

# THE PYRAMID

The ancient wonders of the world have long cursed explorers who've dared to uncover their secrets. Most notable among afflictions is the so-called "Curse of the Pharaohs" – vengeance against adventurers who disturb the sacred tombs of the pyramids.

In 1699, a Polish ship carrying two mummies was haunted by spectral visions and brutal storms. In 1803 four expedition members entered the Pyramid of Khafre -- never to emerge. And in 1922 Tutankhamun's Tomb was opened and a series of horrific deaths befall the excavation team.

For the next 90 years, no other tombs were disturbed.

Until now.

A team of U.S. archaeologists is about to get more than it bargained for when it discovers a lost pyramid unlike any other in the Egyptian desert. As they unlock the terrifying secrets buried within, they realize they aren't just trapped; they are being hunted.

## **THE ORIGIN OF THE PYRAMID**

For Dr. Nora Holden (Ashley Hinshaw) and her father Miles (Denis O'Hare) it might be the most important discovery of their careers. Using NASA satellite imaging technology, they have uncovered the first three-sided Egyptian pyramid buried deep under the desert for over 5,000 years. Followed by documentarian Sunni Marshe (Christa Nicola) and her cameraman Terrence "Fitzie" Fitzsimmons (James Buckley), and with the help of robotics expert Michael Zahir (Amir Kamyab), the team is determined to explore the foreboding structure.

But with political protests raging in nearby Cairo, the security of the expedition can't be guaranteed and the site's officials order an immediate evacuation. Desperate to

take what might be their last chance to venture inside the pyramid, the team goes in alone. But what they find in the dark will test them all to their breaking point.

Egyptology was a topic that had always fascinated THE PYRAMID producer Scott C. Silver. He even had a dedicated Google Alerts feed set up to monitor news in the surprisingly fast-moving world of archeology. It was late in May 2011 when he first heard about the use of satellite technology to survey Egypt and the subsequent discovery of 17 lost pyramids. “It set my mind racing to come up with the idea for THE PYRAMID,” Silver notes.

The use of this technology, he felt, could reveal an unexplored environment on a scale that archeology hadn’t achieved to date. Silver imagined a team of archeologists venturing into the dark and discovering the horrors within.

He brought the idea to his producing partner Chady Eli Mattar. The pair had founded Silvatar Media after graduating from the prestigious American Film Institute Conservatory. “I’m drawn to sociological and psychological drama,” Mattar says, “so I was attracted to Scott’s idea, which included elements of the political upheavals that were going on at the time in Egypt. It added another dimension to the story.”

Mattar and Silver commissioned a script from their fellow AFI alumni Daniel Meersand and Nick Simon, with a view to craft an independent production they could sell to distributors.

The two producers brought the project to veteran producer and former studio executive Mark Canton and his company, Atmosphere Entertainment MM, with whom they had previously collaborated. “When Mark got involved, and when we subsequently brought the project to Alexandre Aja and Gregory Levasseur, with whom Mark had worked on PIRANHA 3D, THE PYRAMID became larger in scope,” Mattar remembers.

“I, too, liked the idea of the historical reality to the story,” says Canton. “Egypt is one of the oldest civilizations on Earth and its history is so fascinating.”

“Alexandre loved the story and had strong ideas about where to take it,” says Canton.

“A movie like this only works when you have a strong starting point,” notes Aja. “I liked the idea of using this new technology to find a lost civilization because it felt so real. It was a chance to explore a clash between the old and new school of archeology.”

Aja showed the script to his longtime collaborator Gregory Levasseur. The pair had worked together since they were kids, with Levasseur having written and produced Aja's films. "THE PYRAMID script was a page-turner," relates Levasseur. "Alex and I met with Chady and Scott and they said, 'If you guys are ready to be involved, you can do what you want.'"

Mattar confirms that "Alex and Greg brought their own layer and texture and finesse to the film. It's an original story but it needed the touch those guys could offer. They're very talented artists."

### **REFINING THE WORLD AND MAKING IT REAL**

When they came on board, Aja, Levasseur and executive producer Justine Raczkiewicz worked closely with screenwriters Daniel Meersand and Nick Simon to strengthen the story's characters, ideas and mythology. "We refined the script and brought the project to Fox International Productions. They liked it and immediately began giving their input," Mattar confirms. "You could feel it all coming together during that period and everything clicked."

The script was strong on its use of the science and archeology, but Levasseur and Aja worked to shore up the mythology of the pyramid, which became a temple to the Egyptian god Osiris and then a prison to the jackal-headed god Anubis. "Of course, the story in the pyramid is fictitious," says Silver. "But Alex and Greg brought an incredible grasp of Egyptian mythology and of Egypt's tremendous, rich history."

"We needed to make it as big as the subject demanded," adds Levasseur.

Aja explains, "We've been passionate about Ancient Egypt and other ancient civilizations since we were kids and it was interesting to play with that and create a story that really surprised."

"Initially, the threats inside the pyramid weren't that readily defined," he continues. "We created and added some new elements, from a fungus that the characters are infected by, to terrifying sphinx cats and the Egyptian gods. We multiplied the dangers and the traps."

It was also important to the filmmakers that the audience cares deeply about the fate of the five characters that venture into the pyramid. "From the beginning, we knew

the story had legs,” says Silver, “but it was still lacking a real heart. We wanted to establish a bond between the characters.”

The first change Aja and Levasseur suggested was to make Dr. Miles Holden the father to Nora. Says Silver: “Once that relationship came into place the rest was smooth sailing.”

“When you’re building characters, you must be scared for them and you must forget that you’re watching a movie,” Aja elaborates. “The characters really help to immerse you in the action.”

Having worked with Aja and Levasseur before, the producers knew that the latter was more than ready to take the directorial reins because Levasseur had served as a second unit director on Aja’s films going back to their earliest collaborations. “Greg has wanted to direct for years but he’s never found the right project at the right time with the right people,” relates Mattar.

“Greg was someone we had wanted to work with as a director,” recalls Canton. “When we did [the Aja-directed] PIRANHA 3D [on which Levasseur was a producer and second unit director], Greg would be there for every single shot and Alex would always turn to Greg and ask his opinion. He was ready to direct.”

Aja agrees, “I don’t see Greg as a first-time director at all,” he explains. “We’ve been on set together since my first film, FURIA, in 1998. He was more than ready; in fact, it was like working the way we usually work, but this time he was the one with the final word.”

As a producer on THE PYRAMID, Aja had intended to join Levasseur for the shoot, but his next project, an adaptation of Joe Hill’s novel HORNS, went into production at the same time. “I was involved in prep and I was in Morocco,” where THE PYRAMID was shot, reveals Aja. “Then I was called away for shooting. But I was able to look at the dailies every day. So Greg and I we were still able to have the collaboration we always have.”

For Levasseur, working closely with the actors was a welcome challenge. “Having worked as a second unit director, I’m used to stunts and action sequences, and I’ve never had the chance to enjoy such a close collaboration,” he says. “But the actors were wonderful –they were all invested in their characters, and always pushed to better

understand them.”

“Greg is a wonderful director,” confirms Denis O’Hare, “because he knows exactly what he wants, is very clear and sure, and yet he’s also adaptable.”

To heighten the scares and intensity, the filmmakers worked to ensure the authenticity of the story’s backdrop amidst Egypt’s recent political turmoil that erupted when Muslim Brotherhood’s Mohamed Morsi became President of Egypt. “Setting against these recent protests immediately places the movie in the real world,” says Silver.

Levasseur decided early on he would not be limited by genre conventions. “I liked the idea that we start with a documentary point of view and then slide into a more traditional narrative. We keep the documentary and handheld style and spirit, but we’re not trapped with one camera.”

The documentary-style framing device does add a certain immediacy that Levasseur and director of photography Laurent Tangy were keen to exploit. “I’m not at all precious about breaking the rules in service to the story,” says Tangy.

The production used real news footage of the event to inspire their restaging of the anti-Morsi protests that open the film. “It provides such a good contrast to archeology,” notes O’Hare. “In archeology you’re watching all these great civilizations rise and fall and it makes the geopolitical shifts of the way we live today seem to pale in comparison.”

Nevertheless, it was important for the production that the featured news events be presented delicately and tastefully. “We had discussions about how to handle it,” Mattar explains. “We want audiences to be able to immerse themselves in a cool world and didn’t want to turn it into a blindly political story. We had many discussions about the most conservative and yet believable scenario; one that tackles the subject without politicizing it.”

## **CASTING**

With the screenplay finalized and the sets under construction, the filmmakers’ attentions turned to casting. “Originally we were going to go for unknowns,” reveals Silver, “but we found a new dimension when we started thinking about established actors who hadn’t quite fully broken out yet.”

The result is an eclectic cast of performers led by Ashley Hinshaw as Nora. “Nora is the one that pushes them all to go into the pyramid,” says Levasseur. “She makes the story happen. Nora is so sure of herself that they all go along with her, convinced that what she says is true – that they’ll find the biggest archeological discovery in history. But it blinds her to the dangers and she brings everyone into a hellish environment.”

Hinshaw, who made an indelible impression with her performance in Fox’s 2013 hit *CHRONICLE*, understood Nora’s motivations. “How many archeologists actually get to go on a dig?” she wonders. “I think the vast majority is behind desks, at museums and universities, and that would drive me nuts. I would need to be in the thick of things, like Nora.”

She elaborates, “Nora has been hungry for adventure and discovery her entire life. Her father is an archeologist and their relationship hinges around her interest in archeology.”

Hinshaw was determined to make Nora a believable scientist. “A woman with blonde hair and jean shorts in the desert is very much a movie character,” she laughs, “but there’s still an element of geekiness about Nora, and you see her drive to push herself.”

The downside of being so self-assured is that Nora is also the last person to realize the dire situation in which she’s put her colleagues. “When things start going wrong it takes her longer to accept it,” Hinshaw confirms. “You start to see her unravel. But despite the horrors enveloping her and the group, she’s not going to give up.”

Hinshaw was drawn to the character because of the actress’ own interest in archeology. “In fact, before I turned to acting I wanted to go to school and study that field,” she reveals. “So when this came through I knew it was right up my alley.”

Indeed, *THE PYRAMID* offered Hinshaw the opportunity to immerse herself in the world of Ancient Egypt. But the film’s tight scheduling meant she was in Morocco just a week after she won the part. “Seven days of prep time doesn’t feel like enough, given I over-prepare in general,” she says with a laugh. “In fact, I had to start researching when I was still auditioning, because the subject is so fascinating.”

The filmmakers are effusive in their praise of Hinshaw, who was a unifying force on set. “She had wonderful ideas about the character’s emotional life,” says Aja. “My

experience tells me that dialogue is one thing, but to be able to act without dialogue – to take an audience with you through gestures and facial expressions alone – and show all the real fear and emotion, that’s the most important thing. And Ashley can do that.”

Helping bring to life the film’s key relationship – the father/daughter bond between Holden and Nora – is Denis O’Hare, a Tony-winning actor who’s had memorable roles in stage, on screen and on television, including the fearsome vampire king in TRUE BLOOD. “As played by Denis, Holden is the opposite of Nora,” says Levasseur. “Holden doesn’t want to go into the pyramid, he’s always concerned about safety and you realize he’s wise to do so. He’s the first to figure out what’s going on.”

Aja notes that “Denis is a perfect choice, because he has confidence, security and fragility at the same time. You feel the position between him and Nora shift during the movie. When you’re lost inside the pyramid and there’s no way out, you want your father to be the leader, but he’s being led by Nora.”

“We got so lucky with Denis,” adds Canton. “He’s an adventurer in real life and a great actor. He’s the real deal.”

O’Hare notes that the part was challenging to research. “The funny thing about researching a role is you inevitably explore the wrong thing,” he says. “To make this character work properly I investigated how people react under pressure and what they do when they’re trapped. To become Holden, it was less about me becoming an archaeologist and more about becoming someone who’s trapped in a pyramid!”

O’Hare did immerse himself in Egyptian history by absorbing an entire lecture series on Ancient Egypt and then learning about other civilizations of the time. “It’s a great excuse to get to know a new area,” he confirms.

On location, O’Hare related his newfound knowledge to an engaged cast and crew. “I learned so much from him,” says Amir Kamyab, who plays Zahir, “and not just about acting. Getting to learn from Denis, even off set, really helped me understand a lot more about the craft and the world of motion pictures.”

Where Nora is eager for a groundbreaking discovery, Holden is jaded from years of coasting. “He’s an academician who’s never had the right idea or received the right funding,” O’Hare reflects. “I imagine he had an early success in his twenties, which landed him a professorship, and then nothing else has happened to him. Now, because his

daughter is reigniting that thirst for discovery and exploration, he makes some bad decisions.”

For Hinshaw, O’Hare proved to be a perfect co-star. “We spent a lot of time discussing their relationship,” she says. “We focused on the characters’ backstory. It’s rare to get a co-star who’s as into that as I am, and perhaps he’s even more interested than me. We started developing all these stories about their lives and their life together before the film starts.”

Cementing the father/daughter bond was always the key driver of the story. Their disparate personalities and goals are heightened by Nora’s embracing of new technology – the very technology that reveals the location of the pyramid – and Holden’s desire to continue using the tried and true methods of his profession. “They have an emotional connection, that anyone can relate to, but it also increases the tension because you can have a more direct confrontation with your father than you can with, say, your professor.”

Another on-screen duo has a similarly antagonistic dynamic: Sunni and Fitzie. “They’ve known each other for years,” reflects Buckley. “And you get that from watching them. You understand they have this working relationship.”

“Sunni is a strong character who knows what she wants,” says Christa Nicola, who makes her feature film debut in *THE PYRAMID*. “I think that’s why they chose me for the role, because I have that same cockiness.”

“We liked Nicola’s audition a lot,” says Mattar. “And then Greg said, ‘Can you make a tape showing you can handle the physical stuff; running and crawling and that kind of thing?’ A few days later we got this crazy video of her rock climbing. It turns out she does that in her spare time. She’s almost a stuntwoman!”

Nicola’s Sunni has an agenda the archeologists don’t always agree with. “She and Holden spark the most,” says O’Hare, “and Christa has been fantastic, because she’s really brought that to the fore beautifully.”

Fitzie is in many ways the polar opposite of Sunni. “He’s a younger brother to her really,” Nicola says. “But I think she really trusts him. He annoys the hell out of her, but he’s good at what he does and that relaxes her.”

James Buckley is a well-known actor in Britain, thanks to his role as Jay in the hit comedy show *THE INBETWEENERS*. “James brought something genuine and fun to the



character,” Levasseur says. “Fitzie is the audience – the one they can relate to. It’s his point of view for the first part of the movie, and we come to rely on him. With James’s talent for improvisation, he was an ideal choice.”

Buckley describes Fitzie as “the cameraman who’s at the site to document the archaeologists’ discovery and he and Sunni do these projects together. It’s just another job for him. He has no interest in Egyptology or archeology. He’s there for the cash.”

“Fitzie’s probably my favorite character,” says Mattar. “He doesn’t care about the desert. He’d rather spend his day in a 5-star hotel lobby. He doesn’t have any respect for these archeologists or what they’re doing.”

Buckley suspects he was brought onto the film as the comic relief, but in fact Fitzie’s character undergoes the darkest transformation in the pyramid. It’s been a new challenge for the actor and one he’s embraced. “He has this moment of bravery that is the opposite of how he behaved at the outset. He realizes he’d rather die fighting than try scrabbling around an existence in this pyramid the rest of his life.”

The role was a dream for Buckley, who got to live out his Indiana Jones fantasies. “I’m used to walking down streets in suburban Britain, so being in a pyramid, doing the kind of film I’ve loved since childhood is pretty fantastic.”

Another comedian, Iranian-American stand-up Amir Kamyab, portrays Zahir, the group’s robotics expert and love interest to Nora. “It’s pure coincidence that both Amir and James are comic actors,” reflects Levasseur. “What we were looking for in Zahir was an American who could act and play in Arabic, because he’s got a lot of dialogue and he’s doing translation for the characters. But Amir really impressed us in the audition and I thought he’d be the best to interpret the character.”

“Zahir is a robotics engineer sent out to help the excavation crew,” says Kamyab. “He controls Shorty, a NASA rover that goes into the pyramid, and he has a relationship with Nora, which runs through the movie. But he’s a bit of an I.T. know-it-all and he doesn’t have a high threshold for people that don’t understand his profession.”

***“It isn't the mountain ahead that wears you out; it's the grain of sand in your shoe.”***

The above quote from poet Robert W. Service would undoubtedly ring true for

the cast of THE PYRAMID. Their characters battle horrific circumstances and creatures, but sand, says James Buckley, was the cast's fiercest enemy. "There was so much of it," he says. "I'd shower in the mornings, only to have the crew pour sand over me when the cameras started rolling. It's everywhere. I stopped worrying about it because it was such a constant. You come to Morocco; you should expect a lot of sand."

The shoot's toughest days involved the actors' passage through an enormous sand trap. They were literally covered in sand for two days. "The sand tunnel scene and the one after it are the biggest for me," says Levasseur. "It involves all the effects that go into an adventure movie: prosthetics, stunts, special effects and visual effects. It's very intense."

As difficult as the sequence was on the actors, it was also part of the fun of making the movie. "Very few jobs let you do things like this," says Hinshaw. "I didn't expect to feel some of the emotions I experienced. I was claustrophobic in the tunnels and very little of it was fabricated. I had real scratches and scrapes – at a certain point it's not make-up anymore!"

Hinshaw's character gets completely submerged in sand, an effect the crew was planning to achieve with CGI. But Hinshaw wanted to try the scene practically. "She did it the whole day and we didn't have to use CGI," says Levasseur. "It was amazing."

Hinshaw confides, "There were a couple of screams in there that weren't acting!"

## **BUILDING A PYRAMID**

The production decided on Morocco as a shooting location, largely thanks to Aja and Levasseur's history with the area – they had shot FURIA and THE HILLS HAVE EYES in the country – and the talented local crews. The location offered the cast a chance to gel, with the entire production being housed in two adjacent hotels in the small filmmaking town of Ouarzazate, where there are two film studios. In fact, production designer Marco Trentini had helped build the CLA studios, which the production called home, for the late producer Dino De Laurentiis.

Trentini's exceptional ability to craft believable rock-hewn sets was invaluable to the production. Next to the CLA studios, and still standing in the desert, is the grand city of Jerusalem that Trentini helped to build with production designer Arthur Max for

Ridley Scott's epic KINGDOM OF HEAVEN. THE PYRAMID marks Trentini's first credit as a production designer, but he has worked in film since the 1980s, alongside directors Francis Ford Coppola (THE GODFATHER: PART III), Wes Anderson (THE LIFE AQUATIC WITH STEVE ZISSOU) and Mike Nichols (CHARLIE WILSON'S WAR).

"Marco is a genius," says Silver. "The first few visuals we got back from him made our jaws drop. Amir K. said it best when he said, 'I've never been to the pyramids, but now I don't need to.'"

"They're phenomenal sets," says Denis O'Hare. "They're creepy and real. When the sand's pouring on you, it's really pouring on you. They feel dangerous because they *are* dangerous, although we were always kept safe."

Trentini worked closely with Levasseur and Aja on the design of the pyramid, and the three spent weeks on location in Morocco prepping the shoot. The close collaboration meant the designer had free reign to build the most uncomfortable environment for the characters he could come up with.

"The movie would not have been possible without Marco," says Aja. "He was the key element from the beginning. If you didn't believe in the pyramids and the corridors throughout the movie, you were never going to believe the emotional journey of the characters trapped inside. It was the same for the visual effects and make-up effects teams. They were the elements we had to ensure were in place so Greg could make the movie he wanted to make."

Aja has high praise for the environments Trentini built. "Of all the movies I've worked on, I think these sets are the most spectacular I've ever seen."

The biggest set was the Grand Gallery, which is a long stepped corridor that descends into a tank underneath the stage's floor. "We originally scouted a location near the Casbah in town," Trentini reveals. "But I knew from experience it would be expensive to shut down, difficult to work in and possibly impossible to build, since I'd have needed to attach my structure to the walls." He realized instead that he could use the existing steps that went down into the pit under the stage and make use of every inch of space it provided.

But the film's *piece de resistance* is a burial chamber set that appears in the final

moments. “It’s the only place in the pyramid where any color remains. It’s a great end to the movie, because it changes the tone,” says Levasseur. In fact, the director liked it so much that he and Tangy decided to reveal it in three different modes in the film. We first see it bathed in shadow, then through the green tinge of a night vision screen. Finally, it’s lit by a bright red flare. “There are three different colors and volumes just because of the lights and shading on the walls, and it looks fantastic,” says Levasseur.

Our first glimpse of the pyramid, which the characters have yet to enter, is at an excavation that reveals only the apex of the building rising from the sand. This involved a practical build in the Moroccan desert. “It was my first choice of location because the gorge we used already exists, so all we had to do was bring the apex structure,” states Levasseur. “The result is spectacular, and one of the film’s most impressive visual surprises.”

But shooting in the desert was not easy. “We did not expect the sandstorms,” says Silver. “We’d go for an hour in the mornings on scouts and talk about what we wanted to do, and it was fine. But once we got on set in the afternoon, the wind started howling and it was really tough. But it adds production value!”

“It looks beautiful on camera,” confirms Mattar. “It was a rough, hot week. But we were lucky, because the following week there was torrential rain.”

## **ABOUT THE CAST**

**ASHLEY HINSHAW** (Dr. Nora Holden) grew up in the Midwest and was involved with theatre from a young age. She made the move to New York City as a teenager to pursue a career in entertainment and got her start modeling. She has been the face of some of the world’s largest campaigns, including Abercrombie & Fitch.

Hinshaw has since focussed on her passion for acting, and has proved her talent by landing leading roles. She was most recently seen in 20<sup>th</sup> Century Fox’s hit film *CHRONICLE*, directed by Josh Trank, as well as in Mandate Pictures’ film *LOL* opposite Miley Cyrus and Demi Moore.

Hinshaw will next be on the HBO series *ENLIGHTENED*. She is also the lead in *CHERRY* (2012 Berlin Film Festival) opposite James Franco, Dev Patel and Heather Graham, and in Peter Iliff’s independent film *RITES OF PASSAGE* opposite Wes

Bentley, Christian Slater and Stephen Dorff. She has appeared on hit television shows such as Fox's FRINGE, A&E's THE GLADES and CW's GOSSIP GIRL.

**DENIS O'HARE** (Dr. Miles Holden) is a Tony Award-winning stage performer who has also made his mark on screens both big and small. O'Hare has appeared in such popular television series as LAW & ORDER, BROTHERS & SISTERS, TRUE BLOOD and AMERICAN HORROR STORY and such critically acclaimed features as THE ANNIVERSARY PARTY and MICHAEL CLAYTON.

Initially known as a stage actor, the Kansas City native honed his craft at Northwestern University before jumping into the Chicago theater scene. In the early 1990s, it was time for O'Hare to make the move to New York City and try his luck on Broadway. He debuted in David Hare's RACING DEMON at Lincoln Center, won a Tony Award for his performance in TAKE ME OUT and has appeared in numerous plays since then, most recently in UNCLE VANYA Off-Broadway with Peter Saarsgard and Maggie Gyllenhaal and in ELLING with Brendan Fraser. O'Hare proved a natural at musicals as well, and would quickly go on to earn accolades for performances in ASSASSINS and CABARET. O'Hare won a Drama Desk Award for his performance as Oscar in SWEET CHARITY and most recently as The Baker in the Shakespeare in the Park production of INTO THE WOODS, where he appeared alongside Amy Adams.

Back on the big screen, the actor was making strides with appearances in such films as Woody Allen's SWEET AND LOWDOWN and Alejandro González Iñárritu's 21 GRAMS. Though O'Hare did display an impressive onscreen charisma, his stage roots would continue to show onscreen with roles opposite Campbell Scott in HAMLET and Carol Burnett in ONCE UPON A MATRESS, and in the New York theater drama HEIGHTS. While his onscreen roles are often of the supporting variety, it's easy to see the talent that lies beneath no matter how few lines he may have in the final cut. In 2006, O'Hare could be seen in Ryan Fleck's Oscar-nominated drama HALF NELSON, with a role in director Michael Winterbottom's A MIGHTY HEART following in short order. He shines in a scene near the beginning of MICHAEL CLAYTON, which sets the tone for the movie and lingers in the mind long after the final credits have rolled.

At home in both dramas and comedies, O'Hare has appeared in BABY MAMA

with Tina Fey and Amy Poehler and *THE PROPOSAL* with Sandra Bullock and Ryan Reynolds. Some of his most recent appearances include the homophobic Senator John Briggs in *MILK* where he starred with Sean Penn, the steely psychiatrist in Clint Eastwood's *CHANGELING* and a Roman Soldier alongside Channing Tatum in Kevin MacDonal'd's *THE EAGLE*. This year, O'Hare was nominated for an Emmy for his performance opposite Jessica Lange in Ryan Murphy's *AMERICAN HORROR STORY* playing Larry – a twisted, pathetic denizen of the season's haunted house. This year also marked the return of Russell Edgington – the outrageous vampire King of Mississippi that O'Hare created for Alan Ball's *TRUE BLOOD*.

As a writer, O'Hare recently co-wrote a piece for the stage called *AN ILLIAD*, for which he received the Lucille Lortel, Obie and Outer Critics Circle Awards. He is currently writing another piece with his collaborator, Lisa Petersen, for the Court Theatre and the University of Chicago.

An avid artist, fierce progressive and activist in his spare time, O'Hare began crafting Cornell Boxes for friends after reading about the curious art pieces in a William Gibson novel.

**JAMES BUCKLEY** (Terrence “Fitzie” Fitzsimmons) is a British Comedy Award nominee for Best Comedy Actor for his role as Jay Cartwright in the cult hit show *THE INBETWEENERS*. The TV series ran for three seasons and picked up multiple nominations including two nominations for Best Situation Comedy at the BAFTA TV Awards. It won the Audience Award at the BAFTA TV Awards, as well as Best Sitcom and the inaugural Outstanding Contribution to British Comedy prize at the British Comedy Awards. The show went on to be adapted into a feature film in which the original cast, including Buckley, reprised their roles. *THE INBETWEENERS MOVIE* had the UK's biggest-ever opening weekend for a comedy film and went on to become one of 2011's highest-grossing films in the UK.

Buckley's other credits include the UK classic *ONLY FOOLS AND HORSES* prequel *ROCK AND CHOPS* for the BBC, and the feature film *THE NECESSARY DEATH OF CHARLIE COUNTRYMAN* starring Shia LaBeouf.

**CHRISTA NICOLA** (Sunni Marshe) developed an interest in the arts at a very young age. From the age of four she took up dancing, singing and acting and won several awards in each category. At 15, Nicola's passion for the performing arts grew, so she auditioned for the exclusive Centre for Performing Arts in South Australia. She got down to the final few when the Head of Acting took her aside and said he thought she had a natural talent, but suggested she finish her schooling first. Nicola took his advice, auditioned two years later and was accepted.

During Nicola's first year at the CPA, and being the youngest student, the Director encouraged her to audition for the prestigious National Institute of Dramatic Arts (NIDA). She did just that and was accepted at the age of 17, again as the youngest student. After playing several lead roles at NIDA, including musical theatre productions, Nicola graduated and went straight into the popular Australian TV series HOME AND AWAY.

After a run on local Australian television, Nicola's yearning and love of theatre eventually took her to London where she performed in shows on and off the West End including the role of Kate in THE TAMING OF THE SHREW, Hermia in A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM and Portia and Jane in the record-breaking VEGEMITE TALES, as well as in several award-winning short films.

Nicola recently returned home to Australia, where she is pursuing film and television.

**AMIR KAMYAB** (Michael Zahir) is undoubtedly one of the fastest rising talents in Hollywood. In 2013 he appeared in the Ben Affleck directed feature ARGO.

Born in Tehran, Iran and raised in Southern California, his stand-up comedy is a hilarious blend of character work, storytelling and improvisation shaped by a multi-cultural upbringing. Amir has been featured on DFDTV's LIVE LAUGHS and he has won Tommy T's stand-up competition, The 100 Comic Ultimate Laff-Down in Southern California, and OC's Funniest Stand-Up competition in 2010.

He was a finalist for NBC's renowned Stand-Up for Diversity Showcase and was selected out of thousands to perform in the 2012 CBS Diversity Showcase. With a relentless work ethic, Amir Kamyab performs nightly on stages all over the world with

many of the most respected comedians in the business. When he is not touring he is entertaining crowds at the top comedy clubs around Los Angeles including the world famous Comedy Store, Laugh Factory and Improv.

### **ABOUT THE FILMMAKERS**

**GREGORY LEVASSEUR** (Director) is a French native who has worked alongside his longtime collaborator and friend Alexandre Aja for the last 16 years as a writer, producer and 2<sup>nd</sup> unit director. **THE PYRAMID** is his feature-length film directorial debut.

The release of **HIGH TENSION** in 2003, which Levasseur co-wrote with Aja, placed them both on the map for the horror genre. The slasher picture pushed the gore and tension envelope at the Sundance and Toronto Film Festivals, where it garnered wide media acclaim and was immediately acquired by Lionsgate Films. The instant hype surrounding the French duo brought them on board Wes Craven's reboot of **THE HILLS HAVE EYES**, for which Levasseur co-wrote and directed 2<sup>nd</sup> unit on location in Morocco.

Following the success of **THE HILLS HAVE EYES**, Levasseur co-wrote, produced and directed 2<sup>nd</sup> unit on **MIRRORS**, a supernatural thriller for Fox starring Kiefer Sutherland. The film was shot on location in Romania. Shortly after, and across the globe, the independent thriller **P2** took him to Toronto, which he co-wrote and produced for Summit Entertainment. Dimension Films approached both him and Aja to produce **PIRANHA 3D**, for which he also directed 2<sup>nd</sup> unit on location in Lake Havasu, Arizona.

In the past few years Levasseur and Aja have expanded their production slate and are developing a wide range of projects. Most recently, Levasseur co-wrote **MANIAC**, a first person point-of-view thriller starring Elijah Wood, which played in the Official Selection at the Cannes Film Festival in 2012. It was developed along with Oscar-winning producer Thomas Langmann, and is set for release by IFC Films later this year.

Next up is **COBRA: THE SPACE PIRATE**, both his and Aja's childhood dream project based on the cult manga and one of the most successful franchises in Japan. They are developing this big-budget space adventure with Onyx Films and Studio 37 / Orange



who are setting it up to become the next STAR WARS.

**DANIEL MEERSAND** (Writer) is a 2008 screenwriting graduate of the American Film Institute Conservatory. At AFI he collaborated with writer/director Nick Simon on their thesis film, *THE 7th CLAUS*, an official selection at the CineVegas International Film Festival.

Upon graduation, Meersand co-wrote the feature length film *REMOVAL* (co-written and directed by Simon), which premiered at the 2010 AFI Fest and was an official selection at the 2010 Dubai International Film Festival. *REMOVAL* was picked up for distribution by Lionsgate Films in 2011.

Prior to AFI and his screenwriting career, Dan spent five years in sports television concurrent to working on his Bachelor's degree in film production from CUNY Brooklyn College, where he wrote/produced/directed four short films that played at festivals throughout New York City. Meersand's television career peaked with his work as a producer for NBC at the 2004 Athens Olympics, for which he won an Emmy award. Meersand was also a segment producer and assistant director for the short-lived ESPN series *CLASSIC NOW* with Josh Elliot.

**NICK SIMON** (Writer) is a graduate of the American Film Institute Conservatory. At AFI he wrote and directed his thesis film, *THE 7th CLAUS*, an official selection at the CineVegas International Film Festival. His follow up thesis film, *BUCKETS*, enjoyed a strong festival run including the 2008 AFI Film Festival.

Following AFI, Nick went on to direct a feature length film entitled *REMOVAL*, which premiered at the 2010 AFI Fest and was an official selection at the 2010 Dubai International Film Festival. *REMOVAL* is distributed through Lionsgate Films. Nick also co-wrote 2014's *COLD COMES THE NIGHT*, starring Bryan Cranston, Alice Eve, and Logan Marshall-Green and was released by Sony Pictures.

Working alongside producer Wes Craven, Nick is preparing to direct his second feature film, *THE GIRL IN THE PHOTOGRAPHS*, which he also co-wrote.

**ALEXANDRE AJA** (Producer) was born in Paris on August 7, 1978 to a French director and a cinema critic. Alexandre practically grew up on a film set during his formative years. His roles range from that of writer, director and producer, alongside his frequent collaborator and friend Gregory Levasseur. He is a member of the so-called “Splat Pack,” a term coined for a new wave of directors who have revolutionized the horror genre, including Rob Zombie, Zack Snyder and Eli Roth.

Aja made his directorial debut at the age of eighteen with the short film *OVER THE RAINBOW*, which received a Golden Palm Award nomination at the Cannes Film Festival. In 1999, after graduating from Sorbonne in Philosophy, he wrote the screenplay and directed his first feature *FURIA*, a futurist movie starring Marion Cotillard based on a short story by Julio Cortázar.

But it was the release of *HAUTE TENSION* (High Tension) in 2003, which placed Aja on the map for the horror genre. The French slasher pushed the gore and tension envelope at the Sundance and Toronto Film Festivals, where it garnered media acclaim for Aja. The film was nominated for the grand prize at the Amsterdam Fantastic Film Festival, earned Aja awards for best direction and best fantasy film at the Catalonian International Film Festival and placed him on *Variety*’s Ten Directors to Watch list in 2004.

For his third feature, American director Wes Craven asked Aja to come up with a concept for the remake of his 1977 film *THE HILLS HAVE EYES*, which became a cult classic. After the success of *HILLS*, Aja wrote, directed and produced *MIRRORS*, a supernatural thriller for New Regency starring Kiefer Sutherland and Paula Patton. He also produced the indie thriller *P2* directed by Franck Khalfoun for Summit. In 2010, Aja directed and produced *PIRANHA 3D* along with Dimension Films. The fresh mix of humor and gore, playing homage to the popcorn films of the past, garnered unanimous positive reviews and became another cult success.

Aja’s most recent film, *HORNS*, based on the novel by Joe Hill, stars Daniel Radcliffe and is produced by Mandalay and Red Granite Pictures. This supernatural romance thriller premiered at the Toronto Film Festival in 2013, and was hailed by *Bloody Disgusting* as an “edgy, audacious and affecting romantic fairy tale, dark comedy

and compelling mystery unlike anything you've seen before." It will be released by TWC/Radius on October 31<sup>st</sup>, 2014.

In the past few years Aja has expanded his production slate and has produced a wide range of projects. The most recent success was MANIAC – a film he co-wrote and produced alongside Oscar winning producer Thomas Langmann and starring Elijah Wood. It had its world premiere at the 2012 Cannes Film Festival and was released by IFC Films in 2013. Alex has also produced two films with FOX International: THE PYRAMID, and the recently wrapped THE OTHER SIDE OF THE DOOR, a haunted-house possession thriller he produced in India, directed by Johannes Roberts and set for release next year.

Currently Aja is directing THE NINTH LIFE OF LOUIS DRAX, a poignant family drama and a Hitchcockian thriller based on the book of the same name, adapted by Max Minghella and produced by Miramax.

Other projects in development are SCANNERS, a re-imagining of the Cronenberg cult original as a new espionage television show with Dimension Films; WEDDING GOWN, a psychological thriller with TF1 International, and COBRA: THE SPACE PIRATE, Aja's lifelong dream project based on the Japanese manga and one of the most successful franchises in Japan. Aja is developing this big-budget space adventure with Studio Orange who is setting it up to be STAR WARS for a new generation.

**MARK CANTON** (Producer) has been a preeminent force in the entertainment industry helping to bring more than 300 pictures to the screen in his capacity as a senior studio executive and producer. Canton controls a large number of high profile projects in various stages of development, pre-production, production and post- production.

300: RISE OF AN EMPIRE, the companion to the mega-hit 300, recently opened to new box office records around the world is 300: RISE OF AN EMPIRE. It was written by Zack Snyder and Kurt Johnstad and directed by Noam Murro for Warner Bros. and Legendary Pictures and is based on Frank Miller's latest graphic novel. In post-production is OUTCAST, an adventure-drama directed by Nick Powell and starring

Nicolas Cage and Hayden Christiansen. Canton is an executive producer on the picture, which was filmed in China.

Three motion pictures are in production in 2014. *CAKE* is a dark comedy written by Patrick Tobin, directed by Daniel Barnz and starring Jennifer Aniston as an acerbic woman who becomes fascinated by the suicide of a person in her chronic pain group, completed principal photography May 7<sup>th</sup>. It is the first project being produced under a new venture between Cinelou Films DHJ and China's Shenghua Entertainment. Courtney Solomon is producing with Canton.

*LAST WITCH HUNTER* is a classic tale about an immortal witch hunter and a powerful warlock. Starring Vin Diesel, it is written by Corey Goodman with Breck Eisner directing. It began shooting in September for Lionsgate.

In advanced development are:

-*EMPEROR*, which follows the adventures and intrigues of Gaius Julius Caesar and Marcus Brutus as they mature from boys into young men in the powerful, sexy and dangerous world of ancient Rome. The original script is by Oscar nominee William Broyles Jr. and Stephen Harrigan based on Conn Iggulden's historical fiction novel. Nigel Sinclair and Guy East of Whitehorse Pictures, Gianni Nunnari and Matt Jackson are producing alongside Canton.

-*DEN OF THIEVES*, a crime thriller about a gang of outlaws who try to rob the Federal Reserve in Los Angeles and a team of renegade cops who try to stop them. It is written and will be directed by Christian Gudegast with Gerard Butler in a starring role for Relativity Media.

-*WARRIOR: BIRTH OF THE SADHU*, a new superhero film based on the comic book series by Graphic India. The script by Gotham Chopra and Sharad Devarajan taps into the mystical traditions and mythologies of India through an accessible action-packed adventure.

- *CRASH BANDITS*, an adventure film written by Michael Stokes, will film in China for Millennium.

-*TUNNELS* is based on the first in a series of highly successful novels by Roderick Gordon and Brian Williams and set under the streets of London. It is expected to be the next sensation to replace the "Harry Potter" franchise.

In the television arena, Canton is currently Executive Producer on *POWER*, which is starting its second season and is shooting in New York. The series was developed with Curtis “50 Cent” Jackson and CBS Studios for the Starz Network, with Courtney Kemp-Agboh (*THE GOOD WIFE*) as the writer/show runner. Additionally, Canton has entered into a first look arrangement with Starz for the development and production of cutting edge, high-concept original programming for the network.

Amongst his notable films are *300*, *300: RISE OF AN EMPIRE*, *THE SPIDERWICK CHRONICLES*, and *IMMORTALS*. *300*, based on the Frank Miller graphic novel and directed by Zack Snyder for Warner Bros. Pictures, opened to record-setting box office numbers, having grossed more than \$460 million worldwide and is the highest-grossing March release in the history of the motion picture business. The *300* DVD has set sales records around the world. *THE SPIDERWICK CHRONICLES*, based on the best-selling children books by Tony DiTerlizzi & Holly Black, with Mark Waters (*MEAN GIRLS*) directing, was released in February 2008 by Paramount Pictures and was the highest-grossing family film of early 2008. *IMMORTALS*, an epic mythological tale set in war torn ancient Greece, was released 11/11/11 and has since amassed a worldwide gross of almost \$250 million.

Canton had two movies released in 2010: *LETTERS TO JULIET*, a romantic drama for Summit Entertainment, directed by the late Gary Winick on location in Verona and Tuscany, Italy, and New York City, and Dimension Films’ *PIRANHA 3D*, directed by Alexandre Aja, which Canton describes as “*JAWS* for a new generation.” Its sequel, *PIRANHA 3DD*, was also released by Dimension.

After holding posts as President of Worldwide Theatrical Production at Warner Bros., where Canton was instrumental in creating the notable *BATMAN*, *LETHAL WEAPON* and *NATIONAL LAMPOON’S VACATION* film franchises, and as Chairman of the Columbia TriStar Motion Picture Companies, where he greenlit numerous highly popular, widely acclaimed award-winning films including *AS GOOD AS IT GETS*, *JERRY MAGUIRE* and *MEN IN BLACK*, Canton returned to Warner Bros. to create his own production entity, The Canton Company. In early 2002 he joined Artists Production Group as a partner, Chairman and CEO. and in December 2003, he

launched Atmosphere Entertainment MM, an entrepreneurial venture that develops, produces and finances theatrical motion pictures and television programming.

A native of New York, Canton is a UCLA graduate (magna cum laude) and a member of UCLA's National Honor Society for American Studies. He delivered the 2011 commencement address at UCLA's School of History. In addition to serving on the UCLA Board of Councilors and the Dean's Advisory Board for the School of Theatre, Film, and Television, Canton was Vice Chairman of the Board of Directors of the American Film Institute and Founder and is Chairman Emeritus of AFI's Third Decade Council.

**CHADY ELI MATTAR** (Producer) is a Lebanese-American filmmaker who produced content for the MBC, O3 and Signature Productions throughout the Middle East (including Lebanon, Dubai, Jordan and Bahrain) and in Europe before moving to Los Angeles to attend the prestigious American Film Institute Conservatory. At the AFI he earned an MFA in motion picture producing. Mattar was the first student from the Middle East to attend the AFI.

A graduate of Notre Dame University with B.A. degrees in Advertising/Marketing and Radio/TV, Mattar received an MA in Film Production from ALBA School of the Arts jointly with INA and TV 5 in Paris. He then line-produced an adaptation of the UK's number one TV motor show, TOP GEAR, for the Middle East Broadcasting Corporation and served as Production Manager on THE INFLUENCE OF EUROPE ON THE ARAB-ISRAELI CONFLICT, one of the Euro-Med series of documentaries about the Middle East.

Following his time at the AFI, Mattar worked in various capacities for entertainment industry icons Mark Canton (300, IMMORTALS, LETTERS TO JULIET) and Scott Rudin (NO COUNTRY FOR OLD MEN, THE TRUMAN SHOW, THE SOCIAL NETWORK) as well as for Relativity Media, Warner Bros. and The Walt Disney Company.

In 2008 Mattar and fellow AFI graduate Scott C. Silver founded Silvatar Media, an entertainment company focused on creating, financing and producing independent and studio motion pictures and ancillary products that appeal to a global audience. Their first

film, **REMOVAL**, a psychological thriller starring Billy Burke, Oz Perkins, Kelly Brook and Elliott Gould, released by Lionsgate, was named one of the five scariest films of 2011 by MoreHorror.com. **THE PYRAMID** is their second project and is their first for a major Hollywood studio.

**SCOTT C. SILVER** (Producer and Editor), a native of Waco, Texas is an award-winning motion picture editor and a veteran in post-production with over eight years of experience in the Northeast, including at one of Boston's premiere post facilities. After receiving a degree in Film and Business from Clark University, Silver moved to Los Angeles, where he earned an MFA in Film Editing from the world-renowned American Film Institute Conservatory.

Through hands on experience, extensive travel throughout North and Central America and various parts of the Orient, and the AFI's ambitious post graduate program, Silver has learned the art of storytelling from the inside out, giving him an exceptional eye for great projects. He has been mentored by numerous highly respected editors, including Rick Rosenthal (**BAD BOYS**, **HALLOWEEN II/RESSURECTION**), Howard E. Smith (**THE ABYSS**, **DANTE'S PEAK**, **POINT BREAK**, **GLENGARRY GLEN ROSS**) and Lynzee Kingman (**ONE FLEW OVER THE CUCKOO'S NEST**, **ALI**, **THE BEAVER**), among others

In 2008 Silver and fellow AFI graduate Chady Eli Mattar founded Silvatar Media, an entertainment company focused on creating, financing and producing independent and studio motion pictures and ancillary products that appeal to a global audience. Their first film, **REMOVAL**, a psychological thriller starring Billy Burke, Oz Perkins, Kelly Brook and Elliott Gould, released by Lionsgate, was named one of the five scariest films of 2011 by MoreHorror.com. **THE PYRAMID** is their second project and is their first for a major Hollywood studio.

**ROBERT O. KAPLAN** (Executive Producer) has practiced entertainment law for over 35 years, first with the preeminent firm of Kaplan, Livingston, Goodwin, Berkowitz & Selvin and then with his own firm, Stein, Kahan & Kaplan. Kaplan has been involved with feature film and television production and distribution, film and

corporate financing, music and intellectual property matters. He has represented major studios, talent agencies, production companies, film financiers, individual producers, directors, writers and actors.

Kaplan served as a senior business affairs executive at Warner Bros. Pictures in London, handling all European motion picture business affairs. He was involved in the production of Stanley Kubrick's A CLOCKWORK ORANGE, Lindsey Anderson's O LUCKY MAN and Francois Truffaut's DAY FOR NIGHT, among others.

More recently, Kaplan has specialized in the financing and production of independent feature films, including bank and mezzanine financing, having worked as production counsel on over 20 films. Some of the films for which he was responsible for the financing as well as legal work include PAPHILLON starring Steve McQueen and Dustin Hoffman, and I'LL SLEEP WHEN I'M DEAD starring Clive Owen for Paramount Classics.

Kaplan also funded and operated his own film development company for a number of years, through which he produced KRUSH GROOVE (for Warner Bros.) starring Run-DMC and LL Cool J, and NIGHT OF THE COMET, a cult classic for Atlantic Releasing.

Currently, Kaplan is acting as legal counsel for a number of producers and film financiers and is producing a handful of his own films, including FORTY LASHES LESS ONE, based on the book and screenplay written by Elmore Leonard, OVERBLOWN, by Michael Van Himbergen, PIECE OF CAKE, an original screenplay written by Bob and John Leekley, and several other projects.

Kaplan is a graduate of Dartmouth College and Boalt Hall School of Law at the University of California at Berkeley. He is admitted to the Bar of the State of California. For over 32 years he created and taught a course on the business aspects of film production at the American Film Institute Conservatory.

**ALFRED S. NEWMAN** (Executive Producer) is one of the entertainment industry's most versatile and respected marketing executives. He has developed a wide range of expertise in the positioning of entertainment companies and their product for three major studios, emerging and established independent entertainment companies, and



two of world's largest and most prestigious public relations agencies.

He formed Newman & Company in early 1991 as a boutique public relations and marketing communications consultancy specializing in entertainment companies and their product. From 1994 to 2009 he was one of the communications strategists behind the re-positioning and growth of IMAX Corporation from a destination experience to one of Hollywood's most prominent release platforms for event motion pictures.

In recent years Newman has become a sought-after resource by high-profile filmmakers and production companies to oversee the studios' marketing and distribution of their major motion pictures. Films represented include 300, IMMORTALS, THE SPIDERWICK CHRONICLES and THE SPIRIT, among others.

In 2011, Newman extended this expertise into the role of motion picture production, serving as co-executive producer on the thriller RITES OF PASSAGE and this year as an Executive Producer on THE PYRAMID for 20<sup>th</sup> Century Fox. He and his PYRAMID colleagues at Silvatar Media presently have three new feature films and a reality television series in various stages of development and pre-production.

Over the years Newman has represented a broad spectrum of clients including IMAX, MGM/UA, Universal Pictures, Paramount Pictures, Warner Bros., Sony Pictures Releasing International, Relativity Media, Atmosphere Entertainment, Silvatar Media, Lionsgate, New Line Cinema, Hollywood Gang Productions, Amicus Entertainment, Panavision, Technicolor and the Berlin and Venice Film Festivals.

After graduating from NYU, Newman joined Columbia Pictures in New York. Five years later he moved to MGM as head of East Coast marketing, relocating to Los Angeles six years later where Newman held various executive posts including head of worldwide marketing. He then joined Twentieth Century Fox in a senior management capacity. Later Newman served as Executive Vice President of the noted entertainment industry PR firm Rogers & Cowan; Executive Vice President - Worldwide Marketing of Management Company Entertainment Group, Inc. and President and CEO of Sterling Entertainment Company, MCEG's marketing services subsidiary; and founding Managing Director of Hill and Knowlton's Worldwide Entertainment Division.

He is a longtime member of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts & Sciences.

**JUSTINE RACZKIEWICZ** (Executive Producer) began her career in the film industry in corporate communications at The Weinstein Company where she represented the company's various media labels as well as worked on publicity campaigns for Todd Hayne's *I'M NOT THERE* and Woody Allen's *VICKY CRISTINA BARCELONA*. Shortly after, she moved into physical production where she worked on a number of award-winning films including Rob Marshall's *NINE*, Stephen Daldry's *THE READER*, John Hillcoat's *THE ROAD* and Quentin Tarantino's *INGLOURIOUS BASTERDS*.

Under the Dimension Films label, Justine traveled to Arizona to work as an Associate Producer on *PIRANHA 3D*, alongside director Alexandre Aja. Since then, she has been developing and associate producing a wide range of projects with Aja. *MANIAC*, the daring point-of-view thriller starring Elijah Wood, played in the Official Selection at the 2012 Cannes Film Festival and was released by IFC Films. Most recently *HORNS* generated a lot of hype at Fantastic Fest in Austin and at the 2013 Toronto Film Festival, where it played in the Official Vanguard Selection. *HORNS* an edgy supernatural thriller with a darkly comedic twist is based on the bestselling novel by Joe Hill. Aja directed this refreshing rock 'n' roll take on the devil myth, starring Daniel Radcliffe. It was released by The Weinstein Company / Radius on October 31<sup>st</sup>, 2014.

Along with Aja, Justine has also worked with FOX International on two different films. She executive produced, *THE PYRAMID*, an adventure horror film set in an ancient Egyptian pyramid, to be released by FOX in December 2014; and most recently co-produced, *THE OTHER SIDE OF THE DOOR*, a psychological horror set in Mumbai, India.

Next up is, *THE NINTH LIFE OF LOUIS DRAX*, a poignant family drama and a Hitchcockian thriller based on the book of the same name. Miramax is producing the film and Alex Aja is directing in Canada this fall.

Other projects on the development slate include: *SCANNERS*, a re-imagining of the cult original as a new espionage thriller TV show with Cinemax and Dimension Films; *COBRA: THE SPACE PIRATE*, based on the cult manga and one of the most successful franchises in Japan. Aja will be directing this big-budget space adventure with Studio Orange who is setting it up to become the next Star Wars.

Originally from Warsaw, Poland Justine's passion for storytelling has taken her from stage to script and across the globe. She graduated *magna cum laude* from Barnard College, Columbia University and studied Theater, Philosophy and Anthropology. She has also trained at the American Conservatory Theater in San Francisco, Ecole de Theatre Jacques LeCoq in Paris and the Parsons School of Design.

**LAURENT TANGY** (Director of Photography) was born and raised in Paris, France. After a few years as a camera assistant with cinematographers including Tetsuo Nagata, Alex Lamarque and Michel Abramovitz, he started as a director of photography for commercials and music videos in 2006. Tany has worked on 300 such projects, including commercials for TEDx, Nokia, YSL, Coca-Cola, Peugeot and Samsung and for music videos for the likes of Snow Patrol, Sebastian and Tame Impala. He made his feature film debut with MIKE in 2010, for director Lars Blumers, and has worked on the films THE DAY I SAW YOUR HEART, THE INCIDENT, RADIOSTARS and 20 ANS D'ECART. After THE PYRAMID he shot his seventh film, LA FRENCH starring Oscar®-winner Jean Dujardin. It is a new take on the classic FRENCH CONNECTION

**MARCO TRENTINI** (Production Designer) is an Italian-born Production Designer and Art Director whose stellar career includes collaborations with directors Ridley Scott, Mike Nichols and Wes Anderson.

For much of his career Trentini collaborated with the late producer Dino Di Laurentiis, earning his first feature film credit as a set designer on the 1987 feature COLLISION COURSE. For Carolco Pictures, Trentini also earned his spurs on the films TOTAL RECALL and CLIFFHANGER. During this period he worked as an Assistant Art Director on films including CRIMINALS, GENGHIS KHAN, SLAVE OF DREAM and SOLOMON & SHEBA.

It was through Laurentiis that Trentini met Ridley Scott, collaborating with the pair on HANNIBAL in 2000. He continued an association with Scott by following him to his next film BLACK HAWK DOWN, working with Production Designer Arthur Max. Together, the team collaborated again on KINGDOM OF HEAVEN and BODY OF

LIES, and Trentini was also involved in Scott's abandoned TRIPOLI project in 2002 and in a two-week location scout of Morocco for PROMETHEUS in 2011.

Other credits as an Art Director include the films U-571, EXORCIST: THE BEGINNING and THE LIFE AQUATIC WITH STEVE ZISSOU. As a Supervising Art Director, Trentini worked on the films THE NATIVITY STORY, CHARLIE WILSON'S WAR, THE TOURIST and PRINCE OF PERSIA. He served as Production Designer on TORA BORA.

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