

Paramount Pictures Present  
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# BUMBLEBEE



**OPENS NATIONWIDE DECEMBER 21, 2018**

Executive Produced by Steven Spielberg, Brian Goldner, Chris Brigham  
Produced by Lorenzo di Bonaventura, Tom DeSanto & Don Murphy, Michael Bay, Mark Vahradian  
Written by Christina Hodson  
Directed by Travis Knight

**Cast:** Hailee Steinfeld, John Cena, Jorge Lendeborg Jr., John Ortiz, Jason Drucker, Pamela Adlon, Stephen Schneider

Run Time: 119 minutes

**“Bumblebee” has been rated PG-13 for sequences of sci-fi action violence**

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## ***BUMBLEBEE***

On the run in the year 1987, Bumblebee finds refuge in a junkyard in a small Californian beach town. Charlie (Hailee Steinfeld), on the cusp of turning 18 and trying to find her place in the world, discovers Bumblebee, battle-scarred and broken. When Charlie revives him, she quickly learns this is no ordinary, yellow VW bug.

Directed by Travis Knight (*Kubo and the Two Strings*, *The Boxtrolls*) written by Christina Hodson (*Unforgettable*, *Birds of Prey*), the film stars Hailee Steinfeld (*True Grit*, *The Edge of Seventeen*), John Cena (*Trainwreck*, *Blockers*), Jorge Lendeborg Jr. (*Spider-Man: Homecoming*, *Love, Simon*), John Ortiz (*Replicas*, *Peppermint*), Jason Drucker (*Diary of a Wimpy Kid: The Long Haul*, *Barely Lethal*), Pamela Adlon (“Better Things”) and Stephen Schneider (“Broad City,” “You’re the Worst”). The film also features the voice talents of Oscar<sup>®</sup>-nominee Angela Bassett (*Mission: Impossible – Fallout*, *Black Panther*), Justin Theroux (“Maniac,” *The Lego Ninjago Movie*), Peter Cullen (*Transformers* franchise) returning to the iconic role of Optimus Prime, and Dylan O’Brien (*The Maze Runner* series) as B-127.

Producers are Lorenzo di Bonaventura (*Transformers* franchise, *Deepwater Horizon*), Tom DeSanto (*Transformers* franchise, *X-Men*) & Don Murphy (*Transformers* franchise, *The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen*), Michael Bay (*Transformers* franchise, *Armageddon*) and Mark Vahradian (*Transformers* franchise, *Deepwater Horizon*). Director of photography is Enrique Chediak (*American Assassin*, *Deepwater Horizon*). Production designer is Sean Haworth (*Deadpool*, *Ender’s Game*). Editor is Paul Rubell (*Collateral*, *The Insider*). Costume designer is Dayna Pink (*Concussion*; *Crazy*, *Stupid*, *Love*). The film is executive produced by Steven Spielberg (*Saving Private Ryan*, *Schindler’s List*), Brian Goldner (*Transformers* franchise, *G.I. Joe* franchise), and Chris Brigham (*Inception*, *Assassin’s Creed*).

### **ABOUT THE PRODUCTION**

In the more than 12 years since the first *Transformers* film commenced shooting in White Sands, New Mexico, the straightforward idea of turning a popular toy into a movie has surprised even its creators by growing into a worldwide phenomenon with box office receipts totaling \$4.3 billion. With ***Bumblebee***, the saga enters new territory with a story as emotionally resonant as it is action-packed.

As the film begins, audiences get their first glimpse of the Bumblebee of Cybertron lore. Known as B-127, the bright yellow transformer is a fierce warrior who has fought in a centuries-long conflict between the Autobots and the Decepticons. When all seems lost for the Autobots, B-127 is dispatched to Earth with a mission: Protect the planet and its inhabitants in the hope of establishing a refuge for his comrades.

His arrival is complicated when two Decepticons, Shatter and Dropkick, follow him and launch an attack that endangers Earth's inhabitants, and an American military team decides, understandably, that the alien species is a threat to mankind. Bumblebee attempts to hide from his pursuers disguised as a dilapidated yellow Volkswagen Beetle, but when a teenaged girl named Charlie decides to restore the vehicle, she inadvertently discovers his true identity.

Producer Lorenzo di Bonaventura describes the film as an origin story. "This is Bumblebee's origin story on earth. Since the movie predates the Bay chronology we had the opportunity to do a deeper dive into his character, giving the audience even more reason to fall in love with him. He effectively creates a brand new story through his relationship with Charlie. It becomes a rite of passage story for both of them," he explains.

When Screenwriter Christina Hodson first fleshed out her original take on Bumblebee, the filmmakers were attracted by her vision, Hodson envisioned a smaller, more family-friendly Transformers film with an emotional story at its core.

The producers were intrigued by the concept of a "kinder, gentler" Transformers story that incorporates a more emotional, humanized version of the bots.

"We responded to Christina's pitch right away. It captured a lot of the magic from our first film, but setting the story through the eyes of a bold, strong female lead opened a lot of exciting territory that we couldn't explore before," explains Producer Michael Bay.

Adds di Bonaventura: "Christina convinced us to take a leap of faith and make a different kind of film than we had before. The audience has always wanted to know more about who the Transformers are, and her story allowed us to develop the characters and tell a more intimate story. We let the audience get to know a Transformer in a way they never have before."

Hodson's first draft, completed in the fall of 2016, was an emotionally centered story around Hailee Steinfeld's character Charlie and Bumblebee, "I love seeing girls going on adventures," Hodson says. "And I wanted to create a female character who didn't fit into typical boxes. I think one of the things that makes Charlie feel like an outsider is that she isn't just one thing. She's a bit

nerd, a bit tomboy and a bit athlete. It is absolutely full of Transformers-style thrills and adrenaline and adventure and fun, but has a lot of heart, too.”

After reading Christina’s draft the producers and Paramount were extremely excited by her story and moved quickly into production.

“Christina was able to channel her sense of adventure and create a unique heroine,” explains di Bonaventura.

The idea of focusing on one specific character was also greeted enthusiastically at Hasbro, creators of the original Transformers. Brian Goldner, the company’s CEO and an executive producer of the film, was delighted to read a script that addressed the “inner life” of Bumblebee. “We at Hasbro are guardians of the Transformers lore, so we particularly appreciate the way Charlie brings him to life in a whole new way that still connects directly to what fans know and love about Bumblebee.”

“Bumblebee was the perfect choice, he is a fan favorite and probably the most human-like autobot. Bumblebee is heartfelt, has a youthful exuberance and is a multi-layered character,” explains di Bonaventura.

Goldner also endorses the idea of setting the film in the 1980s, when the first *Transformers* toy line, animated television series and comic books took the world by storm. “Setting the story within that vibrant decade is a wonderful tip of the hat to the talented creators of those characters,” he says.

### **Passing the Torch**

Having agreed upon the story idea, the producers began to meet candidates to direct the film. They unanimously chose Travis Knight, president and CEO of Portland-based animation company Laika. A producer, director and animator, Knight’s 2016 film, *Kubo and the Two Strings*, had won multiple awards, including a BAFTA for Best Animated Feature Film, and nominations for a slew of others, among them two Oscars® and a Golden Globe®.

“Travis is a very skilled filmmaker,” says di Bonaventura. “When you look at *Kubo and the Two Strings* you see original story telling and visual execution that make it a stand out film, that’s what we wanted for *Bumblebee*.”

More than anything, the project required someone with an original vision and the confidence to back it up, explains producer Mark Vahradian. “Taking a franchise in another

direction after it's been successful for more than a decade can be daunting, but Travis wasn't afraid of the challenge."

Knight's experience leading his company to the top echelon of animated filmmaking was an important element in the decision as well, says di Bonaventura, who compares directing a big-budget movie to running a successful corporation. "Travis has such a calm and confident demeanor that it makes you feel assured," the producer says. "And these movies aren't easy to wrangle. You face inevitable storms. He had what it takes to handle it all. He also understood the exact direction and emotion we wanted from the script."

Knight remembers playing with Transformers action figures as a child in the 1980s. An avid fan of the animated television series, he is also a devotee of classic motion pictures of the era, including Spielberg's *E.T. the Extra-Terrestrial* and the films of John Hughes. "The titans of '80s cinema approached adolescence with great sensitivity, warmth and humor," the director says. "It's a universal struggle we all go through, whether to fit in and seek acceptance or to stand out and forge one's own identity. All these moments, sometimes conflicting, merge into the swirling roil of adolescence."

Knight was especially excited to enter the expansive world of the Transformers and focus on a tiny corner of that universe to tell a more intimate, character-driven and emotional story. "At Laika, we try to find an artful balance between darkness and light, intensity and warmth, humor and heart. The idea of bringing that philosophy to this franchise was really exciting to me."

### **A Girl and Her Car**

To play Charlie, the lonely and somewhat lost protagonist of the story, the filmmakers were looking for someone who could not only carry a massive global action franchise, but also a skilled performer who could connect with the audience on an emotional level. Their first choice, says di Bonaventura, was Hailee Steinfeld. "Our goal was to create a hero," says the producer. "So we needed an actor who could make the transition from who Charlie is at the beginning of the film to who she becomes. We knew Hailee would be magical."

Referring to the conventional wisdom that directing is 90 percent casting, Knight adds, "If you find the right actor, a good portion of your job is done. Our leading lady can do absolutely anything. She makes you laugh, she lifts your spirits, she breaks your heart. There is always so much happening behind her eyes."

Steinfeld, who received an Oscar® nomination for her breakout role in the Coen Brothers' *True Grit* at the age of 14, was astounded by the reaction on social media and fan sites when the studio announced her involvement. "I saw how huge the fan base is and realized what an honor it is to be part of this world," she says. "It truly feels like we made something special. I'm excited for fans as well as newcomers to the franchise to see the movie."

Most of Steinfeld's scenes involve Charlie and the computer-generated Bumblebee interacting, which presented a unique situation for an actor. To prepare, Steinfeld watched the previous films in the franchise, concentrating on the original and paying close attention to conversations between the robots and humans. "I had more screen time with the robot than with the people in the film," she notes. "Acting against nothing was the massive challenge. But Travis' vision was so clear from day one. He has a gift for being able to translate the imagery he has in his head to the screen."

Still suffering from the pain and anger of losing a parent, and feeling that the rest of her family has moved on, Charlie finds solace in the garage working on her father's 1959 Corvette. She and her father bonded during their hours together tinkering with old cars and listening to his favorite music. Now, getting a vehicle of her own seems like her ticket to freedom. "Her dad was her best friend," Steinfeld explains. "When she lost him, she lost part of herself. When she finds that missing piece, it happens to be a robot she names Bumblebee."

According to di Bonaventura, one thing the franchise has never attempted to do before is allow a Transformer to become a fully developed character. "Traditionally, they're archetypes. Optimus is wise and good and all-knowing and so on. This is an attempt to allow the audience to get to know one in a way they never have before."

Steinfeld was happy to be a part of bringing a new dimension to the character. "There's nothing not to love about Bumblebee," she says. "He has so much heart, but he's also a strong warrior. He's a protector who would do anything for Charlie. In my imagination, I've built my own relationship with this robot that doesn't exist, which is really special."

While a long list of well-known performers including Hugo Weaving, John Goodman, Ken Watanabe and Steve Buscemi have voiced Transformers in the previous films, *Bumblebee* welcomes some exciting new voice actors to the franchise. Known primarily for using the aid of a radio to communicate, as this story explores Bumblebee's origin, audiences will hear, for the first time, how the Autobot sounded before he lost his voice. Filmmakers chose *The Maze Runner* star Dylan O'Brien to lend his voice to the title role. The film also marks the first time in the franchise's

history that a Transformer is voiced by a female actor. Oscar®-nominated actress Angela Bassett plays Shatter, a ruthless Decepticon who has come to Earth with her henchman Dropkick (Justin Theroux) in pursuit of Bumblebee, setting off the spectacular confrontation that caps the film.

### **A Man on a Mission**

Agent Jack Burns is a high-ranking military officer in Sector 7, a top-secret government agency that deals with extraterrestrial technology and threats. He will stop at nothing to bring Bumblebee — or B-127 as he knows him — to justice for his perceived crimes.

WWE Superstar John Cena, best known outside the wrestling ring for his roles in comedies including *Blockers* and *Trainwreck*, brings the right balance of toughness and empathy to the character, says Knight. “John was something of a revelation for me. He is a terrific actor. I knew he was great with comedy, but this role calls for something different. His physical presence is undeniable, but he needed to show that he has empathy and heart as well.”

Like his character Agent Burns, Cena puts maximum effort behind everything he does, including coming up with a backstory for his character. According to the actor, Burns is a lone-wolf military professional who came up through the ranks. “He will complete his mission at all costs and he brings a whole hell of a lot of equipment to do it,” says Cena.

Burns believes he is fighting for the good of the nation and the world, the actor adds, but sometimes his ideology is so narrow that he doesn’t see everything going on around him. “I’ve always wanted to show a little more dimension and play a conflicted character,” says Cena. “What’s fun about doing a prequel is that we get to delve into the unanswered questions from the earlier movies. This takes place years before Sector 7 has become the established institution it is when we meet Agent Simmons in the first film. It was highly classified then, so you can only imagine how secretive it is 20 years earlier.”

Cena says the chance to fly in a military helicopter, ride with a precision stunt driver and act with explosions going on all around him made him feel like a kid. “I’m still a 13-year-old deep down,” he confesses. “Driving through the forest in a Humvee at full speed, skidding on roads six feet wide, looking down a cliff face from the shotgun seat, it was great. I always knew I was in good hands.”

The actor was also thrilled to work side by side with veteran military personnel hired to portray Sector 7 troops. “Going the extra mile to give the moviegoer a period-correct experience

with people who have actually done this for a living is intrinsically good for the movie,” he says. “And on a personal note, it was absolutely stellar to have veterans on set.”

Burns’ opposite number in the film is Dr. Powell, a government scientist examining the Decepticons on Bumblebee’s trail. Played by John Ortiz, he finds the idea of meeting an alien species a dream come true. Unlike Burns, Powell believes it will be possible to negotiate with, befriend and ultimately control the mechanical behemoths.

As a scientist, Powell sees the opportunity to work with the Decepticons as the chance of a lifetime, so he’s willing to give them access to whatever human technology they need. Out of a combination of arrogance and naiveté, he believes he can handle them, so he courts them while at the same time trying to keep Burns at bay.

Di Bonaventura had previously worked with Ortiz on the film *Replicas*, in which Ortiz plays a “delicious villain,” according to the producer. He knew the actor would be perfect as the counterbalance to Burns’ militaristic instincts. “Powell is a scientist whose curiosity obfuscates potential danger,” says di Bonaventura. “And Burns is the guy who can only see danger.”

### **Friends and Family**

Still struggling with the loss of her father, Charlie has no time for or interest in the sunny disposition and positive attitude of her next-door neighbor, Memo. Played by rising star Jorge Lendeborg Jr., Memo thinks Charlie is the coolest girl in the world. Charlie barely notices he’s alive.

Finding an actor who could bring Memo’s nuances to life was tricky, says Knight. “Jorge is an intuitive actor, and he’s got this dazzling megawatt smile. He sees beyond what’s written on the page to find depth and dimension in the character. He’s so likeable and endearing that he brings Memo to life in a beautiful way.”

The actor found that he had a lot in common with his character. “He likes action figures and sci-fi,” Lendeborg says. “And sci-fi is my favorite thing. I would say he is much like me, so it was pretty easy to translate that to Memo.”

The things that make Charlie unique are exactly the things Memo loves about her. “He likes that she is her own person,” explains Lendeborg. “She doesn’t try to fit in. She’s unapologetically herself. He tries to talk to her, but she has no time for him.”

But once he learns about Bumblebee, Charlie has no choice but to keep him close to make sure her secret doesn’t get out. The first scene Lendeborg filmed was Memo’s discovery of the robot

in the Watson garage. Like Steinfeld, he says that no amount of watching the previous five *Transformers* films could truly prepare him for that day.

“You’ve just got to imagine there is an actual robot there,” according to Lendeborg. “But it’s like anything else in acting: You have to make that leap.”

In the years since Charlie’s father died, her mother, Sally (Pamela Adlon), has found a new love, and her younger brother, Otis (Jason Drucker), has bonded with their new stepdad, Ron (Stephen Schneider).

Adlon, the showrunner and Emmy-nominated star of the acclaimed series “Better Things,” is a force of nature, according to Knight. “Pam is razor sharp and funny as hell,” says the director. “Sally is one of those characters who could easily devolve into a caricature unless the actor finds different shades of performance. In real life Pam is a mom with teenagers who has memories of her own adolescence in the ’80s. That definitely informed the way she approached the interaction between Charlie and Sally.”

Although the *Transformers* universe was unfamiliar to Adlon, she was attracted to Knight’s vision for the film. “I loved *Kubo* and Travis was talking about making a film that would harken back to a different time in filmmaking and create the kind of emotion and sense of discovery that the Amblin films of the 1980s did,” she says. “I also loved that it’s a film about how a family unit can withstand anything, even bots from outer space or scary secret human agents coming after you.”

Adlon and Steinfeld capture a genuine mother-teen daughter relationship on screen and became very close off camera as well. “She’s incredible to me,” Adlon says. “I looked at her every day going through all of these massive scenes and physical stuff and having to act with something that wasn’t there and she is unbelievable. That kid is a superstar. *And* a very sweet, talented, interesting person.”

For the role of Charlie’s younger brother, Otis, Knight felt it was critical to find an actor with an innate, unrehearsed quality. “There was a time during the audition process when I thought, ‘We’re going to have to settle,’” says the director. “Then, when I saw Jason Drucker, it was like, ‘All right! Here’s our Otis!’ He made every right choice. He’s a really funny and naturally gifted actor.”

***Bumblebee*** marks the second time Steinfeld and 12-year-old Drucker have played onscreen siblings, having previously worked together in *Barely Lethal*. “We have the brother-sister dynamic down,” she says.

The inquisitive younger brother eventually finds out about *Bumblebee* and wants in on the adventure. To keep him out from underfoot, Charlie asks him to create a diversion to keep their

mother and stepfather at home while she goes off to save Bumblebee. “Otis is also worried about his sister,” Drucker says. “He thinks he may be able to help with his karate moves.”

Drucker can’t believe his luck at being in a movie about one of his favorite toys. “Transformers are totally cool,” he says. “My only problem was trying to turn the robot back into a truck. I had no problem turning it into a robot, but I could never figure out which door went right or left or how the head folded in. It’s kind of like a Rubik’s Cube.”

Charlie goes out of her way to make sure her stepfather, Ron, knows he will never be good enough to fill her father’s shoes. As played by Schneider, Ron provides a bit of comic relief in the sometimes tense family scenes. “Ron is a sort of out-of-touch but overconfident guy,” says the actor, who makes his major feature debut in the film. “He wants to just do good, and is blindly optimistic, no matter how bad the situation. With the help of Pamela, who is a comic genius, I molded this funny, out-there stepdad, and it was just a joy to play it. A lot of other parts of the film had complicated technical notes or heavy emotional beats to convey, and this was just fun.”

Ron surprises everyone when he tries, in his own way, to come to the aid of his stepdaughter. “He actually becomes the hero he imagines himself to be purely by happenstance,” Schneider laughs. “He’s a badass for a couple minutes and ends up at least having a part in saving the day. Charlie sees him put his own life on the line for her and is finally able to appreciate him.”

Despite their characters’ dynamic, Steinfeld had a difficult time turning a cold shoulder to Schneider, who constantly made her laugh on set. “Charlie doesn’t want to like him and never refers to him as anything other than Ron,” she says. “But I happen to love Stephen and we have so much fun together on camera.”

For her little brother Otis, it’s a much simpler relationship. “Coolest stepdad ever,” says Drucker. “No need to say more!”

### **California Dreaming**

*Bumblebee* is the first *Transformers* film to be set and shot in California, and the filmmakers took full advantage of the diversity and natural beauty of the Golden State. According to the script, Charlie’s fictional home town of Brighton Falls is a small coastal community in Northern California with a tree-lined Main Street where local mom-and-pop stores are just beginning to give way to franchise names. A short 15-minute ferry ride from San Francisco, the small town of Vallejo fit the bill perfectly.

“The script was written for a quintessential California beach town with a late-’80s vibe,” says di Bonaventura. “We were looking for the sense of timelessness that the Santa Cruz Boardwalk has.”

The area surrounding Vallejo is packed with iconic viewpoints, including Battery Spencer in Sausalito, one of the most popular tourist sites overlooking the Golden Gate Bridge. In the expansive Golden Gate National Recreation Area, the production company was able to shoot the picturesque Marin Headlands and Sausalito’s famous Rodeo Beach. Further south, Henry Cowell Redwoods State Park provided a sun-dappled clearing for pivotal scenes between Bumblebee and Charlie.

Other exterior scenes shot in the forest — most of them seen in the opening of the film — were completed at Big Creek Lumber Company, a private logging outfit in Watsonville. Mare Island, a now-defunct naval shipyard in Vallejo, is the setting for most of the film’s astonishing finale.

The company made two stops in Central California, at a campsite near Rock Creek Lake and in the rugged Sierra Nevada at the Pine Creek Tungsten Mine near Bishop. The latter location boasts an intriguing history dating back to the 1890s, when gold and silver prospecting abounded.

Production resumed in Southern California at a boat yard and shop in San Pedro for pivotal scenes in Uncle Hank’s salvage yard, where Charlie discovers Bumblebee, rusting and all but forgotten. Driving scenes were shot along coastal roads in Malibu, around winding switchbacks in Griffith Park, on rural roads in Simi Valley and through the streets and tunnels of downtown Los Angeles. The company also traveled to Thousand Pines Christian Camp in Crestline and desert environs near Lancaster for scenes at the fictitious Gas ‘N Guzzle. One of the largest special effects sequences in the film, Shatter and Dropkick’s grand entrance on Earth, was complicated by 30-mile-per-hour winds in the area.

Continuing south, the Sector 7 headquarters and airbase were built at the recently closed Boeing plant in Long Beach, which was also used for other sets ranging from the interior of Memo’s bedroom to the top of the crane Charlie climbs. Water sequences for the finale were shot in a giant tank known as Falls Lake on the Universal backlot.

### **Building Charlie’s World**

Knight was surrounded by an experienced technical team that includes many veterans of the franchise. After 20 years of developing creative relationships with his team at Laika, working with all new collaborators was initially somewhat nerve-racking for the director. “We have a shorthand at Laika,” he says. “I can communicate with them in troglodytic grunts. There wasn’t a single key

collaborator I had known before working on this project, but fortunately they were an extraordinary group of people.”

Production designer Sean Haworth, an art director on the first *Transformers* movie, brought with him a solid working knowledge of the robot universe as well as a deep connection to the animated series. “*Bumblebee* is a true homage to the television series and the films of that period,” he says. “We embraced the palette, the fashion and aesthetic sensibility of that time, but we didn’t want it to be over the top. We never wanted to lampoon anything or make the movie look like a cartoon.”

The exterior of the Watson house was built at the end of a picturesque cul-de-sac in the bedroom community of Peacock Gap in the Northern California town of San Rafael. The neighborhood’s inhabitants were stunned when they realized that what was erected on an empty lot overlooking the town and bucolic docks below was merely a façade. Haworth had searched for a practical location that might work, but Bumblebee, at 13 feet tall, would not fit into most average homes. “His head would have gone right through the roof,” says Haworth. “So we came back to Los Angeles and designed the interior of the house around the action.”

The mid-century modern post-and-beam house was inspired by the pioneering work of architect Cliff May and developer Joseph Eichler, renowned for their roles in the California postwar building boom. Art director A. Todd Holland, who lives in a post-and-beam home himself, says that whenever he was in a quandary about the design of the set, “I would just go home, look around and solve the problem.”

One of the film’s crucial sets was the Watson home’s attached garage. Built twice, once on a soundstage and once on location in the hilly terrain of San Rafael, the garage is Charlie’s primary world. “It is her last connection to her father, so we wanted to make it feel like home for her,” explains Haworth. “It had plenty of space for her to interact with Bee and still keep her connected to her past.”

### **An Action Education**

The *Transformers* franchise is legendary for its eye-popping, heart-stopping action, and *Bumblebee* will certainly not disappoint fans in that regard. Stunt coordinator and second unit director Mike Gunther, who, along with Bay, designed the stunts and battles on several previous *Transformers* installments, came on board knowing the level of entertainment that would be expected.

Gunther gave the director a “menu” for the film that included classic action options like air ratchets, air rams, pneumatic car flippers and cannons. “I knew I needed to educate Travis about live

action, but he had such a vast knowledge of other movies and specific sequences that there was a lot of common ground,” says Gunther. “He was very clear about how he wanted to feed the appetite of the audience for action and excitement.”

The result is action sequences that have all of the power of the previous films, while keeping them intimate and focused. “Mike had insights into how to scale the action without losing the tension and sense of danger,” says Knight. “He understood that I was trying for a different emotional impact. We have spectacle in this movie, there’s no question. But it was critical that the action was grounded in something we care about, namely Charlie and Bee. The Sturm und Drang of robot fisticuffs and high-speed car chases are meaningless if they overwhelm the emotion.”

Gunther had plenty of practical tasks to take charge of as well. For instance, he and his team, along with the transportation department, worked with Steinfeld to teach her to drive a manual transmission. “It was my first time driving stick,” she says. “I want to say it was easy, but when you have a million other things to think about, including saying your lines, hitting your mark and not killing the people in front of you, it was actually pretty difficult. Even rolling the windows up and down was not easy. Where are the buttons? I accidentally broke off the handle once because I didn’t know what I was doing.”

Riding in the VW pod car with stunt driver Mike Johnson at the wheel was considerably more relaxing, says the actress. “It’s a weird thing to be behind the wheel of a car and not be in control. But it’s also nice not to have to think about it and just act like you’re driving.”

In one scene shot on the winding roads of Los Angeles’ Griffith Park, Charlie and Memo take a hairpin turn and they run smack into Agent Burns. During the sequence, the car is controlled entirely by the blind driver pod. “Jorge and I were in the car, flying downhill,” she recalls. “I am looking at Jorge when we take a corner and come to a screeching halt in front of John Cena. It was terrifying but thrilling. You wouldn’t believe the sounds that were coming out of Jorge’s mouth.”

Gunther used the blind driver pod again in the chase sequence featuring Charlie’s family, when her stepdad Ron uses a 1972 Oldsmobile Vista Cruiser station wagon to disrupt a nail-biting pursuit by Humvees, Broncos and other military vehicles.

“It was like riding a roller coaster,” remembers Drucker. “It felt so real, like we were being chased by some evil people, doing some hardcore, intense driving. But knowing that we didn’t have to really do anything because there was a stunt driver on top of us doing all the work meant we could sit back and enjoy the ride!”

Steinfeld's character was a competitive high-diving champion before her father's death, and her experience on the tower comes into play in a big way during the film's finale. For the actual plunge, the company hired gymnast and NCAA All-American high diver Michelle DeMond, but Steinfeld is seen on the board during the moments leading up to the dive. "Hailee is not afraid of heights, but we always had her clipped in so that she could perform and feel comfortable," says Gunther. "She got up there with no problem. But when you're dealing with a 10-meter dive and a one-and-a-half with a twist, you bring in a professional."

Jessica Harbeck stood in for the actress during some of her other stunt sequences, but during the big action pieces in the third act, Steinfeld did much of her own action work. "There is a whole sequence where she had to climb up a crane about 130 feet up and dive off to save Bee," Knight says. "We did some of that on location at night and some on stage. Hailee showed up every single time. She was pretty impressive."

The movie was very physically demanding in ways she did not anticipate, says Steinfeld. "You're 30, 40 feet in the air and it's freezing. Even though you're harnessed in, you think about the possibilities. I was comfortable climbing the crane. I wasn't going to stop. But at one point I was waiting for someone to call 'Cut!' and finally I'm at the top and I yelled down, 'I can't go any further! Are you going to cut?'"

### **Old Lenses and a New Look**

Di Bonaventura brought in cinematographer Enrique Chediak, who had worked on several of his previous productions, including *Red 2*, *American Assassin* and *Deepwater Horizon*. "Enrique is not only a phenomenal DP, he is also emotionally accessible," says the producer. "Whatever Travis didn't know about the process, Enrique did."

Knowing that Knight would be in the director's chair was a key factor in Chediak's decision to take on the project. "I'd taken my daughter to see *Kubo*, and the humanity of the story really caught my attention," he says. "Once I understood this movie was about relationships and not just robots fighting in an empty frame, I was in."

Knight says the moment he met Chediak he knew he'd found a kindred spirit. "We forged a meaningful creative relationship over the course of the film," says the director. "Not that we didn't challenge each other on occasion, but I love the friction of sincere opinions. He is an extraordinary artist and an even better man."

Chediak and Knight decided to avoid the distinctive crisp picture quality and high contrast that is a hallmark of the *Transformers* franchise, opting instead for a look that evokes popular cinema of the 1980s. “We wanted to reinterpret that look without literally replicating it,” says the cinematographer. “We used the Alexa digital format, but also vintage Panavision lenses from the ’60s. They have millions of imperfections that give a very soft beautiful look in this movie.”

### **Totally ’80s**

The filmmakers pulled out all the stops to capture the distinctive look and atmosphere of the 1980s through the fashions, hair, makeup, décor and attitudes of the decade. For the art department that meant ensuring that none of the commonplace items of today that did not exist in 1987 appear in the film. “You try to remember all the things we didn’t have back then that we take for granted today,” Haworth says. “We always had to keep a sense of what was appropriate and essential for the period, without encumbering ourselves with a lot of distractions.”

Set decorator Anne Kuljian and Haworth spent a great deal of time locating the vintage items that would have accumulated in the Watsons’ garage over the years. Even though the layers of detail, from Charlie’s father’s tools to the cobwebs in the rafters, might not be obvious on camera, Haworth is convinced these specifics are essential to the film’s story.

“We went as far as having our graphic designer, Ellen Lampl, re-create some album covers and newspapers from the period,” says the production designer. “You probably wouldn’t notice them unless you were standing right there, but it makes a difference in how you experience the space.”

When costume designer Dayna Pink met with Knight, they had an immediate meeting of the minds regarding Charlie’s look. “It had to be rooted in the period, but we also didn’t want to give a history lesson,” says Pink. “We wanted to make the audience feel like they are in a certain place and time, but it wasn’t all shoulder pads and craziness.”

Instead she chose to give Charlie a rock ’n’ roll-influenced look that brings to mind ’80s icons Joan Jett and Debbie Harry. “Charlie isn’t trying to fit in,” Pink says. “We gave her a little edge with a darker palette and added teeny touches of yellow, like her black and yellow shoelaces. She’s the only human character wearing any yellow, but you have to look for it.”

With the exception of Charlie’s vintage band T-shirts, Pink’s team built every piece of the character’s clothing — right down to her handmade boots and the T-shirt she wears at the end of the film, which is adorned with a plethora of music-related patches.

“We were taking clothes apart and putting them back together, cutting off sleeves, adding pockets and zippers that didn’t really zip anything,” says Pink. “We redid everything as though Charlie were sitting in her bedroom, doing all this herself.” They also made a stunt version of each outfit with a little more stretch and room to fit protective pads.

Pink and her assistant costume designer, Terry Mark Anderson, had the daunting task of inventing entirely new uniforms for the Sector 7 agents. “We knew where Sector 7 was headed 30 years down the road with their black outfits, but we needed to create uniforms with an ’80s feel,” she says. “I was lucky enough to be working with Terry, who summed it up perfectly: ‘Duran Duran meets the Army,’” she laughs. “He took a pair of pleated pants off the rack and pointed to a photo of Simon Le Bon. From there, we built a collection.”

By the time makeup artist Tina Roesler Kerwin and hair stylist Kelvin R. Trahan joined the production, Haworth and Pink had already created a detailed style board for each of the characters, starting with Charlie. Originally the filmmakers had asked Steinfeld to cut her hair for the film, but since she had a new album coming out and appearances scheduled to promote it, Trahan used six wigs in a color similar to Steinfeld’s own.

“Everybody has an idea somewhat of what ’80s hair looks like, but it is still pretty subjective,” says Trahan. “Dayna, to her credit, came up with the Debbie Harry comparison. When you think ’80s, you think big hair, but Travis felt like Charlie was an outsider and wanted her to have a more natural look. It’s not that she doesn’t have an ’80s look, but she follows a path of rebellion, so she was doing her own thing.”

Kerwin created a very natural look for the actress, while still maintaining the popstar glamour that Steinfeld cultivates in real life. “The idea was that her character wouldn’t wear a whole lot of makeup,” the makeup designer says. “However we had to find a place where Hailee was comfortable as well. We went with neutral tones, very little blush or lip color, just eyes done, really. Hailee is so naturally beautiful; it wasn’t a difficult canvas to work with.”

Steinfeld, a style icon in her own right, says Charlie’s changing look expresses her emerging sense of self as the story unfolds. “You’ll absolutely see an arc in Charlie’s wardrobe that reflects her growing confidence. She goes from being grungier and not very well put together — even her socks are mismatched — to figuring out who she is and holding herself in a self-assured way.”

## Speaking Through Music

No film set in the 1980s is complete without the era's signature sound. *Bumblebee* is set specifically in 1987 to take advantage of that year's wealth of musical hits. "So many people we talked to felt that '87 was the best year of the decade musically," says Vahradian. "I'm not an expert, but it's interesting how many people in the music industry said that to us."

Knight observes that music speaks to us particularly deeply when we are in our teens. "Thinking back to my formative years, I often experienced vague, inarticulate, but keenly felt emotions roiling around inside me, aching for expression and understanding," says the director. "The one thing I found to give voice to those feelings was music. In like manner, music is how Charlie interacts with and interprets the world. She listens to The Smiths, Elvis Costello, The Damned, Motorhead, and Joy Division, in part because she can't express some of her pain, and it helps her communicate what she's feeling. Charlie uses music to help Bumblebee do the same."

Filmmakers were fortunate to have cast a star who's also a multiplatinum recording artist. Steinfeld worked with filmmakers on an original song written for the film, titled "Back To Life," which is featured in the film and on its soundtrack.

"Hailee is absurdly talented," says Knight. "Her gifts as a musician and an actor blend together on this movie in a surprising and heartfelt way. After we finished shooting, she was inspired by the experience to write a song that beautifully captures the central theme of the film. Like *Bumblebee*, 'Back To Life' is a high-spirited tribute to the redemptive and healing power of love. Plus, it's awesome."

## Meet the Beetle

In recent years, Bumblebee's automotive alter ego has been a tricked-out yellow Chevy Camaro, which has become a franchise favorite and one of the most recognizable characters on four wheels. But in his original Generation 1 incarnation, he was a lovable Volkswagen Beetle, and the filmmakers elected to return him to his humbler roots.

"Bumblebee is more childlike in his behavior, more exuberant and playful than the other Transformers," according to Vahradian. "The VW Bug has a nice rounded shape, so even though he is a very fierce warrior, he seems like a more cuddly version of a Transformer."

Knight and production designer Haworth selected a 1967 model, unique among VW Bugs. Transportation coordinator Randy Peters, who has worked on all five previous films, was surprised when he and his team began researching their choice. "We could have gone with any model from the '60s, but we picked that year," he says. "Unbeknownst to any of us, 1967 was a one-off."

From headlights and seatbelts to the distinctive yellow paint job, the 1967 Beetle included design features that were never used on another model before or since. That meant finding enough vehicles and spare parts for them was no mean feat. In fact, it was easier to custom fabricate many parts for the film.

Over the course of four months, eight Beetles were rebuilt to order under the supervision of picture car coordinator Joey Freitas and picture car mechanic Trevor Mann, both veterans of the *Transformers* franchise. The vehicles included a stunt car, a blind-driver pod car and a silent electrical version fabricated for the film by Justin Mann, Trevor's father.

"We started from the ground up: wheels, doors, fenders, windows, door seals, trunk seals, all the wiring, everything. We were ordering parts six hours a day for the first couple of weeks, just trying to find every little piece," says Trevor Mann. "Sometimes the '67s were a little too rough to salvage, so we'd go with a piece from a '66 or a '68 — there's enough wiggle room."

Camera rigs mounted on the pod car required adjustable airbags in each corner to compensate for the excess weight. "We built the car to be dual-purpose," says Mann. "The pod can come off and the vehicle looks stock, but it's really another stunt car with custom brakes for drift handling. It also has a lot of horsepower to work in car chases."

For Mann's money, the electric car was the most interesting assignment. While VW Beetles of that time had manual transmissions, most of the actors were newer drivers, who had never learned to drive a stick shift. The electric Volkswagen has no clutch pedal, no shifter and no ignition. To put it in reverse, the driver flicks a toggle. For safety reasons, a special programmer could control every aspect of the car. The silent engine meant the sound department had less to worry about.

"I'm a gearhead who loves loud engines and anything that burns gasoline," Mann says. "But this car has converted me. It will do 100 miles per hour, no problem, and you can get 80 to 100 miles on a charge."

After the cars were built, the aging process began. Finding the right line between pristine and rundown was tricky. Starting with just one car, the art department worked gradually until they landed on just the right level of disrepair. "We did a series of camera tests to make sure the precise amount of color came through the rust and the layers of grime," says Haworth. "Eventually we did the painting and aging in multiple stages, from its found condition to the point where Charlie fixes it up and makes the car her own."

Knight has a special fondness for Volkswagens. For him, as for many others, they evoke childhood memories and nostalgia for the distinctive sound and look of the cars. "There's just

something about a Bug,” says the director. “It has these beautiful curves, but it’s not streamlined. It’s not muscular, it’s not aggressive. It’s friendly. If ever there was a car you’d want to hug, it’d be a VW Beetle.”

For Autobot commander Optimus Prime’s automotive form, Peters located a 1986 Freightliner Cabover truck in Nebraska and had it shipped to Los Angeles, where his team began a massive facelift. Knight also asked for a trailer for Optimus, which was difficult given the tractor’s length, but Peters came through again.

After the opening battle between Autobots and Decepticons on Cybertron, the fearsome and powerful Decepticon commander dispatches his lieutenants, Shatter and Dropkick, on a mission to destroy Bumblebee at any cost. Knight specifically wanted to contrast the round curves of Bumblebee with the more angular, aggressive shapes for the Decepticon assassins. He and Haworth decided that they should take the form of the muscle cars of the day.

A fearsome warrior, Shatter, is the “better half” of the Decepticon team sent to hunt down B-127. A candy-apple red 1972 Plymouth Satellite, she is clearly the brains of the duo. Her partner, Dropkick, a blue 1974 AMC Javelin, is the pea-brained brawn. Notably, Shatter and Dropkick are also triple-changers, which are Transformers that can transform from robot into two alternative modes. In addition to their muscle car mode, Shatter also transforms into a jet and Dropkick into a helicopter.

Haworth and Freitas worked hand in hand with Ghostlight Industries, which did the heavy lifting when it came to restoration and fabrication of the two cars. “We tried to mix it up and vary the cars from others we’ve seen in *Transformers* films,” says Freitas. “For example, we took the body of a stock Javelin and threw away the rest. We put a custom chassis underneath, with off-road Baja suspension, a full LS motor, 500 horsepower, new tranny, rear end and carrier end, and widened the tire stance to make a high-performance rally vehicle. Same with the Satellite, which was a beast and really cool to drive.”

More than 500 vehicles were gathered for the shoot, some driven by principal talent or extras, others parked in the background of scenes, including several 1979-80 Puch Maxis 50cc mopeds, the perfect mode of transportation for a teen without a driver’s license. Charlie rides a beat-up army-green Maxi, aged to look even older, before finding Bumblebee.

Even the Humvees used in the action sequences had to be period vehicles. “The capability of the cars was different in the ’80s and it definitely played a role in how we designed the action,”

says Gunther. “The Hummers we used are not the high-performance car we usually use, so everything was scaled down on some level.”

### Visualizing Emotion

For the artists at ILM, which has created visual effects for all of the *Transformers* films, *Bumblebee* was like starting all over in some ways. “When we were working on the first *Transformers* movie, we had no idea how we were going to accomplish anything related to these robots,” says ILM’s Jason Smith, who served as the film’s visual effects supervisor. “Every time, we’ve had to make it bigger and better. But with this film, there was an even more difficult challenge, which was how could we help create a real emotional connection between this CG character and our lead actress?”

There was no question of trying to upstage the transformations designed by Bay and ILM for earlier films. Knight had a singular goal in mind, which everything done in VFX was designed to support. “His priority was to tell a great story with clarity and heart,” says Smith. “The whole film hinges on Bumblebee’s relationship with Charlie, so we have to believe him as a character. Travis wasn’t shy about creating opportunities for Charlie to place a hand on Bumblebee’s shoulder or cheek, for example. And they hug more than once. It creates a connection between the characters for the audience and reinforces the fact that the two characters inhabit the same physical world.”

Even their first meeting was designed to create empathy for Bumblebee in Charlie. When she rolls under the VW to work on it, Bumblebee reveals himself by transforming right above her. The sequence is shot from Charlie’s perspective, giving the audience a first-hand look at what it is like to be inside a Transformer.

“The real opportunity on this film was to focus on making that key connection authentic enough that the audience doesn’t think about it as a visual effect after the first few minutes,” explains Smith. “That creates a challenge, because those moments all have to work 100 percent. If any fail, then they have the opposite result, reminding the audience they’re watching a visual effect. We were constantly aware of this and working hard to hopefully never let Travis or the audience down in those moments.”

Taking advantage of his extensive background in animation, Knight worked with the artists at Laika to create what he calls “performance storyboards” before a single frame was shot. As he explains it, “We tried to figure out what the character is thinking, feeling and doing, and board it within an inch of its life. That helped us to use our time and resources wisely. And because Hailee

had never acted opposite air before, the boards allowed us to clearly show her how the scene was ultimately going to play out. These moments are born from an animator's brain, and that's reflected in the early storyboards and the final film. Charlie and Bumblebee are mirrors of each other, so if you look at the composition and framing in the scenes in the garage, you see the symmetry between the two.”

The filmmakers also went to extraordinary lengths to help the cast and crew make the interactions between the humans and Bumblebee feel authentic. For instance, instead of placing a tennis ball on a stick or a cardboard cutout on the set for Steinfeld to play against, during the more intimate scenes visual effects producer Ron Ames had an actor on stilts portray Bumblebee. Circus performer Chris Grabher was brought in to play opposite her in the first scenes in the garage. “He is unbelievably dexterous and skilled on stilts,” says Gunther. “Even though he had no dialogue, you could see his emotion. I think that helped Hailee as well as the camera department. The more data they have in terms of size and framing, the better.”

Knight's animation experience has made him a particularly visual filmmaker, Smith believes. “He knows the power of subtle gesture, a micro-expression, or adding an extra frame in timing. He knows exactly what frame in the film moves the story forward. I think Travis approached the whole film like he was animating every detail.”

While the scope of *Bumblebee* is intentionally more contained than previous films in the franchise, the stunning opening sequence depicts first-generation Transformers in thrilling extraplanetary combat. “Those of us familiar with the franchise in the '80s had a great deal of fun bringing Generation 1 characters to life in this film,” says Smith. “Everyone on the team approached that G1 work with reverence and excitement at the same time. We had the opportunity to create the battle on Cybertron along with some classic G1 characters. A huge team of designers, animators, modelers, painters and many more came together to construct that sequence, and we think the result is fantastic fun.”

### A New Beginning

For more than a decade, Michael Bay, Lorenzo di Bonaventura, Paramount Pictures and Hasbro have guided the *Transformers* franchise through ever-increasing heights of storytelling, visual effects and flat-out fun, creating an iconic series of films in the process. Now, *Bumblebee* opens up a new era for *Transformers* by combining the trademark battling robots, fast cars and thrilling action with the unexpectedly tender relationship between Charlie and her new Autobot friend.

“The Bumblebee character is exemplary of the heart and humor that is the Transformers brand,” says Hasbro’s Goldner. “It is our hope that the audience will take on a whole new appreciation for Bumblebee by understanding his complexity, from the tough aggressive war machine, to the gentle, lovable robot with a big heart.”

Knight has made a film that continues the *Transformers* blockbuster legacy while adding elements of love, empathy and the importance of connection. “At our core, the only thing that matters is connecting with others; that’s why we’re here,” says the director. “It’s one of the things I love about filmmaking. It’s about telling our own stories and binding people from different backgrounds and cultures in a shared experience. Working on *Bumblebee* has been one of the most amazing experiences of my life.”

## ABOUT THE CAST

**HAILEE STEINFELD (Charlie Watson)** emerged as a breakout star at 14 years old with her poignant Academy Award<sup>®</sup>-nominated performance in the Coen Brothers' *True Grit*, alongside Jeff Bridges. Steinfeld was chosen over 15,000 actresses for her role, which garnered universal acclaim including dozens of film critics' award wins for Best Supporting Actress as well as BAFTA and Screen Actors Guild nominations. She has garnered four Teen Choice Award nominations for her work in both film and music and is currently in the studio writing and recording a full-length album.

Since her early start, Steinfeld's career has kept her in the public eye as one of Hollywood's finest up-and-coming actors. In 2016 Steinfeld starred in the critically acclaimed coming-of-age film *The Edge of Seventeen*, for writer and director Kelly Fremon Craig. Co-starring Woody Harrelson, Blake Jenner and Kyra Sedgwick, the film centers on a high school junior (Steinfeld) already at peak awkwardness when her all-star older brother begins dating her best friend. Her outstanding performance garnered Steinfeld a Golden Globe Award<sup>®</sup> nomination for Best Actress in a Musical or Comedy. *The Edge of Seventeen* premiered at the 2016 Toronto International Film Festival.

In 2015 Steinfeld starred in the highly anticipated sequel *Pitch Perfect 2*, opposite Anna Kendrick and Rebel Wilson. Steinfeld reprised her role in 2017's *Pitch Perfect 3*. Steinfeld also starred alongside Samuel L. Jackson and Jessica Alba in *Barely Lethal* and lent her voice to the English version of the Academy Award-nominated animated film *When Marnie Was There*. Her previous credits include *The Homesman*, alongside Tommy Lee Jones and Meryl Streep; *Begin Again*, opposite Keira Knightley and Mark Ruffalo; *Term Life*, with Vince Vaughn; *The Keeping Room*, opposite Brit Marling; *Ten Thousand Saints*, alongside Ethan Hawke; *Hateship, Loveship*, alongside Guy Pearce and Kristen Wiig; *3 Days to Kill*, opposite Kevin Costner; *Romeo & Juliet*, with Douglas Booth and Ed Westwick; and *Ender's Game*, opposite Harrison Ford and Ben Kingsley.

Steinfeld was the face of Miuccia Prada's "Miu Miu" campaign in 2011 and she was named one of "The 16 Most Influential Teens of 2013" by *Time* magazine. Additionally, she was honored with the Female Star of Tomorrow Award at CinemaCon in 2013 and won the 2013 Max Mara Face of the Future Award at the annual Women in Film gala.

Steinfeld successfully launched her music career with Republic Records, quickly cementing herself as a rising force in pop music with a series of platinum-certified hits including her 2015 debut

single “Love Myself,” “Starving” and “Most Girls.” To date she has amassed a total of nearly two billion streams globally.

In 2017 Steinfeld released her new single “Let Me Go,” produced by Grammy Award®-nominated DJ and producer Alesso and critically acclaimed producer, songwriter and artist Andrew Watt. “Let Me Go” pairs Steinfeld with one of country music’s bestselling acts, Florida Georgia Line. She performed the song live for the first time at the 2017 American Music Awards and was honored by *Variety* with the Crossover Artist Award at their inaugural Hitmakers event.

Steinfeld resides in Los Angeles.

**JOHN CENA (Agent Burns)** is an actor, producer, host, entrepreneur and WWE superstar. As the face of the WWE and a 16-time world champion, Cena combines his athleticism, charisma, strong work ethic and genuine personality to shine as one of today’s brightest stars. He recently starred in the action thriller *The Wall*, directed by Doug Liman and co-starring Golden Globe winner Aaron Taylor-Johnson. For this role Cena was honored as Action Star of the Year at CinemaCon. He also starred alongside Leslie Mann and Ike Barinholtz in *Blockers* and received favorable notices for his role opposite Amy Schumer in Judd Apatow’s hit comedy *Trainwreck*. Previously, Cena appeared in the Tina Fey/Amy Poehler film *Sisters*, had a cameo in the Will Ferrell/Mark Wahlberg comedy *Daddy’s Home* and co-starred in *Daddy’s Home 2*. He also voiced the title role in *Ferdinand*, the animated film based on the iconic children’s book.

For the small screen, Cena recently appeared in HBO’s mockumentary “Tour de Pharmacy,” starring Andy Samberg. He executive produces and voices Robo in “Dallas & Robo” for YouTube Red, an animated series that premiered in May 2018. He was the host and executive producer of “American Grit” and has hosted the ESPYs, the Teen Choice Awards, “Saturday Night Live,” Nickelodeon’s Kids’ Choice Awards and “The Today Show.”

Cena devotes much of his time working on behalf of numerous charitable causes. He is Make-A-Wish’s most requested wish granter of all time and the only celebrity to grant 500 wishes. Cena is also committed to the Susan G. Komen foundation and has helped raise more than \$1.6 million for breast cancer research and awareness. A longtime supporter of the U.S. military, Cena was recognized by USO-Metro as the recipient of its 2016 Legacy of Achievement Award. He starred in Ad Council’s “Love Has No Labels” campaign “We Are America,” to further the message of acceptance and love for all communities across the U.S. He also joined Rotary’s “End Polio

Now” campaign in 2017 as a celebrity ambassador and interviewed Bill Gates about his work on eradicating polio.

In addition to his work in the community, Cena is a powerhouse on social media with 45 million Facebook fans, making him the most popular active U.S. athlete on the site. He is also one of the most followed athletes on Twitter and Instagram, with 10 and 7.4 million followers respectively.

Cena has proven himself to be a powerful marketing force. He is the face of Crocs’ “Come as You Are” campaign, which celebrates the uniqueness of individuals of all ages around the world. He is the voice of Ernie the Elephant for Wonderful Pistachios’ biggest advertising campaign ever and also stars in Hefty’s national campaign. What’s more, Cena is an ambassador for Cricket Wireless and his video “The Unexpected John Cena Prank” has been viewed more than 17 million times. In its first week the follow-up video “John Cena Reacts” had over 100 million views on Facebook alone. Cena is a brand ambassador for Tapout, the official fitness and training partner of WWE, as well.

**JORGE LENDEBORG JR. (Guillermo “Memo” Gutierrez)** shined in his breakthrough role in Steven Caple Jr.’s *The Land*, which premiered at the 2016 Sundance Festival. He played one of four Cleveland teens whose dreams of becoming pro skateboarders in California, and their scheme to finance it through petty crime, run afoul of a local drug “queen-pin.” Lendeborg was next seen in *Brigsby Bear*, opposite Claire Danes and Kyle Mooney; *Shot*, with Noah Wyle and Sharon Leal; and *Spider-Man: Homecoming*, opposite Tom Holland and Robert Downey Jr.

More recently, Lendeborg was seen in Greg Berlanti’s teen dramedy *Love, Simon*, starring Jennifer Garner, Nick Robinson and Alexandra Shipp. He appears in Robert Rodriguez’s 2019 release *Alita: Battle Angel*, with Christoph Waltz and Rosa Salazar.

Lendeborg was born in the Dominican Republic and his family moved to Miami before he began kindergarten. At age 18 he decided to move to Los Angeles to pursue acting. An avid writer, Lendeborg enjoys doing standup comedy and also plays several musical instruments including piano and drums.

**JASON DRUCKER (Otis Watson)** is a rising star best known as an ambitious, video-game obsessed tween in *Diary of a Wimpy Kid: The Long Haul*. At age 12 Drucker earned the highly

coveted role after a long and competitive national search. He was also seen in *Barely Lethal*, alongside Samuel L. Jackson, Hailee Steinfeld and Jessica Alba, and the NBC drama “Chicago Fire.”

The young actor serves as an ambassador for Free2Luv, an anti-bullying nonprofit organization dedicated to celebrating individuality and spreading kindness through genuine interaction. Drucker uses his own experiences to encourage peers to use their voices for change and push for love.

Born in Hollywood, Florida, Drucker entered the world of entertainment by working in commercials from the tender age of 6. At 7 he booked his first television role as Tommy Miller in the Latin American Nickelodeon telenovela “Every Witch Way.”

Drucker is an all-around athlete who loves baseball, basketball and skiing.

**PAMELA ADLON (Sally)** has been acting since she was 12 years old. She is perhaps best known for her role as the unpredictable Marcy on Showtime’s “Californication” and for voicing Bobby Hill on Mike Judge’s animated series “King of the Hill,” a role for which she won the 2002 Emmy Award® for Outstanding Voice-Over Performance. Adlon is the co-creator (with Louis C.K.), writer, producer, director and star of the Peabody Award-winning, semi-autobiographical, critically acclaimed FX comedy series “Better Things,” for which she received 2017 and 2018 Emmy nominations for Outstanding Lead Actress in a Comedy Series. Adlon can currently be seen in the independent film *All Square*, opposite Michael Kelly and Josh Lucas.

Previously, Adlon was as an actor, writer and producer on FX’s Peabody Award-winning hit show “Louie,” created by Louie C.K., which aired for five seasons. In addition to sharing in two WGA Awards for Best Comedy Series, she earned a 2015 Emmy nomination for Outstanding Guest Actress in a Comedy Series and a 2013 Emmy bid for writing. She also starred opposite C.K. on HBO’s “Lucky Louie.”

Adlon’s other film credits include *First Girl I Loved* (which won the Best of Next! Audience Award at the 2016 Sundance Film Festival), *Say Anything*, *Bed of Roses*, *The Adventures of Ford Fairlane*, *Sgt. Bilko*, *Plump Fiction*, *Some Girl* and *Grease 2*. She also voices the role of Vidia in Disney’s *Tinker Bell* film franchise.

Adlon currently lives in Los Angeles with her three daughters.

**STEPHEN SCHNEIDER (Ron)** most recently starred in the ABC series “Imaginary Mary,” opposite Jenna Elfman. He also stars in his own original miniseries “Mental Cases,” on Adult

Swim. The actor's other television credits include recurring on the hit series "Broad City" (Comedy Central), "You're the Worst" (FX), "Best Friends Forever" (NBC) and "Save Me" (NBC).

Schneider will next appear in the musical drama series "Mixtape," alongside Jenna Dewan Tatum, Madeleine Stowe and Campbell Scott. On the big screen Schneider starred in the 2013 independent comedy *Bert & Arnie's Guide to Friendship*, with Matt Oberg and Anna Chlumsky.

**RICARDO HOYOS (Tripp Summers)** is a Canadian-American actor best known as the leather-jacket-wearing bad boy Zig Novak on the Emmy-nominated series "Degrassi." Hoyos is a four-time Young Artists Award nominee and a one-time winner who began acting at a young age in a variety of children's programs ranging from TVOntario's "Dino Dan" to Comedy Central's "The Jon Dore Television Show." Hoyos has also starred in several independent feature films showcased at film festivals and on streaming platforms.

**JOHN ORTIZ (Dr. Powell)** is an award-winning actor who honed his craft on the theatrical stage of New York. He won an Obie Award for his performance in the Off Broadway production of "References to Salvador Dali Make Me Hot" and was nominated for an Independent Spirit Award for his performance in the indie film *Jack Goes Boating*, which he both starred in and produced alongside Philip Seymour Hoffman. The actor is equally at home on stage, in feature films and on television.

Most recently, Ortiz co-starred in *Replicas*, with Keanu Reeves and Alice Eve. He has been seen in such films as *Kong: Skull Island*, starring Tom Hiddleston, Brie Larson, Samuel L. Jackson and John Goodman; *Going in Style*, with Morgan Freeman and Michael Caine; *Nostalgia*, opposite Jon Hamm and Catherine Keener; *Ms. White Light*, opposite Judith Light and Roberta Colindrez; *Peppermint*, starring Jennifer Garner; *The Cloverfield Paradox*, with Chris O'Dowd and Elizabeth Debicki; *A Woman, A Part*, opposite Maggie Siff and Cara Seymour; *Steve Jobs*, starring Michael Fassbender and Kate Winslet; *Blackbat*, opposite Chris Hemsworth; *The Drop*, starring Tom Hardy and James Gandolfini; and *Cesar Chavez*, opposite Michael Peña.

The actor's other film credits include *Silver Linings Playbook*, *Public Enemies*, *Fast & Furious 6*, *Pride and Glory*, *American Gangster*, *Aliens vs. Predator: Requiem*, *Miami Vice*, *El Cantante*, *Amistad*, *Carlito's Way*, *Narc*, *Ransom*, *Riot*, *Side Streets*, *Sgt. Bilko*, *Before Night Falls*, *The Opportunists* and *The Last Marshal*.

On television, Ortiz starred opposite Greg Kinnear in Fox's "Rake" and was seen in two HBO series: "Togetherness," alongside Amanda Peet and Melanie Lynskey, and "Luck," opposite Dustin Hoffman. He was also a series regular on "Clubhouse," "The Job" and "Lush Life."

Along with the Hoffman, Ortiz was the co-founder of LAByrinth Theater Company. He produced and performed in many productions, including "The Last Days of Judas Iscariot" (directed by Hoffman), "Othello," "Jesus Hopped the 'A' Train" (for which he received a Drama Desk nomination), "Guinea Pig Solo" and "Jack Goes Boating." Each of these plays were staged at the Public Theater in New York.

The actor's other New York theater credits include the Broadway production of "Anna in the Tropics," "The Skin of our Teeth" and "Cloud Tectonics." Additionally, Ortiz was in "The Persians" and "The Merchant of Venice," both directed by Peter Sellars and performed in Paris, London, Berlin and Edinburgh, among other cities. Regionally, Ortiz has performed at the Mark Taper Forum, the Goodman Theatre, Hartford Stage, Arena Stage, Yale Repertory Theatre, South Coast Repertory and Cincinnati Playhouse.

A devoted fan of the New York Yankees and the New York Knicks, Ortiz was born and raised in Brooklyn. He currently resides in Santa Monica with his wife and son.

**GLYNN TURMAN (General Whalen)** is an Emmy-winning actor who was most recently seen in *Justine*, from writer/director/actress Stephanie Turner, and *Windows on the World*, starring Edward James Olmos and Ryan Guzman. Turman's other film credits include *Super 8*, *Race*, *John Dies at the End*, *Burlesque*, *Takers*, *Sabara*, *Men of Honor*, *Gremlins* and the cult classic *Cooley High*. Next, he stars as Captain David Davenport in the new television drama "Fly," created by RaéVen Kelly. The series chronicles the true story of the first all-African-American commercial flight crew.

Turman started his career at the tender age of 12 in the landmark Broadway production of "A Raisin in the Sun," starring Sidney Poitier and Ruby Dee. A true Renaissance man, he is a performer, director, producer, writer and composer, equally comfortable on stage and screen. In 2008 he won the Emmy for Outstanding Guest Actor in a Drama Series for his performance in HBO's "In Treatment." He also turned in a critically acclaimed performance as series regular Mayor Clarence Royce in HBO's "The Wire," which earned him a 2007 NAACP Image Award nomination for Outstanding Supporting Actor. His role in the 2009 indie feature *Kings of the Evening* won Best Supporting Actor honors at the San Diego Black Film Festival.

Turman's other acknowledgements include three NAACP Image Awards (including a Lifetime Achievement Award for Theatre), a Lifetime Achievement Award at the 2010 Pan African Film Festival, a Los Angeles Critics Circle Award nomination and a Drama-Logue Award. He was the recipient of the 2011 Sidney Poitier Lifelong Achievement Award at the National Black Theater Festival and won the 2010 L.A. Stage Ovation Award for Outstanding Lead Actor for his performance in August Wilson's award-winning play "Two Trains Running."

Turman was a series regular or played recurring roles on TV shows such as "How to Get Away With Murder," "Graves," "Queen Sugar," "House of Lies," "The Defenders," "Resurrection Blvd." and "A Different World." In addition, he has guest-starred on innumerable television series including "Suits," "Proof," "Criminal Minds," "Revolution," "NCIS: Los Angeles," "Southland," "Scrubs," "E.R." and "Cold Case," to name a few.

**LEN CARIOU (Uncle Hank)** is one of the theater world's most beloved talents, a member of the Theatre Hall of Fame and a pre-eminent interpreter of the music of Stephen Sondheim. On Broadway, he has appeared in notable productions such as "Applause," for which he earned a Tony Award® nomination and won the Theatre World Award; "A Little Night Music," for which he was also Tony-nominated; and "Sweeney Todd," for which he won both a Tony and a Drama Desk Award.

Cariou's feature film credits include *One Man* (for which he received a Genie Award), *The Four Seasons*, *Flags of Our Fathers*, *1408*, *Executive Decision*, *Lady in White*, *Thirteen Days*, *About Schmidt*, *Secret Window*, *Boynnton Beach Club*, *Prisoners*, *Death Wish* and Best Picture Oscar winner *Spotlight*. In addition, he supplied voice narration for the Academy Award-winning documentary *The Johnstown Flood*.

Cariou currently plays the patriarch Henry Reagan in the multi-generational hit television series "Blue Bloods," for CBS. He has also appeared on series such as "Murder, She Wrote," "CSI," "Numb3rs," "Damages," "Brotherhood," "Ed," "Law & Order," "The Outer Limits," "The Practice" and "The West Wing." Cariou earned an Emmy nomination for his performance in "Into the Storm."

Cariou's other stage credits include "Nightwatch," "Cold Storage," "Teddy and Alice," "Dance a Little Closer," "The Speed of Darkness," "The Dinner Party," "Proof," "Mountain," "Papa," "The Persians," "A Sorrow Beyond Dreams," "The Master Class" and "Measure for Measure." In addition, he has served as artistic director of the Manitoba Theatre Center and

associate director of the Guthrie Theatre. Most recently, the actor received rave reviews for his show “Broadway and the Bard.”

Cariou was born and raised in Winnipeg, Canada, and holds two honorary degrees as well as the Order of Manitoba. Currently, he resides on the Hudson River’s shore in New Jersey with his wife Heather Summerhayes Cariou, author of *Sixtyfive Roses: A Sister’s Memoir*. The actor loves golf, sports in general, and playing gin rummy.

**GRACIE DZIENNY (Tina)** recently appeared alongside Billy Burke and James Wolk on the CBS thriller “Zoo,” based on James Patterson’s bestselling novel. Dzienny’s other TV credits include Freeform’s “Chasing Life,” Nickelodeon’s Emmy winner “Supah Ninjas” and NBC’s “State of Affairs.”

Originally from Toledo, Ohio, Dzienny began her career as a model at age 5 after winning a contest sponsored by L’Oréal. She has a large YouTube presence in the DIY scene, starring in and producing her own crafting series with AwesomenessTV.

Dzienny currently resides in Los Angeles.

**DYLAN O’BRIEN (Voice of B-127)** is a dynamic young actor quickly emerging as one of Hollywood’s brightest talents. He is best known as the star of the massively successful *Maze Runner* trilogy, based on the James Dashner books. The films follow O’Brien’s character and friends as they search for a cure to a virus that turns people into zombies in a post-apocalyptic world.

The *Maze Runner* series is not the only time that O’Brien has played the protagonist in a big-screen adaptation of a bestselling book. In 2017 O’Brien starred opposite Michael Keaton in Michael Cuesta’s *American Assassin*, based on Vince Flynn’s bestselling book series. The actor’s other film credits include Peter Berg’s *Deepwater Horizon*, Jonathan Kasdan’s *The First Time* and Shawn Levy’s *The Internship*. O’Brien also starred as Stiles in the MTV series “Teen Wolf,” a popular reimagining of the 1980s cult film.

O’Brien was first discovered via YouTube in the series of comic online shorts he directed, produced and starred in. He made his feature debut in the entirely improvised independent film *High Road* (2011), directed by Upright Citizens Brigade co-founder Matt Walsh and co-starring veteran comedic actors Horatio Sanz, Rob Riggle, Abby Elliott and Lizzy Caplan.

The actor currently resides in Los Angeles.

**PETER CULLEN (Voice of Optimus Prime)** is known throughout the world as the voice of the wise and heroic leader of the Autobots, Optimus Prime, on the popular 1980s cartoon series “Transformers.” In 1986 he reprised his iconic role in the animated film *The Transformers: The Movie*. In 2007 Cullen won new fans as the velvet voice of Optimus in Michael Bay’s impressive blockbuster film adaptation *Transformers*, starring Shia LaBeouf, Megan Fox and John Turturro. He reprised his role in the sequels and the animated television series airing on the Hub Network.

Cullen also lent his voice to the popular TV series “The New Adventures of Winnie the Pooh,” providing the somber but sincere voice of Eeyore, the eternally pessimistic donkey. Cullen, who coincidentally owns his own donkey, has voiced the character in everything from cartoons and television commercials to theatrical promotions. Additionally, he is featured on “Disney’s Duck Tales” and voices Monterey Jack on “Chip ‘n’ Dale’s Rescue Rangers.”

Cullen’s film credits include the first remake of *King Kong*, as the voice of the giant ape, and in the *Predator* films he provided the inhuman alien sounds for the title role. Cullen’s voice can also be heard in *My Little Pony: The Movie*, *Heathcliff: The Movie* and *Gremlins*. In the 1980s Cullen voiced characters on “Knight Rider,” “The Pirates of Dark Water,” “Hägar,” “Visionaries: Knights of the Magical Light,” “Dungeons and Dragons,” “Voltron,” “Johnny Quest,” “Spider-Man,” “G.I. Joe,” “My Little Pony and Friends,” “Rainbow Brite,” “Scooby and Scrappy-Doo” and “The Jetsons.”

Born in Montreal, Québec, Cullen is a member of the first graduating class of the National Theatre School of Canada and spent his early professional years as a radio drama actor on the Canadian Broadcasting Company. His son, Clay, is a Taurus Award-winning stuntman in Hollywood.

**ANGELA BASSETT (Voice of Shatter)** captivates audiences with her emotionally charged screen performances. Her talent and abilities as an actress, director and producer, in both television and film, have earned her respect and acclaim from peers and fans alike. She is undoubtedly one of the entertainment industry’s premier leading ladies. Perhaps best known for her intense portrayal of Tina Turner in the biopic *What’s Love Got to Do With It*, opposite Laurence Fishburne, she won the Golden Globe for Best Actress in a Musical and an NAACP Image Award in addition to an Academy Award nomination. Bassett has received 11 NAACP Image Awards for her performances in films such as *How Stella Got Her Groove Back*, *The Score*, *Music of the Heart*, *Malcolm X* and *Contact*. She also received a Screen Actors Guild nomination for her performance in “Ruby’s Bucket of Blood” and an Emmy bid for “The Rosa Parks Story.”

Most recently Bassett starred in Ryan Coogler's highly acclaimed *Black Panther*, with Chadwick Boseman, Sterling K. Brown and Lupita Nyong'o, and *Mission: Impossible: Fallout*, with Tom Cruise. For the small screen, she executive produced and starred in "9-1-1," Ryan Murphy's newest hit series for Fox, and showcased her directing talents in "American Horror Story: Cult."

Bassett received an Emmy nomination for Outstanding Guest Actress in a Comedy Series for her performance in Netflix's hit series "Master of None," opposite Lena Waithe. She also joined the directing team of FX's "American Horror Story: Roanoke" while simultaneously appearing as a member of the all-star cast. She received Emmy nominations for Outstanding Supporting Actress in a Miniseries for her work in "American Horror Story: Coven" and "American Horror Story: Freak Show."

Bassett lends her voice to Netflix's animated series "BoJack Horseman," alongside Will Arnett and Amy Sedaris. She received critical raves for her touching performance as Katherine Jackson in the ABC miniseries "The Jacksons: An American Dream"; an Emmy nomination for the "Uncle Jed's Barbershop" episode of "PBS Storytime"; and critical acclaim for narrating the PBS miniseries "Africans in America." Additionally, Bassett earned a SAG Award nomination for her work as Coretta Scott King in the Lifetime movie "Betty and Coretta." Her other notable television roles include the final season of NBC's "ER" and a recurring role on ABC's "Alias."

Bassett was nominated for her first DGA Award for her directorial debut on the Lifetime film "Whitney," a biopic that chronicled the loving and tumultuous relationship between Whitney Houston and Bobby Brown. In 2015 she directed the episode "Water Apocalypse" for National Geographic's innovative new series "Breakthrough," an anthology celebrating leading scientists from across the globe and their life-changing innovations and advancements in different technologies.

In 2016 Bassett reprised her role as Lynne Jacobs in *London Has Fallen*, the sequel to *Olympus Has Fallen*, co-starring Gerard Butler, Aaron Eckhart and Morgan Freeman. She also appeared in Spike Lee's *Chi-Raq* and Stephen Poliakoff's BBC 2 miniseries "Close to the Enemy." In 2015 Bassett ventured into a new entertainment medium as the lead character in the highly acclaimed video-game franchise "Tom Clancy's Rainbow Six Siege."

Bassett's other film credits include James McTeigue's *Survivor*, opposite Pierce Brosnan; Gregg Araki's *Whitebird in a Blizzard*, with Shailene Woodley; Kasi Lemmons' *Black Nativity*, opposite Forest Whitaker; John Singleton's *Boyz n the Hood*, with Cuba Gooding Jr.; Terry McMillan's *Waiting to Exhale*, co-starring Whitney Houston; Kathryn Bigelow's *Strange Days*, with Ralph Fiennes;

*Vampire in Brooklyn*, opposite Eddie Murphy; Walter Hill's *Supernova*, opposite James Spader; and George Tillman Jr.'s *Notorious*, alongside Jamal Woolard.

One of the most gratifying moments of Bassett's career was the opportunity to merge her faith and her talent when she gave voice to various characters in the all-time bestselling audiobook "The Bible Experience."

Beginning her career on stage and continuing there to this day, the Yale School of Drama graduate has been seen on and Off Broadway in productions such as "Ma Rainey's Black Bottom," "Colored People's Time," "Henry IV, Part I," "Joe Turner's Come and Gone" and "Black Girl." She returned to the stage in 1998 to star opposite Alec Baldwin in "Macbeth" at the Joseph Papp Public Theater in New York. In 2005 Bassett starred with her husband, Courtney B. Vance, in the North American premiere of "His Girl Friday" at the historic Guthrie Theater. She received rave reviews for her work with Laurence Fishburne in August Wilson's "Fences," at the prestigious Pasadena Playhouse, and starred opposite Samuel L. Jackson in the Broadway premiere of Katori Hall's "The Mountaintop."

Bassett and her husband co-wrote the book Friends: A Love Story. The couple resides near Los Angeles with their 12-year-old twins, Bronwyn Golden and Slater Josiah.

**JUSTIN THEROUX (Voice of Dropkick)** is an accomplished film, television and stage actor who first came to prominence with his unforgettable performance in David Lynch's *Mulholland Drive*, opposite Naomi Watts and Laura Harring. More recently, Theroux lent his talents to *The Spy Who Dumped Me*, with Mila Kunis and Kate McKinnon; *Mute*, alongside Alexander Skarsgård and Paul Rudd; and *The LEGO Ninjago Movie*, in which he voiced the evil warlord Garmadon. Theroux also starred in HBO's critically acclaimed series "The Leftovers," created by Damon Lindelof and Tom Perrotta. The show won a 2016 Peabody Award and Theroux received a Critics' Choice Award nomination for his role.

Theroux's other film credits include *The Girl on the Train*, *Inland Empire*, *Broken English*, *Miami Vice*, *Zoolander*, *Your Highness*, *American Psycho*, *The Ten*, *The Baxter*, *Strangers With Candy*, *Charlie's Angels: Full Throttle*, *Duplex*, *I Shot Andy Warhol*, *The Broken Hearts Club* and *Romy and Michele's High School Reunion*.

On television, Theroux portrayed John Hancock in HBO's award-winning miniseries "John Adams," alongside Paul Giamatti, Laura Linney and Tom Wilkinson. He had a guest-starring arc opposite Amy Poehler in NBC's "Parks and Recreation" and was a recurring character on HBO's

acclaimed series “Six Feet Under.” Theroux has also appeared on “Alias,” “Sex and the City,” “Spin City” and “Ally McBeal.”

Theroux is also a talented screenwriter. In 2015, he and Ben Stiller co-wrote the script for *Zoolander 2*. Theroux and Stiller also wrote and executive produced *Tropic Thunder*, starring Stiller, Robert Downey Jr., Jack Black, Nick Nolte and Matthew McConaughey. Theroux’s other writing credits include *Rock of Ages*, starring Tom Cruise, Alec Baldwin and Catherine Zeta-Jones, and *Iron Man 2*, with Robert Downey, Jr., Gwyneth Paltrow and Mickey Rourke.

Theroux made his directorial debut with 2006’s *Dedication*, a romantic comedy starring Billy Crudup, Mandy Moore, Tom Wilkinson and Bob Balaban.

Theroux began his acting career in New York theater, starring opposite Philip Seymour Hoffman in “Shopping and F###king,” followed by “Three Sisters” with Calista Flockhart, Billy Crudup, Jeanne Tripplehorn and Lili Taylor. He last starred in Frank McGuiness’ “Observe the Sons of Ulster Marching Towards the Somme.” Theroux’s performance was honored with a Lucille Lortel Award and the Boston Critics Award for Best Male Actor.

**DAVID SOBOLOV (Voice of Blitzwing)** was the voice of Depth Charge in the classic 1990s *Transformers Beast Wars* TV series, and more recently he played Shockwave in *Transformers Prime* for Hasbro Studios.

He’s the voice of Gorilla Grodd on the CW Network dramas *Legends of Tomorrow* and *The Flash*, Drax on Marvel’s *Guardians of the Galaxy* animated series, Lobo in the animated DC Universe, and Upgrade and Vin Ethanol on the Cartoon Network series *Ben 10*.

David studied acting with Sanford Meisner and Richard Pinter at the Neighborhood Playhouse in New York.

## ABOUT THE FILMMAKERS

**TRAVIS KNIGHT (Director)** is founder and CEO of Laika, the award-winning feature film animation studio located in Hillsboro, Oregon. Under his leadership, Laika has garnered worldwide distinction for its melding of the age-old craft of stop-motion animation with the most cutting-edge cinematic advances and manufacturing techniques. *Fast Company* named Laika one of the world's "Top Ten Most Innovative Companies in Entertainment."

As a producer, Knight received an Academy Award nomination for *The Boxtrolls*. Knight also produced *Kubo and the Two Strings* (2016), which marked his directorial debut. The film won a BAFTA Award and was nominated for Oscars® in the Best Animated Feature Film and Best Visual Effects categories. It won three Annie Awards and a National Board of Review Award and was nominated for PGA, Golden Globe and Critics' Choice awards.

Knight served as lead animator on Laika's first motion picture, *Coraline*, and was producer and lead animator on both *The Boxtrolls* and *ParaNorman*. All four of Laika's features have been nominated for the Academy Award as well as BAFTA and PGA awards. *Coraline* and *The Boxtrolls* were also nominated for Golden Globe awards and *ParaNorman* was cited as Best Animated Feature by 14 critics' groups, more than any other animated feature in 2012. Knight was honored with the Annie Award, the animation industry's highest honor, for his character animation work on *ParaNorman*. He was named a "Rising Star of Animation" by *Animation* magazine in 2007.

Knight began his career in animation in the late 1990s working at Oregon's renowned Vinton Studios. His tenure included the Emmy-winning stop-motion animated television series "The PJs," as well as numerous national commercial campaigns.

In 2012 Knight became the inaugural recipient of the Simon Benson Award for Alumni Achievement, bestowed by his alma mater Portland State University. He sits on the board of directors for Laika and Nike.

**LORENZO DI BONAVENTURA (Producer)** is founder and CEO of di Bonaventura Pictures.

In February 1989, di Bonaventura joined Warner Brothers as Vice President of Production. While at Warner Brothers, he was involved in over 130 productions and eventually became President of Worldwide Production. Amongst his biggest commercial and critical successes were: *Falling Down* (1993), *A Time to Kill* (1996), *The Matrix* (1999), *Analyze This* (2000), *The*

*Perfect Storm* (2000), *Ocean's Eleven* (2001), *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone* (2001) and *Training Day* (2001).

In 2002 he left Warner Brothers and started di Bonaventura Pictures, based at Paramount Pictures. Since then he has produced over 30 movies and may be best known for the *Transformers*, *GI Joe* and *Red* franchises. Other films he's produced include *Shooter* directed by Antoine Fuqua and starring Mark Wahlberg (2007); the psychological horror *1408* (2007), based on the short story by Stephen King; the espionage thriller *Salt* (2010) for Sony Pictures, starring Angelina Jolie; *Deepwater Horizon* (2016) directed by Peter Berg and starring Mark Wahlberg, Kurt Russell, Kate Hudson and Dylan O'Brien; *American Assassin* (2017), the film adaptation of Vince Flynn's best-selling political thriller, starring Dylan O'Brien and Michael Keaton and the recent global box-office hit *The Meg* (2018) starring Jason Statham and Li Bingbing for Warner Bros. Upcoming releases include the film adaption of Stephen King's seminal novel *Pet Sematary* (2019) and *Replicas* (2019) starring Keanu Reeves. Films in development include a Sammy Davis Jnr biopic and GI Joe spin-off *Snake Eyes*, both for Paramount Pictures.

In 2011, the company branched into television production with the formation of di Bonaventura Pictures Television, which produced *The Real O'Neals* and *Shooter*. Upcoming TV productions include the adaptation of Mark Millars' graphic novel, *Jupiters Legacy* with Netflix.

di Bonaventura received his undergraduate degree in Intellectual History at Harvard College and his Master of Business Administration at the University of Pennsylvania's Wharton School of Business. He was awarded the Golden Eye Career Achievement Award by the Zurich Film Festival in 2016.

**DON MURPHY (Producer)** is a film producer from Long Island, New York. After graduating from Georgetown's Business School, he moved to Los Angeles and earned his Masters in Film at USC. He produced his first film, *Natural Born Killers*, from a screenplay by Quentin Tarantino and directed by Oliver Stone. Since then, he continues to produce films he would want to see, including *League of Extraordinary Gentlemen*, *From Hell*, *Shoot 'Em Up*, *Real Steel* and the *Transformers* films as well as the upcoming Ang Lee film *Gemini Man* (also for Paramount) which took a whopping 21 years to get to the big screen.

**MICHAEL BAY (Producer)** is currently at work in Italy on his newest project, *6 Underground*, starring Ryan Reynolds, Mélanie Laurent and Corey Hawkins. The film is based on an

original idea from writers Rhett Reese and Paul Wernick, best known for their work on the irreverent *Deadpool* films.

Bay became a professional director at age 23. By 25 he was recognized as one of the world's major commercial directors. He went on to win the Cannes Lions Grand Prix for Best Commercial for his "Got Milk?" Aaron Burr spot, which has been recognized as one of the best commercials of all time. Several of his commercials are housed in the permanent collection of MOMA (the Museum of Modern Art) in New York.

From there Bay became the feature film director who jump-started Will Smith's film career as an action hero with *Bad Boys*. Next, he helmed the memorable action film *The Rock*, starring Sean Connery, Nicolas Cage and Ed Harris. His career and Bay Films production company continued with blockbuster after blockbuster, including *Armageddon*, *Pearl Harbor*, *Bad Boys 2* and five *Transformers* films. Bay is currently the second-highest-grossing film director in the U.S., behind one of his mentors, Steven Spielberg, and the third-most successful director in the global market.

In the past several years Bay has branched beyond the mainstream into smaller, more artistically driven films like the dark comedy *Pain & Gain*, starring Mark Wahlberg and Dwayne Johnson, and *13 Hours: The Secret Soldiers of Benghazi*, a true story chronicling the heroic rescue mission that saved 36 Americans during the 2012 attack on the U.S. consulate in Benghazi, Libya.

In 2014 *The Hollywood Reporter* named Bay and his two partners in Platinum Dunes "Producers of the Year." The company boasts an extremely successful track record with films of all genres, from smaller horror movies like *Texas Chainsaw Massacre*, *The Amityville Horror* and *Nightmare on Elm Street*, which helped break new actors and directors, to such franchise features as *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles*, *The Purge* and *Ouija*. Overall, Bay's films as director and producer total more than \$8.9 billion in global box-office receipts. The company's latest film, *The First Purge*, directed by Gerard McMurray and starring Y'lan Noel and Lex Scott Davis, grossed more than \$136 million. Another recent release, *A Quiet Place*, directed by and starring John Krasinski, opened to rave reviews and earned more than \$338 million around the world.

For television, Platinum Dunes has produced two critically praised series: "Black Sails," for Starz, and "The Last Ship," for TNT. Their third foray into the market is "Jack Ryan," a TV take on novelist Tom Clancy's CIA hero that stars Krasinski in the title role.

In 2015 Bay helped to launch yet another company, 451 Media Group, which focuses on developing, producing and marketing technology, art and merchandise based on graphic novels or new content.

**MARK VAHRADIAN (Producer)** most recently executive produced *Transformers: The Last Knight*. He also produced *Deepwater Horizon*, *Jack Ryan: Shadow Recruit*, *Man on a Ledge* and *Red and Red*. He has executive produced the entire *Transformers* film franchise, which has grossed a combined total of \$4.3 billion worldwide. Vahradian is actively developing new installments. His other producing credits include *Annapolis*, *Nancy Drew* and the reboot of Stephen King's horror classic *Pet Sematary*.

Vahradian was born in Mission Viejo, California. He is a graduate of Duke University and the UCLA School of Law. He spent nine years as a senior film executive at the Walt Disney Company, where he helped bring to the big screen such films as *Flight Plan*, *Miracle*, *Remember the Titans*, *Gone in 60 Seconds*, *Con Air*, *Pearl Harbor* and *Enemy of the State*. Thereafter, Vahradian spent three years as president of Jerry Weintraub Productions. He is currently president of production for di Bonaventura Pictures.

**STEVEN SPIELBERG (Executive Producer)** is one of the industry's most successful and influential filmmakers and chairman of Amblin Partners. Formed in 2015, the content-creation company works in partnership with Participant Media, Reliance Entertainment, Entertainment One, Alibaba Pictures and Universal Pictures. Spielberg has directed, produced or executive produced some of the top-grossing films of all time, including *Jurassic Park*, *E.T. The Extra-Terrestrial*, *Raiders of the Lost Ark* and *Jaws*. He has also served as an executive producer on a number of the world's most successful film franchises, including *Back to the Future* and *Transformers*.

Among his myriad honors, Spielberg is a three-time Academy Award winner who received Oscars for Best Director and Best Picture for *Schindler's List*, and a third (Best Director) for *Saving Private Ryan*. Spielberg is a recipient of the DGA's Lifetime Achievement Award, the American Film Institute's Lifetime Achievement Award, the prestigious Irving G. Thalberg Award from the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, and a Kennedy Center Honor.

In 2012 Spielberg directed Daniel Day-Lewis in *Lincoln*, based in part on Doris Kearns Goodwin's book *Team of Rivals*, with a screenplay by Tony Kushner. The film earned over \$250 million worldwide, garnered 12 Academy Award nominations and won Oscars for Best Actor and Best Production Design.

Spielberg's 2015 dramatic thriller *Bridge of Spies*, starring Tom Hanks, received six Oscar nominations including Best Picture. That same year, he was also an executive producer on Colin

Trevorrow's *Jurassic World*, which earned over \$1.6 billion worldwide. A follow-up, *Jurassic World: Fallen Kingdom*, was released in June 2018 to global box-office success.

Spielberg directed and produced the 2017 drama *The Post*, starring Meryl Streep and Tom Hanks. The film earned a Best Picture nomination and Streep's 21<sup>st</sup> nomination for Best Actress. He most recently released *Ready Player One*, based on the popular science-fiction novel by Ernest Cline, which opened to critical acclaim and box-office returns.

Apart from his filmmaking work, Spielberg has devoted his time and resources to many philanthropic causes. Using all profits from *Schindler's List*, he established the Righteous Persons Foundation. Spielberg also founded the Survivors of the Shoah Visual History Foundation, which in 2006 became the USC Shoah Foundation: The Institute for Visual History and Education. Dedicated to making people's testimonies a compelling voice for education and action, the Institute has recorded more than 53,000 interviews with survivors and witnesses of the Holocaust and other genocides. Additionally, Spielberg is the chairman emeritus of the Starlight Children's Foundation.

**BRIAN GOLDNER (Executive Producer)** is chairman and CEO of Hasbro Inc., where he is responsible for bringing the company's iconic brands to life across its strategic Brand Blueprint, through toy and game innovation, immersive entertainment experiences, digital gaming and consumer products.

Since joining Hasbro in 2000 and taking on the role of CEO in 2008, Goldner has been instrumental in transforming Hasbro from a traditional toy and game company to a global play and entertainment leader. Hasbro brands are stronger, more inclusive and more pervasive than ever before. Goldner pioneered Hasbro's entry into entertainment and oversees the company's omni-channel storytelling, orchestrating major deals with Paramount, Universal and Lionsgate to create motion pictures based on some of the company's best-known brands. He serves as an executive producer on many of these films, including the box-office powerhouse *Transformers* franchise, the 2017 animated feature *My Little Pony: The Movie* and the successful *G.I. Joe* and *Ouija* movies. Since 2007 films based on Hasbro's brands have earned more than \$5.6 billion in global box-office revenues.

During his tenure Goldner has been strategically expanding Hasbro's capabilities around the Brand Blueprint, a strategy that in 2016 helped Hasbro pass the \$5 billion revenue mark for the first time in company history. In 2016 he led the acquisition of Boulder Media, a leading animation studio

in Ireland, and also oversaw the purchase of Backflip Studios, a mobile gaming company based in Colorado.

Goldner is actively involved in driving corporate and community initiatives to fulfill Hasbro's mission to make the world a better place for children and their families. Hasbro ranked No. 5 on *CR* magazine's "100 Best Corporate Citizens" list for 2018 and was recognized as one of the 2018 "World's Most Ethical Companies" by the Ethisphere Institute, a global leader in defining and advancing the standards of ethical business practices.

Prior to assuming his role as CEO, Goldner served in a number of leadership positions, most recently as chief operating officer from 2006-2008. Before joining Hasbro he held several senior management positions including executive vice president and chief operating officer of Bandai America, worldwide director in charge of the L.A. office of J. Walter Thompson, and vice president and account director in the Chicago office of Leo Burnett Advertising.

In addition to being a member of Hasbro's board of directors, to which he was elected in 2008, Goldner serves on the board of directors for Gap Inc. and is a member of the Producers Guild of America. He is a graduate of Dartmouth College and the Executive Education Program at the Amos Tuck School.

**CHRIS BRIGHAM (Executive Producer)** is a respected veteran in the entertainment industry who has served as an executive producer on some of the most popular and critically acclaimed motion pictures made in the last two decades. He executive produced Ben Affleck's moody period piece *Live by Night*, featuring an all-star cast including Affleck, Sienna Miller, Zoe Saldana and Brendan Gleeson, along with the highly acclaimed international hit drama *Argo*, starring Affleck, Bryan Cranston and Alan Arkin. The film won three Oscars including Best Picture as well as a Golden Globe for Best Motion Picture: Drama and Best Director, a BAFTA Award for Best Picture, the DGA Award for Best Director, the WGA Award for Best Adapted Screenplay, an AFI Award for Movie of the Year and numerous international awards.

Brigham's other credits as executive producer include *By the Sea*, directed by Angelina Jolie and starring Jolie and Brad Pitt; Darren Aronofsky's *Noah*, starring Russell Crowe; Christopher Nolan's *Inception*, starring Leonardo DiCaprio; Martin Scorsese's *Shutter Island* and *The Aviator*, both starring DiCaprio; Rob Cohen's *The Mummy: Tomb of the Dragon Emperor*, with Jet Li; Robert De Niro's *The Good Shepherd*, starring Matt Damon and Jolie; Harold Ramis' hit comedy *Analyze This* and sequel *Analyze That*, both starring De Niro and Billy Crystal; Kevin Reynolds' *The Count of Monte*

*Cristo*, with Jim Caviezel; and Robert Redford's *The Legend of Bagger Vance*, starring Matt Damon and Will Smith.

In addition, Brigham co-produced Michael Apted's *Extreme Measures*, starring Hugh Grant and Gene Hackman, and Barbet Schroeder's *Before and After*, with Meryl Streep. His credits as unit production manager include Schroeder's *Kiss of Death*, starring Samuel L. Jackson and David Caruso; Fred Schepisi's *Six Degrees of Separation*, with Will Smith; Neil Jordan's *Interview With the Vampire*, starring Brad Pitt and Tom Cruise; and George Miller's *Lorenzo's Oil*, with Nick Nolte and Susan Sarandon.

**CHRISTINA HODSON (Written By)** transitioned from development executive to screenwriter in 2012. Her first three spec scripts featured on the Black List three years in a row. One of these was the female-driven sci-fi action script, *The Eden Project*, which sold in a bidding war to Sony. In 2015, she was hired to write *The Fugitive* reboot for Warner Bros. Her screenplay for the *Transformers* spinoff, *Bumblebee*, went into production in 2017 with Travis Knight directing. The film stars Hailee Steinfeld and is set for release in December 2018.

In the DC Extended Universe at Warner Bros, Christina has written *Birds of Prey* with Margot Robbie producing and starring, and Cathy Yan set to direct. It was recently announced that she will also be writing the upcoming *Batgirl* movie. Most recently she has been working with Steven Spielberg on an original project at Amblin/Dreamworks.

**J.J. HOOK (Co-Producer, Supervising Location Manager)** is recognized as one of a small group of professionals who tackle complicated action movies such as the *Transformers* franchise, *The Dark Knight Rises*, *Inception*, *Hancock* and *Spiderman 3*. He also acted as the location manager on Ben Affleck's Prohibition-era period piece *Live by Night*, which earned him a 2017 nomination at the Location Guild Managers International Awards. Hook has begun a strategic move into producing while continuing to oversee the locations department. Most recently he was an associate producer on *Transformers: The Last Knight* and *Whiskey Tango Foxtrot*. Hook is currently working on director Michael Bay's newest project, *6 Underground*, for Netflix and Skydance. The film stars Ryan Reynolds and Mélanie Laurent.

Hook got his first taste of the film industry back in 1996 on the film *Swept From the Sea*, as the project filmed on location near his hometown in rural Southwest England. Bitten by the movie bug, he relocated to London in 1997 and became a location assistant, quickly working his way

through the ranks to become a unit manager and then location manager on features such as *The Mummy Returns*, *Love Actually*, *Johnny English* and *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban*, in addition to HBO's "Band of Brothers."

In 2000 Hook expanded his horizons and became a location specialist in Morocco, where he filmed throughout the country for almost three years. While working on *Spy Game*, *Blackhawk Down*, *Alexander* and *Kingdom of Heaven*, he modified the way in which local business organizations managed logistics with international film companies, revolutionizing aspects of filming on location. Hook then relocated to Los Angeles and by the end of 2005 had established himself as one of the premier location managers in Hollywood, earning two State Awards for his work on *Mission Impossible III*.

Hook resides in Los Angeles with his wife and daughters.

**ENRIQUE CHEDIAK (Director of Photography)** is best known for his striking visuals on *The Maze Runner*, the popular film adaptation of the bestselling YA novel. Starring Dylan O'Brien and directed by Wes Ball, the film earned over \$348 million in 2014. Chediak also lensed Michael Cuesta's *American Assassin*, starring O'Brien and Michael Keaton; Peter Berg's *Deepwater Horizon*, starring Mark Wahlberg and Kurt Russell; and Dean Parisot's *Red 2*, with Bruce Willis, Helen Mirren and John Malkovich. His other more recent films include *The 5<sup>th</sup> Wave*, starring Chloë Grace Moretz, and *Caesar Chavez*, with Michael Peña in the title role. Next up is Disney's live-action adaptation of the animated feature *The Lady and the Tramp*.

Chediak's other film credits include *Europa Report*, *Rage*, *Cronicas*, *Charlie St. Cloud*, *Repo Men*, *The Assailant*, *The Flock*, *28 Weeks Later*, *Turistas*, *Lies & Alibis*, *Down in the Valley*, *A Home at the End of the World*, *Brown Sugar*, *The Good Girl*, *The Safety of Objects*, *3 A.M.*, *Boiler Room*, *Songcatcher*, *The Faculty*, *Desert Blue*, *Frogs for Snakes*, *American Southern* and the made-for-television movies "Undeclared" and "Remembering Sex."

Chediak was born in Quito, Ecuador. He studied communications in Chile and photography in Madrid before switching to film at New York University from 1992 to 1996. In 2010 Chediak collaborated with the British cinematographer Anthony Dod Mantle on Danny Boyle's *127 Hours*, based on the harrowing true story of outdoorsman Aron Ralston. The film earned several Best Cinematography nominations including a BAFTA bid.

**SEAN HAWORTH (Production Designer)** is the son of Academy Award winning Production Designer Edward “Ted” Haworth and Anna Wakhévitch, daughter of French theatre and film Production Designer George Wakhévitch,

Born in Los Angeles, he was raised in Southern France until moving back to Los Angeles to pursue working in film, Sean got the proverbial “foot in the door” in 1982 as an art assistant on *Batteries Not Included*. After a few years assisting in the art department he progressed from Set Designer on to an Assistant Art Director position under accomplished Production Designers Dean Tavoularis and Bo Welch, eventually getting the opportunity of working as an Art Director on Tim Burton’s *Planet of the Apes* for Designer Rick Heinricks. Between 2000 and 2010, he has contributed as Art Director on projects such as *Avatar*, *Transformers 1&2* and *Tron Legacy*. To date, he has been involved in the Art Department on over 50 feature films.

In 2011 he transitioned to Production Design on *The Thing*, a prequel to John Carpenter’s classic 1982 horror film. More recently, Sean has worked on projects like *Ender’s Game*, *Goosebumps* and *Deadpool*.

He is currently finishing a film adaptation of the classic video game *Sonic the Hedgehog* for Paramount Pictures.

**PAUL RUBELL, A.C.E. (Editor)** has been nominated for two Academy Awards for editing films directed by Michael Mann. In 2000 he shared his nomination with William Goldenberg and David Rosenbloom for *The Insider*, which also received BAFTA and A.C.E. nominations. Five years later Rubell and Jim Miller earned nominations for the Tom Cruise thriller *Collateral*. A favorite of the filmmaker, he again collaborated with Mann on *Miami Vice*, the big-screen version of his popular 1980s TV series, and gangster epic *Public Enemies*. Rubell has also maintained an ongoing relationship with director Michael Bay, collaborating on *Transformers: Age of Extinction*, *Transformers: Revenge of the Fallen*, *Transformers* and *The Island*.

Most recently, Rubell edited the hugely popular *The Fate of the Furious*, starring Vin Diesel, Jason Statham, Charlize Theron, Dwayne Johnson, Michelle Rodriguez, Tyrese Gibson and Ludacris. He also edited *Seventh Son*, starring Jeff Bridges, Julianne Moore and Ben Barnes, and the sci-fi thriller *The 5<sup>th</sup> Wave*, starring Chloë Grace Moretz and Liev Schreiber.

The editor’s other film credits include *Need for Speed*, *Battleship*, *The Avengers*, *Thor*, *Hancock*, *Peter Pan*, *The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen*, *XXX*, *Simone*, *The Cell*, *Blade*, *The Island of Dr. Moreau*, *Ruby Cairo*, *The Stone Boy* and *The Final Terror*.

Rubell also has an extensive list of television credits, including two Emmy nominations for TNT's Civil War epic "Andersonville" and the drama "My Name Is Bill W." He holds a bachelor's degree in English literature from the University of California, Los Angeles.

**DAYNA PINK (Costume Designer)** has been creating images and characters with clothing for years now. After dressing and designing pieces for musicians such as Marilyn Manson, U2 and Queens of the Stone Age, Pink went on to design films beginning with *Tenacious D in the Pick of Destiny*. She has since created looks on both modern and period movies ranging from *Hot Tub Time Machine* and *Concussion* to *Crazy, Stupid, Love* and *Focus*. She is as comfortable building an entire army from the '80s as she is making a dress for Margot Robbie. Pink has also established herself as a force in men's tailored dressing for characters played by Will Smith, Ryan Gosling, Steve Carell, Dwayne Johnson and Zac Efron.

Most recently, Pink re-created the iconic red bathing suit for the *Baywatch* film adaptation. She is currently designing the HBO pilot "Lovecraft Country," based on the bestselling novel by Matt Ruff. The dramatic thriller, which takes place in 1955, stars Courtney B. Vance, Jonathan Majors, Jurnee Smollett-Bell, Elizabeth Debicki and Aunjanue Ellis.

**RON AMES (Visual Effects Producer)** is a graduate of UCLA's School of Theater, Film, and Television. He began his career working as a theater director in Los Angeles after studying acting and directing with Lee Strasberg. Ron continued his studies at the Beverly Hills Playhouse in the Masters Class with Milton Katselas.

Ron began working in commercial production as a producer/assistant director. He produced and A.D.'d for many directors including Rocky Morton, Jim Gartner, Stu Hagmann and Erich Joiner. He first became involved in visual effects while working in commercials at Robert Abel and Associates.

Ron eventually started directing commercials and was a founding director at Crash Films. He also worked with Five Union Square in New York. He directed episodic television for the USA Network and for Universal Television.

In 2003, VFX Supervisor, Rob Legato enlisted Ron to assistant direct and produce the Visual Effects unit of Martin Scorsese's, *The Aviator*. Since then, Ron has worked as a VFX producer, associate producer, post production supervisor, and first assistant director for special units. His credits include Robert De Niro's, *The Good Shepherd*, Martin Scorsese's, *The Departed*,

Shine A Light and Shutter Island. Ron was the producer of the Avatar prototype team for James Cameron and Jon Landau. He also produced the visual effects and post production on Errol Morris', Standard Operating Procedure.

Ron was the associate producer/VFX producer for Shawn Levy's Real Steel, and J.J. Abram's Star Trek Into Darkness, both were nominated for Academy Awards for Best Visual Effects. Ron won the Visual Effects Society award for producing the best supporting visual effects for his work on "The Aviator". Ron has also won numerous national and international awards for commercials. He is an active member of the DGA, PGA, and VES.

Ron continued to work with Bad Robot and was the associate producer/VFX producer on Justin Lin's, Star Trek Beyond. He also produced Joss Whedon's, Avengers Age of Ultron for Marvel Films.

**JASON SMITH (Visual Effects Supervisor)** is a visual effects supervisor at Industrial Light & Magic who is responsible for overseeing digital effects for feature films, with an emphasis on digital creatures. Some of his notable projects include *The Revenant*, *The Avengers*, *Rango*, *Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Man's Chest* and *Transformers*. He is also a member of ILM's technology advisory group.

In 2012 Smith was ILM's associate visual effects supervisor on Marvel's superhero blockbuster *The Avengers*. The film went on to gross more than a billion dollars worldwide, and his character work on The Hulk was nominated for a Visual Effects Society Award. In 2015 Smith's work on Alejandro González Iñárritu's *The Revenant* garnered him an Academy Award nomination for Best Visual Effects and a Visual Effects Society Award. Smith's other credits include the groundbreaking film *Warcraft*.

Smith joined ILM in 2001 as a technical assistant and became a creature technical director in 2003. He is a graduate of Brigham Young University, where he studied computer science and visual arts. While earning his degree, he practiced traditional sculpture and prosthetic makeup effects, producing creature makeup effects for university productions.

Smith is one of the creators of BlockParty, ILM's procedural rigging system, for which he was awarded a Technical Achievement Award in 2018 by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences. Smith also invented ILM's TFM process, which was used to accomplish the robot transformations in *Transformers*.

**DARIO MARIANELLI (Composer)** won the Oscar, Golden Globe, Ivor Novello Award and World Soundtrack Award for his work on Joe Wright's acclaimed drama *Atonement*, in addition to a host of nominations. He has composed the scores for two of Travis Knight/Laika's Oscar-nominated films: *Kubo and the Two Strings* and *The Boxtrolls*, the latter of which earned him a 2015 Ivor Novello Award bid.

Marianelli's 2012 collaboration with Joe Wright on *Anna Karenina* earned him Academy Award, BAFTA and Golden Globe nominations for Best Original Score, and his score won the Ivor Novello Award. In 2006 Marianelli was nominated for an Oscar for Best Original Score for his music to Wright's *Pride & Prejudice*. This score won him the Classical Brit Award in the Soundtrack/Musical Theatre Composer of the Year category and also netted another Ivor Novello nomination.

The composer's other film scores include *Darkest Hour*, *Paddington 2*, *Everest*, *Jane Eyre*, *Salmon Fishing in the Yemen*, *Eat Pray Love*, *The Soloist*, *Agora*, *Atonement* and *V for Vendetta*.

Marianelli was recently commissioned by the Royal Opera House to compose a new ballet, "The Unknown Soldier." He has written orchestral music for the Queensland Symphony Orchestra, BBC Symphony Orchestra, London Philharmonic Orchestra, London Symphony Orchestra and the Britten-Pears Orchestra, as well as vocal music for the BBC Singers, incidental music for the Royal Shakespeare Company and several ballet scores.

Marianelli was born in Pisa, Italy, and studied piano and composition in Florence and London. After a year as a postgraduate composer at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, he spent three years at the National Film and Television School before graduating in 1997.

**DENISE CHAMIAN (Casting)**, a Los Angeles native, began her career in the entertainment industry at a boutique agency. It wasn't until she started working for luminary casting directors Janet Hirshenson and Jane Jenkins that she found her true calling. From there she went on to start her own company and has worked with such distinguished directors as Steven Spielberg, Stanley Kubrick, Tony Scott, William Friedkin, Tim Burton, Francis Lawrence, Gabriele Muccino, Michael Bay, and Gore Verbinski among many others.

Her resume includes movies as diverse as "Saving Private Ryan", "Pirates of the Caribbean", "Love, Simon", "Minority Report" and "Big Fish". Current projects include the Paramount Pictures feature film "Top Gun: Maverick" from director Joseph Kosinski, the Fox feature film "Call of the Wild" from director Chris Sanders, the Netflix feature film "The Highwaymen" from director John

Lee Hancock, as well as the new Apple series “See” and new Netflix series “Daybreak” and “Jupiter’s Legacy”.

She is on the Board of Councilors for the University of Southern California's School of Dramatic Arts and is an advisor and fundraiser for The Felix Organization, which provides inspiring opportunities and new experiences to enrich the lives of children who are growing up in the foster care system.

**MIKE GUNTHER (Stunt Coordinator, Second Unit Director)** has a unique array of talents as a writer, director and innovative action expert, which enables him to create, capture and deliver the kind of action films that audiences pack theaters to see. A driving force behind some of Hollywood’s top blockbusters, he has helped bring in over \$3 billion in box-office receipts. In 2010 he formed 5150 Action, a production company that helps to deliver the most exciting action films possible.

Gunther’s action-movie career began as one of the industry’s elite stunt performers and coordinators. Through his creative talent and vision, he ended up working behind the camera as a writer, director and producer. With 5150 Action, Gunther is able to fuse all elements of his filmmaking skills to continually redefine the realm of possibility and generate his distinctive brand of cinematic action.

**ANNE KULJIAN (Set Decorator)** has worked with director Steven Spielberg on films such as *War of the Worlds*, *The Terminal* and *Minority Report*. She is currently at work in New Zealand on a live-action adaptation of Disney’s hugely popular *Mulan* for director Niki Caro (*The Zookeeper’s Wife*, *Whale Rider*). The film, which is set for release in 2020, stars Yifei Liu in the title role, along with Donnie Yen, Li Gong and Jet Li.

Kuljian is a native Angeleno who has not stopped working since she started her artistic career in Hollywood over two decades ago. Nominated for an Academy Award for her work on James Cameron’s ground-breaking sci-fi film *The Abyss*, she continues to be one of the most sought-after set decorators in the business. Most recently her work can be seen in Dean Devlin’s *Geostorm*, starring Gerard Butler and Abbie Cornish, and Bryan Singer’s *X-Men: Apocalypse*, starring James McAvoy, Michael Fassbender and Jennifer Lawrence. Kuljian also decorated the sets of the ambitious major motion pictures *Divergent*, *Man of Steel* and *Green Lantern*.

Kuljian's other credits include *The Mummy: Tomb of the Dragon Emperor*, *Mr. Brooks*, *Cat in the Hat*, *Equilibrium*, *Remember the Titans*, *Bicentennial Man*, *Sphere*, *Basic Instinct*, *What About Bob?* and *Flatliners*.

**ERIK AADAHN (Supervising Sound Editor)** was raised in the San Francisco Bay Area, and now lives and works in Los Angeles. He began his career as a freelance sound effects editor at 20th Century Fox on films such as *X-Men 2*. While sound designing *I, Robot* and *Superman Returns*, he taught sound at USC's School of Cinematic Arts, and later worked as supervising sound editor of *Valkyrie* and Terrence Malick's *The Tree Of Life*.

In 2006, he partnered with Ethan Van der Ryn on the first of five *Transformers* films, followed by *Kung Fu Panda*, *World War Z* and *Godzilla*. He received Oscar® nominations for sound editing *Transformers: Dark Of The Moon* and Academy Award® Best Picture winner *Argo*. Aadahl believes strongly that sound is half the cinematic experience, and *A Quiet Place* is the perfect example of that belief.

**ETHAN VAN DER RYN (Supervising Sound Editor)** started his career at Skywalker Sound. A signature experience early in his career was working on *Terminator 2*, on which he made the jump to sound effects editor and which went on to win the Academy Award® for Sound Editing. Over the next few years he continued to hone his sonic chops and learn the importance of silence within action by working as a sound effects editor or sound designer on many films including *Titanic*, *Saving Private Ryan* and *Pearl Harbor* all of which went on to win the Academy Award® for Sound Editing.

Van der Ryn then moved to New Zealand for four years where he worked as a supervising sound editor and sound designer on *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy and *King Kong*. He won the Academy Award® for both *The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers* and *King Kong*.

The next chapter of his career unfolded in Los Angeles where he teamed up with Erik Aadahl and they formed their sound design/editing company e2 (E Squared). Through e2, they have been lucky enough to work on and be recognized with two additional Oscar® nominations for a wide variety of sound-intensive films including the *Transformers* films, the *Kung Fu Panda* films, *Argo*, *Godzilla* and most recently *A Quiet Place*.

**SCOTT BENZA (Animation Supervisor)** is an animation director at Industrial Light & Magic, where he is responsible for many aspects of the development of CG characters and provides creative and technical direction to animators. Some of his most notable projects include *Pearl Harbor*, the *Transformers* franchise and *The Avengers*. In 2008 and 2011 he was part of the teams nominated for the Oscar for Best Achievement in Visual Effects for *Transformers* and *Transformers: Dark of the Moon*. In 2010 Benza and his colleagues were nominated for a VES Award for Best Visual Effects for *Transformers: Revenge of the Fallen*.

Most recently, Benza served as animation supervisor on Jordan Vogt-Roberts' *Kong: Skull Island*. His team was nominated for both an Academy Award and a VES Award for their work on the film.

Benza has also made key contributions to such films as *Terminator Genisys*, *Iron Man*, *Rush Hour 3*, *Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Man's Chest*, *Mission: Impossible III*, *The Island*, *Star Wars Episode III: Revenge of the Sith*, *Hulk* and *Wild Wild West*, among others.

Benza joined Industrial Light & Magic as an animator in 1997. Prior to his work at ILM, Benza worked as a senior animator for Microsoft. He holds a degree in commercial art with a minor in video production.

**RICK O'CONNOR (Animation Supervisor)** began his career at ILM with *Star Wars: Episode I: The Phantom Menace* and he has gone on to work on such films as *Jurassic Park III*, *War of the Worlds*, *Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Man's Chest*, *Star Trek* and Michael Bay's *Transformers* series. As an animation lead, O'Connor enjoys helping other animators reach their personal goals and also achieve the goals of each production. Most recently, O'Connor was the animation supervisor on John Krasinski's surprise hit *A Quiet Place*.

As a boy O'Connor was inspired by such films as *Star Wars* and *Raiders of the Lost Ark*, so he knew from an early age that he wanted to be a part of moviemaking magic as an animator. O'Connor graduated from Canada's Sheridan College, where he studied traditional animation for three years. His first job in the industry was for a company called Phoenix Animation Studios, where he began as a clean-up artist and was later promoted to character designer. After graduation, he was hired by Square USA, in Hawaii. It was there that he was first introduced to the computer as a tool for animation. He worked on early test phases for projects, tested rigs and helped create animatics that tested their production pipeline.

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