

MUST LOVE DOGS

Dating has never been easy. The time-honored search for a soul mate has always been one part humiliation, two parts aggravation, and a little blind luck thrown in for the fortunate.

Today's version of the game can be a blur of websites, speed lunches and hordes of friends and relatives who know just the "right" person for you.

Thirty-something preschool teacher Sarah Nolan (DIANE LANE) has been divorced for eight months, which is much too long for her family to bear. With the best of intentions and only her happiness in mind, they stage an intervention in an all-out effort to get her out of pajamas and back into the dating scene, one way or another. Leading the charge are Sarah's sisters, Carol (ELIZABETH PERKINS) and Christine (ALI HILLIS), eager to line up potential suitors, and their widowed father Bill (CHRISTOPHER PLUMMER), who sets a fine example with his own recent and very successful foray into the internet dating realm. Bill has lately been seeing the free-spirited Dolly (STOCKARD CHANNING), whom he met online, along with a number of other ladies whose names his daughters can't quite keep track of.

Eager to launch their sister's own cyber-dating debut, Carol and Christine pretend to be Sarah and post her profile on perfectmatch.com, with the enticing message, "Voluptuous, sensuous, alluring and fun. DWF seeks special man to share starlit nights. Must love dogs." And wait for the responses to pour in.

Sarah soon endures a series of hilariously disastrous mismatches and first dates as the website offers up a stream of eager wannabes and one possible maybe – awkward but intriguing boat builder Jake Anderson (JOHN CUSACK), an idealist who measures romance by a *Dr. Zhivago* standard. A little on the intense side, Jake might be looking for more than Sarah wants right now. Meanwhile, at work, there's a new distraction – Bob Connor (DERMOT MULRONEY), the newly separated dad of one of her young students. Charming and relaxed, Bob seems made to order, the perfect guy...but is he just too good to be true?

Based on the best-selling book by Claire Cook, and written and directed by two-time Emmy Award winner Gary David Goldberg, *Must Love Dogs* follows the comic, bumpy and ultimately rewarding journey of a woman cautiously rediscovering romance and learning to trust her own instincts again. Because, as her family enthusiastically reminds her, it's never a good idea to give up on love.

Warner Bros. Pictures presents an UBU / Team Todd Production: Diane Lane and John Cusack star in *Must Love Dogs*, also starring Dermot Mulroney, Elizabeth Perkins, with Stockard Channing and Christopher Plummer. *Must Love Dogs* is directed by Gary David Goldberg and produced by Suzanne Todd, Jennifer Todd and Gary David Goldberg from a screenplay by Gary David Goldberg, based on the novel by Claire Cook. Brad Hall and Ronald G. Smith are executive producers. Director of photography is John Bailey, A.S.C.; production designer, Naomi Shohan; and editors, Eric Sears, A.C.E., and Roger Bondelli, A.C.E... Music is by Craig Armstrong.

Must Love Dogs will be distributed worldwide by Warner Bros. Pictures, a Warner Bros. Entertainment Company. Soundtrack album on EPIC/SONY MUSIC SOUNDTRAX. This film is rated PG-13 by the MPAA for “sexual content.”

www.mustlovedogsmovie.com

***“A beautiful girl like you can’t just give up, Sarah.
There’s life after divorce, you know.”***

“We wanted to explore one woman’s search for love in an increasingly frantic world,” says Gary David Goldberg, who directs the romantic comedy *Must Love Dogs* from his own screenplay, based on the best-selling Claire Cook novel, and shares producing duty with Suzanne and Jennifer Todd. “Sarah Nolan is a woman whose life didn’t turn out exactly as she expected. Now she’s in transition. She has to summon up the courage to get out there and try again, and the world is not as hospitable or forgiving as it should be. It’s an uncomfortable and often very funny place to be, rich with human predicaments we can all relate to.”

No stranger to the human predicament, Goldberg’s career is distinguished by entertainment that addresses themes of family, romance, growing up, breaking up and starting

over – and always with a healthy dose of laughter. A writer on *The Bob Newhart Show*, *Alice* and *M*A*S*H*, and writer/producer on *Lou Grant*, Goldberg went on to create *Family Ties* and *Spin City*, earning his first Emmy Award for *Lou Grant* and another Emmy and four consecutive nominations for *Family Ties*, as well as a nomination as executive producer for the critically acclaimed series *Brooklyn Bridge*. He again struck that balance of humor and poignancy in the 1989 feature *Dad*, starring Jack Lemmon and Ted Danson as a combative father and son bickering their way toward reconciliation.

Goldberg wasn't looking for a film project when he discovered Must Love Dogs. At home in a small town in Vermont, "I kind of fancied myself semi-retired at the time," he recalls, happily removed from the world of development meetings, casting sessions and 4 AM wake-up calls. Stopping at a local bookstore one day, he saw Claire Cook's novel, a Literary Guild Book Club selection, featured as the staff's pick-of-the-week. He read it and laughed out loud. Before long, he was mulling over possibilities for a script and bidding for film rights.

"Claire does a wonderful job of capturing a moment in time," says Goldberg, referring to that surreal, post-divorce pause in which "you're in shock, retreat. Your confidence is shaken and you don't make great choices. That's where we find Sarah."

Matching Goldberg's enthusiasm for the story are dynamic producing partners – and sisters – Suzanne Todd and Jennifer Todd, of *Mememto* (2002 Independent Spirit Award winner and AFI Film of the Year nominee), *Boiler Room* and the phenomenally popular *Austin Powers* films. Suzanne shared a 1997 Emmy nomination for the acclaimed HBO movie *If These Walls Could Talk*, and Team Todd shared a 2000 nomination for its powerful sequel, *If These Walls Could Talk 2*.

"Unlike a lot of broad high-concept romantic comedies," notes Suzanne Todd, "*Must Love Dogs* derives its humor from real characters and real situations."

"It's a sweet, honest movie about putting yourself back together," says Jennifer Todd. "Plus, Suzanne and I enjoyed the sister relationship and the family dynamics, which are amazingly true to life. With Suzanne and I working together we've had so many people tell us either that they think it's wonderful and they would love to be able to work with a sibling or just the opposite, that they can't imagine how we do it and remain on speaking terms. Everyone relates it to their own circumstance and the same is true the first time you encounter Sarah's family, which is very much in each other's business."

Having no sisters of his own, Goldberg gratefully defers to the Todds on that subject, specifically for scenes that highlight the often barbed but unmistakably loving interplay between Sarah and her take-charge sibling Carol, played by Diane Lane and Elizabeth Perkins. “They gave me the sister stuff,” says Goldberg of his co-producers. “There were times when Diane and Elizabeth were working out a scene and we’d be tossing it around and Jennifer or Suzanne would say, ‘well, *we’d* do this’ or ‘this is what *I* would say to her,’ and it all rang true.

“The kind of comedy that interests me is based in reality,” Goldberg emphasizes, “mining legitimate laughs from territory that’s familiar to people. I look for laughs of recognition that come from everyday life, where people in the audience will watch it and think, ‘okay, that’s me,’ or ‘that’s my sister, my brother, my best friend.’ You can sit there and laugh at yourself and your own foibles and know that you’re not alone.”

For all of Sarah’s difficulties, she is most definitely not alone. Her loving family would never allow that. It’s been entirely too long since Sarah has had a date and they’re more than ready to do something about it. As the story opens, eight months after Sarah’s divorce, we find the entire clan – siblings, sisters-and-brothers-in law and family patriarch Bill – convened in her kitchen for an intervention, armed with the names of every available guy they can think of, plus photos of a magazine model or two for general inspiration.

“As a single woman, it would be easy enough for Sarah to go to work and go about her day without ever facing her romantic issues. But her family, and their love for her, forces her to face what’s going on (or not going on) in her life,” Suzanne Todd explains. “They raise her dating problems to a whole new level.”

“It’s a tightly-knit, big Irish family, where everyone feels they know what’s best for you and they’re going to let you know exactly what that is. At the moment, they think Sarah’s moping too much and needs to get out there and find a new man,” says Lane, who sees her character as bruised and somewhat disillusioned but ultimately optimistic. Well respected for her remarkable range of dramatic roles, such as *A Walk on the Moon*, *The Perfect Storm*, *My Dog Skip*, an Emmy-nominated performance in *Lonesome Dove* and, most recently, her searing portrayal of a wayward wife in *Unfaithful* that earned both Oscar and Golden Globe nominations, Lane also shone in the 2003 romantic comedy *Under the Tuscan Sun* and was pleased to return to a genre where she could use her sense of humor to connect with audiences.

“As Sarah, Diane’s flair for comedy meshes perfectly with Gary’s hilarious script about a modern woman’s quest for romance and a soul mate in a world where both are in short supply,” says Jennifer Todd. “Her timing is sharp and you really pick up the underlying self-deprecation in Sarah’s remarks.”

“Sarah is essentially a good girl,” says Lane. “She was willing to remain in a marriage even though there weren’t any fireworks, and is genuinely surprised when it’s her husband who bails out. Truth is, she’s never really found the love of her life. But the best thing about Sarah, never mind her current state of mind and the fact that if she didn’t have a job she probably wouldn’t get dressed for a month, is that she is still open to possibilities. She’s willing to try again, which is the most important thing.” All she needs is a little push to get started...

“Mate shopping?”

“It’s kinda like going online to buy a pair of pants...except there’s going to be a guy in them.”

Not long content with their advisory status on Sarah’s love life, sisters Carol and Christine soon take things a giant step further. They open an account in Sarah’s name on perfectmatch.com, along with a provocative profile and her high school graduation photo – complete with cap and gown. (In their defense, it was the only photo they could find that didn’t include the ex-husband.)

When asked how she would react if someone did the same thing to her, Jennifer Todd lets out an unequivocal “Horrrifying!,” before admitting that she and Suzanne actually did post a friend’s profile on an Internet dating website, although stressing, “the difference was that we *told* her what we were doing. Actually, in this day and age it’s not as crazy as it seems.”

Adds Suzanne, “it may seem unromantic at first but not so if you find the right person and it works out. When you look at the number of people who have met and married people via the Internet you can see it as long-term, if not short-term, romantic.”

As part of his preparation for the project, Goldberg consulted renowned relationship strategist Susan Page, author of the book *If I’m So Wonderful Why Am I Still Single?*, for a realistic picture of what the newly single can expect. “Susan draws a comparison between

people looking for love in America today and people who were looking for jobs during the Great Depression,” he says. “The traditional ways of meeting people have broken down. There isn’t the community that used to exist. Instead, there’s this whole new sense of community on the Internet but it’s still an alien world to many of us. It’s like there’s a big dance going on and Sarah doesn’t know the steps.”

The filmmakers agreed that any story depicting the current dating world would have to involve the Internet. “It’s just become so pervasive,” says Goldberg, who expanded upon that element for the screen version of *Must Love Dogs*, whereas the heroine in Cook’s novel relied upon the newspaper for her personal ad interaction.

“Internet dating is fascinating in so many ways,” says Suzanne Todd. “You can narrow your choices as to age, height, interests, religious preferences – almost anything. But you never know whether or not you’ll have that special chemistry with someone just because they looked good on paper.”

Additionally, Goldberg notes, “the potential for artifice is high in the cyber realm,” although adding that pretense has eternally been intertwined with romance, so in the larger sense nothing has really changed. Frauds have always been frauds and will always be; likewise, diamonds in the rough are always waiting to be discovered. Be it via newspaper, high-speed computer or a friendly set-up through your aunt’s dentist’s neighbor’s cousin, the rules, rewards and potential pitfalls for those seeking a love match are the same today as they were when Grandma debuted at the Church social. Vigilance counts. As does a sense of humor.

Elizabeth Perkins (*The Flintstones*, *Cats & Dogs*, *Finding Nemo*), who stars as Carol, outlines a typical nightmare situation: “There you are online chatting with a guy who says he’s six-foot two, dark hair, blue eyes and in great shape. Then, when you walk into the coffee shop to meet him you think you got the address wrong because there’s no one in the room who even remotely resembles that description. That would be fun, wouldn’t it?”

Must Love Dogs takes this concept to its outrageous but, frighteningly enough, still plausible extreme, in a scene that would make any father, daughter or family therapist squirm. Sarah, still new to the process, answers an ad posted by a man who presents himself as “a young 50,” only to find, when she arrives at the appointed alfresco café, that she has responded to her own 71-year-old father’s ad. Whereupon, dear old Dad proclaims his innocence, insisting that “in the bottom of his soul” he is only 50 and that “the rest is poetry.”

Similarly, when Sarah questions Carol's choice of adjectives on her Perfect Match profile, specifically "voluptuous" and "sensuous," never mind the fact that she doesn't even have a dog, her big sister's response is that the truth in advertising laws don't apply here. The point of a personal ad is to generate interest – and dates – and she can work out the details later. It's a pro-active sentiment echoed by Dolly, one of Bill's Internet girlfriends (played by Oscar-nominated Stockard Channing of *Six Degrees of Separation* and *The West Wing*), a vibrant woman with diverse interests who maintains a dozen different dating profiles in which she tries out various personas. "On one she's dressed up like a rodeo girl, fringe jacket and a cowboy hat, and on another she's all champagne and caviar," says Jennifer Todd. "Her philosophy is, increase your visibility and your odds." Besides, how do you know you *don't* like skydiving, rodeos or opera if you've never tried it?

Thus begins Sarah's hilarious odyssey of first dates, or, as she might later describe some of them: the arm wrestler, the handcuff expert, the one who brought his 14-year-old daughter along and the uncontrollable weeper – and that's not counting the guy who took "must love dogs" literally and howled on her voicemail. Twice. Or the jerk who opened their dinner conversation by bluntly remarking, "I thought you'd be younger."

"I can't believe how stupid guys are," says Goldberg, revealing that the I-thought-you'd-be-younger scenario actually occurred to a friend of his, as did the one in which Prince Charming is accompanied by his sullen teenager. In fact, most of Sarah's dates are based on true stories culled from the filmmakers' circle of friends or their own not-so-distant pasts. "There's a lot of questionable behavior out there."

"You'd think we were pushing it for the sake of comedy, but the truth is, we're not taking liberties here; these are very realistic," Jennifer Todd confirms. "You should have heard the horror stories people volunteered once they knew we were doing this movie."

One definite standout in this eclectic parade is individualist Jake Anderson, played by multi-talented John Cusack, whose facility for both drama and comedy is evident in a career marked by titles such as *Being John Malkovich*, *Pushing Tin*, *The Grifters*, *Bullets Over Broadway*, *The Thin Red Line*, *Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil* and 2000's *High Fidelity*, for which actor/screenwriter Cusack earned Writers Guild, Golden Globe and BAFTA nominations. Also recently divorced, Jake is going through his own angst and uncertainty in self-imposed exile and with more than a measure of sardonic humor. Most nights find him

alone, working on the specialty wooden racing boats he designs or wallowing in countless screenings of his favorite tribute to doomed romance, *Dr. Zhivago*.

Like Sarah, Jake is reluctantly pushed back on the market, not by his family but by best friend Charlie (Ben Shenkman, *Angels in America*) who has, quite frankly, had enough of the Russian winter landscape *and* mopey Jake.

After Jake refuses to see any of the bimbos on Charlie's speed-dial, Charlie tries another tack. Without his friend's knowledge, he clicks onto Sarah's Perfect Match profile and arranges a date for her with Jake at a local dog park – an event for which they must both borrow dogs or risk appearing disingenuous. Jake shows up nervously with a neighbor's feisty terrier and Sarah brings her brother's imposing Newfoundland, Mother Teresa.

Literate, emotionally oriented and straightforward, Jake also has a tendency to be, well... a little intense. Not much for small talk, this is man who wants to know upfront who you *really* are, what you're passionate about and what your thoughts might be on, say, the meaning of life, and will gladly break out his own theories. "He's kind of a throwback guy," explains Goldberg, "looking for authenticity in perhaps the most unauthentic time in human history." For Sarah, who's just starting out on her own again, when wearing her hair up or down is still a major decision for the evening, a relationship with Jake seems like more work than she's looking for.

Meanwhile, there's another "potential maybe" she met the old-fashioned way – in person, at the preschool where she works. Bob Connor, the handsome, charming, easygoing single father of one of her students is played by Dermot Mulroney, the versatile star of *About Schmidt*, *My Best Friend's Wedding*, Tom DiCillo's *Box of Moonlight* and *Living in Oblivion* and the compelling 1990 drama *Longtime Companion*. Sarah and Bob have been shyly flirting over the Crayolas and the Curious George collection for weeks, every time the doting Dad comes to collect his son, although Sarah is hesitant to compromise her job by getting involved with a parent. Then again, as her sisters are quick to point out, maybe that's just an excuse because she doesn't want to take a chance or, more likely, because Bob seems so much like the perfect guy it's frightening.

"The trouble is," suggests Jennifer Todd, "at this stage Sarah is afraid of making another mistake and falling into the same trench she just climbed out from. She's far from confident about making the right choices."

“Ultimately it’s the simple truths that are most difficult to learn, like that very sensible advice about being yourself,” offers Goldberg. “You need to wait for someone who values you to come along instead of trying to guess what other people deem valuable and then trying to make yourself into that model. Until you can honestly assess what you really want and why, you can’t make the right decisions and take control of your life. It’s a process; trial and error.” And luck? “Oh yeah, luck helps. Luck helps a lot.”

Casting: Setting Up the Perfect Group Date

“Comedy is collaborative,” Goldberg believes. “You really cannot impose it.” Consequently, he fosters the kind of open atmosphere on set guaranteed to bring out the best of everyone’s energy and instincts.

“The best joke always wins with Gary, the funniest way it plays, whether he wrote it exactly that way or not,” confirms Jennifer Todd. “He’s tremendously flexible and willing to change anything at the last minute and work around something new; nothing slows him down.”

In this case, “Everything starts with Diane Lane because she is in virtually every scene,” says Goldberg, who credits Lane for impeccable timing and a flair for physical comedy, as well as the more subtle ability “to play in the realm of heightened reality while never leaving the ground. For Diane to be funny, she doesn’t have to step outside herself and present you with a totally different character. Not all actors can play the middle; if they’re going to be funny, they really let you know it and that, in my opinion, removes the audience from the moment. You’re doing their work for them. But actors like this know how to throw their change-up with the same delivery that they throw their fastball and suddenly you’re right there with them.”

Lane warmed to the role from her first script reading, recognizing amidst the laughs the ring of truth the story delivers to “so many people who are realistically looking to meet someone special and facing the frustrations that entails. The fact is, there are more women looking for love than there are available men and there are a lot of people, men and women, who are investigating dating services for the first time. It’s a story people can relate to.”

She also liked the element of traditional role reversal in Sarah’s scenes with Jake, noting that, “it’s Jake who’s looking for something significant from the start. He’s the one who clearly doesn’t want to waste his time with someone who doesn’t feel the same way he does, while

Sarah is still testing the water and would rather keep things a little lighter. It's an interesting, refreshing dynamic to see a guy have that view of things, and less stereotypical."

Indeed, Jake is admittedly looking for someone special, versus someone simply available. "If he's going out there again, he wants an epic romance," says John Cusack, who stars as the classically romantic boat builder. "He understands there'll be some ups and downs and some exquisite agonies and he's ready to embrace it all; he's that kind of passionate character." Not that we would expect anything less from a guy whose emotional role model is Dr. Zhivago.

Although the part of Jake Anderson was already drafted when Cusack signed on, Goldberg was happy to bring the actor, a noted screenwriter in his own right (*Grosse Pointe Blank* and the BAFTA and WGA-nominated *High Fidelity*), into the process, to help refine and amplify the character into, "a more specific and interesting guy than I had imagined."

Describing their early discussions, the director recalls, "John had a lot of insight into the character, and I just said 'write some stuff up and I'll write some stuff up and we'll get together in a room and go over it.' He wasn't sure at first, but it came down to me saying, 'well, out of the 400 ideas you've thrown at me in the last eight minutes, I especially like 17, 21, 43...' and so on. There was certainly no shortage of energy and excitement."

Cusack cites another role reversal in the progress of Jake's and Sarah's relationship, pointing out that, "usually, I play the guy who has to chase the girl and in this case it's Sarah's story and she's the one who initiates everything with her personal ad. She's the one who's actively seeking potential matches and it's Jake who responds."

A working actor since his teens, he likens first dates to auditions, wryly recalling "nightmare scenarios" in which, "sometimes it just doesn't go well at all. You walk in there and lay everything on the line and then they look at you like you completely missed the point."

Representing the opposite end of the dating spectrum is Sarah's new hot prospect Bob Connor, played by Dermot Mulroney with a casual confidence that makes it clear Bob has never worried about making a good first impression. For him, it's always been guaranteed.

Bob is a genuinely great father, a premise that Mulroney does not deny, although admitting his character's parental devotion "has the added advantage of making him look sensitive to women," certainly a plus in the dating market and a fact that Bob clearly trades on, all the better because it's effortless.

“He meets Sarah at the school where she teaches his son, and even though she’s in the caregiver role, Bob sees that she’s the one who’s in need of some attention,” jokes Mulroney. “See, Bob is a good guy. He’s just doing his part.”

It’s Bob’s precocious son Austin (played by Bobby Coleman) who announces his father’s eligibility by repeating in class something he no doubt heard from Mom, that “Dad likes other women” – a potential red flag to any discerning female, but, on the other hand, could just as well be a bitter and undeserved criticism about a man who maybe just hasn’t found the Right One yet.

“Bob is the obvious choice,” Goldberg acknowledges. “He’s handsome, charming, well-spoken, a good father. He really looks like the perfect guy” – so much so that at one point early on Sarah wonders if it’s just too easy. But when something is right, isn’t it *supposed* to be easy?

As Jennifer Todd assesses it through Sarah’s eyes, “She can relate to this guy whose marriage recently fell apart and who’s at a stage where he’s exploring his options out there in the world. It’s really the same place that she’s in. It’s a delicious role for Dermot because he starts off playing one kind of character and ends up revealing himself as someone quite different.”

“It’s refreshing to see an adult romantic comedy,” says Mulroney, who launched his career in the Brat Pack era with *Young Guns* and has since starred in a diverse range of notable films including the acclaimed *Longtime Companion*, *Living in Oblivion*, Showtime’s Emmy-nominated *Bastard Out of Carolina* and the romantic comedy *My Best Friend’s Wedding*. “It’s such a well written script and the humor is natural, my feeling is that I shouldn’t get caught trying to make it funny. It’s my job to keep my head down and let the fur fly around me.”

Married for more than a decade to actress Catherine Keener and the father of a young son, Mulroney laughs when asked if he has ever used a dog to attract women. “Well... let’s just say no,” he responds. “Yeah, let’s go with that.”

Goldberg and Elizabeth Perkins were undeniably in accord on capturing the personality and function of Sarah’s sister Carol in the *Must Love Dogs* ensemble. “When we were trying to cast that part, I kept wondering aloud, ‘where’s Eve Arden? Where’s Ann Sothern?’ says Goldberg, fondly recalling those great actresses who had a special talent for giving depth and flair to essential supporting roles and whose dialogue always snapped with wit. “One day on the set, after we’d been lucky enough to have found Elizabeth, she happened to remark, completely

independently and never having heard me say it, ‘you know who Carol reminds me of? Eve Arden.’”

“Elizabeth is hysterical as the acerbic and loveable big sister,” says Suzanne Todd. “It’s a classic big-sister portrayal for our times – the meddling, know-it-all, boss-you-around sister who you know would kill anyone who tried to hurt you. Jennifer and I find the relationship between Sarah and Carol especially entertaining because it’s so similar to our own. Your sister is your biggest fan and worst critic. It’s wonderful to have someone who will always tell you the absolute truth, loves you unconditionally and would do anything to ensure your happiness.”

However, as Carol plays fast and loose with Sarah’s Internet profile, “wanting Sarah’s happiness means, for Carol, wanting the same things for her sister that make *her* happy, which Sarah may not necessarily want,” Perkins admits. “But that doesn’t matter because Carol has the whole world figured out. She knows exactly what everyone should be doing and she has no problem telling them about it. In one way, I think there might be just a little bit of jealousy involved too, as Carol is married and has a couple of kids and might enjoy living vicariously through her sister’s new love life – not that she’d ever admit it.”

As the youngest of three sisters in real life, one of the delights of portraying the eldest was, for Perkins, “the opportunity to play out some of my fantasies of being the bossy one for a change, which I’m thoroughly enjoying. Plus, I think I have some of the best lines because Carol always has to have the last word.”

“That’s just typecasting. Elizabeth is always bossing me around,” claims Lane, tongue in cheek. The truth is, the two share a close friendship of many years and previously co-starred in the feature *Indian Summer* and the soon-to-be-released Griffin Dunne drama *Fierce People*. For Lane, an only child, “she’s the closest thing I have to a real sister and that connection made these roles all the more interesting to play.”

Echoing Mulroney’s sentiment and that of the players in general, Perkins says, “it’s great to see a script like this where it’s not all pratfalls and people tumbling down the stairs, but real intelligent comedy about relationships.”

Although focused on Sarah’s love life, the sisters are also slowly coming to terms with another potential relationship developing on the periphery of their family circle: Dolly, an effervescent, three-times married free spirit who has lately emerged as the frontrunner for their widowed father’s attention through an Internet dating service.

“Dolly has a great appetite for life,” says acclaimed stage, film and television star Stockard Channing, whose 1993 performance in *Six Degrees of Separation* earned an Oscar nomination. “She can be a bit silly and vain with all her wild outfits but she’s truly a wise and kind-hearted soul, and realistic about romance and about people in general.”

An eleven-time Emmy Award nominee, Channing won the award twice in 2002, for both *The Matthew Shepard Story* and her series regular role as First Lady Abigail Bartlet in *The West Wing*, which she has played since 1999. Part of the attraction of the Dolly role was how much it differed from the gravity of her *West Wing* performance. “I adore good old Abigail,” she says, “but my background is comedy. I’ve been the First Lady for so long, I miss being goofy. Dolly is definitely a little goofy. She’s just out to have a good time.”

“Stockard makes Dolly irresistible,” says Goldberg. “Dolly’s a kind of out-there personality, which I think Stockard definitely had some fun with, but at the same time she keeps her grounded and you get a sense that this is a character with a very rich and interesting past.”

Unfortunately, Dolly’s free-and-easy approach to cyber dating, with her multiple profiles tailored to each of a dozen websites and her creative packaging of the truth backfires on her in a classic *Harold and Maude* moment when one of her regular Internet correspondents turns out to be a 15-year old boy under the impression that Dolly is a teenager. Worse yet, upon impulsively showing up in person and learning the truth, he isn’t the least bit discouraged.

As gracefully as she lets down her would-be high school Romeo, Dolly also accepts the fact that Bill, the man she’s grown to care for very much, isn’t ready to make a commitment and might never be. “She’s aware of his pain and has compassion for him. She knows his late wife was the love of his life and he’s not looking to replace her,” Channing understands. “She sees him genuinely as a human being, rather than ‘a catch,’ or just the hot new widower in town. Consequently, she cuts him a lot of slack when he does things like inviting three women to Thanksgiving dinner and expecting them to sit together. Dolly is willing to bide her time because she thinks Bill is worth it.”

That’s an assessment Bill himself would no doubt share, with a mischievous smile and an appropriate line of lyric philosophy.

Bill is brought vividly to life by legendary and widely accomplished actor Christopher Plummer, perhaps best known to generations around the world as the patriarch of another screen family, the Von Trapps of *The Sound of Music*. Plummer has distinguished himself in all acting

genres in a career spanning 50 years and including such highlights as *The Man Who Would Be King*, *Somewhere in Time*, an Emmy Award-winning performance in Arthur Hailey's *The Moneychangers*, *The Thorn Birds*, *Dolores Claiborne* and, more recently, Michael Mann's *The Insider* and *A Beautiful Mind*. Six-times nominated for Broadway's Tony Award, Plummer won twice; for *Cyrano* in 1974 and again for the title role of *Barrymore* in 1997.

"Bill is based somewhat on my own father-in-law, a genuinely charming Irish gentleman, very warm and generous. If you knew him for five minutes you could have anything in his house," Goldberg reveals. "He was also on the cutting edge of everything, even into his 80s, he never stopped being interested in the world and what was going on."

A father of daughters himself, Goldberg finds "the relationship between Bill and Sarah powerful and resonant. Chris is such a phenomenally skilled actor that he provides all the subtext for the character without having to involve a lot of talking about it. You sense how deeply he feels, how much he cares for his little girl and how seriously attached he was to his late wife. You know, even before he explains it to Sarah, that his decision to start dating again has nothing to do with her mother who, of course, can never be replaced."

Plummer appreciated the way the writer/director avoided "the traps of sentimentality, with a lighter touch and a bit of edginess," and how the script "kept from tying everything up in neat little bundles to satisfy everyone. One of the things I most liked about the story was the fact that it left a fair amount to the imagination. You wondered, for instance, what would happen to the situation with Dolly and Bill, particularly as his true love and loyalty remains with his departed wife. We can't get too cozy with Dolly after all, because he doesn't know where that relationship will ultimately lead," and, true enough to life, neither does she.

Expressing the consensus of cast and crew, Jennifer Todd calls Plummer "incredibly charismatic," and credits him with "bringing invaluable authenticity to the part of Sarah's father. They are in some ways having a parallel experience re-visiting the dating world although it's very different for each of them, and while that's fertile ground for comedy there's also a poignancy to it that Diane and Christopher subtly bring out in their scenes together."

Rounding out the main cast are Ali Hillis (*Kiss Kiss Bang Bang*) as Sarah's conspiratorial younger sister Christine, with "solid gold" dating tips from Sports Illustrated, and Glenn Howerton (*ER*) as her brother Michael. Julie Gonzalo (*Christmas with the Kranks*) and Brad William Henke (*Nikki*) are June and Leo, Sarah's supportive colleagues at the preschool, and

Ben Shenkman (Emmy and Golden Globe nominee for *Angels in America*) is Jake's cynical friend Charlie who, although completely lacking in taste and good sense himself when it comes to women, at least deserves credit for selecting Sarah's Internet ad for Jake.

The Dogs: Unconditional Love

Not a dog owner herself, Sarah is a frequent and willing babysitter for her brother Michael's playful Newfoundland, Mother Teresa, and borrows the sweet-natured bundle of fur for her first date with Jake at the dog park. In contrast to the complications, drama and pretense that characterize adult relationships, Mother Teresa provides only unconditional devotion.

An uncommon breed, and quite large, Newfoundlands are aptly described by Cusack as "great big, lovable, furry teddy bears."

Mother Teresa was played by two female Newfies, Molly and Mabel, selected and trained by renowned animal handler Boone Narr, with head trainer Mark Harden and the team at Boone's Animals for Hollywood, a 33-year industry institution. Although sizeable enough on screen, both dogs were still only puppies, six months old and 80 pounds at the time of production, which is half their potential. Traditionally bred as seafaring rescue dogs, full-grown Newfoundlands will tip the scales at about 150 pounds for females and as much as 165 pounds for males.

Goldberg, a dog-lover who already had four at home and happily adopted Molly and Mabel when production wrapped, admits that, "the dog in Claire's book wasn't a Newfoundland but I'm crazy for Newfies; they have such sweet natures and their eyes are so expressive."

Narr's team located two puppies similar in appearance and began working with them several months prior to filming. "The weak points in one dog's performance will be the strong points for the other," explains Narr, who grounds his regimen in the belief that individual animals will naturally reveal their own talents and personalities in the process.

In addition to hitting their marks, sitting, standing up, laying their heads down, speaking, directing their looks, jumping into a lake and swimming on cue, Molly and Mabel had to master the "go-with," in some cases the most difficult exercise of all, wherein an animal must focus its attention onto an actor as if it were that person's pet, while appearing unaware of the trainer who is providing the cues off-camera.

The trainers' skill at the "go-with" was tested in the film's dog park scene, which matched extras with 26 trained dogs of various breeds who had, understandably, a tough time coping with all the intriguing new scents and sights in the Long Beach public park. "Fortunately, what Gary wanted was a kind of natural, controlled chaos," Narr says, "so it worked out well."

In reference to the industry adage about actors wary of working with dogs or children, he acknowledges that, "the way actors interact with an animal, no matter how well trained, can really make or break a scene. These guys have been great. They spend their own time working with us and there's nothing they won't do to make the situation work for the dog. Diane will give commands and reward the dog if we can't get there in time. She doesn't care about getting slobber on her. She doesn't care about getting her hands dirty."

ABOUT THE CAST

An actress whose acclaimed career has bridged childhood stardom with classic leading lady status, **DIANE LANE** (Sarah Nolan) has firmly established herself among the upper echelon of her peers.

Lane will next be seen in *Fierce People*, directed by Griffin Dunne, in which Lane plays Liz, a loving mother with a slight cocaine problem. In an effort to clean up her life she leaves Manhattan to move in with her only son, Finn, in the wealthy country side in an attempt to start fresh. They adjust quickly to their new life in the country until Finn is brutally attacked and they are left to question whether or not they were safer back in the big city. The film is due for release this October.

Lane recently wrapped production on *Truth, Justice, and the American Way*, opposite Ben Affleck and Adrian Brody. Allen Coulter directs the story of a Los Angeles gumshoe trying

to solve George Reeves' mysterious death. Lane will portray Toni Mannix, the Hollywood wife of a studio exec who may have been linked romantically to Reeves.

Lane earned a Golden Globe nomination for her performance in Audrey Wells' romantic comedy *Under the Tuscan Sun*. Based on Frances Mayes' memoir of the same name, the film follows the experiences of an American woman who takes a trip to Italy in search of a more satisfying life.

She received considerable critical acclaim for her role in Adrian Lyne's *Unfaithful*, re-teaming her with *Cotton Club* co-star Richard Gere and Olivier Martinez. Based on French director Claude Chabrol's 1969 film *La Femme Infidel*, her portrayal of a conflicted, adulterous wife earned her Academy Award, Golden Globe, and SAG nominations for Best Actress, as well as being named Best Actress by the New York Film Critics and National Society of Film Critics.

Lane co-starred with Mark Wahlberg and George Clooney in the box office hit *The Perfect Storm* for director Wolfgang Petersen. Prior to that, she received a Spirit Award nomination for Best Actress for her work in the drama *A Walk on the Moon*, starring Anna Paquin, Liev Schreiber and Viggo Mortensen. The film also featured actor Tony Goldwyn's directorial debut. She also starred in Brian Robbins' *Hardball*, opposite Keanu Reeves.

Other recent films include the highly successful adaptation of Willie Morris' childhood memoir *My Dog Skip*. Directed by Jay Russell, the film co-stars Kevin Bacon and Frankie Muniz. Lane's impressive filmography also includes Peter Masterson's independent drama *The Only Thrill*, opposite Diane Keaton, Sam Shepard and Robert Patrick; the political thriller, *Murder at 1600*, opposite Wesley Snipes for Warner Bros. Pictures; Francis Ford Coppola's *Jack*, opposite Robin Williams; and Walter Hill's epic western *Wild Bill*, with Jeff Bridges.

Additional film credits include the Coppola films *The Outsiders*, *Rumble Fish* and *The Cotton Club*; the futuristic adventure *Judge Dredd*; the critically acclaimed independent feature *My New Gun*; as well as her portrayal of actress Paulette Goddard in *Chaplin* for director Sir Richard Attenborough.

On television, Lane was last seen starring opposite Bill Pullman in TNT's *The Virginian*. Also directed by Pullman, the film is based on Owen Wister's classic western novel of the same name.

Lane's previous television credits include playing Stella opposite Alec Baldwin and Jessica Lange in *A Streetcar Named Desire* for CBS television, as well as the award-winning

CBS series *Lonesome Dove*, where her role opposite Robert Duvall garnered Lane an Emmy nomination as Outstanding Lead Actress. She also starred opposite Gena Rowlands in the Hallmark Hall of Fame drama *Grace & Glorie* for CBS. In 1994, Lane starred opposite Donald Sutherland, Cicely Tyson and Anne Bancroft in the critically acclaimed CBS epic miniseries *Oldest Living Confederate Widow Tells All*. Based on the best-selling novel by Allan Gurganus, Lane portrayed her character from her early teens into her sixties.

Born in New York City, the daughter of drama coach Burt Lane and singer Colleen Farrington, Lane became a professional actress at the age of six. Answering a call for child actors at La Mama Experimental Theater, she won a role in Andrei Serbani's unique version of *Medea* and subsequently appeared over the next five years in his productions of *Electra*, *The Trojan Women*, *The Good Woman of Szechuan* and *As You Like It*, both in New York and at theater festivals around the world.

After performing in Joseph Papp's productions of *The Cherry Orchard* and *Agamemnon* at Lincoln Center in 1976-77, Lane starred at The Public Theater in *Runaways*. In 1978, Lane made her film debut opposite Sir Laurence Olivier in George Roy Hill's *A Little Romance* and subsequently graced the August '79 cover of *TIME Magazine*.

With an impressive body of work spanning the course of two decades, **JOHN CUSACK** (Jake Anderson) has evolved into one of Hollywood's most accomplished and respected actors of his generation. He has garnered both critical acclaim and prestigious accolades for his dramatic as well as comedic roles.

Cusack first gained the attention of audiences by starring in a number of 1980s film classics such as *The Sure Thing*, *Say Anything* and *Sixteen Candles*. Following these roles, he successfully shed his teen-heartbeat image by demonstrating his ability to expand his film repertoire by starring in a wide range of dramas, thrillers and comedies including *The Grifters*, *Eight Men Out*, *Adaptation*, *Being John Malkovich*, *High Fidelity* and *Grosse Pointe Blank*.

Cusack is currently in Vancouver filming the Menno Meyjes' science-fiction drama *The Martian Child*. He plays a widowed father of an adopted young boy, who is convinced that the boy is from Mars. Later this year, Cusack will also film *The Contract*. The Bruce Beresford directed thriller co-stars Morgan Freeman and will be filmed in Bulgaria.

In November this year, Cusack will be reunited with Billy Bob Thornton in the dark comedy *The Ice Harvest*. Based on a Scott Phillips novel, the Harold Ramis directed film revolves around a lawyer (Cusack) who is about to embezzle money from his mob superiors on a snowy Christmas Eve.

Cusack's most recent credit on the big screen was *Runaway Jury*, where he starred opposite Hollywood legends Gene Hackman and Dustin Hoffman. The film was based on John Grisham's best selling novel of the same title and was directed by Gary Fleder. In 2003, Cusack starred alongside Amanda Peet, Alfred Molina and Ray Liotta in the thriller *Identity*, directed by James Mangold.

Cusack also starred in the controversial film *Max* for director Menno Meyjes, released in December 2002. He portrayed Max Rothman, an elegant, sophisticated former cavalry officer who returns to his native Munich to set up an art gallery, when he meets another aspiring artist, a young Adolf Hitler (played by Noah Taylor). The film, which Cusack also produced, garnered strong reactions at the 2002 Toronto Film Festival and has been debated extensively throughout the country because of its controversial subject matter.

Cusack has starred in several romantic comedies including *Serendipity*, directed by Peter Chelsom and co-starring Kate Beckinsale; as well as starring with Julia Roberts, Catherine Zeta-Jones and Billy Crystal in *America's Sweethearts*.

In 2001, Cusack was nominated for a Golden Globe Award for Best Performance by an Actor in a Motion Picture Comedy or Musical for his role in the feature version of Nick Hornby's English novel *High Fidelity*. In addition to starring in the film, Cusack also co-produced and co-wrote the script with Steve Pink and D.V. DeVincentis. The film also stars Jack Black, Lisa Bonet, Catherine Zeta-Jones and John's sister, Joan Cusack.

In 1999, Cusack starred in the dark comedy *Being John Malkovich*. His performance earned him an Independent Spirit Award nomination in the category of Best Actor. That year, Cusack also co-starred in *Cradle Will Rock*, an ensemble drama written and directed by Tim Robbins, portraying Nelson Rockefeller, opposite an ensemble cast that included Emily Watson, Cary Elwes, Susan Sarandon, Hank Azaria, John Turturro, Ruben Blades and Vanessa Redgrave. He also starred with Billy Bob Thornton, Angelina Jolie and Cate Blanchett in Mike Newell's comedy *Pushing Tin*. In the same year, he starred in HBO's *The Jack Bull*, a traditional Western

written by his father, Dick Cusack. John served as executive producer on this film along with Steve Pink and D.V. DeVincentis.

In December 1998, Cusack appeared in the World War II combat epic *The Thin Red Line*, based on the James Jones novel about the Battle of Guadalcanal. Directed by Terrence Malick, the ensemble cast included George Clooney, Woody Harrelson, Nick Nolte, Gary Oldman, Sean Penn, Bill Pullman and John Travolta.

In 1997, Cusack starred opposite Joan Cusack, Dan Aykroyd and Minnie Driver in *Grosse Pointe Blank*. Cusack received rave reviews for the comedy that he also produced and co-wrote about a hit man who goes through a spiritual crisis during his high school reunion. This was the first project New Crime developed and produced under their banner.

Also in 1997, Cusack starred with Nicolas Cage, John Malkovich and Steve Buscemi in the blockbuster *Con Air* from director Simon West. Later that year he starred with Kevin Spacey in the Warner Bros. Pictures' feature *Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil*, directed by Clint Eastwood. Based on John Berendt's nonfiction bestseller of the same name, Cusack portrayed John Kelso, the movie version of the author/narrator. Additionally, Cusack lent his voice to the full-length animated feature *Anastasia*, opposite the voices of Meg Ryan as Anastasia, Christopher Lloyd as Rasputin, and Kelsey Grammer as Vladimir.

In 1995, Cusack starred opposite Al Pacino in the political thriller *City Hall*, directed by Harold Becker. In 1994, he re-teamed with Woody Allen, who cast him in the 1991 film *Shadows and Fog*, to portray playwright David Shayne in the acclaimed *Bullets Over Broadway*. The ensemble cast included Chazz Palminteri, Jennifer Tilly, Dianne Wiest and Tracey Ullman. Some of his other feature film credits include *The Road to Wellville*, *True Colors*, *Broadcast News*, *Stand By Me* and *Better Off Dead*.

Cusack divides his time between Los Angeles and Chicago.

DERMOT MULRONEY (Bob Connor) recently wrapped production on *The Family Stone*, a romantic comedy in which he'll star opposite Diane Keaton, Sarah Jessica Parker, Claire Danes, Luke Wilson and Rachel McAdams. Set around Christmastime, the story revolves around a family whose favorite son (Mulroney) brings home the woman to whom he intends to propose (Parker), only to have his family turn on her. The film will be released this November. Mulroney will start work in the fall on *Griffin and Phoenix*, opposite Amanda Peet.

Mulroney most recently starred opposite Debra Messing in the romantic comedy *The Wedding Date*, and opposite Josh Lucas and Jamie Bell in David Gordon Green's *Undertow*. He also appeared in Alexander Payne's *About Schmidt*, co-starring Jack Nicholson and Hope Davis, and in *The Safety of Objects*, an ensemble film adapted from the A.M. Homes novel of the same name, in which he starred with Glenn Close, Patricia Clarkson, Joshua Jackson and Timothy Olyphant.

Additional credits include: *My Best Friend's Wedding*, opposite Julia Roberts and Cameron Diaz; the Nicole Holofcener film *Lovely & Amazing*, co-starring Catherine Keener, Brenda Blethyn and Emily Mortimer; *Trixie*, opposite Brittany Murphy and Emily Watson; *Goodbye Lover*, with Patricia Arquette and Ellen DeGeneres, directed by Roland Joffe; *Where the Money Is*, starring opposite Paul Newman and Linda Fiorentino; *The Trigger Effect* with Elisabeth Shue; *Kansas City* with Jennifer Jason Leigh; *Copycat*, opposite Holly Hunter and Sigourney Weaver; Tom DiCillo's *Living in Oblivion*, opposite Steve Buscemi and Catherine Keener; and *How To Make an American Quilt*, with Winona Ryder, Anne Bancroft, Ellen Burstyn, Kate Capshaw and Alfre Woodard.

Mulroney's earlier work includes critically acclaimed performances in *Longtime Companion* and *Where the Day Takes You*; *Samantha*, with Martha Plimpton; *Staying Together*, with Stockard Channing; Peter Bogdanovich's *The Thing Called Love*, which also starred River Phoenix and Sandra Bullock; *Young Guns*, with Kiefer Sutherland; *Point of No Return*, with Bridget Fonda; *Bad Girls*, opposite Andie MacDowell, Madeleine Stowe and Drew Barrymore; the Blake Edwards' comedy *Sunset*; and *Career Opportunities*, opposite Jennifer Connelly.

His television work includes a multi-episode guest-starring role on the hit NBC comedy *Friends*; the HBO film *Long Gone*; ABC's four-hour drama *Family Pictures*, with Anjelica Huston; the TNT feature *The Heart of Justice*; the ABC movie-of-the-week *Daddy*; CBS's *Unconquered*, in which he starred as football and track star Richard Flowers; the CBS movie-of-the-week *Sin of Innocence*; and the ABC After School Special, *Toma-The Drug Knot*.

An actress who has distinguished herself with an eclectic mix of roles, **ELIZABETH PERKINS** (Carol) made her New York theatrical debut in 1984 in Neil Simon's *Brighton Beach Memoirs*. She subsequently worked with Playwrights' Horizon, the Ensemble Studio Theatre, The New York Shakespeare Festival and the Steppenwolf Theater.

Perkins' recent feature film credits include *Kids in America*; *The Thing About My Folks*, starring alongside Peter Falk, Paul Reiser and Olympia Dukakis; *Fierce People*, with Diane Lane; *The Ring Two*, with Naomi Watts; *Jiminy Glick in La La Wood*, starring alongside Martin Short and Janeane Garofalo; *Speak*; *Gilded Stones*; *Finding Nemo*; *Try Seventeen*; *Cats & Dogs*; *28 Days*, alongside Sandra Bullock; *Crazy in Alabama*, with Melanie Griffith; and *I'm Losing You*.

Perkins made her feature film debut in Ed Zwick's *About Last Night*, an adaptation of David Mamet's play, *Sexual Perversity in Chicago*. Her breakthrough performance came in 1988 opposite Tom Hanks in the smash hit *Big*, directed by Penny Marshall, and she went on to receive critical acclaim for her performance in Barry Levinson's *Avalon*. She also starred in *The Doctor, He Said, She Said*, and *Indian Summer* before bringing cartoon character Wilma Flintstone to life in *The Flintstones*. Her other films include *Miracle on 34th Street*, *Moonlight and Valentino*, *From the Hip*, *Sweet Hearts Dance*, *Love at Large*, *Enid is Sleeping* and *Lesser Prophets*.

Among her television projects are *Hercules*, *My Sister's Keeper*, *For Their Own Good*, *Baby 2000*, *Rescuers: Stories of Courage: Two Women*, *From the Earth to the Moon*, *If These Walls Could Talk 2* and *Battery Park*.

Currently, Perkins is filming *Weeds*, for Showtime.

STOCKARD CHANNING (Dolly) is one of the most respected and versatile actresses of our time. Her career to date reflects a vast range of roles in film, television and theatre. Channing will be returning to television this fall starring in the CBS comedy *Out of Practice*. The story revolves around a family of physicians who, although they share the same profession, have very little in common. Her character is a driven, status-conscious cardiologist whose career eclipsed her ex-husband's (Henry Winkler) years ago.

Channing has been balancing both film and successful television shows for years. In 2003, she starred in Stephen Fry's *Bright Young Things*, opposite Jim Broadbent, Dan Aykroyd and Emily Mortimer. She also starred in the Merchant-Ivory film *Le Divorce*, opposite Kate Hudson, Naomi Watts and Glenn Close. That same year, Channing was a part of an ensemble star-studded cast of Woody Allen's *Anything Else*, opposite Danny DeVito, Woody Allen, Christina Ricci and Jason Biggs. In 2002, she was awarded an Emmy and Screen Actor's Guild Award for her poignant portrayal of Matthew Shepard's mother in *The Matthew Shepard Story*. The controversial television movie was based on the true story of the openly gay college student

Matthew Shepard, who was brutally beaten and killed from a hate-motivated murder that later led to a great deal of national media attention. That same year, Channing was also awarded an Emmy for her powerful portrayal of first lady Abigail Bartlet on the award-winning series *The West Wing*.

One of the more acclaimed film portrayals of Channing's career took place when she reprised her Broadway role of Ouisa Kittredge (for which she was nominated for a Tony Award) in the motion picture version of *Six Degrees of Separation*. Channing went on to be nominated for an Academy Award and a Golden Globe. This film tells the story of a pampered socialite who begins to realize the emptiness of her life and the starvation of her soul. That same year she earned a Screen Actor's Guild nomination for her appearance in the Wayne Wang film *Smoke*. In 2002, she was recognized by the London Film Critics for her role in *Business of Strangers*.

In Addition to *Six Degrees of Separation*, Channing has an extensive career on Broadway. In 1999, she was nominated for a Tony Award for her role as Eleanor of Aquitaine in *The Lion in Winter*, opposite Laurence Fishburne. Other stage credits include her Tony Award-winning role in *Joe Egg*, where she portrayed a wife struggling with her husband to cope with their only child's severe handicaps. Others include: *House of Blue Leaves*, *Four Baboons Adoring the Sun*, *The Little Foxes*, *Hapgood*, *Woman in Mind*, *The Rink*, *The Golden Age*, *They're Playing Our Song* and the original production of *Love Letters*.

Another of Channing's notable performances was playing the iconic bad girl, Rizzo, in the infamous Randall Kleiser film *Grease*, in which she starred opposite John Travolta and Olivia Newton-John. Channing went on to appear in several other high profile pictures over the years, including *Life or Something Like it*, *Isn't She Great*, *Practical Magic*, *Twilight*, *The First Wives Club*, *Moll Flanders*, *To Wong Foo, Thanks for Everything! Julie Newmar*, *Married to It*, *Meet the Applegates*, *Staying Together*, *Destiny*, *Heartburn*, *The Men's Club*, *The Fortune*, *The Cheap Detective*, *Sweet Revenge*, *The Big Bus* and *Without a Trace*.

Channing's television credits include the Lifetime movie *The Truth about Jane*; the Showtime miniseries *It's A Girl Thing*; *An Unexpected Life* for the USA Network; the Disney Channel's *The Road to Avonlea*; HBO's *Perfect Witness*; CBS's *David's Mother*, *Echoes in the Darkness*, and *On Tidy Endings*; NBC's *Confessions of an Ugly Stepsister* and *The Prosecutors*; Showtime's *Lily Dale*; the Hallmark Hall of Fame production of *The Room Upstairs*; *Silent*

Victory: The Story of Kitty O'Neal; CBS's *The Stockard Channing Show* and *The Girl Most Likely To*.

Channing divides her time between New York and Los Angeles.

CHRISTOPHER PLUMMER (Bill), who has recently completed his Tony-nominated performance as King Lear in Sir Jonathan Miller's much lauded production at Lincoln Center, has enjoyed 50 years as one of the English speaking theatre's most distinguished actors and as a veteran of international renown in over 100 motion pictures.

It was in his hometown of Montreal that Plummer began his professional career on stage and radio in both French and English. After Eva Le Gallienne gave him his New York debut (1954) he went on to star in many celebrated, prize-winning productions on Broadway and London's West End, including Elia Kazan's production of Archibald MacLeish's Pulitzer winning play *J.B.*, and the title role in Anthony Burgess' musical *Cyrano*, for which Plummer won his first Tony. Apart from *King Lear*, his most recent Broadway success was as *Barrymore*, for which he won the Tony, Drama Desk, Outer Critics Circle Award, The Edwin Booth Award, the Boston Critic's Award, Chicago's Jefferson Award, and Los Angeles' Ovation Award as Best Actor 1997-1998. He was also a leading member of Britain's National Theatre under Sir Laurence Olivier, the Royal Shakespeare Company under Sir Peter Hall, and in its formative years, Canada's Stratford Festival under Sir Tyrone Guthrie and Michael Langham. He has played most of the great roles in the classic repertoire.

Plummer's eclectic career on screen began when Sidney Lumet gave him his movie debut in *Stage Struck*. Since then he has appeared in a host of notable films which include the Academy Award-winning *The Sound of Music*, *The Man Who Would Be King*, *The Battle of Britain*, *Waterloo*, *The Silent Partner*, *Dragnet*, *Daisy Clover*, *Star Trek IV*, *Malcolm X*, *Dolores Claiborne*, *Wolf*, *Twelve Monkeys*, *Murder by Decree*, *Somewhere in Time*, Douglas McGrath's *Nicholas Nickleby*, and a host of others.

Plummer's recent successes are Michael Mann's Oscar-nominated *The Insider*, playing television journalist Mike Wallace, for which he won the Boston, Los Angeles, Chicago and Las Vegas National Critics' Awards; as well as Ron Howard's Academy Award-winning *A Beautiful Mind*, and Atom Egoyan's *Ararat*. His latest released films are Oliver Stone's *Alexander* and *National Treasure*.

Up next, he will be seen in Terrence Malick's *The New World*, as well as Warner Bros. Pictures' political thriller *Syriana* and *Il Mare*, which will be released later this year.

ABOUT THE FILMMAKERS

GARY DAVID GOLDBERG (Director / Producer / Screenplay) was born in Brooklyn, New York on June 25, 1944. After a prolonged and checkered collegiate career, which began at Brandeis University in 1962 and ended at San Diego State University in 1975 (with many other schools in between), he moved to Hollywood to try to make it as a writer.

In 1976 he landed his first "real" job at MTM as a writer for *The Bob Newhart Show*. Remaining at MTM, he moved over to become story editor and then producer of *The Tony Randall Show*, and then, in 1978, producer of *Lou Grant*. In 1980 he created and executive produced *The Last Resort*, also for MTM.

In 1981, Goldberg left MTM to form his own company, UBU Productions. Under this banner, nine television series have been created, including the enormously successful *Family Ties*, which ran on NBC 1982-1989, and the critically acclaimed *Brooklyn Bridge*, which aired on CBS 1991-1993. In association with DreamWorks, UBU produced *Spin City*, which ran for six seasons on ABC.

Goldberg has been the recipient of numerous honors during his career, including an Emmy Award as co-producer of *Lou Grant* and an Emmy Award as writer of the *Family Ties* episode "'A,' My Name is Alex"; five additional Emmy nominations for *Lou Grant* and *Family Ties*; a Peabody for *Lou Grant*; two Writers Guild Awards, one for an episode of *M*A*S*H** and another for the "'A,' My Name is Alex" episode of *Family Ties*; five Writers Guild nominations for episodes of *Lou Grant*, *Making the Grade*, and *Family Ties*; five Humanitas Awards for *Lou Grant*, and *Family Ties*, as well as five additional Humanitas nominations; the Producers Guild Award as Producer of the Year in 1991 and the Valentine Davies Award from the Writers Guild for his contributions to the entertainment industry and the community-at-large. And, in 1992 he was inducted into The Broadcasting Magazine Hall of Fame.

During its run, *Brooklyn Bridge* received several honors – a Golden Globe Award for Best Comedy Series, one Humanitas Prize and an additional Humanitas nomination for enriching

television, a Christopher Award, two Viewers for Quality Television awards for Best Comedy, and eight Emmy nominations.

In 1989, Goldberg made his feature film debut when he produced and directed Universal Pictures' *Dad*, starring Jack Lemmon, Ted Danson and Olympia Dukakis. He also wrote the screenplay, which was adapted from the novel of the same name by William Wharton. His second feature film, *Bye Bye Love*, starred Paul Reiser, Matthew Modine and Randy Quaid, as three divorced fathers on a weekend when they all have custody of their children.

Goldberg is married to Dr. Diana Meehan. They have two children, Shana and Cailin.

SUZANNE & JENNIFER TODD (Producers) comprise the producing partnership Team Todd that currently holds a first-look deal with Revolution Studios. Prior to forming Team Todd, both sisters attended the renowned USC Film School, worked for Joel Silver at Warner Bros. Pictures and, in tandem with Demi Moore, produced films that include *Now and Then*, *G.I. Jane*, and the highest rated movie in the history of HBO, *If These Walls Could Talk*.

Under the Team Todd banner, Jennifer and Suzanne are responsible for producing the *Austin Powers* franchise which has grossed over half a billion dollars worldwide; *Boiler Room*, the gritty Wall Street drama which starred Giovanni Ribisi and Ben Affleck, nominated for Best Feature and Best First Screenplay at the 2001 Independent Spirit Awards; and *Memento*, the highly acclaimed independent film that won the 2000 Independent Spirit Award for Best Feature.

Their films have earned numerous Golden Globe, Emmy, and Academy Award nominations, and they were both honored with Women In Film's celebrated Lucy Award. For their HBO follow up, *If These Walls Could Talk 2*, Vanessa Redgrave won every major acting award including the Emmy, Golden Globe and SAG Award.

Up next for Team Todd is the romantic comedy *Prime*, starring Meryl Streep and Uma Thurman, which will be released on October 28th, 2005. The active sisters are currently working on the *Untitled Julie Taymor Project*, a musical told through the songs of the Beatles and *Zoom*, a family adventure comedy starring Tim Allen and Courtney Cox, based on Jason Lethcoe's graphic novel *Zoom's Academy for the Super Gifted*, both to be released in 2006.

CLAIRE COOK (Book Author) is the bestselling author of three novels, Multiple Choice, Must Love Dogs and Ready to Fall. She has been a judge for the Thurber Prize for American Humor and is a member of the Cape Cod Writers Center faculty. She lives on the South Shore of Massachusetts with her husband, two teenagers and their dog, where she is currently hard at work on her fourth novel, which has a Hollywood twist.

Multiple Choice, Cook's third novel is the #2 BookSense 2005 Summer paperback pick. It was also a BookSense pick in hardcover, a BarnesandNoble.com Book Club pick, a More Magazine Don't Miss selection, and a Book-of-the-Month Club and Literary Guild selection. Multiple Choice has been optioned for the screen by Working Title.

As a book, Must Love Dogs (2002) was a Barnes & Noble Discover Great New Writers Pick, a BookSense pick in both hardcover and paperback, and a Book-of-the-Month Club and Literary Guild selection.

Cook wrote her first novel, Ready to Fall (2000), in her Ford Windstar outside her daughter's swim practice at five in the morning. Happily, she has left her minivan and writes in a home office now. A former teacher of physical fitness, including open ocean rowing, as well as creative writing, she also worked as continuity director of a radio station. Visit her website at www.clairecook.com.

BRAD HALL's (Executive Producer) long collaboration with Gary David Goldberg includes the award-winning CBS series *Brooklyn Bridge*, on which Hall served as writer, producer, and directed an episode; and the feature film comedy *Bye Bye Love*. Hall has created, written, directed, and starred in series television for NBC, ABC, and CBS, including such shows as *Saturday Night Live* (actor / writer) *Frasier* (writer), and *Watching Ellie* (creator / writer-producer). Hall also appears briefly in *Must Love Dogs* as an actor.

RONALD G. SMITH (Executive Producer) began his career as a production assistant on Steven Spielberg's first feature film, *The Sugarland Express*. Since then, he has worked as a production manager on films such as *Losing Isaiah*, *The Glimmer Man*, *Three Kings*, *Swordfish* and *Looney Tunes: Back in Action*.

He has also worked as a producer and executive producer on films such as *Fire Down Below* and *Gods and Generals*, as well as the television series *Scarecrow and Mrs. King*. In

addition, he worked at Warner Bros. Pictures as a Vice President of Production and oversaw such movies as *Tango & Cash*, *Batman*, *Lethal Weapon 2* and others. Smith recently produced *Around the Bend*, starring Christopher Walken and Michael Caine.

As one of the premiere American cinematographers, **JOHN BAILEY, A.S.C** (Director of Photography) has worked with a number of leading directors, including Paul Schrader, Lawrence Kasdan, Michael Apted, John Schlesinger, Robert Redford, Herbert Ross, Wolfgang Petersen, Jonathan Demme, Robert Benton, James Brooks and Sam Raimi.

Bailey's most recent credits include *The Producers: The Movie Musical*, *The Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants*, *Incident at Loch Ness*, *How to Lose a Guy in 10 Days*, *The Kid Stays in the Picture*, *Divine Secrets of the Ya Ya Sisterhood* and *The Anniversary Party*.

In an eclectic career, Bailey has photographed mainstream Hollywood films such as *The Big Chill*, *Ordinary People*, *The Accidental Tourist* and *As Good As it Gets*, offbeat auteur films such as Norman Mailer's *Tough Guys Don't Dance* and Jason Miller's *That Championship Season*, as well as genre-bending pictures such as *Swimming to Cambodia* and *A Brief History of Time*.

A highlight of Bailey's career is the special Artistic Achievement Award he received from the Cannes Film Festival for his work on Paul Schrader's *Mishima: A Life in Four Chapters*.

Bailey is married to film editor Carol Littleton. They both have served on the Board of Governors of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences. He has also served several terms as a vice president of the American Society of Cinematographers.

Currently, Bailey is filming *All Fall Down* in New York.

NAOMI SHOHAN (Production Designer) most recently lent her production design talents to *Constantine* for Warner Bros. Pictures, starring Keanu Reeves. Previously, she was responsible for the production design of Antoine Fuqua's intense war film *Tears of the Sun*, with Bruce Willis, as well as Fuqua's gritty crime drama *Training Day*, which earned stars Denzel Washington an Academy Award for Best Actor and Ethan Hawke an Academy Award

nomination for Best Supporting Actor. Shohan also designed the 1999 Academy Award-winning Best Picture *American Beauty*, starring Kevin Spacey and Annette Bening.

Constantine marked the designer's third film with actor Keanu Reeves. Previously, she worked on the romantic drama *Sweet November* with Reeves and Charlize Theron and *Feeling Minnesota*, starring Reeves and Cameron Diaz. Shohan served as the production designer on the suspense thriller *Teaching Mrs. Tingle*, starring Helen Mirren and Katie Holmes; the action thriller *The Replacement Killers* (also directed by Antoine Fuqua); *Playing God*; *White Man's Burden*, starring John Travolta; and *Zebrahead*, directed by Anthony Drazan.

ERIC SEARS, A.C.E. (Editor) most recently edited *Cellular* and *Final Destination 2*, both for director David Ellis. Other film credits include *On the Line*; *Original Sin*; *Cheaters*, for which he was nominated for an A.C.E. Award; *Body Shots* and *The Rat Pack* for HBO, for which he was nominated for an Emmy and A.C.E. Award. Sears won both the Emmy and the A.C.E. Award for his work on HBO's *Gia*, starring Angelina Jolie.

Sears' additional film credits include *The Sixth Man*, *Spy Hard*, *Houseguest*, *The Positively True Adventures of the Alleged Texas Cheerleader Murdering Mom*, for which he was nominated for an A.C.E. Award, *Encino Man*, *Dad* and *Wired*. He was also a co-editor on *Mighty Ducks II* and *Hot Shots!*

For the small screen, Sears edited the *Karen Sisco* pilot, *The Boys*, and TNT's *The Court Martial of Jackie Robinson*, for which he was nominated for both the Emmy and A.C.E. Award. His additional television credits include *Baby M*, *Queenie*, *Into Thin Air* and *North and South II*, all four of which were nominated for A.C.E. Awards. Sears also edited on the popular series *Miami Vice*.

ROGER BONDELLI (Editor) last worked on the feature film *Man of the House*, for director Stephen Herek. Before that, he edited *Eurotrip*, working with producer Ivan Reitman and writer-directors Alec Berg, David Mandel and Jeff Schaffer. Previous to that, he edited the feature *Dickie Roberts: Former Child Star*, for director Sam Weisman. This was his third collaboration with director Weisman, having also edited *George of the Jungle* and *Bye Bye Love*. In addition, his feature credits include *Snow Dogs*, for director Brian Levant and producer Jordan

Kerner; *Anna and the King*; *Ever After*; *Fools Rush In*; *It Takes Two*; *Who is Cletis Tout?* and he was a co-editor on *The Ghost and the Darkness*.

Bondelli's impressive list of television credits include two seasons with the popular series *Moonlighting*, for which he was nominated for an Emmy Award in 1986 and won the Emmy in 1987; one season on *Designing Women*, for which he received another nomination; a season on *Midnight Caller*, and yet another Emmy nomination; and two seasons on *Brooklyn Bridge*, which brought Bondelli two A.C.E. Eddie Awards and another Emmy nomination in 1992.

Bondelli began his career in the mailroom of a Los Angeles television station while still in high school. After being promoted into the film department there, he continued to work at the station through college. He then joined Spelling-Goldberg Productions as an apprentice, and moved up to assistant editor for five years, working on a variety of series, pilots and MOW's until he became a full-fledged editor.

There are no barriers in **CRAIG ARMSTRONG's** (Music by) world. Whether he's composing classical pieces, writing film scores, recording his own solo albums or collaborating with the likes of Madonna, Massive Attack and U2, it is all simply music.

After studying violin and composition at the Royal Academy, Armstrong branched into theatre and became resident composer at the Tron Theatre in Glasgow. His other stage work includes commissions for the Royal Shakespeare Company.

His many film scores include Baz Luhrmann's *Romeo and Juliet*, for which he won a BAFTA and an Ivor Novello; and *Moulin Rouge*, for which he won a Golden Globe, Ivor Novello and American Film Institute Award. Armstrong won a third Ivor Novello for his music for Phillip Noyce's *The Quiet American*, and also scored *The Bone Collector* and the Oscar-winning *One Day in September*.

His classical works include a chamber opera commissioned for the Edinburgh festival, a homage to Luchino Visconti, which was performed at the Barbican; and various other orchestral commissions for the Northern Sinfonietta, the Scottish Chamber Orchestra, the BT Ensemble and the Royal Scottish National Orchestra.

In the world of popular music he has become one of the world's most sought-after composers and arrangers. His work with Massive Attack on their *Protection* album led to him signing as a solo artist with their record label, Melankolic, for whom he recorded the solo albums

The Space Between Us and *As If to Nothing*, which included collaborations with Evan Dando on the sublime “Wake Up in New York” and David McAlmont, to name a couple.

Following *Melankolic*’s demise, for his third solo offering, Armstrong is releasing his latest album, *Piano Works*. The album is radically different and contains gorgeous piano versions of some of his film themes, tracks he composed for Massive Attack, and entirely new pieces. The release of *Piano Works* is followed by a film of the same title shot in Paris by director David Barnard.

Later this year, Armstrong will release a best-of film music album, *Film Works*, as well as the new Chanel No.5 advertisements, starring Nicole Kidman and directed by Baz Luhrmann, for which Armstrong arranged the classic *Clair de Lune*.

Armstrong recently performed two exclusive piano concerts in America. He performed in the Weil Recital Hall in Carnegie Hall, which followed with a stunning performance at the Sundance Film Festival in Utah.