CORY JOHNSON
.....	BRAD ROBINSON
.....	MICHELLE PIZANIS
Special Effects Coordinator	MATTHEW HERON
Producers' Associate	MARK MORAN
Assistant to Mr. Siegel & Mr. McGehee	SHANNON KORS
Assistants to Mr. Milchan	JANE BULMER
.....	MICHAEL BRADLEY COMBS
Production Accountant	R. BRADLEY DAVIS
1 st Assistant Accountant	ROBERT LANE
2 nd Assistant Accountant	ANTHONY ALLEGRE
Payroll Accountant	CINDY NEVINS
Construction Coordinators	CRAIG MOHAGEN
.....	DOUG WILLIAMS
Construction Foremen	CHARLES RAY
.....	MARK LUEVANO
Lead Scenic	DALE HAUGO
Paint Foreman	EDWARD T. RICHARDSON
Painter	VIRGINIA HOPKINS
Linens Provided by	DWELL HOME FURNISHINGS No contract.

Foreman.....	RUSSELL SOUZA
Laborer.....	VICTOR SALAZAR
Propmakers.....	JOHN OSTER
.....	ROGER W. DODD
.....	RICH CLOT
.....	KATSUHIKO OKADA
.....	MARK KESSLER
.....	NICK d'ABO
.....	STEVE SADLER
.....	KEN SLY
Transportation Coordinator.....	DEREK RASER
Transportation Captain.....	DON FEENEY
Transportation Co-Captain.....	FRANKLIN ROCHA
Casting Associate.....	CATHY WEINER
Extras Casting.....	BEAU BONNEAU CASTING
Ms. Binoche's Dialect Coach.....	PEGGY HALL-PLESSAS
Ms. Cross' Acting Coaches.....	BILL HART
.....	GEOF PRYSIRR
ADR Coach.....	ANDREW MAGARIAN
Mr. Minghella's Dialect Coach.....	DEBORAH SUSSEL
Mr. Minghella's Cello Coach.....	CAROLYN FULKERSON
Mr. Gere's Violin Coaches.....	SUZANNE ORNSTEIN
.....	JASSEN TODOROV
Unit Publicist.....	MICHAEL UMBLE
Studio Teachers.....	BARBARA GOGNEY
.....	CAROLYN CRIMLEY
Kabbalah Guide.....	MITCH SISKIND
ISKCON Consultants.....	KUVALESHAYA ZAKHEIM
.....	GABRIEL FOLEY
Texts Provided by.....	HENRY HOLLANDER
Fine Art Provided by.....	KEN ROSENTHAL
.....	SAUNDRA U. McPHERSON
Additional Theological Guidance.....	ELIE SPITZ
Animal Trainer.....	GREG HOLLAND - ANIMAL ARTS
Catering.....	DELUXE CATERING, INC.
Chef.....	MICHAEL GREAN
Caterers.....	ALDIS SEATON
.....	SERGIO JIMENEZ
.....	JUAN GONZALEZ
Craft Service.....	SANDY REED
.....	JAMES R. CHANDLER
Set Medic.....	SCOTT SANDINE
Electrical Equipment Provided by.....	PASKAL LIGHTING
Grip Equipment Provided by.....	DTC GRIP AND ELECTRIC
Camera Dollies by.....	CHAPMAN / LEONARD STUDIO EQUIPMENT, INC.
Gyro-Stabilized Camera System Provided by.....	SPACECAM SYSTEMS, INC.
Post Production Accounting.....	TREVANNA POST, INC.
.....	STEVE LIPPROSS
Post Production Assistant.....	ANDREW BROTZMAN
Edit Room Coordinator.....	TANYA SMITH
ADR Editor / Dialogue Supervisor.....	TONY MARTINEZ
Re-recording Mixers.....	MICHAEL BARRY
.....	WARREN SHAW
Sound Effects Editor.....	JACOB RIBICOFF
First Assistant Sound Editor.....	STEVE SCHWARTZ
Assistant Sound Editor.....	ERIC STRAUSSER
Post Production Facility.....	SOUND ONE Dialogue Editors
.....	DAN KORINTUS
.....	JAC RUBENSTEIN
Foley Supervisor.....	STUART STANLEY
Foley Artist.....	JAY PECK
Foley Recordist.....	RYAN COLLISON

ADR Engineers DAVID BOULTON
 ALEX RASPA
 Re-recordingist..... MIKE PATRICK
 ADR Voice Casting BRUCE WINANT / LOOPERS UNLIMITED
 Negative Cutting..... VIVIAN HENGSTELER/
 VIV KIM NEGATIVE CUTTING
 Color Timer..... MATO
 Preview Engineer LEE TUCKER
 Main Title Design by..... DEBORAH ROSS FILM DESIGN
 Opticals by..... FILM EFFECTS, INC. / JOHN FURNIOTIS

Visual Effects by
 BLACKBOX DIGITAL, LLC

Visual Effects Supervisors KENT DEMAINE
 WILL ROBBINS
 Visual Effects Producer..... KARIN LEVINSON
 AVIDs Provided by..... TIMELINE/DAVID AMADO
 ORBIT DIGITAL EDIT-HIRE POST PRODUCTION

SERVICES

Dailies by..... NT VIDEO
 London Sound Department..... GLENN FREEMANTLE
 BEN BARKER
 LEE HERRICK
 BRENDAN NICHOLSON
 PETER CLARKE
 Music Editors..... NANCY ALLEN
 ANNETTE KUDRAK
 Score Conducted by ADAM STERN
 Score Recorded & Mixed by JOEL IWATAKI
 Orchestra Contracted by SIMON JAMES
 Score Recorded at BASTRYR UNIVERSITY
 RIGHT TRACK RECORDING
 MANHATTAN CENTER STUDIOS
 DUOTONE AUDIO GROUP
 Score Mixed at MANHATTAN CENTER STUDIOS
 Digital Recordists LAWRENCE MANCHESTER
 JASON STASIUM
 Additional Engineering..... BRIAN DEMING
 Featured Musicians..... JEFFREY ALLEN - BASS
 JOE BONADIO - PERCUSSION
 TIMOTHY FAIN - VIOLIN
 GERRY LEONARD - AMBIENT GUITAR TEXTURES
 NELSON PADGETT - PIANO
 LARRY SALTZMAN - ACOUSTIC GUITARS, TIPLE
 INBAL SEGEV - CELLO
 STACEY SHAMES - HARP
 DAVID WEISS - WOOD FLUTES

SONGS

"PARTITA I IN B MINOR, BWV.1002 SARABANDE"

Written by Johann Sebastian Bach

Arranged by Peter Nashel and Patrick Zimmerli

Performed by Timothy Fain and Inbal Segev

"HOW DO YOU LOVE"

Written by Ed Roland

Performed by Collective Soul

Courtesy of El Music Group

"PARTITA II IN D MINOR, BWV.1004 CHACCONNE"

Written by Johann Sebastian Bach

Performed by Timothy Fain

"PIANO CONCERTO IN E MAJOR, BWV.1053"

Written by Johann Sebastian Bach

Performed by Hae-won Chang, Piano with Camerata Cassovia

Courtesy of Naxos

By arrangement with Source/Q

"TWO TICKETS TO PARADISE"

Written by Eddie Money

"AWAKE UP"

Written by Pete Min

Performed by Pete Min and Carl Capretto

Courtesy of Duotone Audio Group

"VIOLIN CONCERTO IN E MAJOR, BWV.1042"

Written by Johann Sebastian Bach

Performed by Kolja Blacher, Violin with Cologne Chamber Orchestra

Courtesy of Naxos

By arrangement with Source/Q

"HARE KRISHNA KIRTAN"

Traditional

"I'LL BE NEAR YOU"

Written & Produced by Andy Chase, Adam Schlesinger, Dominique Durand and Peter Nashel

Performed by IVY

IVY performs courtesy of Netwerk America, LLC

SOUNDTRACK AVAILABLE ON NETTWERK RECORDS (logo)

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PAUL ZAENTZ, SAUL ZAENTZ, JOHN SLOSS, JACKIE ECKHOUSE,
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LESLIE MCCLEAVE, P. DAVID EBERSOLE, RICHARD GLATZER, WASH WESTMORELAND,
KELLY IRELAND, KAITLIN ROSE REILLEY, BELLA COCHRAN-HUBERT, ED LIEBOWITZ,
DAVID COHEN, B. RUBY RICH, LINDA WILLIAMS, DANIEL SASAKI, MIKE HAMPEN, DAVID O. ROGERS

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MOTION PICTURE ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA

IATSE "Bug"

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