



Dansk biografpremiere

11. marts 2021

Pressematerialer

<https://www.sandrewmetronome.com/press/>

Kodeord: press

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SANDREW METRONOME

SYNOPSIS KORT

En familie på tre generationer samles en weekend for at tilbringe en sidste stund sammen med deres dødeligt syge mor Lily. Konflikterne ulmer under overfladen mellem Lilys døtre Jennifer og Anna, og dybt begravede hemmeligheder truer alle håb om et fredeligt farvel.

Blackbird er en hjerteskræende historie om familie, kærlighed og om modet til at tage styring over ens egen skæbne.

SYNOPSIS LANG

Lily, en sprudlende kvinde i 60'erne, og hendes mand Paul forbereder en weekend med besøg fr deres børn. På trods af hendes begrænsede motorik, insisterer Lily på at klare sig selv. Parret håber på en dejlig dag, men humøret er tydeligvis ikke i top da deres gæster begynder at ankomme til huset på landet.

Først ankommer datteren Jennifer med sin mand Michael og deres 15-årige søn, Jonathan. Dernæst kommer parrets fælles ven Elisabeth og til sidst deres yngste datter Anna og hendes partner Chris. Den rebelske Anna har været undvigende og fraværende overfor familien, hvilket tydeligvis gør hendes storesøster vred.

Som weekenden skrider frem, bliver der revet op i gamle sår og nogle af familiens medlemmer driver længere og længere væk fra hinanden, mens andre opbygger tættere bånd. Både Jennifer og Lily er i vildrede over deres mors planer, hvilket besværliggør Lilys drøm om et fredeligt farvel.

FAKTA

Originaltitel: Blackbird

Produktionsland: UK, USA

Varighed: 1t, 37m

Genre: Drama

Sprog: Engelsk

Censur: 15 år

Instruktion: Roger Michell

Manuskript: Christian Torpe

Medvirkende: Susan Sarandon, Kate Winslet, Mia Wasikowska, Sam Neill, Rainn Wilson,

Lindsay Duncan, Anson Boon, Bexx Taylor-Klaus.

PRODUCTION STORY – HOW IT ALL BEGAN

A chance meeting at a dinner party brought the story of *Blackbird* to its producer, Sherryl Clark. While chatting to Christian Torpe, the writer of the award-winning Danish movie *Silent Heart*, he mentioned that he'd adapted his script for a US production. 'I was just being polite saying I'll take a look at it,' admits Clark. 'But he sent it to me and I was so moved by this story of a family struggling with their mother's decision to take her own life after being diagnosed with ALS.'

The director's name that sprung to mind immediately was Roger Michell, whom Clark had worked with on *Morning Glory*. 'He called me straight away and said: "I'd like to do this movie." I was shocked, because you never usually get your first choice.'

With the director in place, Clark approached producer David Bernardi of Millennium Films. 'We generally make big action movies, but I read it and I couldn't believe how uplifting it was with such a dark subject matter,' says Bernardi. 'Sherryl then said: "Roger wants to direct it," and I said: "I will do what I have to do!'. Sherryl didn't realize I was this crazy Roger Michell fan. Millennium let me do something that is not part of the mandate of our company and I'm thankful for it.'

FINDING THE FAMILY

The next step was casting. 'Roger really wanted to cast Lily first,' shares Clark, 'He felt it was important to go from Mom down. But we ended up getting Kate Winslet first to play the daughter.'

Winslet had personal reasons for taking the project. 'About 18 months before the shoot, I lost my own mother. I had all those emotions building up to her passing away, which we knew was coming, she had cancer... I'd found it hard to go back to work since she died and I have a particularly keen experience of grief at this time in my life. I have been through this level of communication and know what it means to be a family going through something as devastating as the loss of a mother.'

Initially, another actress was attached to play the mother Lily, but when she had a scheduling conflict, Clark turned to one of the most iconic performers of her generation: Susan Sarandon. 'I called her agent and said we had a scheduling conflict and the agent was like, "Give me 24 hours, this is the perfect role for her." We emailed the script over, had it printed in New York, and we had a bike messenger take it to Susan's apartment. Within four hours she signed on.'

'I was definitely interested right away,' says Sarandon. 'And I trusted Roger completely. That's a gift, when you can be with somebody who you know is a captain of a ship that is

going to stay afloat so you trust them in the journey.'

With Mia Wasikowska and Sam Neill already signed on, Rainn Wilson soon joined, and Anson Boon was a discovery by director Michell. As for the role of Chris, Anna's partner, Clark says, 'We had some people who had called us who wanted to do the movie and Bex Taylor-Klaus was one of them. We didn't know Bex's work but we were blown away.'

The filmmakers even adapted the script to apply to Taylor-Klaus, who is gender non-binary. 'When I first read the script, Chris was still Christopher, a 32-year-old man,' says the actor. 'I sent Roger a text message after speaking with him, saying I genuinely want to thank you for providing this opportunity because I never saw characters like me growing up. Now, I get to be characters like me for the next round of kids growing up. That's a really cool feeling.'

Playing Lily and Paul, Sarandon and Neill already had a working relationship. 'I've been married to Sam in a previous movie,' says Sarandon, referring to 2007's *Irresistible*. 'He's just a wonderful, funny fellow.' Says Neill, 'Susan and I don't need to talk much: we understand how the other one works.'

SETTING THE SCENE

Kate Winslet was instrumental in finding a location for the film, suggesting a home near her own which could very convincingly double for Connecticut. A five-week shoot commenced near Chichester in October 2018, when the house became an integral part of the film. 'The house is a character in this story,' says Lindsay Duncan, who plays friend Elisabeth. 'It's their home, it's a very powerful architectural presence and hardly any scenes aren't shot in the house.'

Producer Clark says: 'One single location, so actors can build characters chronologically... it doesn't get much better than this.'

Michell made the unusual decision to film almost chronologically, something that helped bring the actors together. 'That had an even bigger impact than I thought it would have on the cast's focus and commitment to the film and each other,' he says.

The mood also benefited from Winslet's local know-how. 'She was the hostess with the mostess from day one,' says Michell. Rainn Wilson calls her the 'den mother' and says, 'She took us out for meals, set us up with delicious vegan food. She took us to her yoga class and to some local pubs.'

Another unusual element was the working hours. Says Sarandon: 'We were using only natural light so that meant our days started in the dark and finished, for the most part, at sunset. So we had beautiful sunrises and sunsets. I'd never spent time in the English countryside and we had unseasonably gorgeous days. But the nature of the filming was

such that we were pretty much all together all the time.'

Despite some of the film's weighty themes, the mood on and off camera was often light. 'Roger brought to the story a lot of humour and didn't go in a sentimental way which I think is respectful of people struggling with this life shortening disease,' says Sarandon. 'And Rainn Wilson kept all of us laughing all the time.' Says Mia Wasikowska, 'Everybody got to know each other really well. Because it's an ensemble and most of our scenes are with everybody, only eight cast members, we're all there all the time.'

All the cast and crew agree that this was a very special shoot, not least its youngest member, Anson Boon. 'Aside from the most amazing experience, this was a massive acting class for me because I got to work with these incredible people and learn from them every day. I was surrounded by these legends.'

BIOGRAPHIES - ABOUT THE FILMMAKERS

Roger Michell, Director

The son of an English diplomat, Roger Michell was born in South Africa and as a child lived in Beirut, Damascus and Prague. He started directing plays at school before going on to Cambridge where he won the RSC Buzz Goodbody Award at the National Student Drama Festival in 1977 and a Fringe First Award at the Edinburgh Festival in the same year.

He has subsequently directed plays at the National Theatre, the Old Vic, Lyric Hammersmith, Donmar, Hampstead, Royal Court, Almeida, in the West End and on Broadway and elsewhere and for six years he was resident director at the Royal Shakespeare Company in Stratford and London.

In the early nineties he began directing for TV and film and his work includes the award-winning mini-series *Buddha of Suburbia* and *The Lost Honour Of Christopher Jefferies* and the films *Persuasion*, *Titanic Town*, *My Night with Reg*, *Notting Hill*, *Changing Lanes*, *The Mother*, *Enduring Love*, *Venus*, *Le Weekend*, *My Cousin Rachel*, *Tea With The Dames* and *Morning Glory*. He has also directed documentaries for the BBC and a number of commercials.

He has received many awards for his film work including two BAFTAs, an Evening Standard Award, two EMPIRE Awards, Critics Circle Award and Awards from Festivals at Emden, Locarno, Seville, Shanghai, Rheims and elsewhere.

Sherryl Clark, Producer (President of Production, The H Collective)

Sherryl oversees all aspects of development and production across The H Collective's slate. The James Gunn produced horror film *Brightburn* starring Elizabeth Banks was the first release for the new company. She is next producing and overseeing the 4th installment of the *xx* franchise starring Vin Diesel and directed by DJ Caruso. Other projects in the works are *The Beast* written by Aaron Sala - featured on the 2018 Black List, Hit List, and Young and Hungry List and *The Remainders* by Derek Kolstad (*John Wick*). She most recently produced *Blackbird* under her Busted Shark label.

Before joining The H Collective in May 2018, Clark founded Busted Shark Productions where she produced *Plush* with Jason Blum for director Catherine Hardwicke; *Fathers & Daughters* starring Russell Crowe, Amanda Seyfried, and Aaron Paul; *Viral* directed by Henry Joost and Ariel Schulman for Blumhouse and *Wish Upon* starring Joey King and Ryan Phillippe with director John Leonetti. Prior to that, Clark was Head of Film at J.J. Abrams' Bad Robot for five years where she oversaw all production and development projects. During her time at Bad Robot, Clark was involved in bringing franchise giants *Star Trek* and *Mission: Impossible*

to the big screen, produced *Cloverfield* and *Morning Glory*, and oversaw *Super 8* directed by Abrams and starring Elle Fanning. She remains attached to some of Bad Robot's highest profile projects.

Clark has vast experience as both a producer and an executive, having begun her career at The Walt Disney Company where she worked at Touchstone Pictures and later at The Jacobson Company. Clark then joined Kopelson Entertainment working with the late Academy Award-winning producer Arnold Kopelson (*The Fugitive*, *Se7en*). During her tenure there, she worked her way up the ranks from Vice President of Creative Affairs to President of Production.

David Bernardi, Producer (Millennium Media)

David Bernardi began his film career as a Development Assistant at Imagine Entertainment in 1996. He was promoted to Creative Executive a year later and rose through the ranks until eventually becoming Executive Vice President of Production in 2004. While at Imagine, David worked on *EdTV*, *A Beautiful Mind*, *Undercover Brother*, *Friday Night Lights*, the animated feature *Curious George*, the Academy Award Nominated *Frost/Nixon* and *Cowboys & Aliens* as well as supervised the development of numerous other projects including an adaptation of the Steinbeck classic *East Of Eden* with Tom Hooper attached to direct, a remake of *Bride Of Frankenstein* with Berman & Pulcini to direct, the Ludlum classic *Parsifal Mosaic* written by David Self with Ron Howard to direct, *Conqueror*, an epic story of the Aztec empire, written by Brian Helgeland and originally for Ron Howard to direct but currently being developed as a television series for Showtime, a remake of *The Invisible Man* with David Goyer to write and direct, *LA Riots* with Spike Lee to direct, the Iraqi war epic *Last Man Home* with Gavin O'Connor to write and direct and *Downtown*, a period cop drama set in 1950s Los Angeles written by Richard Price for Ron Howard to direct and Tom Hanks to star.

After leaving Imagine in 2010, David became President of Scott Rudin Productions whose first look deal with Walt Disney Studios ended in 2011. In addition to managing and supervising the company's staff and entire development slate, he also hired Lena Dunham to write and direct an adaptation of the teen romance novel *Dash And Lily's Book Of Dares*, Michael Bacall to write an adaptation of *The New Cool*, a nonfiction account of high school robotic competitions and developed a graphic novel *Mata Hari* at Warner Bros.

From April 2012 to October 2015, David served as President of Len Wiseman's Sketch Films. He developed both features and television including *The New West*, a graphic novel set in a post-apocalyptic Los Angeles, the supernatural conspiracy thriller *Black Chapter* with Skydance, a prequel to *Die Hard* set in 1979 New York City, *Untitled Space Pilot*, a one-hour sci-fi drama written by Jeff Eastin for Fox. He also worked on a feature adaptation of the graphic superhero novel *The Darkness*, set up and developed *A.P.B.*, a cop procedural currently on air, a biographical anthology television series on the real lives of the saints with

the first season focusing on *St. Patrick* for Fox and a television series based on the futuristic graphic novel *Cyclops* for New Regency and Fox.

He is currently a Producer with Millennium Media and since May 2017 has made two movies for the company with a third to begin production in the summer of 2019: he is the Executive Producer of the third installment of the Gerard Butler franchise *Angel Has Fallen*, directed by Ric Roman Waugh; Producer of *Blackbird* and Producer of *Jolt*, a female-driven action/comedy, directed by Alethea Jones and starring Kate Beckinsale which begins production in June 2019.

Alice Dawson, Co-Producer

Alice has worked on British independent films for the last 20 years, first as a Production Accountant and then as a Production Manager, Line Producer and Co-Producer. Her film credits include *The Warrior* (winner of two BAFTA awards), *St Trinians*, *A Mighty Heart*, *The Man Who Knew Infinity*, *The Party*, *Yardie* and *Blinded by the Light*.

Christian Torpe, Writer

Born in Denmark, 1978, Torpe won critical acclaim and the Danish Oscar for writing the Bille August comeback and San Sebastian winner *Stille Hjerte*. He got his breakthrough with the hit Netflix series *Rita* (2012), a show that was remade in The Netherlands as *Tessa* (2015) and in France as *Sam* (2016). He is currently doing *Deliver Us / Fred til lands*, a new show for Danish TV and adapting Christian Jungersen's international bestseller *The Exception*. He lives in Los Angeles and Copenhagen.

BIOGRAPHIES - ABOUT THE CAST

Susan Sarandon (Lily)

The extremely versatile Susan Sarandon brings her own brand of sex appeal and intelligence to every role – from her fearless portrayal of Annie Savoy in *Bull Durham* to her Oscar®-nominated performances in *Thelma & Louise*, *Lorenzo's Oil*, *The Client*, and *Atlantic City* to her Academy Award®-winning and SAG® Award-winning role as Sister Helen, a nun consoling a death-row inmate in *Dead Man Walking*.

Sarandon made her acting debut in the movie *Joe* in 1970, which she followed with a continuing role in the TV drama *A World Apart*. Early film credits include *The Great Waldo Pepper*, *Lovin' Molly*, Billy Wilder's *The Front Page*, the 1975 cult classic *The Rocky Horror Picture Show* and Louis Malle's controversial *Pretty Baby*. She went on to receive her first Oscar® nomination in Malle's *Atlantic City*.

Additional film credits include *The Hunger*, *The Witches of Eastwick*, *A Dry White Season*, *White Palace*, *Light Sleeper*, *Bob Roberts*, *Little Women*, *Stepmom*, *Cradle Will Rock*, *Igby Goes Down*, *The Banger Sisters*, *Moonlight Mile*, *Shall We Dance?*, *Alfie*, *Elizabethtown*, *Romance and Cigarettes*, *Enchanted*, *The Lovely Bones*, *Jeff Who Lives at Home*, *Robot & Frank*, *Arbitrage*, *Tammy* and *The Meddler*.

The hard-working actress has made a career of choosing diverse and challenging projects in film as well as television, having just finished portraying Bette Davis in Ryan Murphy's *Feud: Bette & Joan* opposite Jessica Lange. In 2008, she received an Emmy® Nomination for Outstanding Lead Actress in a Miniseries for her role in the HBO film *Bernard and Doris*, as well as a Golden Globe® and SAG® nomination. She received an Emmy and SAG nomination for her work in Barry Levinson's *You Don't Know Jack* with Al Pacino for HBO.

Sarandon has made guest appearances on *Friends*, *Malcolm in the Middle*, *ER*, *30 Rock*, *The Big C*, *Doll & Em*, *Mike & Molly* and in the Mother Lover video on *Saturday Night Live* as well as lent her voice to numerous animation projects including *The Simpsons*, *James and the Giant Peach*, *Rugrats in Paris: The Movie*, *April and the Extraordinary World*, *Hell and Back*, *Spark: A Space Tail* and *Skylanders Academy*. She can currently be seen in the sixth season of Showtime's *Ray Donovan* with Liev Schreiber and upcoming projects include *Blackbird*, *The Death & Life Of John F. Donovan* with Kit Harrington and Kathy Bates and *Call Jane* with Elisabeth Moss.

Kate Winslet (Jennifer)

Academy Award® winning actress, Kate Winslet has brought to life some of cinema's most captivating and memorable roles. Her resumé consists of critically and commercially acclaimed work as well as a span of awards and honors that illustrate Winslet's talent and solidify her a permanent place in cinema history.

Winslet won her first Academy Award®, after a stunning past 5 nominations, for her role as Hannah Schmitz in Stephen Daldry's 2008 *The Reader* directed by Stephen Daldry. Winslet also won a Golden Globe®, SAG, BAFTA, and Critics' Choice Award, among many others, for the role. She also starred that year in *Revolutionary Road*, directed by Sam Mendes, which reteamed her with *Titanic* co-star Leonardo DiCaprio. Winslet won a Golden Globe® and received many nominations for her portrayal of April Wheeler.

At the age of 17, Kate made an international name for herself in Peter Jackson's feature film *Heavenly Creatures*. She followed that in 1995 with her role as Marianne Dashwood in Ang Lee's *Sense and Sensibility*. Winslet received her first Academy Award® nomination for this performance and was also nominated for a Golden Globe®. She then went on to win the BAFTA and the Screen Actors Guild Award.

Winslet co-starred with Christopher Eccleston in Michael Winterbottom's *Jude*; and then as Ophelia in Kenneth Branagh's *Hamlet*. She appeared as the iconic survivor, Rose, in James Cameron's *Titanic* opposite Leonardo DiCaprio. At the age of 22, Winslet received her second Academy Award® nomination for this role and the honor of being the youngest actress ever to be nominated for two Academy Awards®.

In 1997 Winslet starred as Julia in *Hideous Kinky*, directed by Gillies McKinnon; and in 1998 co-starred with Harvey Keitel in Jane Campion's comedic drama *Holy Smoke*. She also starred in Philip Kaufman's period drama *Quills* along with Geoffrey Rush, Joaquin Phoenix and Michael Caine.

In 2001 Winslet starred in the Richard Eyre production of *Iris*, playing the young Iris Murdoch to Judi Dench's older Iris and received Golden Globe® and Oscar® nominations. She next starred in Michael Apted's *Enigma*, a spy drama about code breakers during WWII, and *The Life of David Gale* with Kevin Spacey. She then went on to star as Clementine in *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind*, for which she received Academy Award®, Golden Globe® and BAFTA nominations for Best Actress. She then went on to star opposite Johnny Depp in *Finding Neverland*, which was named the 2004 Best Film by the National Board of Review.

In 2006, Winslet was seen in *All the King's Men*, with Jude Law and Sean Penn, directed by Steven Zaillian. She then extended her voice to the animated feature *Flushed Away*; and finished the year in the romantic comedy *The Holiday* opposite Cameron Diaz, Jude Law, and Jack Black. She starred opposite Patrick Wilson and Jennifer Connelly in Todd Field's *Little Children* for which she received her fifth Academy Award® nomination for Best Actress.

Winslet filmed the title role in HBO's multi award-winning 5-part mini-series *Mildred Pierce* for which she won Emmy®, Golden Globe® and SAG Awards as Best Actress in 2010. She joined the ensemble cast of Steven Soderbergh's *Contagion*; and starred in Roman Polanski's *Carnage*, which premiered in competition at the 2011 Venice Film Festival.

2014 saw Kate co-star with Josh Brolin in director Jason Reitman's *Labor Day*. The film premiered at the 2013 Toronto Film Festival and earned Winslet a Golden Globe® nomination for Best Actress.

February 2015 saw Kate reprise her role in: *Insurgent*, the second film in Veronica Roth's best-selling book series. Kate will also starred in *A Little Chaos*, a film directed by Alan Rickman and written by Allison Deegan. The film also starred Alan Rickman and Stanley Tucci. November 2018 saw Kate star in the lead role of Jocelyn Moorhouse's *The Dressmaker*, based on the novel by Rosalie Ham. Kate starred opposite Liam Hemsworth and Judy Davis and the role gained her a Best Actress AACTA Awards. In the same month Kate also starred in *Steve Jobs* alongside Michael Fassbender. The critically acclaimed role has won her a Golden Globe®, BAFTA and nominations for SAG and an Academy Award®.

March 2016 saw the release of *Triple Nine* in which Kate starred opposite Chiwetel Ejiofor, Casey Affleck and Aaron Paul. She was also seen in *Collateral Beauty* alongside Will Smith, Helen Mirren and Keira Knightley.

2017 saw Kate star opposite Idris Elba in *The Mountain Between Us*, a Hany Abu-Assad film adaptation of Charles Martin's novel. She was also seen in *Wonder Wheel* with Justin Timberlake and Juno Temple.

2018 saw Kate complete work on James Cameron's sequel to *Avatar* as Ronal, alongside Zoe Saldana and Sam Worthington. Twentieth Century Fox will release the film on the 18th December 2020. Also forthcoming is Roger Michell's *Blackbird*, a remake of the 2014 Danish film 'Silent Heart'. Bex Taylor-Klaus, Susan Sarandon, Sam Neill and Mia Wasikowska also star alongside Winslet. It has also been announced that Kate will star alongside Saoirse Ronan in Francis Lee's *Ammonite*. The story explores the life of fossil hunter Mary Anning (Winslet).

It has been recently announced that Winslet will star and executively produce the limited series *Mare of Easttown* for HBO, created by Brad Ingelsby. She will play a small-town Pennsylvania detective whose life crumbles around her as she investigates a local murder, with the series being directed by Gavin O'Connor (*The Accountant*).

In 2013, Winslet was awarded the CBE, which she received from HM Queen Elizabeth II in a ceremony at Buckingham Palace. She was also awarded a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame in March 2014, cementing her status amongst the stars of Hollywood. She was also the recipient of The Dilys Powell Award for Excellence in Film at the 38th London Critics' Circle Film Awards in January 2018.

Mia Wasikowska (Anna)

Wasikowska gained international recognition as the title character in Tim Burton's 2010 retelling of the Lewis Carrol novel, *Alice in Wonderland*, starring Johnny Depp, Anne

Hathaway, Michael Sheen, Helena Bonham Carter, and Alan Rickman, as well as in James Bobin's 2015 sequel, *Alice Through the Looking Glass*.

Wasikowska will next star in *Judy and Punch*, a reimagining of the classic puppet show that marks the directorial debut of Australian actress and writer Mirrah Foulkes. The film is produced by Vice Media Australia and Nash Edgerton's Blue Tongue Films and had its world premiere at the 2019 Sundance Film Festival in January.

Wasikowska can currently be seen starring opposite Christopher Abbott in Nicolas Pesce's *Piercing*, based on Ryu Murakami's 1994 novel of the same name. The film premiered at the 2018 Sundance Film Festival and Universal Pictures Content Group released the film on February 1st.

In June 2018, Wasikowska starred in David and Nathan Zellner's *Damsel*, opposite Robert Pattinson, a Western satirical comedy which follows an affluent pioneer (Pattinson) who ventures across the American frontier to marry the love of his life (Wasikowska). Magnolia Pictures released the film, which first premiered at the 2018 Sundance Film Festival.

In 2017, Wasikowska starred in *The Man with the Iron Heart*, a World War II thriller by director Cédric Jimenez, adapted from Laurent Binet's novel *HHhH* about the assassination of a Nazi leader in Prague. Wasikowska stars alongside Jason Clarke, Rosamund Pike, Jack O'Connell and Jack Reynor.

In October 2015, Wasikowska lead a stellar cast in Guillermo Del Toro's period thriller *Crimson Peak*, also starring Tom Hiddleston and Jessica Chastain. In June 2015, Wasikowska also starred as the title character in Sophie Barthes' *Madame Bovary*, based on the Gustave Flaubert novel, alongside Paul Giamatti and Ezra Miller.

In Fall 2014, Wasikowska starred in the John Curran film *Tracks*, shot in rural Australia. Based on a true story, Wasikowska portrays Robyn Davidson, a young woman who embarks on a 1,700 mile trek across the deserts of West Australia with her four camels and faithful dog. Adam Driver plays the photographer assigned to document her adventure. Wasikowska also starred in *Maps to the Stars* which premiered at the 2014 Cannes Film Festival. The satire drama was directed by David Cronenberg and also stars Julianne Moore, John Cusack and Robert Pattinson.

In March 2013, Wasikowska starred opposite Nicole Kidman and Matthew Goode in the Fox Searchlight dramatic thriller *Stoker*, directed by Chan-wook Park. In August 2012, Wasikowska appeared in a supporting role in *Lawless* opposite Shia LaBeouf, Tom Hardy and Jessica Chastain.

In September 2011, Wasikowska tackled the title role in *Jane Eyre*, director Cary Fukunaga's screen adaptation of the classic novel by Charlotte Bronte, opposite Michael Fassbender (as Rochester). Wasikowska ended 2011 co-starring opposite Glenn Close and Janet

McTeer in Rodrigo Garcia's period drama *Albert Nobbs*. In May 2011, Wasikowska starred in the Gus Van Sant film *Restless*, as a terminally ill girl who falls in love with a death-obsessed teenage boy, played by Henry Hopper. An official selection of the 2011 Cannes Film Festival, the film was produced by Imagine Entertainment with Bryce Dallas Howard and released by Sony Classics.

In July 2010, Wasikowska co-starred in the Academy Award-nominated film *The Kids Are All Right* with Annette Bening, Julianne Moore and Mark Ruffalo. The Lisa Cholodenko film was also recognized with an Independent Spirit Award and Golden Globe Award for Best Film.

Wasikowska's additional film credits include *Defiance*, *Amelia*, *That Evening Sun*, *The Double*, and *Only Lovers Left*.

Wasikowska made her debut to a US audience as the tormented and suicidal teen Sophie in HBO's series *In Treatment*. Directed by Rodrigo Garcia, *In Treatment* focused on the relationship between a therapist (Gabriel Byrne) and his patients. In recognition of her performance, Wasikowska was honored by the Los Angeles based organization Australians in Film (whose Host Committee includes Cate Blanchett, Naomi Watts, Nicole Kidman and Hugh Jackman, among others) with the Breakthrough Actress award. The series was also nominated for a Golden Globe Award for Best Drama Series.

Wasikowska began her acting career in her home country of Australia, landing a recurring role on the popular medical drama *All Saints*. Upon securing her first major role in the independent film *Suburban Mayhem*, Wasikowska was recognized by the Australian Film Institute Awards for Best Young Actor. She followed up these projects with acclaimed performances in *Lens Love Story*, *Skin* (a short film,) *September*, and in the Australian horror film *Rogue* alongside Michael Vartan and Radha Mitchell.

In 2016, Wasikowska made her directorial debut (with individual but connected segments) in *The Turning*, an adaptation of Tim Winton's best-selling short story collection filmed in Sydney, Australia. Wasikowska went behind the lens a second time for *Afterbirth*, a selection of short stories which she also wrote.

Sam Neill (Paul)

Sam Neill began his impressive career in New Zealand, with early notable roles in *Sleeping Dogs* in 1977 and *My Brilliant Career* in 1979. In 1981, he secured his first major international role in *Omen III: The Final Conflict*, which he followed up with the cult film, *Possession*. He gained further international recognition with *Dead Calm*, opposite Nicole Kidman, *The Hunt For The Red October*, and the award winning Jane Campion film, *The Piano*.

Neill was cast as Dr. Alan Grant in the 1993 Spielberg film *Jurassic Park*, a role reprised in *Jurassic Park III* in 2001. Other notable film roles include *The Horse Whisperer*, *Hunt For The*

Wilderpeople, *A Long Way Down*, *Wimbledon* and the recent film, *Peter Rabbit*, as well as a cameo in Taika Waititi's *Thor: Ragnarok*.

Neill's TV credits include the mini-series *Merlin*, for which he was nominated for an Emmy®, and Golden Globe®, *The Tudors*, *Alcatraz*, *And Then There Were None*, *Tutankhamun* and *Peaky Blinders*.

In addition to *Blackbird*, Neill's upcoming roles include: *Ride Like A Girl*, directed by Rachel Griffiths and co-starring Teresa Palmer and *RAMS*, opposite Miranda Richardson.

Bex Taylor-Klaus (Chris)

Bex currently stars in the recently released original Netflix comedy, *Dumplin'* opposite Jennifer Aniston and Danielle MacDonald. Bex's comedic chops shine on screen as they play Hannah, the mischievous friend to the eponymous character of *Dumplin'*. Hannah is a rebellious, combat boot-wearing teen who loves the idea of disrupting the local pageant! Bex also recently starred in the horror film *Hellfest* for CBS FILMS. Bex, who identifies as gender non-binary is making huge wave for gender non-conforming artists in mainstream media and works closely with LGBTQ+ organizations like GLAAD.

Television fans may recognize Bex Taylor-Klaus from past work on shows such as AMC's critically acclaimed *The Killing*, which has helped them accumulate a massive fan following as well as CW's *Arrow* and Showtime's *House of Lies*. More recently, Taylor-Klaus played Audrey Jensen, the lead role on MTV's *Scream: The TV Series*, as well as the role of Pidge in Netflix's *Voltron: Legendary Defender*, an ode to the 1980's icon cartoon series and action figures.

Bex was born and raised in Atlanta, GA, a fourth generation Atlantan who has two passions: sports and acting. An all-around athlete, Taylor-Klaus played high school varsity softball as a freshman (catcher & 3rd base). The young performer's acting training started with Shakespeare in an after-school program in the 3rd grade and was a consistent part of extracurricular life and summers. In high school, Bex performed in the school's Improv Troupe and along with friends started a junior high acting troupe to train young actors.

At 18, Taylor-Klaus moved to LA in the summer of 2012 to begin an acting career while finishing high school. Bex was then cast as Bullet, a series regular in *The Killing*, about which Bex remarked, "to be an actor is to want to visit the dark places that humans strive so hard to stay away from." All eyes were on Bex after the hit show. Creative executives in Hollywood began writing with roles in mind for Taylor-Klaus. Bex continues to inspire LGBTQ+ and gender non-conforming people all over the world and advocates for more diverse and inclusive representations in Hollywood. When not working, Bex loves to bring attention to important causes including animal adoption and rescue, LGBTQ+ issues as well as environmental justice.

Next year, Bex will also join the cast of a hit Netflix Series (which is currently unannounced) along with being seen in *Blackbird*.

Rainn Wilson (Michael)

Rainn Wilson starred in the Warner Bros summer tentpole hit *Meg*, for producer Lorenzo DiBonaventura opposite Jason Statham, and can currently be seen in the new *Star Trek* series as the iconic con-man Harry Mudd. He is upcoming in a recurring role on Chuck Lorre's *Mom*, opposite Allison Janney and currently in production on the highly anticipated Amazon series *Utopia*, based on the popular UK format.

Rainn is an Emmy® nominated and SAG award-winning actor who has found himself in a variety of comedic and theatrical roles throughout his career. His first breakthrough role came when he played assistant mortician Arthur Martin in HBO's *Six Feet Under*, winning him and the cast a Screen Actors Guild Award for Outstanding Performance by an Ensemble in a Drama Series. Wilson is best known for playing the inimitable Dwight Schrute for nine seasons on NBC's Emmy® award winning comedy, *The Office*.

Rainn's film credits include Netflix feature, *Shimmer Lake*, directed by Oren Uziel; *Hesher*, opposite Natalie Portman and Joseph Gordon-Levett; *Super*, with Kevin Bacon, Liv Tyler, and Ellen Page; *Cooties* opposite Elijah Wood; and the acclaimed comedies *Juno*; *Almost Famous*; and *Permanent*, opposite Patricia Arquette. He is upcoming in the indie thriller *Don't Tell A Soul*.

On TV, Rainn portrayed the irascible but brilliant Detective Everett Backstrom in FOX's subversive/comic crime procedural *Backstrom*, as well as a special guest star role in Cameron Crowe's Showtime series *Roadies*, and he recently starred in a n episode of the HBO anthology series *Room 104* from the Duplass Brothers.

Rainn has an MFA from NYU's Graduate Acting Program at the Tisch School of the Arts, and spent ten years doing theatre in New York before moving to Los Angeles. He was on Broadway in *The Tempest* with Patrick Stewart, and the Tony® nominated *London Assurance*. Rainn worked off-Broadway at The Public Theater and Playwrights Horizons, and performed regularly at The Arena Stage, The Guthrie, and with the touring repertory theater The Acting Company. The comedy show he created, *The New Bonanza*, had a successful off-Broadway run at The Cherry Lane, and later played in Los Angeles at The Hudson Guild and The Tiffany. Rainn performed the critically acclaimed one-person monologue *Thom Pain (Based On Nothing)* at The Geffen; and most recently, he was the lead role in the political farce, *The Doppelganger*, at Steppenwolf Theater.

Rainn founded the YouTube channel *Soul Pancake*, which has over 2.6 million subscribers. In 2015 he published his memoir, *The Bassoon King: My Life in Art, Faith, and Idiocy*.

Lindsay Duncan (Liz)

Lindsay Duncan is a Tony and Olivier award-winning actress, renowned for her extensive career both on stage and screen. Film credits include the Oscar and Golden Globe award-winning film *Birdman* alongside Michael Keaton, Marc Webb's *Gifted*, Roger Michell's *Le Weekend*, Richard Curtis' *About Time* starring alongside Bill Nighy and Tim Burton's *Alice Through the Looking Glass*. On television Lindsay has recently appeared as Ysabeau De Clermont in Sky One's *A Discovery of Witches*. Other appearances include Clementine Churchill in *Churchill's Secret*, Frau Bellinghausen in Stephen Poliakoff's *Closer to The Enemy*, Grace in HBO's critically acclaimed *The Leftovers* and Lady Smallwood in BBC's award-winning *Sherlock*.

Not only is Lindsay recognised for her work on screen but she is also admired for her work on stage. Throughout her extensive career Lindsay has appeared on stages all over the UK, in the West End and on Broadway. Lindsay most recently appeared as Claire in *A Delicate Balance* on Broadway. Before this, she appeared in London's West End as Judith Bliss in *Hay Fever* directed by Howard Davies and as Amanda Prynne in *Private Lives* alongside Alan Rickman for which she won a Tony, Olivier, Variety Club, Drama Desk and Critics Circle award for Best Actress. Lindsay was appointed Commander of the Order of the British Empire in 2009 for her services to Drama.

Anson Boon (Jonathan)

Anson's TV credits include *All At Sea* for the BBC, *The Alienist* starring Dakota Fanning and Luke Evans for TNT and Netflix, the ITV series *Endeavour*, and *Living The Dream* for Sky One / Now TV. He is currently filming the Amazon series, *The Feed*, which stars Guy Burnet and David Thewlis.

In addition to *Blackbird*, Anson's recent film credits include *Sulphur & White* with Anna Friel and Dougray Scott and Alexandre Aja's *Crawl* for Paramount, starring Kaya Scodelario.

BIOGRAPHIES - ABOUT THE CREW

Mike Eley B.S.C., Director of Photography

Beginning his career working on high profile documentaries, Mike moved into features and television drama and in 2000 worked on Ken Loach's *The Navigators*. In 2002, he shot the documentary feature *Touching the Void* with director Kevin Macdonald, winning a BIFA Award that year for Best Technical Achievement. He has collaborated many times with director Susanna White, most notably on the BBC mini-series *Jane Eyre* (for which Mike received an Emmy Award nomination and won the RTS Award for Best Cinematography).

In 2007, Mike shot the HBO film *Grey Gardens* with director Michael Sucasny, for which he earned his second Emmy nomination. In 2009 he re-teamed with Susanna White for the feature film, *Nanny McPhee Returns*, and then again worked with White in 2011 for the BBC/HBO production of *Parade's End*, garnering his third Emmy award nomination.

In 2012, Mike shot Clive Barnard's acclaimed feature *The Selfish Giant*, for which he won a Best Cinematography Award from the Dinard Film Festival. Mike's work on *The Lost Honour of Christopher Jeffries* earned him both BAFTA and RTS awards. In 2016, Mike teamed up again with Roger Michell to shoot his adaptation of Du Maurier's classic *My Cousin Rachel*. Mike's most recent credits include a Sundance TV 10 x 10' series directed by Stephen Frears entitled *State Of The Union*.

Mike is currently the President of the British Society of Cinematographers

John Paul Kelly, Production Designer

John Paul Kelly (JP) was born and educated in Ireland before moving to London to attain a BA in Architecture. He later attended the RCA where he graduated with an MA in Design for Film and Television.

Kelly designed the multi Oscar and BAFTA winning *Theory of Everything* (Working Title) directed by James Marsh, telling the life story of the late Stephen Hawking. More recent work includes *Stan & Ollie* following Laurel and Hardy's final tour of the UK in the 1950s, directed by John Baird. Previous Working Title collaborations include the huge hit sequel *Bridget Jones' Baby* and Richard Curtis' *About Time*. With Sony Pictures he designed *The Other Boleyn Girl* starring Natalie Portman and Scarlett Johansen.

Kelly has designed numerous independent films including John MacDonagh's hilarious comedy *The Guard*, Fernando Meirelles' *360*, starring Anthony Hopkins and filmed in London, Vienna and Paris, *Venus* and *Enduring Love* both directed by Roger Michell.

Earlier work includes Michael Winterbottom's *A Cock & Bull Story*, and the multi award winning films *Under the Skin* by Carine Adler and *24/7* by Shane Meadows. He also designed the Berlin Silver Bear winning *Bloody Sunday* directed by Paul Greengrass.

Kelly's television includes *The Lost Prince* by Stephen Poliakoff which won him a BAFTA and an EMMY award, having also worked previously with Stephen on *Shooting The Past*.

Kristina Hetherington, Editor

Kristina Hetherington is a BAFTA award winning editor who has enjoyed great success collaborating with some of the industry's finest directors.

In 2010, Kristina began her creative relationship with Phillip Martin on *MO*, starring Julie Walters, which was met with a wealth of critical acclaim and Kristina won the BAFTA Award for Best Editing Fiction/Entertainment. She continued working with him on the documentary feature *JAPAN IN A DAY, WALLANDER* starring Kenneth Branagh and *BIRDSONG* for Working Title for which she received a BAFTA nomination for Best Editing: Fiction in 2012. Most recently she cut two episodes of the highly praised series *THE CROWN* with Philip Martin and Stephen Daldry.

In 2013 she edited the feature *LE WEEK-END* starring Jim Broadbent and Lyndsay Duncan which was the start of a fruitful relationship with director Roger Michell. Shortly after, she worked again with Roger on *THE LOST HONOUR OF CHRISTOPHER JEFFERIES* written by Peter Morgan with Jason Watkins in the title role, for which she won an RTS West Craft Award. She then went on to cut *BIRTHDAY*, a TV film based on the play by Joe Penhall, with [Stephen Mangan](#) and [Anna Maxwell Martin](#), to which followed *MY COUSIN RACHEL* with Rachel Weisz and Sam Claflin playing the leads.

Kristina's other credits include Chris Smith's *DETOUR* with Emory Cohen and Bel Powley, Julian Farino's *THE CHILD IN TIME* with Benedict Cumberbatch and Kelly MacDonal and Trevor Nunn's *RED JOAN* starring Judy Dench.

Dinah Collin, Costume Designer

Dinah Collin's costumes have featured in some of the most seminal television dramas and films for over the past two decades.

Perhaps her most well-known television work was in the BBC's 1995 version of *Pride and Prejudice*, for which she won an EMMY Award for Best Costume. She's also won a BAFTA for BBC2's *Portrait of a Marriage*.

As her career began to progress, Dinah began to transfer her talents to film. Some of the highlights include Paul Greengrass's *The Bourne Supremacy*, Roman Polanski's *The Ghost* with Ewan McGregor and Pierce Brosnan, *Dad's Army* starring Catherine Zeta-Jones and Bill

Nighy, *The Infiltrator* starring Bryan Cranston and Diana Kruger, the period mystery *My Cousin Rachel* directed by Roger Michell and *Gwen* directed by William McGregor.

Dinah's theatre credits include *Cunning Little Vixen* at the Glyndebourne Festival Opera 2012 directed by Melly Still, the National Theatre's adaptation of Terry Pratchett's novel *Nation*, also directed by Melly Still, Nicholas Hytner's *Much Ado about Nothing* starring Zoe Wanamaker and Simon Russell Beale and the Old Vic's *Mood Music* directed by Roger Michell. Her work was most recently on stage in the National Theatre and West End transfer, *Consent* by Nina Raine and *The Mirror Crack'd* written by Agatha Christie and adapted for the stage by Rachel Wagstaff.

Her work can soon be seen in *Blackbird* directed by Roger Michell and starring Kate Winslet and Mia Wasikowska.

Ivana Primorac, Hair & Make up Designer

Ivana Primorac won BAFTA, Critics Choice and Make Up & Hair Stylists Guild Awards for her work on Joe Wright's *Darkest Hour*, starring Gary Oldman. She has been BAFA nominated six further times for Tim Burton's *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* and *Sweeney Todd*, starring Johnny Depp and Helena Bonham Carter; Anthony Minghella's *Cold Mountain*, starring Jude Law, Nicole Kidman and Renée Zellweger; Stephen Daldry's *The Hours*, starring Nicole Kidman and *Atonement* and *Anna Karenina*, both starring Keira Knightley.

Ivana's extensive and varied credits include *A Little Chaos* for director Alan Rickman, Morten Tyldum's *The Imitation Game*, Lone Scherfig's *One Day*, Rowan Joffe's *Brighton Rock*; Stephen Daldry's *Extremely Loud & Incredibly Close* and *The Reader*, Justin Chadwick's *The Other Boleyn Girl*, Anthony Minghella's *Breaking and Entering*, M. Night Shyamalan's *The Last Airbender*; and Milos Forman's *Goya's Ghosts*, starring Natalie Portman and Javier Bardem. The latter earned her a Goya Award nomination.

She has also worked on such films as Peter Jackson's *The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King*, Laurence Dunmore's *The Libertine*, Ridley Scott's *Gladiator*, Tim Roth's *The War Zone*, Shekhar Kapur's *Elizabeth* and Kenneth Branagh's *In the Bleak Midwinter*.

Ivana has worked as personal make up artist to Nicole Kidman on Jonathan Teplitzky's *The Railway Man* and Oliver Dahan's *Grace of Monaco* and to Kate Winslet on Jason Reitman's *Labor Day*, Jocelyn Moorhouse's *The Dressmaker* and David Frankel's *Collateral Beauty*.

Ivana's recent credits include Wash Westmoreland's *Colette* for which she picked up a BIFA Award nomination, *Yesterday* starring Lily James and directed by Danny Boyle with whom she also worked on *Steve Jobs* and *T2 Trainspotting*, and Greta Gerwig's *Little Women* (Wig Designer).

Starring

SUSAN SARANDON

KATE WINSLET

MIA WASIKOWSKA

SAM NEILL

RAINN WILSON

LINDSAY DUNCAN

ANSON BOON

BEX TAYLOR-KLAUS

Credits

Directed by

ROGER MICHELL

Written by

CHRISTIAN TORPE

Produced by

SHERRYL CLARK, DAVID BERNARDI, ALICE DAWSON

Executive Producers

BOAZ DAVIDSON, MIKE DONOVAN, ANDERY GEORGIEV, JEFFREY GREENSTEIN, ANDREW
KOTLIAR, AVI LERNER, BRYAN LORD, HEIDI JO MARKEL, JOSHUA SASON, TREVOR SHORT,
JONATHAN YUNGER, ELISABETH ZAVOYSKIY

Director of Photography

MIKE ELEY

Production Designer

JOHN PAUL KELLY

Casting Director

FIONA WEIR

Editor

KRISTINA HETHERINGTON

Costume Designer

DINAH COLLIN

Hair & Make Up Designer

IVNA PRIMORAC

Composer

PETET GREGSON

Co-Producers

ALICE DAWSON, GISELLE MARENGO, CHRISTIAN TORPE