

Mongrel Media
Presents

Emperor



**A film by Peter Webber
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Distribution



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EMPEROR

Synopsis

A gripping tale of love and honor forged between fierce enemies of war, EMPEROR unfolds the story, inspired by true events, of the bold and secret moves that won the peace in the shadows of postwar Japan. The story of EMPEROR is based on the resonant, real events of 1945, when General MacArthur took control of a shell-shocked Japan on behalf of the U.S and Bonner Fellers worked covertly to investigate the Emperor's fate while the future of the nation hung in the balance. Entwined with an against-the-odds romance, the story traverses the conflicting loyalties between heart and homeland, between revenge and justice, as the world rebuilds from the ruins of war.

Matthew Fox joins with Academy Award® winner Tommy Lee Jones, newcomer Eriko Hatsune and award-winning Japanese star Toshiyuki Nishida to bring to life the American occupation of Japan in the perilous and unpredictable days just after Emperor Hirohito's World War II surrender. As General Douglas MacArthur (Jones) suddenly finds himself the de facto ruler of a foreign nation, he assigns an expert in Japanese culture – and psychological warfare – General Bonner Fellers (Fox), to covertly investigate the looming question hanging over the country: should the Japanese Emperor, worshiped by his people but accused of war crimes, be punished or saved? Caught between the high-wire political intrigue of his urgent mission and his own impassioned search for the mysterious school teacher (Hatsune) who first drew him to Japan, Fellers can be certain only that the tricky subterfuge about to play out will forever change the history of two nations and his heart.

EMPEROR is directed by Peter Webber (GIRL WITH A PEARL EARRING), from a screenplay by David Klass (WALKING TALL, DESPERATE MEASURES, KISS THE GIRLS) and Vera Blasi (WOMAN ON TOP, TORTILLA SOUP). The film is produced by Yoko Narahashi (THE LAST SAMURAI), Gary Foster (SLEEPLESS IN SEATTLE, GHOST RIDER, DAREDEVIL, TIN CUP, THE SOLOIST), Eugene Nomura (TAJOMARU, SURELY SOME DAY) and Russ Krasnoff (THE SOLOIST). The behind-the-scenes team includes such notable filmmakers as Oscar® nominated director of photography Stuart Dryburgh (TEXAS KILLING FIELDS, THE TEMPEST, THE PIANO), Academy Award® winning production designer Grant Major (KING KONG, THE LORD OF THE RINGS trilogy), and Academy Award® winning costume designer Ngila Dickson (THE ILLUSIONIST, THE LAST SAMURAI, THE LORD OF THE RINGS TRILOGY).

EMPEROR

About The Production

"And so it is according to the dictate of time and fate that we have resolved to pave the way for a grand peace for all generations.

. . . "

-- Emperor Hirohito, Tokyo, 1945

The drama of war has long been prime cinematic territory – but it is often the hidden aftermath of war that raises the most provocative and intriguing human questions. In the shadowy gap between when battle has ended but before peace has broken out, emotions are raw, nerves and hearts are on edge and clashing agendas play out, as enemies vie to cross the vast distance between the instinct for vengeance and the dream of reconciliation. **EMPEROR**, the first contemporary Hollywood film set during the U.S.-led occupation of Japan at the close of World War II, unfolds a story of both secret love and international intrigue in a post-war world where trust is in short supply and the stakes for the future could not be higher.

The story is based on the events of 1945, following the dropping of the atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, when Japan's sacred leader, Emperor Hirohito, unconditionally surrendered. Faced with leading the Allied Powers' occupation of the ravaged country, President Harry S. Truman tasked the American hero General Douglas MacArthur with the epic, make-or-break job of restoring order and preparing the way for democratic elections. Yet even before he arrived in a firebombed Tokyo reduced to rubble on August 30th, MacArthur knew he faced an extraordinary dilemma: what to do about the Emperor? Should the man revered by many as a god and the living embodiment of the Japanese spirit stand trial and likely be hanged to pay for the war's brutal crimes – or could there be any other way of moving forward while the whole world was watching?

Behind the scenes, one man was given just a few days to investigate if the Emperor's prosecution should proceed: Bonner Fellers, an American with a deep love of Japanese culture, who would ultimately help MacArthur choose a bold course. Fellers' story had been largely lost in the vast annals of World War II, known only to hardcore history buffs, until he became the hero of a riveting screenplay by David Klass and Vera Blasi. Diving deep into the historical records, Klass and Blasi also opened their story up into imagined territory – as Fellers finds himself swept up not only into a dangerous political game, but into a driven search for the Japanese woman who introduced him to the soulful beauty of Japan and has haunted his heart ever since.

The Perilous Journey To Peace

The journey of *EMPEROR* began with producer Yoko Narahashi (*THE LAST SAMURAI*) who has long been interested in the fertile territory where East and West. As a child, Narahashi had been riveted by stories from her grandfather, Teizaburo Sekiya, who served in the high palace as a key member of Emperor Hirohito's Ministry of the Interior – and played a role in bringing MacArthur and the Emperor together for the meeting that would change their fates. Decades later, the war-scarred Japan that Narahashi's grandfather described seemed almost unimaginable – and she became fascinated by just how it was that the most dire of enemies had been transformed with blinding speed into the closest of allies as Japan rebuilt from the ashes.

Narahashi knew there were many personal stories about how the occupation integrated the past into a new future for both Japan and the U.S., but one in particular caught her eye. This was the story of Bonner Fellers, who from the outside might seem to be a minor figure among General MacArthur's newly arrived team in 1945 -- but turned out to have made himself into a history-changing human bridge between two ways of life in those days of peril and mistrust.

"I was very intrigued by what I saw as a truly international story, a story about both Japan and the West," says Narahashi. "I'm always fascinated by unsung heroes and when I learned about Bonner Fellers, I realized that here was someone who no one really knows yet, but he had a great deal to do with the changing of history. That was a very compelling start."

As Narahashi began to research Fellers and to read some of his writings from the war, she found that he sometimes wrote about visiting an unnamed "friend" in Japan and she wondered if perhaps there was a love story lurking within. There could be no proof, but Narahashi saw an opportunity for a writer's imagination to take the next step. Thus was born the seed of the fictional character of Aya, the alluring schoolteacher who reveals to Fellers a side of Japan that will forever change his mind about the country – even as the pair is star-crossed by war.

Narahashi's instincts were affirmed when she told her 101 year-old uncle, Teizaburo Sekiya's son, about the movie. She recalls: "He gave his blessing to us and when I asked him if he had a message to give us, he said, 'Make it a burning love story.'"

Narahashi brought the idea of a burning, cross-cultural love story in occupied Japan to the novelist and screenwriter David Klass, known for such thrillers as *KISS THE GIRLS* and *DESPERATE*

MEASURES, but who also had worked as a schoolteacher in Japan himself. Klass drafted the first screenplay.

In the meantime, a stellar production team came into place including Gary Foster and Russ Krasnoff of Krasnoff/Foster Entertainment, known for a wide range of high-profile films spanning from *SLEEPLESS IN SEATTLE* and *THE SOLOIST* to *GHOST RIDER DAREDEVIL* and actor / film producer, Eugene Nomura. Each was drawn by the potential for blending history, intrigue and romance – and by a truth-based tale that has never before been told on the screen.

“I’ve always wanted to do a movie about this period,” says Foster, “and I found the story of how MacArthur and Fellers had to make this profound decision about the Emperor in such a short period of time, under the most extreme pressures, very dramatic. Then, I fell head over heels for the script’s love story.”

Foster was especially captivated by the idea of bringing to light a part of World War II that has so far largely escaped cinematic exploration. “People have seen a lot about life during the war, but the story that hasn’t been told is how after the war ended, the peace was negotiated,” he notes. “This story is something fresh that illuminates a period many people thought they knew in a different way – and I find that very intriguing.”

Producer Eugene Nomura saw the story not only as historical – but also as compellingly relevant to our own times of international conflicts, global uncertainty as well as unprecedented natural disaster in Japan. “This is a story about how Japan was rebuilt after the war, and Japan after the tsunami of 2011 in some ways looks similar to Japan in 1945,” he observes. “So I think it means a lot to tell this story right now about the country trying to rebuild and make it work for the right reasons.”

To further hone the script, Foster brought in screenwriter Vera Blasi, known for her passionate love of history and finesse with psychologically rich characters. Right away, she found the heart of the story. “To me it’s about how justice and truth are juxtaposed with political expedience and what will be the greater good for the world,” she explains. “I just find that fascinating and it continues to be very important in our world.”

Blasi saw the love story between Fellers and Aya as the perfect vehicle to tell the story of two seemingly disparate cultures who must find common ground to co-exist. “The political story and the love story bring in two different views of the world in 1945,” she comments.

Indeed, in the final script, the depth of Bonner Fellers' yearning to find Aya is both the source of his respect for Japanese culture and his inspiration for trying to uncover if the Emperor might have tried to halt the terrible consequences of the war. Aya's spirit haunts Fellers' every move, even if he does not yet know her fate.

"A love story is always universal," sums up Narahashi, "but the beauty of the love story in EMPEROR is that it leads an American man to make a momentous decision for Japan."

Love, War And Neo-Noir

With a story traversing political suspense, the quest for lost love and the murky days just after the end of World War II in Japan, the filmmakers knew they would need a director for EMPEROR who could evoke both its intricate themes and its rarely seen period. They chose Peter Webber, the British director who turned GIRL WITH A PEARL EARRING into a hypnotic cinematic painting.

"We loved his passion," says Gary Foster. "We met with a number of directors and there were different points of view on making the film more of a love story or more of a political thriller, but Peter found a way to integrate both. He was able to bring in both the muscular feel of a thriller and the lyrical romanticism of a relationship that might have changed history."

The screenplay had entranced Webber. "I'm sent a lot of scripts but I'm interested in very, very few of them," he admits. "When this landed on my doorstep, I instantly felt 'I'd really like to make this film.' It was real page-turner. I knew a bit about MacArthur and the occupation. I'd read about post-war Japan and the dismantling of their empire. But here was a dark little corner of history that had previously been un-illuminated and I thought it would be exciting to shine a light into it."

He continues: "But this story isn't only about past history. I think it has something quite contemporary and relevant to say about the differences between revenge and justice."

Indeed all the moral shadows and tricky romance in the story put Webber in mind of classic film noirs, in which the gritty mood of mystery reflects both what the characters are going through and the dramatic uncertainty of the world at large. "There was something in the script that reminded me of THE THIRD MAN," notes Webber, referring to the Carol Reed classic of love and deception set in post-war Vienna. "This is more of a political thriller, but I really wanted to make a kind of neo-noir out of it in the detail and the atmosphere. To me it's at once a political thriller, a love story and a dark film noir."

Once he took on the production, Webber immersed himself in research, delving into history books and every different kind of visual reference he could find from the period, scouring rare archival footage as well as making several personal journeys to Japan. Since the story is fictionalized, he had some visual freedom, but authenticity in the period details remained vital. He was committed to honoring the complexity of the Japanese culture that Aya reveals to Fellers with such resonant results.

“I’ve tried to avoid easy cultural clichés in the film such as delicate, oriental flowers and the like,” says Webber. “Prior to 1945, Japan was actually a quite modern, already slightly westernized country. But there was still a clash of cultures with the Americans. Because the film is seen through the eyes of Bonner Fellers, it’s really about a man trying to penetrate an imperial culture that seems at first impenetrable.”

While historical consultants, including war historian and military archivist Pedro Loureiro, helped to keep the film true to the overall sweep of events, Webber says he was most interested in being true to the spirit of the characters. “Although we wanted to get all the broader details correct, we were focused on creating an intelligent entertainment,” he explains.

A believer in the adage that “you’re only as good as your collaborators,” Webber began that process with casting, looking for actors who could cut to the core of the characters’ strong, colliding personalities rather than their photographic appearances.

Fox on Fellers

To play the lead role of Bonner Fellers, the filmmakers needed an actor that audiences would be willing to follow into the personal and political rubble of 1945 Japan, someone evincing both intelligence and a romantic sensibility. They found that combo in Matthew Fox, who is rapidly moving into the ranks of today’s top leading men. Having come to the fore in hit television roles on “Party of Five” and “Lost,” Fox will soon be seen in Rob Cohen’s thriller I, ALEX CROSS and Marc Forster’s actioner WORLD WAR Z.

“Matthew has an intelligence that is quite rare in leading men,” says Peter Webber of the actor who studied economics at Columbia University. “And he has the looks. There is a classic Hollywood feeling about him that I really like.”

Adds Gary Foster: “There is a kind of masculine strength that I think is essential to the character of Fellers and Matthew clearly has that. He’s also the investigator in the movie, so he had

to be smart, and Matthew conveys great intelligence. And he has that romantic side as well, where you really want to see him kiss the girl.”

Fox says he found himself moved by the script and by how Fellers reacts to a complex situation. “In the context of our story he is a very honorable man,” he comments. “He is someone who is given an almost impossible task that is hugely important – and at the same time, he is being haunted by this once in a lifetime love.”

Soon Fox began reading about the real Bonner Fellers, who after studying at a Quaker College in Indiana initially served in World War II as an attaché in Egypt, monitoring British military operations and finding himself at the center of controversy when his encrypted reports were famously intercepted and cracked by the Germans. Fellers then began to work in psychological warfare operations in the Pacific. But it was after the war officially ended that Fellers had his brush with history.

It was then, as a General Brigadier, that he was assigned by General MacArthur as a Japanese specialist to investigate the potentially explosive matter of the Emperor. With some 3.5 million armed Japanese soldiers still on edge, and just a few days to conduct his inquiry, Fellers understood that the stakes were enormous.

“I read all the material I could get my hands on from the time,” says Fox, “all the actual reports he wrote. That took it to a whole other level of interest for me. This is my favorite kind of job where I get to do something where I’m learning something and being challenged.”

He came to see the Fellers depicted in *EMPEROR* as motivated as much by his heart as his head. “What was always striking to me about the script is that it is an epic love story,” he says. “When war separates Fellers and Aya, he becomes fixated on Japanese culture hoping to understand the reasons why she is the way she is – and that leads him to a much more global understanding of Japan.”

When he is with Aya, Fox notes that Fellers feels as if cultural barriers barely exist. “I think Fellers sees that love is possible no matter what the circumstances are,” he comments. “When you can’t communicate through language that well, you communicate more purely and truthfully. When he and Aya are together, it’s like they’re the only two people in the world.”

This feeling became organic between Fox and co-star Eriko Hatsune. “The love story had to be very real so we had to share a lot,” he explains. “We trusted each other and we really dove in

there together. It was so incredibly important to the film that we interact honestly and warmly with each other, and I think we got that.”

Fellers has a very different relationship with General MacArthur, one built on respect but complicated by mutual uncertainty of each other’s agendas. Fellers is aware of MacArthur’s larger personal ambitions and the pressures on him back home, but he never lets that sway his investigation. “I think their relationship is very much father and son in that Fellers looks up to MacArthur. MacArthur has a lot of qualities that Fellers doesn’t feel like he has. He admires his chutzpah.”

Working with Tommy Lee Jones brought that to the fore. “Tommy really got his hooks deeply into this material because he cares so much and that was really inspiring,” says Fox.

Jones On MacArthur

General Douglas MacArthur is perhaps the most iconic American military figure of all time – renowned equally for his brilliant victories and for his complicated and controversial personality. Flamboyant and egotistical he also displayed unmovable courage and intelligence, and in 1945 it seemed a foregone conclusion he might one day run for President of the United States.

To play a figure most Americans already know from history books, the filmmakers knew they needed someone with a larger-than-life personality. This is what led them straight to Academy Award® winner Tommy Lee Jones, known for creating indelible characters from the relentless deputy chasing a wanted man in *THE FUGITIVE* to the laconic sheriff investigating a crime spree in rural Texas in *NO COUNTRY FOR OLD MEN* to the alien Agent K in the action-comedy *MEN IN BLACK* series.

“I laid siege to Tommy,” jokes Peter Webber. “He was intrigued and interested in the script but it took a while to hook him and then reel him in – but we finally got him. And it’s been amazing how he’s been able to channel the spirit of MacArthur. He’s immensely charming, immensely charismatic and a bit intimidating – but this is MacArthur so he is meant to be scary. I had a great time working with him.”

Jones admits that it was an irresistible undertaking. “MacArthur has intrigued people for half a century and he’s played an important role in the development of world history,” he says. But he also knew he would have to come at the man from the inside out. “I bear no real resemblance to

MacArthur but when you put on the military uniform with lots of fruit salad on the front and smoke a corncob pipe – that’s the image that he cultivated and it became iconic.”

As Supreme Commander of the Allied Powers in Japan, MacArthur has been credited with running the most peaceful occupation in the history of war – a tone that was set at the end of summer in 1945, when the General made his momentous decision about the Emperor.

After reading a variety of biographical writings, Jones came to believe that MacArthur had many different motivations for taking the risky course he did, from his need to keep the peace to his own political prospects. “I don’t think personal feelings were as important to him as strategic thinking,” he observes. “To have deposed the Emperor and put him on trial would have created a lot more problems for MacArthur than it would have solved. Yet, it was also the morally right thing to do. It was an intelligent and far-reaching stride towards peace.”

The stunning reversal of Japan’s fate that made its rapid rise into a peaceful world power possible is the part of the story that most moved Jones. “I think people will be fascinated to see the beginnings of the deep Japanese and American friendship,” he concludes. “It’s an important part of the last century – and as we go forward.”

For Gary Foster, Jones brings the kind of gravitas, as well as humor, to the role that brings all of that out vividly and allows MacArthur a complex humanity. “I was riveted watching him work,” says the producer. “He’s just one of those actors who shows great strength in very compelling ways. MacArthur is a role that demands that kind of strength and Tommy really got it. He understood the period, he did his research, he knows a bit about Japan and he was a great collaborator. His MacArthur is a fantastic character to watch because, there are a lot of different games he is playing.”

Aya’s Love

While General MacArthur and Bonner Fellers are historic figures, the lead character of Aya is more of an enigma – a fictional love who becomes Fellers’ entrée into all the wonders and beauty of Japanese culture. The search was on for an actress with the allure to drive both Feller’s search and his momentous decision about the Emperor – a fresh Japanese actress who would be a discovery for international audiences.

Ultimately, Eriko Hatsune, a rising young star in Japan who was previously seen in Ang Dhun Tran’s film adaptation of NORWEGIAN WOOD, won the role.

“Eriko is a gem,” describes Yoko Narahashi. “When you see her you think, where did this woman come from? She is such a beautiful creature.”

“When I met her I was quite simply entranced,” adds Peter Webber. “She has a fresh and natural acting talent, there is nothing fake about her in the slightest. I think she brings something incredibly special to this film.”

For Hatsune the film was a huge journey, one that began with having to learn English and continued as she pierced the vibrant spirit of Aya, which becomes a kind of ethereal specter woven through the entire film. “I learned from Aya how wonderful it is to love from your heart and to enjoy each beautiful moment in life,” she says. “And I’m grateful to the filmmakers who let me have the freedom to be me and find the innocence of Aya.”

Although Aya herself did not exist, Hatsune did her fair share of research on the time period and specifically on the typical life of a young, single teacher. “I even observed some classes taught by a friend of my mother,” she explains. “I saw how the teacher tried to teach with love and I felt this would be the same for Aya in any time or place.”

Yet, even the life of a schoolteacher was not exempt from the effects of war. War might separate Aya from Fellers, but it could not stop their emotions, Hatsune notes, even when everything else between them has changed. “What didn’t change was the immense love Fellers had for Aya,” she says. “Even when they could not see each other, I think she felt supported by his love. There couldn’t have been anyone else for one another.”

Like Matthew Fox, Hatsune was thrilled that such an organic chemistry seemed to unfold between them. “Matthew brings a warm, calm atmosphere with him,” she comments. “He is very honest and polite, but more than that, in him I was able to feel the life that Fellers had lived. I have great admiration for him as an actor.”

She also feels that Peter Webber did the utmost to capture that chemistry. “He gave us so much freedom and openness,” she observes. “In my scenes with Matthew, he was very sensitive to our space. It was as if he would move around us – carefully walking on a piece of glass. I was able to explore a depth of love as I haven’t before.”

That comes across on the screen says Foster. “Eriko understands the subtle art of working in front of a camera,” the producer concludes. “As Aya, she has to represent many things in this story and she has the classical, ethereal quality that can do that.”

A Cross-Cultural Cast

An international cast joins Matthew Fox, Tommy Lee Jones and Eriko Hatsune in *EMPEROR*, including Masayoshi Haneda (*47 RONIN*, *THE RAMEN GIRL*) as Feller's right hand man in Japan, Takahashi; the leading Japanese screen star Toshiyuki Nishida (*OUTRAGE 2*, *THE MAGIC HOUR*) as Aya's Uncle Kajima; New Zealander Colin Moy (*UNDER THE MOUNTAIN*) as the fictional composite character Major General Richter, who vehemently opposes protecting the Emperor; Isao Natsuyagi (*MY WAY*) as the high palace official Sekiya, who in real life was producer Yoko Narahashi's grandfather and producer Eugene Nomura's great-grandfather; and Takataro Kataoko (*BEAUTY UTSUKUSHIMONO*, *EMPIRE OF THE SUN*) in the pivotal role of Emperor Hirohito.

Much of the Japanese casting was overseen by Narahashi and Nomura, who have experience working within the Japanese film world. "Yoko really knows a lot about the Japanese acting scene and she has very good relationships with actors, so she and Eugene were able to bring us some amazing choices," says Peter Webber. "It's one of the things I'm really excited about in *EMPEROR*; it will bring some wonderful Japanese actors to Western audiences for the first time."

"It was hard getting some of these actors," confesses Narahashi. "It was like trying to move mountains at times. But I wanted to make this film so much that nothing would get in the way. I would plead until no became yes."

In the case of Kataoko, who plays the Emperor, the filmmakers were won over in an early audition; only to find out he was a star Kabuki actor's son who did not want to release him from their troupe's regular shows. "Luckily, Yoko kept hanging on, telling them 'he's the guy for the film,'" recalls Nomura.

Kataoko says he was motivated by a story he is excited for people around the world to see. "It's a beautiful film based on what really happened," he says. "I'd like young people to discover this history and elder people to remember."

As for playing the Emperor, Kataoko took the opportunity very seriously. After all, for many Japanese, Emperor Hirohito was not only a monarch but the divine "son of heaven." Having become the Crown Prince at the age of 15, his life had been steeped in imperial traditions and rituals that held a sacred importance to the entire structure of the society. He had largely been a silent enigma even in Japan until August 15, 1945, when he made his first-ever public radio announcement – telling the people the incredible news that their nation had surrendered to the Allies. Only then did the

debate begin as to how much control the Emperor had over military operations and the conduct of the war . . . and whether he should be put on trial.

“As a real person we greatly revere, this role put a lot of pressure on me. I felt a lot of responsibility,” says Kataoko.

Nishida, who plays Uncle Kajima, was drawn to a script that feels is unusually true to the essence of the Japanese spirit. “I was amazed by how well the script conveys the Japanese mentality,” he says. “It understands our culture and offers insight into it.”

Adds Haneda, who portrays Takahashi as one of Fellers’ links to the feelings of the Japanese people: “There has never been a project like this in Japan. It is a movie that expresses hope.”

Moy took on the challenge of bringing out another side of the Japanese Occupation – those who believed only executions could set things right – through the fictionalized character of General Richter. “Richter is someone who grew up with a strong sense of right and wrong and I think he’s looking for some kind of righteousness,” Moy explains. “That’s why he feels so compelled to stand his ground.”

Natsuyagi, who won the key role of the Emperor’s envoy Sekiya, marvels at how the story of EMPEROR seems to represent all sides in the battle for the future. “The core of the film is how people create a new era,” he summarizes. “It took two sides – MacArthur and his associates, and the Emperor and his associates – cooperating together for Japan to be reborn.”

Out of the Ruins: The Design

In the years since 1945, Japan has changed dramatically, rebuilding to the point that the shattered landscape of those days is no longer recognizable as the same terrain. No matter where they shot the film, the filmmakers of EMPEROR knew they would have to start from the ground up, recreating a lost world – and a period not seen in Hollywood films since 1956’s TEAHOUSE OF AUGUST MOON starring Marlon Brando. They did so on the Pacific island of New Zealand, which offered both some unique locations and a highly skilled workforce.

Leading the effort to bring to life the noir atmosphere and romantic mood of the film were three acclaimed award-winners: Oscar®-nominated cinematographer Stuart Dryburgh, Oscar® winning production designer Grant Major and Oscar® winning costume designer Ngila Dickson.

“Stuart is a world-class DP and cameraman, Ngila is a master with period and Grant did a stellar job of recreating the era,” says Gary Foster. “When you get the best people, you can overcome any challenges.”

The challenges were substantial at the outset. “We had to conjure an apocalyptic, bombed-out Tokyo of 1945 inside 21st Century Auckland,” muses Peter Webber. In keeping with his instinct to frame the love story within a film noir, Webber wanted that world to be seen through the sharp angles, dense shadows and expressionistic landscapes that so richly reflect fear, anxiety and moral uncertainty.

He worked closely with New Zealander Stuart Dryburgh to define the look of the film, which shifts in palette. “We shot it so that 1945 is more bleak, grey and apocalyptic whereas 1941 is more sort of a real-world palette and 1935 is very vivid, like a youthful memory,” he explains.

Dryburgh loved the creative challenges of the film’s scope. “One of the things I enjoyed most about EMPEROR is that there is such a diversity of landscapes and storylines. I loved the dark, grittiness of it and also the beauty, especially of Eriko Hatsune playing Aya.”

The vast diversity of the film became a gauntlet for Grant Major, who is best known for his work bringing the fantastical worlds of J.R.R. Tolkien to real life in Peter Jackson’s LORD OF THE RINGS series. He began by poring through historic photos to immerse himself in 1945 Japan.

“The scope of what we were trying to create was huge,” Major confesses,” and Peter had a rich vision for the look of the film. We started with the contrasts between the massive devastation on the ground versus the worlds of MacArthur and the Emperor in the upper echelons.”

To bring audiences into the chaos and danger of a shattered cityscape, Major turned a burnt-out industrial site known as Southdown into the streets of Tokyo. “Southdown had been a freezing works in the past but it had burnt to the ground about a year ago,” he explains. “It was a choice location because we had these devastated, collapsed buildings and all these hauntingly twisted bits of metal to work with. We used that for several different locations and also built a bar and restaurant in this bombed-out atmosphere. And we built the exterior of Aya’s apartment in there – we found a beautiful, little cove that we managed to convert into Japanese architecture.”

An old Ford factory provided another site where Majors recreated the firebombed section of Tokyo the Emperor must drive through on his way to the American Embassy.

These harrowing landscapes make a stark contrast with the grand Imperial Palace, the long-secret innards of which were re-created based on a handful of rare historic photographs. “The main scene in the Imperial Palace is in Sekiya’s meeting room, where he confronts Fellers,” explains Major.

“Yoko sent us some special books filled with photos and we chose a certain room and recreated that as faithfully as possible. Of course, the photos were in black & white so we imagined a color scheme.”

The photographs were introduced to Narahashi by the Japanese Minister of the Interior. “Even Japanese people have never seen this room before,” she muses.

The interior of Aya’s apartment before its destruction allowed Major to use his imagination. “I had a great time inventing this personal space that says a lot about the character,” he says.

For the house of Aya’s Uncle Kajima, Majors was excited to have the chance to create a more classical Japanese space. “He lives in a house that was probably built around the turn of the century,” notes Major, adding, “It’s been fun learning more about Japanese architecture works and all the nuances and details of it.”

Among the other key sets Majors and his team created are MacArthur’s offices (based on the office that remains preserved on the 6th Floor of Tokyo’s Da-Ichi Insurance Building); the American Embassy in Tokyo; Ohio’s Douglstown College, where Fellers first falls for Aya in the 1930s; the bunker of the Temporary Palace, where Hirohito is briefly seen during the war; and the interior of the C54 Skymaster prop plane that MacArthur and Fellers flew into Atsugi Airport, the very same base where kamikaze pilots trained.

Each of the sets had a transporting quality that impacted cast and crew. “I was spectacularly happy with the sets Grant built,” Webber summarizes. “It just lifts you up in the morning when you go to work on sets full of detail, mood and atmosphere. They really help to set the tone of this world.”

EMPEROR also brought Majors into collaboration again with Ngila Dickson, the Oscar®-winning costume designer with whom he has worked frequently including on THE LORD OF THE RINGS. It was also a reunion for Narahashi who worked with Dickson on THE LAST SAMURAI.

“Ngila is so artistic and talented. I love her sensitivity and attention to detail,” says Narahashi. “I was just dying to work with her again.”

Dickson started by journeying back in time and also to Japan, learning about Japanese styles both common and imperial. “We did masses of research,” she says. “Whenever you do something historical, for me it’s about always knowing that whatever choices you make, you can back that up with information.”

The more she learned, the more she saw Japanese influences on Western fashion. “The man in the street in 1945 Tokyo had these very high waistbands, which in our vernacular is a 50s period

style. But then you go, hang on, it looks like the American soldiers picked up on this style and brought it back home. That was the beginning of that style,” she muses.

She and Webber also talked at length about the feeling they wanted from the clothing, both agreeing that the film should have an almost palpable texture. “We used a lot of patterned knits for Fellers. It became an important element running throughout,” she explains.

A lot of attention was also paid to the authenticity of the military uniforms, both American and Japanese, as well as to giving Aya her own sense of style as a young Japanese woman who has been to America yet deeply values her Japanese traditions.

For Webber, the way Dickson kept all the costuming authentic but full of character and devoid of cliché was a great match for his design aesthetic. “She’s got an amazing eye and she really understands costuming depth,” he concludes. “The experience just shines out of her and she does not suffer fools gladly. I would work with her again at the drop of a hat.”

Finishing touches were put on the design by the team of Visual Effects Supervisor Julian Dimsey, whose work includes GHOST RIDER: SPIRIT OF VENGEANCE, KILLER ELITE, DON’T BE AFRAID OF THE DARK and AUSTRALIA. Dimsey helped to generate key backgrounds including Atsugi Airfield, Tokyo Bay filled with American ships and the ruins of bombed-out Tokyo.

“We coordinated with Yoko and Eugene on a lot of historical material,” says Dimsey. “We wanted it to look real and photographic but also artistic in a way that works with Peter Webber’s eye.”

As all of the film’s elements came together, topped with a score by Alex Heffes (THE LAST KING OF SCOTLAND, STATE OF PLAY), there was a lot of thought not only about America and Japan in 1945, but also about what Japan has been going through since the devastating tsunami of April, 2011.

“When I walked through the ruins of the tsunami, it felt similar to scenes in our movie,” says Yoko Narahashi. “And yet, Japan rebuilt. I wanted to kind of make this film my dedication to the people of Japan in this tragic time. I hope this story can give people a feeling of hope, courage and energy. These events have made the film even more meaningful to me.”

A Brief Note About The Japanese Occupation and Aftermath

“We have decided to effect a settlement of the present situation by resorting to an extraordinary measure,” began the Emperor Hirohito on his first-ever radio speech -- given August 15, 1945 to announce Japan’s unconditional surrender to Allied Forces in World War II. By that time,

Japan had lost the lives of more than 2 million soldiers, 800,000 civilians and seen its historic cities and pastoral countryside reduced to broken shards of what they had once been. As that speech was made, a world shaken by years of global battles waited anxiously to see if Japan could make a peaceful transition into a new reality.

The day before Emperor Hirohito's speech, President Harry S. Truman had appointed General Douglas MacArthur as Supreme Commander of the Allied Powers. It was MacArthur who had the responsibility of leading an occupation that would allow the Japanese people the hope of rebuilding, while demilitarizing the nation, opening the way to democracy and addressing some of the root causes of the war. He arrived with an immediate understanding that he would have to find a way to break the intense psychological tension of a country taken over by its long-time enemy, a country in which 3.5 armed soldiers had just been told to surrender. For the next six years, the United States would remain in Japan overseeing a bold experiment that would not be without serious controversy and challenges but is still considered the foremost model of what an occupation might accomplish.

In those six years, feudal Japan became a modern democracy— a fresh constitution came into being, women were given the right to vote, land reforms and labor unions created opportunities and a starving populace fired up a new economy that would turn Japan into a technological powerhouse.

Once it was decided that the Emperor and other members of the imperial family would not stand trial, he became an asset to the occupation, backing the new constitution and referring to himself as "Japan's first democrat." On New Year's Day of 1946, Hirohito made a formal statement that the role of the Emperor had changed and that the divinity of the Emperor was a "false concept." He then continued to be an active public figure in Japan, often playing a diplomatic role with world leaders, while also conducting research as a marine biologist. Emperor Hirohito passed away on January 7, 1989 after a battle with cancer.

General MacArthur handed power back to the Japanese government in 1949, but remained in Japan until 1951. During this time he also became Commander in Chief of the United Nations Command, overseeing the war between North and South Korea. He butted heads with President Truman over the conduct of the war and when casualties mounted, he was relieved by Truman of his duties, ending 52 years of military service. Nevertheless, he came home to a hero's welcome. Despite long-running speculation that he would run for President, he never did, though he continued to counsel politicians on military matters. He passed away April 5, 1964.

Bonner Fellers left Japan in 1946, retired from the army and became active in Republican Party politics. He passed away in 1973.

As for Japan and the United States, the friendship forged in those difficult early days of 1945 has continued to this day with a profound impact on both nations.

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ABOUT THE CAST

MATTHEW FOX (General Bonner Fellers) is an actor cut from the proverbial leading-man cloth, carrying himself with strong charisma and a powerful presence.

Fox will next be seen starring opposite Brad Pitt in Marc Forster's *WORLD WAR Z*, an adaptation of the Max Brooks zombie-infestation novel. He most recently starred opposite Tyler Perry in the thriller *ALEX CROSS*, based on the popular James Patterson detective novel series, and in 2011, he made his West End debut in the original play *In a Forest Dark and Deep* written and directed by Neil LaBute.

Fox starred on the Emmy Award winning ABC adventure/drama *LOST* for six seasons. The story followed the battered survivors of a plane that crashed on a large, forbidding island somewhere in the South Pacific. Fox played a doctor and the de facto leader of the group, striving to keep them together as stress and fear pull them apart. In 2005, Fox shared the Screen Actors Guild Ensemble Award and was nominated for Golden Globe and Television Critics Association Awards for achievement in dramatic acting. In 2010 he was nominated for an Emmy for "Outstanding Leading Man in a Drama Series." Fox first rose to prominence on television, starring in FOX Network's hugely successful series *PARTY OF FIVE*, winner of the 1996 Golden Globe for Best Drama.

His other feature film credits include Andy and Lana Wachowski's *SPEED RACER*, the live action update of the 1960's cartoon; the thriller *VANTAGE POINT* opposite Forest Whitaker and Dennis Quaid; and McG's *WE ARE MARSHALL* opposite Matthew McConaughey.

TOMMY LEE JONES (General Douglas MacArthur) is one of the most acclaimed and accomplished actors in Hollywood, Academy Award winner Tommy Lee Jones brings a distinct character to his every film.

Jones made his feature film debut in *Love Story* and, in a career spanning four decades, has starred in such films as *Eyes of Laura Mars*, *Coal Miner's Daughter* – for which he received his first Golden Globe nomination – *Stormy Monday*, *The Package*, *JFK*, *Under Siege*, *The Fugitive*, *Heaven and Earth*, *The Client*, *Natural Born Killers*, *Blue Sky*, *Cobb*, *Batman Forever*, *Men In Black*, *U.S. Marshalls*, *Double Jeopardy*, *Rules of Engagement*, *Space Cowboys*, *Men in*

Black 2, The Hunted, The Missing, The Three Burials of Melquiades Estrada, A Prairie Home Companion, In the Electric Mist, The Company Men and Captain America: The First Avenger.

He was awarded the Best Supporting Actor Oscar® for his portrayal of the uncompromising U.S. Marshal Sam Gerard in the box office hit *The Fugitive* in 1994. For this performance, he also received a Golden Globe Award as Best Supporting Actor. Three years earlier, Jones received his first Oscar® nomination for his portrayal of Clay Shaw in Oliver Stone's *JFK*.

In 2007 Jones starred in the critically acclaimed film *In the Valley of Elah* for which he received an Oscar® nomination for Best Actor and in the same year he starred in the Academy Award winning film *No Country for Old Men* written and directed by Joel and Ethan Coen and based on the Cormac McCarthy novel.

In 2012, Jones stars in three films. He reprised his role as "Agent K" in *Men in Black 3* in May; he starred with Meryl Streep in *Great Hope Springs* in August and he portrays Thaddeus Stevens in Steven Spielberg's *Lincoln* which will open in November.

Jones recently completed filming *The Emperor* on location in New Zealand for director Peter Webber. He portrays General Douglas MacArthur. The film premiered at the Toronto Film Festival in September and it will be released in March 2013.

He also recently shot *Malavita* in France for director Luc Besson.

In 1995, Jones made his directorial debut with the critically acclaimed telefilm adaptation of the Elmer Kelton novel *The Good Old Boys* for TNT. Jones also starred in the telefilm with Sissy Spacek, Sam Shepard, Frances McDormand and Matt Damon. For his portrayal of Hewey Calloway, he received a Screen Actors Guild Award nomination and a CableACE Award nomination.

In 2005, Jones starred in the critically acclaimed film, *The Three Burials of Melquiades Estrada*, which he also directed and produced. The film debuted in competition at the 2005 Cannes Film Festival and garnered Jones the award for Best Actor and screenwriter Guillermo Arriaga the award for Best Screenplay for this film about friendship and murder along the Texas-Mexican border.

Jones directed *The Sunset Limited* for HBO. This telefilm, which premiered in February 2011, is based on the play of the same name by Cormac McCarthy and starred Jones and Samuel L. Jackson.

The next film he will direct will be *The Homesman* which is the story of a pioneer woman and a claim-jumping rascal of a man who usher three insane women on an odyssey from Nebraska to Iowa, braving the elements along the way.

Jones has also had success on the small screen. In 1983, he won an Emmy Award for Outstanding Lead Actor in a Limited Series or a Special for his portrayal of Gary Gilmore in *The Executioner's Song* and, in 1989 he was nominated for an Emmy Award and a Golden Globe Award for Outstanding Lead Actor in a Miniseries or a Special for *Lonesome Dove*.

His numerous network and cable credits include the title role in *The Amazing Howard Hughes*, the American Playhouse production of *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*, *The Rainmaker* for HBO, the HBO/BBC production of *Yuri Noshenko*, *KGB* and *April Morning*.

In 1969, Jones made his Broadway debut in John Osborne's *A Patriot for Me*. His other Broadway appearances include *Four on a Garden* with Carol Channing and Sid Caesar, and *Ulysses in Nighttown* with the late Zero Mostel.

Born in San Saba, Texas, he worked briefly with his father in the oil fields before attending St. Mark's School of Texas, then Harvard University, where he graduated cum laude with a degree in English.

ERIKO HATSUNE (Aya Shimada) is a Japanese actress who graduated from Tokyo's entertainment-focused Horikoshi High School. She began her career in 1998 when she appeared in several Japanese television commercials. Shortly afterward, in 1999, she made her acting debut on the NTV drama *Labyrinth*.

Hatsune has acted across various genres including film, TV, and stage play. She is best known for her roles in *SPIRAL* (2000), directed by Higuchisky, *APARTMENT 1303* (2007), directed by Ataru Oikawa and *NORWEGIAN WOOD* (2010), directed by Tran Anh Hung.

ABOUT THE FILMMAKERS

PETER WEBBER (Director) is a British director best known for his feature films GIRL WITH A PEARL EARRING and HANNIBAL RISING. GIRL WITH A PEARL EARRING starring Scarlett Johansson and Colin Firth, marked Webber's feature film debut. The film has received numerous accolades, including 3 Academy Award[®] nominations, 2 Golden Globe nominations, and 10 BAFTA Award nominations.

Dino De Laurentiis tapped Webber to direct HANNIBAL RISING. Based on Thomas Harris' book of the same name, and starring Gaspard Ulliel, Gong Li and Rhys Ifans, this prequel depicts a young Hannibal Lecter as he gradually becomes a serial killer. The film has now garnered a cult status.

Webber made his first short film, THE ZEBRA MAN, about sideshow performer Horace Ridler starring Minnie Driver. He directed Simon Russell Beale as Franz Schubert and explored the counter-culture of tunnel-dwelling road protesters in UNDERGROUND. His 2001 Channel 4 mini-series MEN ONLY stirred controversy for its frank and shocking portrayal of the dark side of male sexuality. It is notable for giving early leads to Stephen Moyer of TRUE BLOOD and Martin Freeman of THE HOBBIT.

An award-winning documentary director, Webber directed several programs for BBC and Channel 4 about Classical music including child prodigies, maestros and composers such as Richard Wagner. He also directed several popular science documentaries about a range of subjects including crash test dummies, deep sea life and phantom limbs.

Webber moved to Qatar in 2008 where he took up the post of Creative Director at Qatar National Day for 2 years. During this time he developed their film program and creative vision. While in Qatar he also Executive Produced several documentary films including Sarajevo Film Festival winner FOR THE LOVE OF BOOKS.

In 2009 he travelled into the remote Columbian Amazon to film with the Macuna Tribe for a documentary called THE SAND AND THE RAIN.

DAVID KLASS (Screenwriter) is a screenwriter and a novelist. He has written more than thirty feature screenplays for the Hollywood studios including: KISS THE GIRLS, DESPERATE MEASURES, and WALKING TALL. His TV credits include a year on staff as a writer-producer for "Law and Order: Criminal Intent" and the Showtime movie "In the Time of the Butterflies." Klass has also published eighteen novels. His next novel, Second Impact -- about head trauma in high school football -- is now in press at Farrar, Straus and Giroux.

From 1983 to 1985 Klass worked as a Mombusho English Fellow at Atami High School in Shizuoka Prefecture, Japan. He loved the city, the schools, and most especially the Japanese people who treated him so well.

VERA BLASI (Screenwriter) was born and raised in Sao Paulo, Brazil, and works as a screenwriter in Los Angeles. While at the American Film Institute, she wrote the romantic comedy *WOMAN ON TOP*, which was later produced by Fox Searchlight. She went on to co-write the American remake of *EAT DRINK MAN WOMAN (TORTILLA SOUP)* produced by Samuel Goldwyn Productions. Vera has written several historical dramas, *GALILEO* for Spitfire Pictures and di Bonaventura Pictures, and has others in development, including *PONTIUS PILATE* and an action adventure, *DAKAR*.

GARY FOSTER (Producer), a 1983 graduate of the University of Southern California, began his career as a producer in the mid 1980's. At age 25, he launched his career producing the highly successful *SHORT CIRCUIT* which soon led to *SHORT CIRCUIT 2*. In 1993 Foster produced the Oscar and Golden Globe nominated hits *SLEEPLESS IN SEATTLE*, which grossed more than \$300 million worldwide.

From 1993 to 1995 Foster served as President of Lee Rich Productions where he produced *JUST CAUSE* starring Sean Connery and Lawrence Fishburne, *THE AMAZING PANDA ADVENTURE* and *BIG BULLY*. In 1996 he produced *TIN CUP* starring Kevin Costner and Rene Russo.

In 2001 Foster produced *THE SCORE*, bringing together the talents of Robert De Niro, Edward Norton and Marlon Brando. This crime thriller was directed by Frank Oz and marked the very last film in Brando's legendary career. Foster then teamed with writer-director Mark Steven Johnson to form Horseshoe Bay Productions.

Foster's other feature credits include: *GLORIA* (1999), *DESPERATE MEASURES* (1998), *LOVERBOY* (1989) and *SIDE OUT* (1990). In 2003, Foster produced *DAREDEVIL* written and directed by Johnson, *ELEKTRA* followed starring Jennifer Garner. In 2007 he produced the fantasy, action thriller *GHOST RIDER* starring Nicolas Cage and Eva Mendes.

In 2009, in association with Working Title and Russ Krasnoff, Foster produced *THE SOLOIST* starring Jamie Foxx and Robert Downey Jr, in the moving true story of an LA journalist who discovers a talented musician who was once a dynamic prodigy now living on Skid Row.

In 2010, Foster marked his fourth collaboration with writer/director Mark Steven Johnson with *WHEN IN ROME* for Disney. Most recently in 2011 Foster executive produced *GHOST RIDER: SPIRIT OF VENGEANCE* starring Nicholas Cage again as Johnny Blaze the Ghost Rider.

Currently, Foster is partnered with former head of Sony Television Russ Krasnoff. Krasnoff/Foster Entertainment develop and work within both the big and small screens. Krasnoff/Foster Entertainment produce the NBC hit comedy series “Community”, created by Dan Harmon and now in its third season.

YOKO NARAHASHI (Producer) is an accomplished actor, an award winning director of stage and screen, a casting director and a lyricist.

The daughter of an international Japanese diplomat, Yoko grew up in Montreal and Ottawa receiving her formal education in Canada. She later trained at the Neighborhood Playhouse in New York. Among the plays and musicals she has directed are “Hair,” “The Magic Monkey” and the award winning “The Winds of God” which was performed in Los Angeles, New York (Strasberg Institute, Actors Studio, and the United Nations), Australia and New Zealand.

Narahashi’s feature film directorial debut *THE WINDS OF GOD* won her the Japan Film Critics Award for Best New Director.

Narahashi has been a casting director for foreign feature film productions since she worked with Director and Producer Steven Spielberg on *EMPIRE OF THE SUN* in 1987. More recently, Narahashi was Associate Producer and casting director for *THE LAST SAMURAI* Directed by Ed Zwick; and casting for *MEMOIRS OF A GEISHA* directed by Rob Marshall; *BABEL* directed by Alejandro Gonzalez Inarritu; *THE RAMEN GIRL* directed Robert Allan Ackerman; and most recently *47 RONIN* Directed by Carl Rinsch, starring Keanu Reeves and due for release in 2012.

For *THE LAST SAMURAI* Narahashi also acted as Associate Producer and assisted Tom Cruise with his Japanese dialogue and Ken Watanabe with his English dialogue.

In 1978 Narahashi wrote original lyrics for Japanese TV series *MONKEY*, an action adventure story based on an ancient Chinese legend tracing the origins of Buddhism, screening in many countries around the world.

In 1974 she co-founded the successful Model Language Studio, which teaches English through drama. Now in 34 locations, The MLS program consists of the training for actors, audition practice, workshops, as well as English training for business professionals, adults, English teachers and children. Narahashi followed that MLS by establishing the United Performers’ Studio, a production (film, theater, TV and video) and management company for professional actors. The company now

focuses mainly on casting and production work for international film and television. In 1998, she also founded UPS Academy, an acting school with an emphasis on method acting.

EUGENE NOMURA (Producer) is both an actor and producer. His acting career began at the age of fourteen playing the lead in an award winning NHK television drama ‘Kizuna’ (1987). He then received an acting scholarship to the Lee Strasberg Institute and the Actors’ Studio in New York. After returning to Tokyo, Nomura worked on the award winning film ‘800 Two Lap Runners’ (1994) where he was honored with the Kinema Junpo Award and Mainichi Concours Grand Prize for Best Actor. Having worked in over 50 films and 60 major television series in Japan, he also started producing films in 2009.

Nomura’s producer credits include THE LAUGHING POLICEMAN (2009) TAJOMARU (2009); SURELY SOME DAY (2010); and TOMATO NO SHIZUKU (2011).

TIM CODDINGTON (Co-Producer) is one of New Zealand’s most prolific filmmakers with over 25 years’ experience in the international & domestic film industry. In 2011 he served as Executive Producer on MISTER PIP Directed by Andrew Adamson. This independent New Zealand feature film based on the best-selling, internationally-acclaimed novel by Lloyd Jones, was shot in the remote regions of Bougainville province near Papua New Guinea and various locations around New Zealand.

A solid relationship was forged with Director, Andrew Adamson and Producer Mark Johnson following Tim’s tenure as Line Producer & Unit Production Manager for the Disney & Walden Media’s global box-office hits, THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA: THE LION, THE WITCH AND THE WARDROBE (2005), and PRINCE CASPIAN (2008).

In 2006 he co-produced the Walt Disney Pictures & Walden Media’s box-office success, BRIDGE TO TERABITHIA, directed by Gabor Csupo and filmed entirely on location in NZ.

Tim made his first foray into 3D as the Co-Producer of Warner Bros.’ YOGI BEAR and soon followed this as Line Producer on a 3D film featuring the phenomenal CIRQUE DU SOLIEL: WORLD’S AWAY - Directed by Andrew Adamson and Produced by Adamson and Walden Media founder, Cary Granat. The film is due for release in December 2012.

Prior to entering the film industry, he managed a fishing venture in the Fly River region of Papua New Guinea, then spent three years as an officer with the Royal New Zealand Air Force and New Zealand territorial Armoured Corp. He began his film career as Unit Manager and Assistant Director on New Zealand feature films, such as Bruce Morrison’s acclaimed CONSTANCE.

Tim holds an NZ and UK citizenship. In 1982 he moved to the U.K. and worked as a freelance Assistant Director, film projects included John Cleese comedy CLOCKWISE, Alan Bleasdale's NO SURRENDER and Stanley Kubrick's FULL METAL JACKET.

Returning to N.Z. in 1987, he worked as a First Assistant Director on diverse television and film projects, including WORZEL GUMMIDGE starring Jon Pertwee of Dr Who fame, and the Kevin Costner thriller NO WAY OUT, directed by Roger Donaldson. He went on to become Production Manager of VERTICAL LIMIT directed by Martin Campbell (CASINO ROYALE); THE OTHER SIDE OF HEAVEN for which he won a Camie Award and SUPERFIRE. He spent 3 years as a producer at Silverscreen in Wellington before setting up his own company Rolling Films a company that sole produced for 3 Directors and specialised in producing commercials in N.Z., Australia, USA, UK, Germany and Asia. Many of his commercials garnered major international awards, including Silver and Bronze Lions at Cannes; Gold LFTA; Gold Mobius; and closer to home Gold, Silver and Bronze AXIS awards.

Coddington is founding chairman of Film Auckland Advisory Board and a founding member of Film Auckland, organizations that promote filmmaking in the region to local and international producers. He was also a former Board member of Waitakere Enterprise, the body instrumental in purchasing and establishing Henderson Valley Studios - now known as Auckland Film Studios - the largest in New Zealand with a 4 hectare (10.5 acres) site and five sound stages containing 5,251 square meters (56,500 sq. feet) of studio space.

STUART DRYBURGH, ASC (Director of Photography) is a British born, New York based cinematographer. His many credits as a DOP include BRIDGET JONES'S DIARY, THE PAINTED VEIL, AEON FLUX, NIM'S ISLAND, NO RESERVATIONS and his most recent projects include AMELIA which reunited him with Director Mira Nair and starred Hilary Swank, Richard Gere and Ewan McGregor, TEXAS KILLING FIELDS, THE TEMPEST, and the HBO series BOARDWALK EMPIRE.

In New Zealand, Dryburgh lensed the distinctive look of many Kiwi classic films such as the 1989 AN ANGEL AT MY TABLE for director Jane Campion. This led to another Dryburgh/ Campion collaboration in 1994 with THE PIANO which garnered him an Academy Award nomination for Best Cinematography in 1994. Also in 1994, Dryburgh shot ONCE WERE WARRIORS with Director Lee Tamahori later returning to New Zealand as Director of Photography for IN MY FATHER'S DEN directed by the late Brad McGann.

Dryburgh was born in the UK in 1952, and migrated with his family to New Zealand in 1961, where he spent most of his childhood and young adult life. He earned a Bachelor of Architecture from Auckland University in 1977.

In 1979, Dryburgh commenced his filmmaking career as a gaffer alongside legendary NZ cinematographer Alun Bollinger on early iconic New Zealand films such as MIDDLE AGE SPREAD, GOODBYE PORK PIE (Director: Geoff Murphy) and VIGIL (Director: Vincent Ward), and other titles such as SMASH PALACE (Director: Roger Donaldson).

From 1985, Dryburgh has worked continuously as a cinematographer, at first shooting short films, music videos, and TV commercials. In 1994, Dryburgh shot his first US feature film, the PERES FAMILY for director Mira Nair (AMELIA).

In 1996 he moved permanently to the US. He lives in Brooklyn with his wife Carla Rajj and their 2 young children Joaquin and Mateo. Dryburgh's adult children, Tomas, Isobel and Emil live in Auckland, New Zealand.

GRANT MAJOR (Production Designer) was nominated for the Best Art Direction/Set Decoration Academy Award® as well as England's BAFTA prize for his work as production designer on all three films in Peter Jackson's THE LORD OF THE RINGS trilogy. He received an Oscar®, a Los Angeles Film Critics' Society Award and an Art Director's Guild Award for the third installment of the trilogy, THE RETURN OF THE KING.

Additionally, he won an American Film Institute Award, a National Board of Review Award and an Art Directors Guild nomination for Jackson's first film in the series, THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE RING. He also took home the Art Directors Guild Award for the second chapter, THE TWO TOWERS and was nominated for a Satellite Award in 2003 for his production design on both THE RETURN OF THE KING and Niki Caro's Oscar®-nominated production WHALE RIDER winning for the former.

Major's collaboration with Sir Peter Jackson dates back HEAVENLY CREATURES in 1994, for which Major received a New Zealand Film and Television Award for Best Design. He continued his association with Jackson on his 1996 horror film, THE FRIGHTENERS and the 2005 epic KING KONG for which he earned his fourth Oscar®, BAFTA and Art Directors Guild nominations.

Major's other film credits include three titles for which he won New Zealand Film and TV honors: Niki Caro's MEMORY AND DESIRE; THE UGLY; and Jane Campion's AN ANGEL AT MY TABLE. He also designed the feature films THE RUIN; THE ABERRATIONS; JACK BE NIMBLE and Niki Caro's THE VINTNERS LUCK.

Major served as art director on the motion picture OTHER HALVES and two HERCULES: THE LEGENDARY JOURNEY telefilms, THE GRASSCUTTER and the series HANLON in addition to working on news programs and commercials, including a TV spot for Singapore Airlines directed by Vincent Ward, winning a Mobius AwardGold for Major's art direction.

Born in Palmerston North, on New Zealand's North Island, Major's career in design began at Television New Zealand. He is a professional film, commercials and event designer covering a wide range of design work in various arenas, as production designer for the Commonwealth Games Federation ceremonies, to designer for the New Zealand Pavilions at the World Expos; to design consultant for the Louis Vuitton 150th anniversary parties in New York, Hong Kong, Tokyo and Paris. Major received an honorary doctorate from his alma mater, the Auckland University of Technology, in 2004, and was inducted a year later as a Member of the New Zealand Order of Merit, awarded by the New Zealand Government for services to the New Zealand Film Industry.

NGILA DICKSON (Costume Designer) won an Academy Award[®] in 2004 for her work on Peter Jackson's THE LORD OF THE RINGS: THE RETURN OF THE KING. She earned dual nominations that year, also being honored for her costume designs for Edward Zwick's THE LAST SAMURAI. Dickson had previously gained her first Dickson had previously gained her first Oscar[®] nomination and a BAFTA nomination for Best Costume Design for THE LORD OF THE RINGS: THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE RING.

In addition, she won a BAFTA Award for her work on THE LORD OF THE RINGS: THE TWO TOWERS and won a Costume Designers Guild Award and received her third BAFTA Award nomination for THE LORD OF THE RINGS: THE RETURN OF THE KING. She received another Costume Designers Guild Award nomination for her work on THE ILLUSIONIST, starring Edward Norton, Paul Giamatti and Jessica Biel and more recently designed the costumes for THE INTERNATIONAL starring Clive Owen and Naomi Watts; FOOL'S GOLD, with Matthew McConaughey and Kate Hudson; and BLOOD DIAMOND, starring Leonardo DiCaprio, Djimon Hounsou and Jennifer Connelly.

Born and raised in Dunedin, New Zealand, Dickson first worked with Wellington-based director Peter Jackson on his directorial feature debut, HEAVENLY CREATURES. Her early credits also include the 1989 television project THE RAINBOW WARRIOR CONSPRIRACY about the sinking of a Greenpeace ship, and the feature film version of the same story, Dickson also designed the costumes for the internationally successful television series XENA: WARRIOR PRINCESS, for which she received a New Zealand Film and TV Award for Best Contribution to Design.

CHRIS PLUMMER (Editor) has a career spanning 25 years, working on most of New Zealand's iconic feature films. Plummer edited Taika Waititi's second feature film **BOY**, the award-winning run-away NZ box office hit of 2010. Also in 2010 he edited **THE HOPES AND DREAMS OF GAZZA SNELL** directed by Brendan Donovan.

Plummer's most recent film is the much anticipated **MR PIP** directed by Andrew Adamson and due for release in 2012.

In 2001, Plummer edited **CROOKED EARTH** directed by Sam Pillsury and assistant edited the Oscar-nominated **THE QUIET AMERICAN** directed by Phillip Noyce. He went on to win a New Zealand Film Award for his work on **IN MY FATHER'S DEN**, directed by the late Brad McGann.

Plummer's next two features resulted in further editing nominations for horror-comedy **BLACK SHEEP** directed by Jonathan King and the family drama **No. 2** directed by Toa Fraser. Plummer reunited with both directors for Jonathan King's adaptation of Maurice Gee novel **UNDER THE MOUNTAIN**, and with Toa Fraser on **DEAN SPANLEY** starring Peter O'Toole which won for Plummer another New Zealand Film and Television editing award. Plummer also edited **RAIN OF THE CHILDREN** a documentary by Director Vincent Ward.

About Fellers Film

Fellers Film was formed by acclaimed casting director, director and producer Yoko Narahashi and actor / producer Eugene Nomura. Narahashi has been involved with major international films including: **THE LAST SAMURAI**, **BABEL** and **MEMOIRS OF A GEISHA** while Nomura has been involved with Japanese film and television for 25 years.

About Krasnoff/Foster Entertainment

Producers Gary Foster and Russ Krasnoff have been successful Hollywood producers for over 25 years. Foster's credits include **SLEEPLESS IN SEATTLE**, **TIN CUP**, **GHOST RIDER**, **DAREDEVIL** and **THE SOLOIST**. With his partner Russ Krasnoff, they executive produce the NBC series "Community", now in its 3rd season.

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