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A Stage 6 Films Presentation of an Inferno Production
In association with
Opperman Viner Chrystyn Entertainment
A Lasse Hallstrom Film
Starring Richard Gere and Joan Allen

HACHIKO: A DOG’S STORY


Running Time: 93 Minutes
MPAA Rating: (G)
SYNOPSIS

This heartwarming film is an American adaptation of a famous Japanese tale about a loyal Akita dog named Hachiko.

This special dog, nicknamed “Hachi,” accompanies his master Parker (Richard Gere), a university professor, to the train station every morning to see him off and then returns to the station each afternoon to greet him at the end of his day. The emotionally complex nature of what unfolds when their uncomplicated routine becomes interrupted is what makes Hachi’s story a tale for the ages; a dog’s faithful devotion to his master exposes the great power of love and how this simplest of acts can become the grandest gesture of all.

A TIME HONORED STORY

Since the early 1930’s the story of a loyal Akita dog named Hachiko from Tokyo has been a staple of Japanese folklore, so much so that three bronze statues of the dog stand throughout the country, one being the most famous meeting spot in Tokyo: the “Hachi Exit” at the Shibuya Train Station.

In the seven decades since Hachiko became a Japanese hero, the beloved story has been made into a Japanese blockbuster film, *Hachikō Monogatari* (1987), and been the subject of two children’s books: *Hachikō: The True Story of a Loyal Dog*, written by Pamela S. Turner and *Hachiko Waits* written by Lesléa Newman, both published in 2004. This timeless tale of commitment and friendship is now being introduced to American moviegoers as a major motion picture directed by Academy Award nominee, Lasse Hallström.

Hallström says of receiving the script from his old friend and *Hachiko* Producer, Richard Gere, “it was really a gift for me because it’s such a wonderful story and being the lover of dogs that I am, this was fantastic.”

Gere and Hallström are neighbors in upstate New York and since working together on *The Hoax* in 2006, had been wanting to do another film together. It
took Richard a while to warm up to the idea of doing a film in the family genre, but once he was sold, he knew Hallström was the director for this beautiful and mysterious dog story. Of Hallström, Gere says “Lasse’s kind of a Swedish Leprechaun. His wife and I laugh about him all the time because he is in total control of what is going on but we don’t ever know what he’s doing or how he’s doing it.” This simple film with its sublime message needed the type of magic only Hallström can perform.

There was unanimous agreement amongst the *Hachiko* cast and crew that Hallström is sort of a non-directing director, and a great guy. Jason Alexander plays Carl, the train station master who is regular witness to Hachiko’s life. His role as train station master could seem minor or almost insignificant but Hallström has a way of gently pulling each character out to fulfill its full importance. Alexander says, “Lasse trusts his actors. You’re just kind of chatting and doing things and then all of a sudden you find that you are part of this image in his head and it’s this beautiful way he has of being invisible. His method of getting the actor to the place he wants them to be is very quiet and gentle and almost feels as if nobody is pulling you in any particular direction, but he is there and you know it at the end of the day.” Gere adds, “Lasse will just start an idea, and the way he does it resonates, and you find yourself inhabiting something but it's coming from you, it's not coming from some direction from the outside.”

Hallström felt it was important to not get lost in the sappiness of the story of Hachiko, he says, “It’s a small story. But the real challenge of it is to not step into the sentimentality too deeply because there is this danger inherent in the story already. Richard tends to call it a fable, but I see it as a drama-comedy. This is what I am comfortable with. To me it is the most truthful way of describing the world, because it is all dramatic and then comedic, isn’t it?”

As Hallström points out, Gere may not entirely agree on the comedy aspect of the story; his agent pushed the script on him and when he finally read it, he couldn’t turn it down, saying, “It’s not a movie that one would expect that I would
be drawn to but when I read it I cried like a baby. And I said ‘Oh man, I’m gonna have to do this, aren’t I?’ So I read it again just to be sure and it still really moved me. I think there is something powerfully iconic and mysterious about this movie, and this story of a dog that waits. There is something in the makeup of our hearts that responds to that. That sense of loyalty, that sense of I’m always gonna be there for you. And it’s really, really powerful and deep stuff.”

Vicki Shigekuni Wong is the inspired producer behind the coming to be of Hachiko: A Dog’s Story. During her first visit to Japan in the mid 1980s, above the hustle and bustle of Tokyo’s Shibuya Train Station, Wong found inspiration in a bronze statue memorializing Japan’s most beloved canine, an Akita named Hachiko. Wong was so taken by the beauty of the statue and its story that she later named her own dog Hachiko. After her “Hachi” died, her sadness drove her to want to tell the story of this special dog. Wong convinced her friend, and veteran producer Paul Mason, to join her on the journey of making a film of the story of Hachiko. They found screenwriter Stephen Lindsey to re-tell the story and eventually landed Inferno Distribution and Bill Johnson to finance, produce, and help turn Wong’s dream into a reality.

Wong says at the first meeting about who to cast and specifically who would play Hachi’s devoted master, Parker, “the first name on everybody’s mind was Richard Gere. And not only did he want to star in it, but he wanted to co-produce it! We couldn’t have been more delighted because if there is anybody in the world that exemplifies integrity and compassion, it is Richard.”

Gere’s character oozes compassion for Hachiko from the very beginning of the story, much to the chagrin of his wife Cate, played by Joan Allen. Cate does not want Parker to keep the lost Akita puppy he brings home one night from the train station, but he can’t seem to shake him. Parker feels a connection, and he feels needed, and this is where his integrity comes into play. According to Gere, his character “Parker is the ‘given’ in this story. The relationship he has with the dog
is based on a very non-rational connection. That really interested me.” Parker is as loyal to Hachiko as the dog is to him.

Gere felt that capturing a sense of forgiveness, generosity and acceptance was vital to the tone of the film. He also wanted the film to expose the essence of small town and family relationships like, he said, “the way people know each other without commenting on it, not being in each other’s faces all of the time, but co-existing” like Parker and Hachi do.

One character in the film to which Gere is referring is Alexander’s character, Carl, the train station master. “Carl is part of this little ensemble, this little family of people whose lives are profoundly moved, along with Hachiko’s,” says Alexander. The other “family” members to whom he refers are Shabir, the hot dog and coffee cart vendor, played by Erick Avari, and Mary Anne, the book store owner, played by Davinia McFadden. These three characters are the daily witnesses to the growing bond between Parker and Hachi, and eventually become Hachi’s pseudo care-takers.

It is Carl who encourages Parker to take Hachiko home after Parker discovers the “lost” puppy staring (quite deliberately) up at him from the passenger platform of the train station after work one day. When Parker tries to turn the puppy in, Carl tells him that if he doesn’t take the puppy he will be left alone in the station all night only to be brought to the pound first thing the next morning. It is apparent that this puppy has “chosen” Parker and he cannot ignore the pull and leave the puppy behind.

According to Joan Allen, Gere’s personal values are not much different than the committed character he plays, saying “I see how deeply he cares about how this story is told and he has really wonderful insight into the nuances of the family. He is always looking for something that is a little bit deeper, a little bit unexpected. And he has incredible spontaneity and ease and charisma!”
Allen, who has been nominated for three Academy awards including Best actress, plays the dramatic foil in the film. Her character Cate is a historical preservationist whose daughter Andy (Sarah Roemer) is about to be married and Cate seems ready to enjoy a more carefree life with her husband. An obstacle is thrown in her plan when Parker unexpectedly brings home a puppy. At first she is not a fan of Hachi sticking around but she soon begins to accept, respect and appreciate her husband’s child-like bond with the dog.

Allen was a natural choice to play Cate, says Gere, “We needed someone for this piece who in a very simple story would bring enormous depth and resonance when it was needed, a real sense of gravitas, of power.” But Allen’s character and her actions are subtle, so she couldn’t be over-powering, “and Joan has this quality of being very light, kind of invisible. But it is in an invisible way of people who know each other well, how they co-exist in space. And then at the same time she can very quickly conjure a real depth that’s way beyond that kind of simplicity.”

Director Hallström agrees, “To work with Joan is a humbling experience. It is so wonderful to see an actress that is so precise in her work.”

Allen felt she and Gere had a very natural and believable husband and wife chemistry, saying “that is not always something you can predict or manufacture. It just kind of exists or it doesn’t.”

Cary -Hiroyuki Tagawa, who has starred in such films as The Last Emperor and Memoirs of a Geisha, plays Parker’s best friend and fellow University professor, Ken. An expert on Japanese culture, Ken is Parker’s “go to” for all things Japanese and all things Akita, explaining the mysteries of the dog’s nature. Being born and partially raised in Tokyo himself, Tagawa feels that Gere was the perfect choice for this role in an American adaptation of such a special Japanese story because of “his love for animals and nature, and especially because of his
connection to the Tibetan Buddhists and his quest for peace, these sorts of
tings are very important to the Japanese people.”

Gere felt similarly about the Akita dogs that play Hachiko, “These are not the kind
of dogs you can buy with treats, they either like you or they don’t. An Akita makes
a connection or it doesn’t.” Akitas are very discerning and particular dogs and as
Gere recalls, “the trainers were very apprehensive about me meeting the dogs
because these dogs make up their mind right away and if they don’t like you,
there is no going back. So you know, we spent a lot of time putting this movie
together and a lot was banking on this moment I met the dogs. I was almost
afraid to pet them.” But it all worked out and Gere was accepted into “the tribe.”

THE REAL STARS

“When people in the business of acting say ‘don’t work with dogs or children,’ it is
not because they are difficult to work with, it is because they steal the scene!”
says veteran Hollywood animal trainer, Boone Narr. Narr was on set nearly every
day with three beautiful Akitas he had gathered from around the county and
trained for over six months to play different stages of the adult Hachiko’s life.

Narr recalls Gere asking him what the hardest thing in the script was for the
animal trainers to accomplish and he replied “Richard, the hardest thing in this
movie is gonna be making that dog look like he belongs to you and not the trainer
standing behind the camera.” And from that day on Richard went out of his way
doing anything he could to help make that happen.

Narr felt Hachiko was better than any dog script he had read in years but knew
its success would rely heavily on the audience’s emotional connection to the dog.
And since everyone told him that he was going to pull his hair out trying to train
an Akita because they don’t listen and are very stubborn, he thought, “Okay,
that’s a challenge. I’m going to do it!” Unlike many dog movies this story did not
involve animal trickery so the real challenge for Narr’s team was making the dogs
act in a way that people would feel sorry for them. After months of stubbornness
Narr’s trainers broke through and realized that Akitas were some of the smartest dogs they had ever worked with - they delivered the emotion the film so desperately needed, and then some. “They are better than us, these dogs have been incredible,” said Gere.

Actress Sarah Roemer who plays Parker’s supportive daughter Andy says “the Akitas are very human, very patient and very calm. They are not as eager to please human beings as most dogs are. It’s incredible to watch them because they are very independent and smart and are kind of blowing all of us actors out of the water!”

Alexander says that Layla, one of the Akita’s who plays Hachiko, is supposedly the “Meryl Streep of the Akita world.” Alexander loves working with her because she “has this very expressive face. She is so gorgeous, so noble, and so elegant.”

Joan Allen adds “Akitas are very regal dogs. They are kind of listening to their own drummer and don’t care much about pleasing people. They are somewhat aloof but very gentle. As great as Richard is, the star of the film really is Hachi. These dogs are just very, very impressive.”

Akita’s are the only Japanese-bred dog, and Cary Tagawa supports that they are “very Japanese in that they are not overly affectionate, not overly expressive, but have a deep focus and intuition that I relate to because I am Japanese. Akitas, unlike most dogs, are very old souls.” Tagawa echoes his character Ken’s take on Akita’s serious personalities in a scene where he explains why Hachi won’t fetch to a frustrated Parker - he says it is because Akita’s do not please for the sake of pleasing, and if they are to fetch it will be for a reason more meaningful than a cookie or praise. Later in a poignant scene, Hachi performs an unexpected and uncharacteristic fetch - it is obvious that something is about to change.
Marisa Bellis was the American Humane Association’s (AHA) animal safety representative assigned to be on set at all times to oversee the treatment of the Shiba Inu puppies that played the young Hachi and the Akita dogs playing the adult Hachiko. Bellis says that animal safety and protection is only part of the reason for AHA’s presence and that audience perception plays a huge role in their purpose. “The general public will often watch a movie with animals and experience a scene that makes their ‘animal cruelty’ alarm go off. People get very worried about how the animals were treated which can ultimately ruin their experience of a film. So the AHA is on set to give the audience peace of mind.”

Every scene is documented with an explanation of how the trainers got the animals to do each thing and then posted on the website www.americanhumane.org. The AHA also issues a disclaimer on each film stating, “No Animals were harmed in the making of this film.”

The set of *Hachiko: A Dog’s Story* was extra animal friendly with much of the cast and crew showing up each day for work with their own canine companions, often wearing coats and sweaters. Much of the film was shot during the coldest months of winter in Rhode Island so the weather and freezing temps were a concern for the AHA, especially with the puppies. But Bellis says that AHA went over all the scripts in advance and set certain guidelines and provisions for the dogs’ comfort, especially the puppies because they tire easily, are vulnerable to the cold and need to be rotated regularly. “The little guys need a lot of rest, and people think we’re crazy but we just love them, so we take care of them. Wardrobe helped us out and made a little jacket with warmers inside, the same color as the puppies coat, so in the scenes where the Hachi puppy is in the satchel or wrapped in Richard’s arms, the audience may think the pup is freezing but what they don’t know is that I have made sure he’s really toasty because we don’t want any cold puppies on the set!”

Sarah Roemer validates Bellis’ perspective on people’s emotional attachment to animals on film or in stories when she tells of a time that she and her friend sobbed in unison while they were reading and discussing the script together. She
says “We were like ‘It’s a dog!’ And dogs are just so innocent and so pure and loyal and they have this perfect wholesome love, so the story becomes so much sadder. My friend said ‘your character could be getting beat up and abused in the script and I wouldn’t care as much, but it’s a dog!’ I felt the same way.”

THE MESSAGE, WHY IT’S IMPORTANT, AND WHO WOULD WAIT

Inferno Distribution chose to finance and produce Hachiko’s story because they are interested in making films that raise consciousness and saw the universal appeal of a story of a man and his faithful dog. Producer Bill Johnson says, “When I read the script, I immediately understood the power of the message it could project on a massive amount of people - of loyalty, commitment and unconditional love.” Working on a project with such universal meaning got the cast and crew pondering their personal connections to the story and how this special dog’s example touches their own lives.

Jason Alexander feels this film will go down in history with other classic animal pictures. He says, “Animals sacrifice for love, they possess certain nobility about them that is oftentimes lacking in their human counterparts. Hachiko’s story is important because it has a profound lesson but it doesn’t bang anyone over the head. It is a quiet little story with a lot of texture and is therefore sophisticated in its simplicity. This dog doesn’t have an extraordinary life. Parker doesn’t have an extraordinary life. This man took this dog and just gave it his heart, and the dog received it and returned it, it didn’t save his life or pull anybody from a burning car. There are no heroics here. There is no splash. There is no ‘big’ moment at all. It is just ‘I found you. I get you. And I give myself to you in a way that is real but not terribly flamboyant.’ Right now in my life, that gets me in a very profound way.”

Tagawa personally relates to Hachi’s dedication saying, “I proverbially wait at the train station for humanity. I am literally devoted to the planet waking up.” In a meaningful scene, Tagawa’s character, Ken, discovers the number eight (8)
engraved on the Akita puppy’s collar. Ken tells Parker that the Japanese word for eight is “hachi” and that in Japan, hachi (8) has a symbolic significance of connecting “the earthly and spiritual planes,” it translates as “reaching up to heaven and touching down to earth.” It is also the symbol for infinity, tracing an endless, flowing form where one sees no beginning and no end; this is what Hachiko’s devotion is like. There is something about this dog’s example of love that brings heaven down to earth.

Joan Allen said she just kind of “lost it” when she read the script, it touched her because she says “we live in a world where things are moving so quickly and the older we get, the faster time goes. And you rush around and try to squeeze it all in and there is just never enough time. You’ve always got to move on to the next thing. I really think that is this story’s great lesson: to take time, step back and really connect with people you care about. And that not everything is so disposable – we live in such a disposable society. This is a story about something that is long-lasting. This beautiful dog doesn’t give up on waiting for something that he loves. And that is a terrific lesson that anybody could take and apply to their own lives. Hachi is a gentle and loving teacher of loyalty and patience and

Richard Gere wraps it up nicely saying that Hachiko’s waiting, and what it means to him, is “beyond talking about. It is something you feel very deep in the core of your heart. This sense that there is no beginning, there is no end to this love, that the yearning we feel deepest inside of ourselves is something that fills the universe, and there is something about stories like this, this one in particular, that just touches on that universality in some delicate way that should be mysterious. It shouldn’t relate to description.”

The Real Story

In 1924, Hachikō was brought to Tokyo by his owner, Hidesamurō Ueno, a professor in the agriculture department at the University of Tokyo. During his
owner’s life, Hachikō saw him off from the front door and greeted him at the end of the day at the nearby Shibuya Station. The pair continued their daily routine until May 1925, when Uyeno didn't return on the usual train one evening. The professor had suffered a stroke at the university that day. He died and never returned to the train station where his friend was waiting.

Hachiko was given away after his master’s death, but he routinely escaped, showing up again and again at his old home. After time, Hachi apparently realized that Professor Uyeno no longer lived at the house. So he went to look for his master at the train station where he had accompanied him so many times before. Each day, Hachiko waited for Uyeno to return. And each day he didn't see his friend among the commuters at the station.

The permanent fixture at the train station that was Hachiko attracted the attention of other commuters. Many of the people who frequented the Shibuya train station had seen Hachi and Professor Uyeno together each day. Realizing that Hachiko waited in vigil for his dead master, their hearts were touched. They brought Hachiko treats and food to nourish him during his wait.

This continued for 10 years, with Hachikō appearing only in the evening time, precisely when the train was due at the station.

That same year, another of Ueno's former students (who had become something of an expert on Akitas) saw the dog at the station and followed him to the Kobayashi home where he learned the history of Hachikō's life. Shortly after this meeting, the former student published a documented census of Akitas in Japan. His research found only 30 purebred Akitas remaining, including Hachikō from Shibuya Station.

Ueno's former student returned frequently to visit the dog and over the years published several articles about Hachikō's remarkable loyalty. In 1932 one of these articles, published in Tokyo's largest newspaper, threw the dog into the national spotlight. Hachikō became a national sensation. His faithfulness to his
master's memory impressed the people of Japan as a spirit of family loyalty all should strive to achieve. Teachers and parents used Hachikō's vigil as an example for children to follow. A well-known Japanese artist rendered a sculpture of the dog, and throughout the country a new awareness of the Akita breed grew.

In April 1934, a bronze statue in his likeness was erected at Shibuya Station, and Hachikō himself was present at its unveiling (Hachikō died on March 8, 1935). The statue was recycled for the war effort during World War II. After the war, Hachikō was not forgotten. In 1948 The Society for Recreating the Hachikō Statue commissioned Takeshi Ando, son of the original artist who had since died, to make a second statue. The new statue, which was erected in August 1948, still stands and is an extremely popular meeting spot. The station entrance near this statue is named "Hachikō-guchi", meaning "The Hachikō Exit", and is one of Shibuya Station's five exits.

A similar statue stands in Hachikō's hometown, in front of Odate Station. In 2004, a new statue of Hachikō was erected on the original stone pedestal from Shibuya in front of the Akita Dog Museum in Odate.

The 1987 movie *Hachikō Monogatari* told the story of the dog's life from his birth up until his death and imagined spiritual reunion with his master, the Professor. Considered a blockbuster success, the film was the last big hit for Japanese film studio Shochiku Kinema Kenkyū-jo.

### ABOUT THE CAST

**Richard Gere (Parker, Producer)**

Humanitarian, actor, and Golden Globe winner, Richard Gere is known for his roles in such films as *Chicago, Unfaithful, An Officer and a Gentleman, Days of Heaven, American Gigolo, Pretty Woman,* and *Primal Fear.*
Gere recently finished filming Fox Searchlight’s *Amelia*, opposite Hilary Swank and Ewan McGregor. *Amelia* tells the story of Amelia Earhart and her tumultuous relationship with her husband/editor, George Putnam (played by Gere). He will next appear in *Brooklyn’s Finest* alongside Don Cheadle and Ethan Hawke. *Brooklyn’s Finest* chronicles the lives of three Brooklyn cops who find their worlds intersecting when they all arrive at the same fatal location.

His 2008 release, *Nights in Rodanthe*, is based on the best-selling novel by Nicholas Sparks and reunites him with Diane Lane. *Nights* tells the story of a man who, while on a journey to reconcile with his estranged son, checks into a North Carolina inn and begins a life-altering romance with a woman who is burdened with the decision of whether or not to stay in an unhappy marriage.

In the fall of 2007, Gere was seen in the critically acclaimed film *I’m Not There*; a film that provides a view into the life and songs of the legendary Bob Dylan as told through seven-characters. The all-star cast includes Cate Blanchett, Christian Bale, and the late Heath Ledger.

Additionally in 2007, Gere graced the screen in several other releases: First, he starred in Lasse Hallström's critically acclaimed film *The Hoax*, based on the true story of Clifford Irving (Gere) who sells his bogus biography of Howard Hughes to a premiere publishing house in the early 1970s. The film costars Alfred Molina and Marcia Gay Harden. Later he appeared in *The Hunting Party*, a film that tells the story of two journalists that head to post-war Bosnia on an unauthorized mission to locate the region's number one war criminal. Problems arise when their target mistakes them for a CIA hit squad and decides to bring the chase to them. The film costars Terrence Howard and Jesse Eisenberg.

Christmas of 2002 Gere sang and danced his way onto the big screen in the Academy Award winning film adaptation of *Chicago*, playing the infamous lawyer Billy Flynn. In January of 2003, Gere won his first Golden Globe Award as Best
Actor in a Musical or Comedy for his performance in *Chicago*. The Miramax musical all-star cast includes Catherine Zeta Jones as Velma and Renee Zellweger as Roxie Hart.

In 2004 Gere teamed up with, Susan Sarandon and Jennifer Lopez to in the romantic comedy, *Shall We Dance* and in 2005, Gere was seen in the well-respected film, *Bee Season*, based on the book by the same name.

In 2001 Gere was seen in the critically acclaimed Fox Searchlight dramatic thrilled *Unfaithful*, directed by Adrian Lyne. The film, which also stars Diane Lane and Olivier Martinez, centers on a couple living in the New York City suburbs whose marriage goes dangerously awry when the wife indulges in an adulterous fling. Earlier that year Gere was seen playing a reporter drawn to a small West Virginia town to investigate a series of strange events in Sony Picture’s psychological thriller *Mothman Prophecies* opposite Debra Messing.

Born in Philadelphia, Richard Gere showed his artist ability at a young age, by playing a number of instruments and writing music for high school productions. Gere won a gymnastics scholarship to the University of Massachusetts in Amherst, where he was a philosophy major. While at school, Gere caught the acting bug and left college after 2 years to pursue acting, landing the lead role of ‘Danny Zuko’ in the London production of the rock musical "Grease" in 1973. After spending full sessions with the Provincetown Playhouse and Seattle Repertory Theatre, he performed in a number of New York plays, notably the title role in Richard Farina: *Long Time Coming and Long Time Gone*, in addition to two plays by Sam Shepard, *Back Bog Beast Bait* and *Killers Head*.

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

Gere’s motion picture debut came in 1978 with Oscar-honored *Days of Heaven*, for which he received the Italian equivalent of the Academy Award. His subsequent films include *Looking for Mr. Goodbar* with Diane Keaton, *Blood Brothers*, John Schlesinger’s *Yanks*, and *American Gigolo*. His next film was the 1982 blockbuster *An Officer and a Gentleman*, followed by *Breathless, Beyond the Limit, The Cotton Club, Power, No Mercy*, and *Miles From Home*.

In 1990, Gere received Box-office acclaim for his portrayal of a corrupt cop in *Internal Affairs* and starred opposite of Julia Roberts in the year’s top-grossing picture, *Pretty Woman*. This movie captured the nation’s heart, and won the People’s Choice Award for Best Movie. The following year, he made a guest appearance in Japanese director Akira Kurosawa’s *Rhapsody in August*. Additional film credits include the MGM political thriller Red Corner, directed by Jon Avnet and Micael Caton-Jones remake of *The Jackal* for Universal Pictures.

Gere was also the first actor to agree to appear in *And The Band Played On*, the HBO adaptation of Randy Shilts book about the first five years of AIDS in America. Gere played the role of a fictional choreographer.

In 2000 Gere starred in the box-office hit *Runaway Bride*, for Paramount Pictures. In this romantic comedy, Gere was reunited with his *Pretty Women* director Garry Marshall, and co-star Julia Roberts. Also in 2000, Gere stared as a Dallas gynecologist who is surrounded by adoring women in Dr. *T and the Women* directed by Robert Altman. The film also stars Helen Hunt, Liv Tyler, Farrah Fawcett, and Kate Hudson.
Off screen, Gere is an accomplished pianist and music writer. He is also actively involved in developing projects and has executive produced *Final Analysis, Mr. Jones*, and *Sommersby*.

A student and friend of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, Gere, for over twenty years, has made numerous journeys throughout India, Nepal, Zanskar and Tibet, Mongolia and China. He is an accomplished photographer who has worked extensively within these regions.

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

An outspoken human rights advocate, Gere has done much to draw attention to the tragedy that has been unfolding in Tibet under Chinese occupation.

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

Gere currently lives in New York with his wife Carey Lowell and their son Homer.
Joan Allen (Cate)

Three-time Oscar nominee Joan Allen is one of the film world’s busiest actresses.

She was most recently seen in Universal’s Death Race, playing the villain to Jason Statham’s hero in the film. She was also seen last spring in Bonneville, alongside Jessica Lange and Kathy Bates. In 2007, she appeared opposite Matt Damon in the box-office smash the The Bourne Ultimatum, reprising her role as Pamela Landy. Before that, she appeared in Yes, a modern day cross-cultural love story for writer-director Sally Potter. In 2005, Joan starred opposite Kevin Costner in The Upside of Anger for director/writer Mike Binder, and in Off the Map, directed by Campbell Scott. In 2004, she was seen in the blockbuster The Bourne Supremacy and in The Notebook the same year.

Allen starred in The Contender for which she was nominated for a Golden Globe, a SAG Award, an Independent Spirit Award and an Academy Award for Best Actress.

She starred in Pleasantville opposite William H. Macy and Jeff Daniels, which earned her several critics’ awards. Her role opposite John Travolta and Nicolas Cage in the smash hit film Face-Off, earned her critical kudos as well as Blockbuster and MTV Movie Awards. Her emotionally devastating role in The Ice Storm opposite Kevin Kline and Sigourney Weaver, also earned her several critics awards.

In 1996, Allen starred in Oliver Stone's Nixon for which she received an Academy Award nomination for Best Supporting Actress. She also won 7 critics association awards, including the L.A. Film Critics Association and the National Society of Film Critics Awards.
Allen received her second consecutive Best Supporting Actress Oscar nomination in 1997 for her role in Arthur Miller’s *The Crucible*.

Allen has appeared in numerous feature films including *Compromising Positions*, *Peggy Sue Got Married*, *Manhunter*, *Tucker: The Man And His Dream*, *Ethan Frome*, *Josh and S.A.M.*, *In Country*, *Searching for Bobby Fisher*, *Mad Love*, *It’s the Rage*, and *When the Sky Falls*.

Allen is also one of the New York theater world’s most honored actresses and winner of every major prize for her work on and off-Broadway. She received the Best Actress Tony Award for her performance opposite John Malkovich in Lanford Wilson’s “Burn This”, and was nominated in the same category for the title role in “The Heidi Chronicles”. Off-Broadway she starred in “The Marriage of Bette & Boo” (for which she won the Obie Award), and reprised her Steppenwolf Theatre/Joseph Jefferson Award-winning role in “And A Nightingale Sang”, for which she received the Clarence Derwent, Drama Desk, Outer Critics Circle and Theatre World Awards. Off-Broadway she also starred in “Delores” and “The Heidi Chronicles”. An original member of Chicago’s famed Steppenwolf Theatre Company, Allen starred in their production of “Burn This”, “Earthly Possessions”, “Reckless”, “A Lesson From Aloes” (Joseph Jefferson Award), “Balm in Gilead” and “Of Mice and Men.” Joan will next star opposite Jeremy Irons in the upcoming Jack O’Brien play “Impressionism” which will debut in spring 2009. This will be her first time back on Broadway in 19 years.

Allen received an Emmy nomination for the “Mists of Avalon” opposite Angelica Huston and Julianna Margulies, for TNT.

She lives in New York City with her daughter Sadie.
Sarah Roemer (Andy)

With her striking beauty and sincere talent, Sarah Roemer is quickly emerging as one of Hollywood's most sought out actresses. Roemer can soon be seen in the family drama *Hachiko* opposite Richard Gere and Joan Allen.

Sarah recently wrapped production on Screen Gems' *Fired Up*. *Fired Up* tells the story of two guys who join their high school’s cheer squad in hopes of meeting girls; Roemer plays the head cheerleader. The film is slated for release On March 20\textsuperscript{th}, 2009.

Roemer can soon be seen in Paradigm/North by Northwest Entertainment's film, *Falling Up*. The film is about a male nursing student, played by Joseph Cross, who is forced to quit school and takes a job as a doorman in New York City, where he meets ‘Scarlette Dowling’ (Roemer), a building resident and sparks romance. Roemer will also be seen in *Waking Madison*, where she played ‘Madison Walker,’ opposite Elisabeth Shue and Taryn Manning. The story is about a woman (Roemer) who suffers from multiple personality disorder and is trying to piece her life back together. Both *The Golden Compass* and *Waking Madison* are slated for release in 2008.

Roemer is best known for her role in the hit film, *Disturbia* opposite Shai LaBeouf. In 2007, Sarah was also recently seen in the short film, *Cutlass*, opposite Virginia Madsen, Dakota Fanning and Kurt Russell. Her other film credits include *Asylum* and *The Grudge 2*.

Native of San Diego, Roemer was always an avid athlete and then started a career in modeling at the age of 15. She currently resides in Los Angeles and enjoys surfing and horseback riding in her spare time.
Cary- Hiroyuki Tagawa (Ken)

Born in Tokyo, Cary-Hiroyuki Tagawa's life reads like the basis for a novel. Raised on a series of Army posts in the southern United States (including Fort Bragg, North Carolina, the largest military base in the world), Tagawa felt like a "stranger in a strange land."

The cultural backdrop of the South can often be a difficult, alienating environment for any outsider. Tagawa's Hawaiian-born, Japanese-American father served with a counter-intelligence unit as part of the U.S. military forces occupying post-World War II Japan. While there, he met Tagawa's mother, a rebellious young woman who became a stage actress.

Even so, Tagawa did not immediately take to acting. Although he says he "understood what acting was about at an early age" and was cast in high school plays, his mother dissuaded him from theatrical pursuits because she thought that roles offered to Asian actors in American films lacked depth. Instead, Tagawa, who says he always feels "the warrior element of his being" within his psyche, aimed for a West Point appointment. Yet when he broached the subject to his stern father for approval, the idea was vehemently opposed.

After becoming more socially conscious while attending USC, martial arts provided Tagawa with a way to channel his anger and calm the emotional element of his character. He began studying karate in his teens and later simultaneously incorporated the fighting techniques with an exploration of his Japanese cultural heritage. The intertwined studies led him to trail-blaze his own style of martial arts. Calling it Chuu-Shin, it defines a process of centering inside the heart and mind, and provides the seeker with the structure to unite the physical and spiritual aspects of being.

In many ways, Tagawa's acting career has brought him full circle and stands as a reflection of his life of exploration. Dozens of parts came his way in the following years highlighted by his roles in "Big Trouble in Little China", “The Last Emperor"
“Rising Sun,” “Mortal Kombat,” “Vampires”, “Snow Falling on Cedars” and “Memoirs of a Geisha.”

**Jason Alexander (Carl)**

The persona of George Costanza, created by versatile actor/writer/director Jason Alexander, has been dubbed by Entertainment Weekly as one of the “Best Television Sidekicks of All Time” (#3 actually, behind Robin and Tonto). The hapless, thoughtless, neurotic everyman that he played for nine seasons on NBC’s “Seinfeld” garnered him six Emmy and four Golden Globe nominations, an American Television Award and two American Comedy Awards for “Best Supporting Actor in a Television Series.” The Screen Actors Guild went one step higher and knighted him “Best Actor in a Comedy Series,” despite his role as a supporting actor, and he led a TV Guide Readers and Critics Poll that named him one of the top 10 characters in TV history. “Seinfeld” remains the most successful half hour television series throughout the world.

But there is more to this man than one iconic role.

Fifteen years before “Seinfeld,” Alexander was building a career that would include performing Tony Award-winning Broadway roles as well as appearing in major film and television projects, producing, directing and writing, making him one of the most consistently coveted stars in the country. After studying at Boston University’s College of Fine Arts, he moved to New York to pursue a theater career. Over a decade he racked up hit after hit. His notable Broadway debut came in Hal Prince and Stephen Sondheim’s 1981 musical production of *Merrily We Roll Along*. In quick succession, he starred in productions of *Forbidden Broadway, The Rink, Stop the World…*, *Neil Simon’s Broadway Bound, Personals, Light Up the Sky, Michael Stewart’s “D,”* and *Accomplice*, to name a few. Though known at the time mainly as an actor, Alexander was asked by Jerome Robbins to write the narrative book for his revue *Jerome Robbins’ Broadway*. To perform it, Alexander would play 14 different characters at every
performance. And for that chameleon-like ability, he won the Drama Desk, Outer Critics Circle and Tony Awards as “Best Actor in a Musical.” The show he authored went on to win Best Musical.

After winning the Tony Award in 1989, Alexander was cast in two projects that would change the direction of his career and his life. The first was his role as Richard Gere’s wily and misogynistic lawyer in *Pretty Woman*. The role made him a nationally recognized face, albeit one whom women wanted very much to slap. The second was winning the role of George in “Seinfeld,” which made him recognizable throughout the world as a figure that some would slap, some would cuddle, but all would love.

Since moving to Los Angeles, film and television have been the focus of his work. His film credits include *The Burning* (notable as the first film by Harvey and Bob Weinstein), *Mosquito Coast, White Palace, Jacob’s Ladder, Coneheads, The Paper, North, Blankman, Dunston Checks In, Love, Valor, Compassion, The Adventures of Rocky and Bullwinkle, Shallow Hal* and *Ira and Abby*. In 1996 Alexander formed his production company, AngelArk Entertainment, and has gone on to direct the features *For Better or Worse* with Lolita Davidovich and James Woods, as well as *Just Looking* with Gretchen Mol. AngelArk has also been successful producing the television shows “Ultimate Trek,” “Bob Patterson” and “Listen Up” and the films *Agent Cody Banks* and *Agent Cody Banks 2: Destination London*.

Alexander has been a staple of television viewing far beyond his years on “Seinfeld.” He starred on the series “Everything’s Relative,” “E.R.,” “Bob Patterson” and “Listen Up.” He has guested on “Newhart,” “Dream On,” “The Nanny,” “Remember WENN,” “Star Trek: Voyager,” “Friends,” “The Twilight Zone,” “Malcolm in the Middle,” “Monk,” “Criminal Minds” and “Everybody Hates Chris.” He has also directed episodes of “Remember WENN,” “Campus Ladies,” “Everybody Hates Chris” and “Seinfeld,” for which he was nominated for a DGA
Award. Alexander also starred in several films for television, including: “Rockabye,” “Favorite Son,” “Cinderella,” “The Man Who Saved Christmas,” “Bye Bye Birdie” and “A Christmas Carol.” Commercials have been a consistent part of his career as he has participated in several historic commercial campaigns. Today, most of his commercial work is as a director of both commercials and music videos. His most recent video, Brad Paisley’s “Cooler Online,” recently won him the honor of directing the “Country Music Video of the Year” at the CMA’s in November 2007.


When Alexander is not appearing as a character, he is often being asked to appear as some version of himself. He’s been a frequent guest on every major daytime and late-night talk show. He has hosted “Saturday Night Live” and “The 47th Annual Emmy Awards.” He has played himself on “The Larry Sanders Show,” “Curb Your Enthusiasm,” “The Muppet Show,” “Sesame Street,” “Comic Relief,” “The Aristocrats,” game shows, celebrity poker showdowns, celebrity roasts, improvisations and charity telethons. He is most proud and most often commended for his seven appearances with host Bill Maher on the HBO series “Real Time,” in which he has been an outspoken, articulate, insightful and satirical advocate for progressive issues.

Alexander has also found many opportunities to return to the stage despite basing his career in Los Angeles. As an actor, he has starred as President Harry Truman in the one-man show Give ‘Em Hell, Harry! He starred with Peter Falk in the world premiere of Defiled at the Geffen Playhouse and inaugurated the
Reprise Theater Company by starring in their first production, Neil Simon’s *Promises, Promises*. Most notably, Alexander starred for eight months alongside Martin Short in the acclaimed L.A. production of Mel Brooks’s *The Producers* where he was hailed by critics and audiences alike.

Working both sides of the boards, Alexander has also directed the West Coast premiere of Sam Shephard’s *The God of Hell* at the Geffen Theater as well as *Sunday In The Park With George* and his own newly adapted rendition of the classic *Damn Yankees*, both for Reprise Theater Company. In fact, Alexander’s name has become synonymous with Reprise since he took over as artistic director in June 2007. Reprise is fast becoming a national center for the revitalization of classic American musicals, as well as the development of the next generation of musical theater.

In what he laughingly refers to as his spare time, Alexander has become one of the most requested Masters of Ceremony for a wide array of fundraising events for charities that range from Big Brothers to the Alzheimer’s Foundation to arts programs for local schools. He has, in fact, been teaching acting and other performing arts around the country and served as a guest professor at the USC School of Fine Arts. Alexander serves as the national spokesperson for the Scleroderma Foundation, helping to educate and unite patients and families suffering from this disfiguring and often fatal disease. He is also a preeminent spokesman and representative for OneVoice – a grassroots organization of Israelis and Palestinians committed to a peaceful, two-state solution in the Middle East.

As a teenager, Alexander was a serious student of magic before making the transition to acting. His love of the magical arts has never left him and he has been a member of the renowned Magic Castle for close to 20 years. In 2007 Alexander made his performing debut in the Castle’s Parlour of Prestidigitation
and a panel of professional colleagues then named him “Parlour Magician of the Year.”

Unlike George Costanza, who could never seem to find true love, Alexander has been happily married for over 25 years to his wife, Daena Title. Daena is a painter whose work has appeared in galleries throughout Los Angeles and across the country and can be found at her website, daenatitle.com. Together they have two sons, Gabriel and Noah. The boys have inspired much in Alexander, not the least of which is his acclaimed children’s book, “Dad, Are You the Tooth Fairy?” published by Scholastic Books.

**Erick Avari**

During his 30 years as an actor, Erick Avari has consistently turned in finely crafted performances, from grand opera to soap opera, with stops on and Off Broadway, in regional theaters, in some of the highest grossing films in the past two decades, on hit television series and in award-winning independent films.

Avari is instantly recognizable from his roles in blockbuster films ranging from the comedic *Mr. Deeds*, opposite Adam Sandler; to sci-fi epics such as *The Mummy*, with Rachel Weisz and Brandon Fraser; *Stargate*, with Kurt Russell and James Spader; *Independence Day*, starring Will Smith, and *Daredevil*, as Jennifer Garner’s father. He has also lent his talents to critically acclaimed dramatic roles in film festival favorites *American East*, with Tony Shalhoub; *Dark Matter*, starring Meryl Streep; *Three Days of Rain*, with Peter Falk and Blythe Danner; and *Choose Conner*, with Steven Weber.

Since his Hollywood debut in Kevin Reynold’s *The Beast of War*, he has been fortunate to work with some of the most honored film directors of the time, including Mike Nichols, Tim Burton, Lasse Hallström and Satyajit Ray.
Born in Darjeeling, India, Avari attended European boarding schools before attending university in the US. He launched a distinguished career on the New York stage that included leading roles in *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* (directed by Tony winner A.J. Antoon), *’Tis Pity She’s a Whore* (directed by Mabou Mines founder Joanne Akalaitis) and “A Map of the World” (written and directed by David Hare) at the Joseph Papp Public Theater, as well as the classic musical *The King and I* on Broadway.

He has appeared at some of the country’s most prestigious regional theaters, including the Tyrone Guthrie Theater in Minneapolis, the Goodman Theater in Chicago and Shakespeare and Company in Stockbridge, and played leading roles in Mozart’s *Abduction from the Seraglio* at the Portland Grand Opera, and in *Rasputin* at New York City Opera.

Among his scores of television roles are Chandra Suresh on NBC’s breakout hit series *Heroes*, as well as recurring roles on *LA Dragnet, Stargate SG-1* and *Felicity*. Avari’s recent television appearances also include *Dirty Sexy Money*, opposite Peter Krause and *Law and Order: Criminal Intent*.

Versatile, dedicated and dynamic, Avari has been a trailblazer for a generation of South Asian actors in Hollywood. In his fight against stereotypical casting, he has played more than two-dozen different ethnicities with authority and believability.

Avari is currently filming *The Untitled Kevin James Film* with Kevin James.

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**Davenia McFadden (Mary Anne)**

Davenia McFadden was born in Abbeville, SC and graduated from North Carolina School of the Arts with a BFA in Theatre in 1982. Upon graduating, Davenia moved to New York, where she replaced Patty LuPone in John

**ABOUT THE FILMMAKERS**

**Lasse Hallström (DIRECTOR)**

Academy Award nominated director Hallström currently has many film projects in various stages of development including *Dear John* based on a novel by Nicholas Sparks starring Channing Tatum and Amanda Seyfried. He also recently directed the television pilot for Fox, *New Amsterdam*, which premiered the beginning of March 2008 about an immortal detective in New York City.

*The Hoax* with Richard Gere was released in April 2007 to much acclaim. His other recent films include *Casanova* with Heath Ledger and *An Unfinished Life*, with Robert Redford and Morgan Freeman. Hallström's acclaimed adaptation of Joanna Harris' *Chocolat* starring Juliette Binoche, Johnny Depp and Judi Dench, earned five Academy Award nominations, including Best Picture. Hallström received a second Oscar nomination for Best Director for his work on *The Cider House Rules*, starring Tobey Maguire, Charlize Theron and Michael Caine.

This Swedish director's first Academy Award nomination for Best Director came with the 1985 release of *My Life As A Dog*, which was also nominated for Best Screenplay. In 1993 Hallström directed Peter Hedge's *What's Eating Gilbert Grape*, starring Johnny Depp and earning Leonardo DiCaprio his first Oscar

Hallström began his career in his native Sweden, working in television and on shorts. In addition, he directed music videos, most notably for the famed Swedish band ABBA

**Vicki Shigekuni Wong (Producer)**

Vicki Shigekuni Wong, a third generation Japanese American, was born and raised in Los Angeles. After graduating from UCLA with a B.A. in psychology, she spent 25 years in various creative endeavors including fashion design and merchandising, editor of a women's magazine, advertising and marketing.

Ms. Shigekuni Wong co-owned one of the most successful ophthalmic surgery centers in the United States. It was sold to a publicly traded company, which had the distinction of having performed laser eye vision correction surgery on thousands of patients including family members, surgeons, business leaders and celebrities including Tiger Woods.

In 2003, she joined Mr. Paul Mason, veteran producer of numerous hit television shows and films, in the development of independent films culminating in the production of *Hachiko: A Dog’s Story*.

Twenty years earlier, while traveling through Japan, Ms. Shigekuni Wong saw the bronze statue of Hachiko that stands in front of Shibuya Station in Tokyo. She became entranced by the story of the loyal dog that continued to return to the station for almost ten years even after the death of his master. Upon returning from her trip, she acquired a Japanese dog and named him Hachiko. Several scenes in the movie were based upon real life events that occurred over
the sixteen years that Ms. Shigekuni Wong enjoyed with her constant companion.

In addition to the development of *Hachiko: A Dog's Story*, through their Hachidog Productions, Ms. Shigekuni Wong and her business partner Paul Mason are committed to producing compassionate, life affirming projects. Currently, they have several animal oriented projects under development as well as a World War II epic based on the life of Sugihara, a diplomat who is often referred to as the "Japanese Shindler".

An avid dog lover, Ms. Shigekuni Wong continues to seek avenues through which she can promote appreciation and respect towards all animals. She splits her time between her homes in Los Angeles and the South Pacific.

**Bill Johnson (Producer)**

Bill Johnson is a native of Chicago who was an All-American tennis player at California State University, Northridge and later, attended film courses at both the University of Southern California and the American Film Institute.

After college and with one desk and a phone as assets, Bill founded an insurance brokerage firm, which, within a few short years, was employing 50 people and writing over $25 million in annual premiums. After guiding the company through several acquisitions and divestitures, the highly profitable LIBERTY COMPANY and its online subsidiary CLICKINSURE, is presently managed day to day by a minority partner as it continues to grow and sell property and casualty insurance to consumers throughout the United States.

Bill's foray into the entertainment business began in 1996 when he wrote two screenplays and directed one film, *Within the Lines*, which was produced in 1997.
Bill left the day-to-day management of Liberty in late 2002 in order to focus on his passion for the film business. Shortly thereafter, he partnered with Jim Seibel to found Inferno. Once again, in a few short years, this start up venture quickly grew into becoming one of the top production, finance and sales companies in Hollywood and is currently producing 3 to 4 feature films per year in addition to handling international sales on other productions. Under Seibel and Johnson’s direction, Inferno has raised over $250 million in institutional financing and closed a multi-picture distribution deal with Sony Entertainment.

In the past 3 years, Johnson has produced or executive produced 11 films with top stars and directors. His film passion is to create commercially viable films that are positive, inspirational and raise consciousness.

On the philanthropic side, Johnson founded a public charity called The Enlightenment Network that has the mission of supporting young artists and art programs that put a focus on creating positive, inspirational and consciousness raising art.

Bill has developed a passion for yoga and meditation that includes 14 years of in-depth study and practice including four teacher trainings. This has led him to occasionally teach yoga classes at several Los Angeles based studios in recent years.

Bill lives on the beach in Venice, California with his wife Leah and three children Skyler, Jett and Jade.

Jim Seibel (Executive Producer)

Jim Seibel is co-founder and partner in Inferno.

Mr. Seibel engineered the launch of Inferno’s foreign sales arm in 2003 by negotiating a sales agreement with German media fund Cinerenta Feature Films.
This achievement enabled Inferno to manage international sales of 34 feature films and the launch of a foreign sales shingle.

In the past three years, Mr. Seibel has executive produced 11 feature films with top tier talent.

Mr. Seibel started his career in the mailroom at Saban Entertainment. Shortly after, Mr. Seibel became the executive assistant to both Mel Woods (COO) and Haim Saban (CEO) of Saban/Fox. Mr. Seibel advanced through the executive ranks at Saban/Fox where he was responsible for development and sales of feature films. In November 1999, Mr. Seibel departed Saban/Fox with an offer to become VP of Sales at Unapix Entertainment. This new position’s responsibilities included domestic television distribution, syndication and acquisitions. Unapix was the leading independent supplier of feature films to such broadcasters as HBO, Cinemax, Starz/Encore, VH1, TBS, TNN Showtime, iNDEMAND, etc.

A native of Florida, Mr. Seibel began his college education with the focus on Pharmacology. Realizing that he had an entrepreneurial spirit with an interest in entertainment and finance, Mr. Seibel relocated to Los Angeles in 1995 to learn the trade. He currently lives in Beverly Hills with his French bulldog Oscar.

**Paul Mason (Executive Producer)**

A graduate of Northwestern University, Mr. Mason has twice been awarded Fame Magazine’s Critic Award for writing and producing the best television detective series (*MacMillian and Wife*), has been nominated for the Emmy for best television series, (*Ironside*), and produced the series which won the first Image Award from NAACP, (*Ironside*).

Mr. Mason has been a writer and a producer in the industry for more than 30 years. Some of his screenplays include cult classic *King Kong vs. Godzilla, Angel*
Baby, The Ladies Club, Action in the North Atlantic, and To Die in Paris. Recently, he was the Executive Producer of The Amityville Horror, Night of the Living Dead, and The Road from Elephant Pass. His most successful television series’, in addition to Ironside and McMillan and Wife include Chico and The Man, Welcome Back Kotter, Chips and It Takes a Thief.

Mr. Mason became interested in Hachiko when his producing partner, Vicky Shigekuni Wong, introduced him to the inspiring story of Japan’s most faithful dog. Together with Ms. Wong, Mr. Mason developed the story and hired Stephen P. Lindsey to work with them on the story and screenplay.

As Senior, Vice-President of Production at Viacom and Showtime for over 10 years, Mr. Mason was responsible for $300 million dollars in annual production. He analyzed costs for all projects produced by Viacom and Showtime productions, set the financial guidelines in accordance with the finance department, hired the necessary personal to produce the projects and supervised them to completion. His results were within plus or minus 1% of his estimates. Paul Mason has recently achieved success with his book Producing for Hollywood: A guide for the Independent Producer, which has become a standard at most Film Schools.

Dean Schnider (Co-Producer)

Dean Schnider is a young and talented entrepreneur. His career began at 16 when he founded a promotions and management company called 3rd World Entertainment. Dean led a team of his peers to produce weekly night clubs, local concerts and events. He also managed several rap and R&B artists and ran a recording studio to produce their albums.

Dean attended the University of Michigan where he designed his own major, Leadership Studies, which focused on business, film and psychology. During college, Dean created and developed a reality TV show called THE
GRADUATE. Dean packaged the project and successfully attached Spyglass Entertainment, Ben Stein and the University of Michigan. Upon graduation, Dean joined a small, diversified family fund investing in media and real estate. He was responsible for sourcing potential investments and worked closely with the portfolio companies to build their relationships and strategic partnerships.

Dean's passion for film led him to developing his own movie projects and building relationships with producers, one of whom had the idea for HACHIKO. Out of dozens of projects, Dean selected and pursued HACHIKO, confident that it would be a remarkable and commercial picture and helped develop HACHIKO from an idea to a script. Dean pitched the project and at age 22, ultimately set the picture up at Inferno Distribution, with whom he had previously interned.

A year after developing HACHIKO, and while working as a Co-Producer, Dean partnered with a veteran entrepreneur to launch a home shopping network for the Hispanic market, both online and on Television. As Co-Founder and VP Business Development, Dean helped produce 16 hours of Spanish Language home shopping television and launched the start-up ecommerce website called Telegaleria.com.

Dean is currently developing several new movie projects under his own banner, Promethean Enterprises. Dean was born in Johannesburg, South Africa but grew up in Los Angeles where he currently resides.

**Boone Narr (DogTrainer)**

Boone Narr has been training animals for over 30 years and his company, Boone's Animals for Hollywood, is one of the most widely known and highly respected animal training companies in the world. Boone has trained cats, dogs, horses and exotic animals from around the globe.
Narr is currently working on Cats & Dogs 2 and some of his other film credits include all three *Pirates of the Caribbean*, *Stuart Little 1* and *2*, *Underdog*, and *Catwoman*. His most recent television credits include *Ugly Betty*, *House MD* and *Grey's Anatomy*, to name a few.

At this point in his career, Narr, a South Carolina native, can be picky about the work he accepts. But his first job in the animal training field was downright odious. In 1970 he was back from his third tour of duty in Vietnam as a Navy Seabee and casting about for something to do. A friend told him of an opening, cleaning cages at a company in Fillmore, California, that trained animals for film and television.

He learned the business helping to train animals for television shows such as *Mork & Mindy*, *Happy Days*, *Laverne & Shirley*, and *Cheers* which he says was his toughest training ground as they were all taped live in front of a studio audience.

In 1985, he went out on his own, basing his operations on a six-acre ranch in a rural, mountainous corner of Los Angeles County. There he keeps more than 100 animals, mostly dogs and cats, cared for by eight full-time employees. Some of the animals are well known to TV and film audiences; others are waiting to be discovered. All are treated like stars, housed in spacious indoor-outdoor cages and catered to with chow and treats whipped up in the ranch kitchen. "We've got some picky eaters, and some that are stubborn, some outgoing ones, some complainers," Narr says. "We've got every personality on this ranch, but they are family."

**Stephen P. Lindsey (Screenplay)**

Stephen P. Lindsey is a native of South Carolina. He left the south for New York City in his early twenties to embark on a career in the film industry and wrote his
first feature script in 1995. He enrolled in script-writing courses at several NYC educational institutions while supporting himself by working in the World Trade Center at *Windows on the World*. Stephen happened to have the day off on the morning of September 11, 2001 and, after the tragic events of that day, he decided to return to film school at CUNY and focus relentlessly on carving a path for himself as a screenwriter. “*The tone of my work changed at that point and I started to write about real people with real emotions. I discovered that I was able to handle emotionally driven material very well.*”

While at CUNY, Stephen wrote and produced two very ambitious award-winning half-hour short films, both shot on location in South Carolina: *The Secrets Of Fireflies* and *When They Could Fly*, which can still be seen at film festivals in the US.

After completing his studies, Stephen left New York for Los Angeles in 2004. Soon thereafter, he was hired to do rewrites on large portions of an existing film script that was in production at the time. Stephen’s work on this project led to his being hired to write the screenplay for *Hachiko: A Dog’s Story*.

Stephen currently lives in Hollywood and has several other projects in development. He is represented by The Gersh Agency and Principal Entertainment.

**Jan A. P. Kaczmarek (Score)**

Jan A. P. Kaczmarek is a composer with a tremendous international reputation that continues to grow. As a successful recording artist and touring musician, Jan turned to composing film scores as his primary occupation.

Jan's first success in the United States came in theater. After composing striking scores for productions at Chicago's Goodman Theatre and Los Angeles' Mark...
Taper Forum, Jan won an Obie and a Drama Desk Award for his music for the New York Shakespeare Festival's 1992 production of John Ford's *Tis Pity She's A Whore*, directed by JoAnne Akalaitis, starring Val Kilmer and Jeanne Tripplehorn. Newsday wrote that Jan's score "undulates with hypnotic force that gets under your skin," while Frank Rich of the New York Times found it worthy of the films of Bernardo Bertolucci and Luchino Visconti. Educated as a lawyer, he abandoned his planned career as a diplomat, for political reasons, to write music in order to finally gain freedom of expression. First he composed for the highly politicized underground theater, and then for a mini-orchestra of his own creation, "The Orchestra of the Eighth Day". The major turning point in his life, he says, was a period of intense study with avant-garde theater director, Jerzy Grotowski.

"Playing and composing was like a religion for me," Kaczmarek explains, "and then it became a profession."

"The Orchestra of the Eighth Day" began touring Europe in the late 1970's and to date has completed eighteen major tours. They appeared at the Queen Elizabeth Hall in London, the VPRO Radio International Contemporary Music Festival in Amsterdam, the Venice Biennale, and the International Music Festival in Karlovy Vary, Czechoslovakia, where Jan won the Golden Spring Prize for the Best Composition. He is a five-time winner in Jazz Forum's Jazz Top Poll. At the end of the Orchestra's first American tour in 1982, Kaczmarek recorded his debut album, *Music for the End*, for the Chicago-based major independent Flying Fish Records.

Jan returned to America in 1989 to find a label for his latest composition for the Orchestra. Jan stayed in the United States where he expanded his horizons by composing for theater as he had already done in Poland with great success, capped by two prestigious New York theater awards in 1992. Having also composed music for films in Poland, he focused his attention to that medium, achieving recognition as a film composer with scores to such films as *Total Eclipse*, *Bliss*, *Washington Square*, *Aimée & Jaguar*, *The Third Miracle*, *Lost*.
Souls, Edges of the Lord, Quo Vadis and Adrian Lyne’s Unfaithful.

February 2005, Jan won his first Oscar for Best Original Score on Marc Forster’s highly acclaimed film, Finding Neverland.

J.A.P.K. also won The National Review Board’s award for Best Score of the Year, and was nominated for both a Golden Globe and BAFTA’s Anthony Asquith Award for Achievement in Film Music. In addition to his work in films, Jan was commissioned to write two symphonic and choral pieces for two important national occasions in Poland: “Cantata for Freedom” (2005) to celebrate 25th anniversary of the Solidarity movement, and oratorio “1956” (2006) to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the bloody uprising against totalitarian government in Poznan, Poland. Both premiers were broadcast live on national television.

Jan is also setting up an Institute inspired by the Sundance Institute, in his home country of Poland, as a European center for development of new work in the areas of film, theatre, music and new media. The Institute website is: http://rozbitek.org. It is anticipated that Rozbitek will begin accepting students in 2007.
HACHIKO: A DOG’S STORY

End Credits

Unit Production Manager
Stephanie M. Accetta
Robert V. Ortiz

First Assistant Director
Cara L. Giallanza

Second Assistant Director
Stephen E. Hagen

Produced in Association with Hachiko, LLC
and
Grand Army Entertainment, LLC

In Association with Scion Films

From the motion picture “HACHIKO MONOGATARI”
Written by Kaneto Shindo, Directed by Seijiro Koyama,
Produced by Shochiku Co., Ltd./Tokyu Agency Inc./Mitsui & Co., Ltd.

Executive Producers
Warren T. Goz
Stewart McMichael
Co-Executive Producer
Sam Frankel

Associates Producers
Michael Viner
Dwight Opperman
Julie Chrystyn

Associate Producer
Paul A. Levin
CAST

Parker Wilson Richard Gere
Cate Wilson Joan Allen
Ken Cary-Hiroyuki Tagawa
Andy Sarah Roemer
Carl Jason Alexander
Jasjeet Erick Avari
Mary Anne Davenia MacFadden
Michael Robbie Collier Sublett
Ronnie (11 years) Kevin Decoste
Teddy Barnes Robert Degen
Heather Tora Hallström
Myra Donna Sorbello
Milton-The Butcher Frank Aronson
Sal Troy Doherty
Student Pianist Ian Sherman
Evan Lock Timothy Crowe
Miss Latham Denece Ryland
Student Blake Friedman
Harry Pinow Bates Wilder
Commuter Daniel Kirby
Commuter #2 Gloria Crist
Mover Richard Trethway
Man Tom Tynell

Animals Provided by
BOONE'S ANIMALS FOR HOLLYWOOD, INC.

Animal Coordinator Boone Narr
Animal Trainers David Allsberry
Mark Harden
Tracy Kelly
Puppy Trainer Gleanna Doyle
Skunk Trainer All Tame Animals
Associate Producer Roxanna Farzaneh
Art Director Jordan Jacobs
Set Decorator Gretchen Schlottman
Script Supervisor Robin Squibb
‘A’ Camera Operator Bruce MacCallum
‘A’ Camera First Assistant Tim Norman
‘A’ Camera Second Assistants Tim Sweeney
'B' Camera Operator  Christian Hollyer
'B' Camera First Assistants  Frances Spieldenner
'B' Camera Second Assistant  Patrick Quinn
Steadicam Operator  Rob Bullard
Additional Steadicam Operator  Jamie Fitzpatrick
Steadicam Operator  Frances Spieldenner
Additional Steadicam Operator  Brant S. Fagan

Digital Imaging Technicians  Barry Minnerly
VTR  Abby Levine
Still Photographer  John Levy
Assistant Editor  Paul Raymond
Post Production Supervisor  Claire Folger

Supervising Sound Editor  Victoria Lang
Dialogue/ADR Editor  Barry Minnerly
Dialogue Editor  Abby Levine
Foley Supervisor  John Levy
Foley Editor  Paul Raymond
Sound Effects Editor  Claire Folger
Loop Group  Victoria Lang

Re-Recording Mixers  Ann Gray
Re-Recordist  Dave Paterson
Costume Supervisor  Mary Ellen Porto
Key Costumer  Sylvia Menno
Foley Supervisor  Rachel Chancey
Foley Editor  Matt Haasch
Sound Effects Editor  Damian Volpe
Loop Group  Sondra James

Re-Recording Mixers  Robert Fernandez
Re-Recordist  Dave Paterson

Costume Supervisor  Sheila Grover
Key Costumer  Hillary Derby
Costumer to Mr. Gere  Tommy Boyer
Set Costumer  Alyson MacInnis
Seamstress  Janna Pederson

Personal to Richard Gere and  Luann Claps
Department Head Make-Up Artist  Nikki Pleau
2nd Make-Up  Lyndell Quiyou
Key Hair by  Cheryl Daniels
2nd Hair

Gaffers  Frans Weterrings
John DeBlau
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Production Assistants
Angela Cutrone
Michael Fitzgerald
Greg Bator
Lisa Burrascano
Abigail Hahn
Xina Giatas

Stand-In for Mr. Gere
Al Conti

Rhode Island Principal/Extras Casting
Anne Mulhall
Extra Casting Assistants
Deb Greene
Andre Gadbois

Transportation Captain
Gene O’Neill

Transportation Co-Captain
John Canavan

JAPAN UNIT

Second Unit Director
Tom Luse

Producer
Shin Torisawa

Director of Photography
Jun Fukumoto

Chief Lighting Technician
Tokuju Ichikawa

Digital Imaging Technician
Masami Hayashi

Assistant Director
Naoki Kusumoto

Production Managers
Satoru Kanazawa
Yuzo Nomura
Rumi Takemata

Location Manager
Jun Takahashi

Coordinator
Junko Kusunoki

Camera Department
Sinya Kocho
Mamie Nogita
Takahisa Hirowatari
Takahide Ookubo

Dog Wrangler
Michihiro Sasaki

Lighting Department
Takanori Kashihara
Koji Iwarkiri
Tomoshi Kosaco

Grips
Gentaro Misawa
Takao Shimizu

Transportation
Tohru Honda
Taichi Iwasaki
Hideki Nakamura
Haremi Nishimura

Technical Advisors
Yusho Itaba
Shoei Itaba
Visual Effects by
&
Company

Visual Effects Supervisor  David Isyomin
Visual Effects Executive Producer  Chris Gelles
Lead Roto Artist  Joan Demsky

Music Editor  Sally Swisher

Score Performed by  The Polish Radio Orchestra
Conductor  Lukasz Borowicz
Soloists  Leszek Mozdzer - Piano
          Marek Szpakiewicz - Cello
Orchestrations  Jan A.P. Kaczmarek
          Dylan Maulucci
          Marek Szpakiewicz

Music Scoring Mixer  Rafal Paczkowski
Orchestra Contractor  Bogna Kowalska
Assistant to the Composer  Piotr Tatarski
Music Recorded at  The Polish Radio Studios and
          Sound & More Studios, Warsaw
          P.I.Y. Studio, Warsaw, Poland
Mixed at
Score Produced by  Jan A.P. Kaczmarek

Titles by  Nina Saxon Design

Digital Intermediate by  Deluxe New York
Digital Intermediate Colorist  Joe Gawler
Digital Intermediate Producer  Mitchell Ferm
Digital Intermediate Editor  Chris Mackenzie
Digital Intermediate Assistant Colorists  Jack Lewars
          Jacob Robinson
Data Manager  Duck Grossberg
Digital Intermediate Coordinator  Molle DeBartolo

Post Production Services Provided by  Postworks, N.Y.
          Orbit Digital
Sound Services Provided by  Sound One

Completion Bond  Film Finances
Collection Account Management by  Fintage House

For Scion Films:

Head of Group Finance  Joanne Sennitt
Head of Creative Affairs Jo Rogers
Legal and Business Affairs Joanna Johnson
Alan Moss
Assistant to Mr. Abberley/Mrs. Blackman Beverley Reid

With grateful acknowledgement to the State of Rhode and Steven Feinberg,
Director, the Rhode Island Film & Television Office

Filmed on location in
Woonsocket, Rhode Island
Bristol, Rhode Island
and Japan

Special Thanks

Bill and Michie Ross
Sid Sheinberg
Andrew Mann
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Sasaki Animal Productions, Inc.
Central Japan Railroad
The State of Rhode Island
Providence Worcester Railroad
United States National Parks
The University of Rhode Island
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Photographs Courtesy of Suki Mahan
Arche
Hamilton Watches
Indigo Palms/Tommy Bahama
E-Bogu.com
Woolrich
Wacoal
Timberland
Carson Bag
Mothers Work, Inc,
Dansko, Inc.
Rowenta
Bill’s Khaki’s
Smartwool
Shelly Neubauer
Mikolaj Bauer
REN
Joe Beirne
Matt Schneider
Pete Conlin
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Hachiko Photograph  Akitainu-Hozonkai, Odate Japan

Post Production Clearance
Searchworks Clearance and Research

Production Services by
Red Herring Motion Picture Lighting
  Cinema Mechanics
  KAS Lighting, Inc.
  Long Island Film Equipment

Filmed With Panavison ®

Prints by DELUXE

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