



## *Production Notes*

After more than thirty years of service as one of the Navy's top aviators, Pete "Maverick" Mitchell (Tom Cruise) is where he belongs, pushing the envelope as a courageous test pilot and dodging the advancement in rank that would ground him. When he finds himself training a detachment of TOPGUN graduates for a specialized mission the likes of which no living pilot has ever seen, Maverick encounters Lt. Bradley Bradshaw (Miles Teller), call sign: "Rooster," the son of Maverick's late friend and Radar Intercept Officer Lt. Nick Bradshaw, aka "Goose."

Facing an uncertain future and confronting the ghosts of his past, Maverick is drawn into a confrontation with his own deepest fears, culminating in a mission that demands the ultimate sacrifice from those who will be chosen to fly it.

Paramount Pictures and Skydance and Jerry Bruckheimer Films present A Don Simpson / Jerry Bruckheimer Production, A Joseph Kosinski Film, Tom Cruise, *Top Gun: Maverick*. Directed by Joseph Kosinski. Story by Peter Craig and Justin Marks. Screenplay by Ehren Kruger and Eric Warren Singer and Christopher M<sup>c</sup>Quarrie. Based on Characters Created by Jim Cash & Jack Epps, Jr. Produced by Jerry Bruckheimer, Tom Cruise, Christopher M<sup>c</sup>Quarrie, David Ellison. Executive Produced by Tommy Harper, Dana Goldberg, Don Granger, Chad Oman, Mike Stenson.

*Top Gun: Maverick* stars Tom Cruise, Miles Teller, Jennifer Connelly, Jon Hamm, Glen Powell, Lewis Pullman, Charles Parnell, Bashir Salahuddin, Monica Barbaro, Jay Ellis, Danny Ramirez, Greg Tarzan Davis with Ed Harris and Val Kilmer.

## **ABOUT THE PRODUCTION**

There's a line in *Top Gun: Maverick* that sums up its production maybe more than any other. Appropriately, it's said in a scene between two of its returning heroes: Tom Cruise's title character, Maverick, and his old nemesis-turned-wingman Iceman, played once again by Val Kilmer. The pair are discussing their passion for being pilots, looking back on what their careers mean to them. "It's not *what* I am," Maverick tells Iceman. "It's *who* I am."

On Friday September 7, 2018, Tom Cruise returned to Miramar, the military base where much of *Top Gun* was filmed 33 years previously, in the Spring of 1985. He was there to undergo a full ASTC (Aviation Survival Training Curriculum), to qualify for the extensive flying sequences in U.S. Navy F/A-18s that he had personally insisted were essential to the making of its long-awaited sequel, *Top Gun: Maverick*.

As he embarked on a training program unlike any other in film history, it was impossible to not note the parallels between Maverick and the person who plays him; two men constantly testing the limits of themselves and their profession. Two men also not averse to breaking the odd rule along the way, if that means pushing their craft further than anyone ever has before, exploring its possibilities, stretching its edges.

"I'd thought about a sequel to *Top Gun* for all these years," says Cruise of only now returning, as actor and producer, to perhaps his most iconic ever role. "People had asked for a sequel for decades. *Decades*. And the thing I said to the studio from the beginning was: 'If I'm ever going to entertain this, we're shooting everything practically. I'm in that F/A-18, period. So, we're going to have to develop camera rigs. There's going to be wind tunnels and engineering. It's going to take a long, *long* time for me to figure it out.' And I wanted to work with Jerry [Bruckheimer]. I wouldn't do this movie without him in a million years. For years, people had said, 'Can't you shoot [the movie] with CGI?' And I always said, 'No. That's not the experience.' I said, 'I need to find the right story. And we're going to need the right team. This movie is like trying to hit a bullet with a bullet. I'm not playing.'"

That Bruckheimer factor is essential in understanding what this movie means to the people who have made it – and what it will mean for the audiences soon to experience it, too. Cruise describes Bruckheimer simply: "He's a legendary producer. One of *the* great Hollywood producers." And he should know. It was on the original *Top Gun* that Bruckheimer and his late

producing partner, the equally legendary Don Simpson, took a then 21-year-old actor who wanted to learn it all under, well, their wing.

“When we started working on this [new] movie, we were working on the script and I looked across at Jerry and I just felt like a kid again, like I was back in 1985, working with him. [Back then] I wanted to learn *everything* about being a producer,” Cruise remembers. “And Don and Jerry, at a time when I asked to be involved with something, to be in those meetings, were very generous with me. And as we all know, not everyone is like that. *Top Gun* was the next phase for me [in my career]. For me, like Jerry, I always just wanted to make great stories and entertain the world. That was my purpose.”

On the original movie, although Cruise was filmed in the cockpit of an F-14 Tomcat, his castmates weren’t so successful in their endeavors. “We had other actors up there, flying,” says Bruckheimer. “But their footage unfortunately wasn’t usable because they didn’t have enough experience in training. When we put them in the air, none of them could hack it. Tom was the only one we had usable flight footage for. We had tons of footage of the other actors in the air with their eyes rolling back in their heads. This time, thanks to Tom, all the actors on *Top Gun: Maverick* became accustomed to the fundamentals and mechanics of flight and G-forces, because of all the training they did months in advance. Unlike the first film, our actors are actually in the cockpits of the F/A-18s in flight, acting and speaking their lines of dialogue.”

That seismic shift is not just about an increase in aviation authenticity, either. Rather, it is part of an amplification of a number of factors that made the original *Top Gun* resonate so strongly. “In this movie we very much wanted to have a more developed group and a greater sense of the pilots around Maverick,” says writer and producer, Christopher McQuarrie, the *Usual Suspects* Oscar®-winner who has collaborated with Cruise since writing *Valkyrie* in 2008, and has since written and directed him in one *Jack Reacher* and two *Mission: Impossible* films, with another two on the way.

“One of the things I said to Tom early on was that the original *Top Gun* was not just about Maverick. It wasn’t just about Maverick and Goose. It was about a *culture*,” McQuarrie observes. “It was about the culture of these pilots and the competition that they all had with one another, and we wanted to bring some of that in. As a result, all the pilots in this film are more richly drawn. It’s a deeper bench but also a richer canvas. That tapestry of pilots all help to serve an understanding of who Maverick is now. Obviously, this movie takes place over 30 years later.

And we didn't want to stop the movie and reflect upon what those 30 years were. We wanted you to feel that history unfolding while you were watching the movie."

The director of *Top Gun: Maverick*, Joseph Kosinski (*Tron: Legacy*, *Oblivion*, *Only The Brave*), still vividly remembers the first time he saw the original *Top Gun*, at the Orpheum Theater in Marshalltown, Iowa. He'd just turned 12 years old, and thought Maverick was one of the greatest characters he'd ever seen on the big screen. He was so inspired by all the state-of-the-art machinery on display that he would later study aerospace and mechanical engineering at Stanford before switching gears and moving into the world of filmmaking.

The very first sequence Kosinski shot on *Top Gun: Maverick* proved to be the ultimate combination of his twin passions. It was a high-speed tracking shot of Tom Cruise on a Kawasaki motorcycle, dressed in Maverick's leather jacket and Aviator sunglasses, racing an F/A-18 down a runway, framed against a classic Tony Scott sunset. "*Top Gun*, in some ways, is a fantasy," says Kosinski of Scott's beloved original. "The sun's always setting, there's volleyball at the beach, and the jukebox is full of classic tunes. That first movie is gorgeous. Tony was making a blockbuster, but he shot it like an art film. The lighting, the gradient filters, the framing. There are moments in this film that are an homage, stylistically, to Tony's movie. There were days, like on that runway with Tom, the bike, and the jet, that you just had to pinch yourself."

Like many good things, Kosinski's part in the production began in Paris. "I flew out there, where Tom was shooting *Mission: Impossible – Fallout*," Kosinski remembers of the moment he became involved in the sequel, three decades after falling in love with this world. "I had 20 minutes with Tom to pitch my take on it, and I knew there would be two requirements: One, the story had to be deeply emotional. Two, the film had to be shot practically. The theme that everyone remembers from the first movie, and really holds true in this one, is to never leave your wingman. That *notion* of a wingman – brotherhood, friendship, loyalty – had to be at the core of our story. At the same time, we're telling a new tale. It's a continuation of Maverick's story, but we've brought it into the present day. He is called back to TOPGUN because there is a specific mission that requires the skills of a very special pilot. A type of mission that's rarely flown and involves extremely low-altitude flying. It's very risky and requires a high level of skill. Maverick is the only active duty pilot who has flown a mission like it before. So the Navy

pulls him back to TOPGUN not to fly it, but to *teach* a group of young Naval aviators how to pull it off.”

At the heart of this new story is the conflict between Maverick and one of those young TOPGUN pilots, Lt. Bradley “Rooster” Bradshaw (played by Miles Teller). Maverick and Rooster’s history runs deep: Rooster is the son of Maverick’s late best friend and RIO (Radar Intercept Officer), Lt. Nick “Goose” Bradshaw, who was killed in a training accident that forced the two pilots to eject from their F-14 Tomcat, in a scene from the original movie that traumatized a generation to the point that Cruise still has people mention it to him now.

When we meet Maverick again, he is working as a test pilot, pushing incredibly powerful, and occasionally temperamental, new cutting-edge flying machines to their limits for the Navy. “It was very important to us that Maverick still be in the Navy. The Navy is really the only thing he’s ever known. The Navy is his family,” says McQuarrie. “At the same time, Maverick has been in the Navy for over 30 years. Being a test pilot answered the question of how someone would stay in the Navy this long and remain where he is. Because what matters most to Maverick is that he always finds a way to fly. He’s not just there because he is a great pilot, but through a certain amount of guile and ingenuity. Because the system is constantly looking for ways to push Maverick out to pasture. And Maverick constantly finds ways to avoid that.”

On the ground, meanwhile, Maverick once again comes into the life of Penny Benjamin, a character whose name fans will remember being mentioned in the original movie, now brought to life by the Oscar-winning Jennifer Connelly. A single mother and owner of The Hard Deck aviators’ club, Penny is “bright, independent and happy,” says Connelly, reteaming with Kosinski after working with him – as did Teller – on *Only The Brave*. “An elite sailor, she loves to race and she loves the sea, but she’s found anchor in her community and her family. Penny and Maverick had a brief romance when they were young and have rekindled the relationship a few times over the years. While things always end pretty amicably, they’ve had enough break-ups that she’s determined not to get involved again. But, we get the sense that for the first time, they may have finally reappeared in each other’s lives at the right time,” Connelly says. As Bruckheimer notes of the relationship: “Jennifer’s scenes with Tom just crackle with wit and tension as these two very independent people reunite and get to know each other again.”

For Kosinski, “the original *Top Gun* is a drama wrapped in an action movie, and I wanted to continue that idea. The most important thing to me was the emotional spine of this film; the story of Maverick reconnecting with the son of his wingman, Goose, and watching that relationship, which has been fractured over time, come together. But it was also about where we find Maverick 35 years later. I was intrigued with the concept of him being on the outer fringes of the Navy, in the experimental world, testing aircraft that people don’t realize exist. I liked the notion of finding Maverick on the outside, and then having him called back to TOPGUN and having to confront and reconnect with characters from the original movie. It felt like the right way to get back into this world.”

Maverick has, of course, ruffled more than a few feathers during his time in the Navy. “The future is coming. And you’re not in it,” Rear Admiral Chester “Hammer” Cain (Ed Harris) tells him in no uncertain terms. But Maverick has got friends in high places, too. Not least Iceman, who is now a 4-star Admiral himself, and knows Maverick is the only pilot with the expertise and daring needed to train this special detachment to complete this crucial mission.

“On the first *Top Gun*, I was desperate that Val played Iceman,” remembers Cruise. “But at first he didn’t want to do it because he was starring in his own movies. But he was so perfect for that role. So, Tony had to go and pursue him. In fact, I remember calling my agent at the time – I think she represented Val. I said, ‘Look, what do I need to do to get Val on this movie?’”

Kilmer’s reticence was straightforward: “I had only played leads, even in the theater and in the two films I had done,” he says. “But Tony was so enthusiastic and so were Simpson and Bruckheimer, who couldn’t have been nicer. Tony, Don and Jerry really were exactly like advertised, so fun and full of life – pure joy!” And for Cruise, the moment Kilmer eventually did say yes was one that will always stay with him. “When Val finally committed, I remember the four of us in the office – me, Jerry, Don and Tony – all high-fiving!” he says. “On this one, I wanted Val to be in it and he wanted to be in it. He was on the internet, saying, ‘I am ready for *Top Gun*’! I wanted this movie to be a progression of their relationship. And working with him again was so special. Playing scenes again, me and Val. Just sitting down with him was really emotional.”

Fun, too. “We laughed like children after most takes,” adds Kilmer. “We hadn’t seen each other for many years and it was amazing how quickly we got caught up. Also, perhaps the

euphoria of now having our characters be friends, we were just so energized. Tom brings that out in people.”

Maverick’s relationship with Iceman is critical to *Top Gun: Maverick*, but so too are his with the other key characters in his orbit. “The relationships between Maverick and Iceman, Maverick and Hondo, Maverick and Cyclone and Warlock and, of course, Penny, all of those relationships are built into the story so that you feel this life that this character has been living since you last saw him,” notes McQuarrie.

Ask Bruckheimer if you could make a *Top Gun* movie without Tom Cruise and his answer is definitive. “No, you couldn’t. Tom is Maverick and Maverick is *Top Gun*. Maverick carries on a legacy, and Tom Cruise carries on a legacy.” But, according to the man who plays him, there’s another essential ingredient. “A *Top Gun* movie isn’t a *Top Gun* movie without Jerry Bruckheimer,” says Cruise. “And getting to produce a movie with Jerry, at this stage... A *Top Gun* movie. It’s special. You can feel Tony Scott’s inspiration in this film. We’re not imitating a Tony Scott movie – this isn’t a cover album of *Top Gun*, but it’s very much playing in the same world.”

Speaking of albums, *Top Gun: Maverick* has something very special up its sleeve musically, too. “The first movie’s soundtrack was iconic,” says Cruise. “When we were looking for the sound of this movie, we were working with Hans [Zimmer]. And Harold Faltermeyer was involved. We knew the pieces. We had the pieces. But finding the *music*... There was a magical moment where Joe, Jerry, McQ [Cruise’s nickname for McQuarrie], our editor Eddie [Hamilton], we were all working in England. And Hans said, ‘Come over to my music room.’ We went in there and he said, ‘There’s music, from Lady Gaga.’ And he played her song. It was such a *moment*.”

Wanting to capture not just the romance between Maverick and Penny but also the romance of flying, all the filmmakers had wanted Lady Gaga to add her soul to the soundtrack and were delighted with the results. Written specifically for the film by her and BloodPop, “Hold My Hand” plays in full in the final scenes of the movie but its beats are woven throughout. “Gaga is just a genius. The *power*,” says Cruise. “I’ve had the good fortune to have seen her perform live. We knew at that point that this was the end of our movie. It inspired the cut. It inspired the tone of what we were able to play with at that point. It was just right in line with

what we needed. There are moments when you hear a song in a movie for the first time and you immediately know, ‘That’s it!’ This was one of those moments.”

Like all movies, *Top Gun: Maverick* is a product of its parts and its people. “And we really do have the best that’s out there in terms of both,” says Bruckheimer. “This has a story, tone, feeling and look that is totally compelling and very much continues what we started in the first movie. But the audience is also going to get a point of view of what it’s really like to be in the cockpit of one of these planes in a way that no film has been able to do, including the original *Top Gun*. We’re putting you right in there with Maverick.”

Producer David Ellison describes, “*Top Gun* is the film that ignited my lifelong passion for aviation and like so many others had a visceral and profound impact on my life. The picture is a true love letter to aviation. Being part of *Top Gun: Maverick* allows me to celebrate two things I truly enjoy, my life-long passion for aviation and working to bring large-scale movies that hopefully resonate with audiences in enduring and impactful ways.”

Cruise says there is a “majesty and beauty” in flying an airplane. “It’s both using and defying nature,” he says. “And playing Maverick again, at a different stage of his life, has been an incredible experience for me. Maverick is still Maverick. He still wants to fly Mach 2 with his hair on fire. But you see the transition that Maverick undergoes. The pressure of him losing his best friend, the responsibility he feels about that and how he has carried that with him – and how that incident has changed both his and Rooster’s life forever. Maverick loves Rooster as a son. This film is about family and it’s about friendship and it’s about sacrifice. It’s about redemption and the cost of mistakes.”

And that emotion hasn’t just been up on screen, but behind the scenes, on a journey that has taken the makers of *Top Gun: Maverick* both back in time and forward, into new frontiers in filmmaking. “What we have achieved with the aerial sequences is genuinely something that people will never have seen before,” says Cruise. “We’ve trained actors to be able to fly and perform in real F/A-18s. And, to do that, we took the greatest fighter pilots in the world [from the U.S. Navy] and we taught them about movies – the pilot and the actor had to work as a team. This is the sophistication of the aerial sequences. No one’s ever done this, ever.”

It’s not just pride that Cruise feels, though. *Top Gun: Maverick* isn’t just a movie – it’s a destination. A culmination of everything he has learned in his 40 years in this business (Cruise’s

debut, *Endless Love*, was released on July 17, 1981), this is a story he's been building towards. A love letter to aviation, for sure. But a love letter to *movies* too.

"Tom is a very experienced pilot. That's something I learned the hard way on [another] film we did together," says McQuarrie, who for *Mission: Impossible – Fallout* had to watch on a monitor as his leading man put a helicopter into a controlled spin in a ravine in New Zealand and then jumped out of a plane moving at 160mph, 25,000 feet over Abu Dhabi. "Aviation has been a part of every film that I've ever worked on with Tom, whether it's on screen or behind the camera. He's always had an incredible love of and passion for aviation. In fact, one of my earliest meetings with Tom was at his hangar where his beautiful P-51 Mustang [that we see in *Top Gun: Maverick*] is. How to capture the love of aviation was an enormous challenge for us, finding a way to express Maverick's passion for aviation in a way that was done visually, as opposed to him just saying it."

McQuarrie pauses. "I don't think I'm more proud of a movie that I've worked on to date than *this* film," he says. "It's a movie I really can't wait for audiences to see. This is the kind of movie they don't make anymore. It's epic in scale, it's epic in scope, it's epic in emotional depth, whether you have seen the original movie or not. It's very much a modern film, but it's steeped in classic storytelling."

"It's *every* emotion," Cruise says of how making it has felt. "*Top Gun: Maverick* is a legacy film for me. For *us*, me and Jerry. Making this movie has been a very emotional experience. When you ask me about that line, 'It's not *what* I am. It's *who* I am'... It's always been that way, in terms of my work and my life and my passion. And to have started this with Tony... And for it now to be finished... And, also, just the responsibility for the audience, which I always feel. You know, it's *36 years later*. I knew we had the story. I knew it was in the palm of our hand. But the *emotion* of it? Man, making this movie has been everything you can imagine."

### **THE GHOST OF GOOSE**

The Maverick we meet in *Top Gun: Maverick* is still unmistakably the man you remember from the original movie, but he's also very much a progression of how we last left him. "At the end of the first movie, Val's Iceman says to Maverick, 'You can be my wingman

anytime,” says Cruise. “Me and McQ kept saying that for this movie, ‘He’s got to still be Maverick. But he’s got to have learned something from the first movie. By the end of the first movie, he’s [become] someone who cares about other people, who’s more *aware* of other people. Of being a wingman.’ But sometimes, even at the beginning of this movie, he’s still, ‘Just a little push...’ That’s *him*! That’s Maverick,” Cruise laughs. “He can’t help it. In this movie, he is still who he is, but he’s had a life. Maverick is alone at the beginning of this movie. And he’s alone because of the events that happened in the first *Top Gun*.”

What happened in that first movie, of course, was the training accident that killed one of the most adored characters in movie history, the father of the young boy we will now meet as a man. “And I’ve got to say,” says Cruise of Teller’s performance as Rooster, “that guy *showed up*. He *knew* how to play that character. Miles came on set and he had the mustache, had the Hawaiian shirt, had the hair... I kept saying to him, ‘You’re Goose’s son. You’re Anthony [Edwards] and Meg’s [Ryan] son.’ And he *nailed* it. He’s such a brilliant actor. Let me tell you, to get that tone – in the relationship between Maverick and Rooster – it was threading a needle, tonally. It has to be grounded, emotionally. And you look at his performance and you *see* Goose’s son.”

The death of his father has also impacted Rooster’s career, echoes from the original reverberating into the story of *Top Gun: Maverick*. “The thing that Rooster has that makes him different from the other pilots is that he’s a little more conservative in the way that he flies, which is understandable given that his father was killed in an accident in an F-14,” says Kosinski. “But that little bit of caution can be a weakness in combat. Sometimes you need to be more aggressive to survive. That’s something that Maverick is trying to get him to understand.”

Not that that’s exactly an easy process, given the history between the characters. “Maverick keeps telling Rooster he needs to trust his instincts,” says Teller. “Forget the book, trust your instincts, believe in yourself. It’s really these pilots against themselves, against their own kind of inhibitions. It’s them against their skillset, going beyond what they think they’re capable of and testing their own limits. Rooster has been shaped by the death of his father. Now he’s going to find out who he really is.” Teller took the role so seriously he even took seven weeks of piano lessons before shooting, so he could play for real in the scene in *Top Gun: Maverick* when Rooster, aping his old man in the original, sings ‘Great Balls Of Fire’ in the bar.

“Maverick’s relationship with Rooster, obviously, is a very complicated one,” says McQuarrie. “Bradley Bradshaw was just a child in the original *Top Gun* and probably wasn’t all that aware of the events that went on around him. And here he is, as a grown man, who clearly has an unresolved relationship with his father and an unresolved relationship with Maverick, and how that relationship complicated his own ambitions.”

More than anyone, Cruise is acutely aware of what the character of Goose still means to people – how his death in *Top Gun* still hurts. “When you think of it, we killed Goose,” Cruise says. “Can you imagine? Today, you’d have a hard time killing Goose. There would be a *lot* of discussion about killing Goose. You’d go to test screenings, and they would tell us, ‘They *hate* it when Goose dies! He’s such a likeable character! You’ve got to cut that out of the movie.’” But, just like Cruise knew back then that Goose’s fate was final – “Goose always died in the script, *always*” – so too did he realize Rooster was their way back in when it came to finding the story for the sequel.

“Goose permeates just about every frame of this [new] film,” observes McQuarrie. “He’s a character that everybody loved from the first movie, Maverick especially. And it was a real challenge because we didn’t want to take audiences out of the movie and ask them to remember another film. So we had to reintroduce Goose as a character. We had to introduce him as a spirit in the story. And that very much came through, even down to the line, ‘Talk to me, Goose.’”

Such was the attention to detail on *Top Gun: Maverick*, the finely tuned calibration between newness and nostalgia, that that was a line that very nearly didn’t make the final cut. Until, “we were all struck, when we had a screening to watch the original film,” remembers McQuarrie, “that Maverick’s first line in the original *Top Gun* is, ‘Talk to me, Goose.’” The line made it, and the result is very much a sense that via *Top Gun: Maverick*, Goose lives on. “Throughout the movie,” says McQuarrie, “you have this feeling that Goose is watching over Maverick and watching over Rooster, hoping that these two characters will find reconciliation. Because in many ways, they’re two people without a family. And this movie is really about how they find it.”

It was 1984 when Tom Cruise first found Anthony Edwards, who would go on to play Goose to such perfection. Back then, the paintballing craze had just hit Los Angeles, to the point that, for a time, it became the pastime of choice for actors of a certain age. “I went to this paintball thing,” remembers Cruise. “And there was Anthony. And he was so engaging,

charismatic, funny and personable. That night, I called Jerry. I remember, it was a Sunday. And I said, ‘We’ve got to get Anthony Edwards. Anthony Edwards has got to play Goose.’ It was late, and Jerry was like, ‘Okay...’ And I was like, ‘No, no, you don’t understand. He has *got* to play Goose. He *is* Goose!’”

The casting of Edwards is crucial to understanding how Tom Cruise approaches his work on any given movie. For one, as the paintballing story showcases, when Cruise is working on a movie, he’s *always* working on the movie. Second, as the following story illustrates, for Cruise, the movie is the most important thing. It’s the *only* thing. He sees his job, and everyone else’s, as being in service to that movie.

And so it was that on the day that Cruise and Anthony Edwards were walking down the aircraft carrier, preparing to shoot the scene containing one of the most remembered, repeated lines in cinema history, Cruise decided to shake things up.

“‘I feel the need. The need for speed.’ That was actually my line,” says Cruise. “But Anthony is just wonderful. So, when we were setting up, I said to him, ‘We’ve got to split this line up. What do you want? Do you want to say, “I feel the need” and I do the other part? How do you want to switch it up?’ And we did a bunch of different takes. That’s how we came up with the high and low slap that we do [to accompany the line], together.”

If you’re wondering at this point if that happens often on movies, actors happily handing over their lines to their co-stars, the answer is that it doesn’t. Especially lines as good as *that* one. “But it’s about the movie,” explains Cruise. “It must only ever be about that. On a movie, I want every diamond to be polished. They’re the kind of movies I like to see. When I go see a movie, I love being invested in the world and the characters. So, I was constantly looking at every aspect of that storytelling. How can we do it? How can we make it better?”

It’s a philosophy Cruise has carried with him over the course of his career – and one that factored directly into the casting process for Rooster on *Top Gun: Maverick*. Ultimately won by Teller, the role was coveted by many young actors in Hollywood, including Glen Powell, who now plays Hangman.

“Glen tested for Rooster and he wasn’t right for Rooster. I offered him [the role of] Hangman and he passed on it. He was a huge fan of *Top Gun* and was so disappointed [at not getting the Rooster role] so he said he wasn’t interested,” says Cruise. “So, I said, ‘Look, I’m in a production meeting. I want to talk to you about it, personally. I’m not here to convince you to

do something or not do something. I understand that. That's your personal choice. But I want you to come down and see, to be in the production meeting.' We were doing an aerial production meeting and he sat in the corner and watched. After the meeting, I pulled him aside and he said, 'I just don't understand the Hangman character.' And I said, 'It's not *written*. The role's not written. The script's not written.' He kept saying, 'The script's *there*.' I said, 'We have words on a page and I have a structure. From that structure, I can create a budget and know how many days and the room that I have, the basic tone that we're trying to accomplish. But it's an *idea*. And it's an idea that we're formulating and we're continuing. When you cast an actor, you write for the actor. You don't just box it in.'"

Powell looked at Cruise, digesting this information. "I said to him," remembers Cruise: "'What kind of career do you want?' And he said, 'I want *your* career.' I said, 'Okay. How do you think I did it?' And he said, 'Well, you chose great characters.' I said, 'No, I didn't. I chose *movies* and I created the characters in them. I would evaluate whether you want to do the *movie* or not. I just don't want the film to come out and you didn't explore the process enough.' Whatever you do, on the movies you make and the movies you don't make, do your research. Even before I made a film, I studied every aspect, from the cinematography, the director, the producer. I didn't go to film school. But I knew movies. I wanted to understand why they worked and why they didn't work – the elements involved. It is a collaborative artform. Period."

Passing on what he has learned across his years in the business is important to Cruise. Essential, even. "I said to Glen, 'You need to understand who the people are who are involved and what kind of movies you want to make, and what kind of film this is. And see if you want to be part of it. We're going to get you a great role and it's going to be tailored for you. That's what we do. But I never chose a role because I thought, 'That's a great character.' I chose a role because I wanted the *movie*.'"

For Powell, it was a conversation he'll never forget. "*Top Gun* is literally the reason I became an actor," he says. "I first saw *Top Gun* when I was 10 years old, with my dad, on VHS. I feel like for most fathers and sons it's sort of a rite of passage. It's something that fathers hold onto, and, 'I cannot wait to show my son this.' And that's how it was with my dad. After seeing the movie, that's when I asked him to start taking me to acting classes. So, when I found out they were making a sequel, I even talked about it like I was already on the movie. It's the only movie I've ever been this passionate about. And it happened, which is great, because it almost didn't."

And to get to work with Tom, building out this character of Hangman, I mean, it's the kind of opportunity you never think you're going to get...

"Do you remember that movie *Last Action Hero*, where the kid literally gets to step into the movie that he has always wanted to do?" Powell says. "It feels like that."

### **WELCOME TO FLIGHT SCHOOL**

"Personally, I wouldn't let an actor walk my dog, let alone fly a plane," laughs Miles Teller. Alongside Teller and Powell as *Top Gun: Maverick*'s new generation of hotshot pilots are Greg Tarzan Davis as "Coyote", Jay Ellis as "Payback", Danny Ramirez as "Fanboy", Monica Barbaro as "Phoenix" and Lewis Pullman as "Bob".

In the Navy, call signs can come about in different ways. They can be a play on your last name or based on something that happened to you. "I know a guy named "Frogger" because he got hit by a car crossing the street," says Captain Brian 'Ferg' Ferguson, *Top Gun: Maverick*'s Naval Aviation Technical Advisor and Aerial Coordinator, by way of example. Barbaro, meanwhile, alludes to a heavy night out with her co-stars, and their amazement that she made it into work on time the next day, when explaining where her moniker "Phoenix" is derived from. "It was something about rising from the ashes," she remembers. Pullman, meanwhile, says his WSO (Weapons System Operator) is called Bob "because he's just kind of quiet and unassuming... Although eventually it becomes a lot more meaningful than that and his name stands for "Big Old Balls". So that's pretty cool."

In the original movie, there were no women in the cockpit. "Because, in the mid-'80s there were no female fighter pilots," says Kosinski. "In the late '80s and early '90s, that started to change. It was important to all of us that we reflect that in this film." "At the time of the first *Top Gun*, female pilots were not allowed to fly in combat," adds Barbaro. The United States Armed Forces lifted the combat ban in 1993. "A few years later they were taking off of carriers like the rest of the pilots. When I've spoken to the pilots, what they've said is that they do best when there's less of a divide between male and female, when they can really not be referred to as 'female pilots' but just 'pilots'. I noticed it in some of the [news reports about her casting]. It was, 'Monica Barbaro has been cast as a female pilot.' Well, yeah, she's a pilot. We don't have

to point out that she's female." Like the pilots she flew with on the movie, Barbaro hopes for a time when people don't feel the need to bring gender into job descriptions.

"What was so different now, more than 30 years after the first film, was that, thankfully, the world of naval aviation has changed, and those changes gave us a great opportunity to cast a wide net into the pool of talented actors," Bruckheimer states.

TOPGUN veteran Captain Ferguson echoes Bruckheimer's sentiments stating, "You know, twenty-five or thirty years ago, we all looked exactly the same. We all looked like we came out of the same machine, and now we are a cross-section of America. So you have people from every conceivable demographic. We have strength in diversity."

When it came to their job descriptions on this movie, the young cast were very much forewarned. "We were very upfront with all the actors we were talking to [in the casting process]," says Kosinski. "We said, 'Listen, this is *not* your typical acting job. You're going to be in Super Hornets flying at 600 miles an hour, pulling heavy Gs. Are you comfortable with flying?'" Greg Tarzan Davis, who actually learned to fly *and* swim on this production, laughs at the memory. "When I found out, I was thinking, 'Yes, this is gonna be so cool!'" he says. "And then, once I got in the plane, I thought, 'Oh, I don't want to do this anymore.' When people say, 'Wow. That's cool. You can scratch that off your bucket list,' I say, 'Well, it wasn't on my bucket list. I didn't think it was possible for me to fly in a military grade jet.'"

To train the young cast for what they would need to be able to achieve in *Top Gun: Maverick*, Cruise looked back to his own breakout movie, *Taps*, for which, in 1980, director Harold Becker and producer Stanley Jaffe put Cruise and his young co-stars Sean Penn, Timothy Hutton and co. through a bootcamp, to immerse them in their new military world. "On the first *Top Gun*," says Kosinski, "Tom was just kind of thrown into the F-14 cockpit. I think this time he wanted to make sure that the actors were more prepared than he was, particularly to pull it off in the way we wanted to. The planes have more technology in them now, but the emphasis in this film, as in the first, is on the pilot, not on the machine. It all comes down to the man or woman in the box. It's not a movie about fighter *planes*, it's a movie about fighter *pilots*."

As such, *Top Gun: Maverick*'s new recruits would quite literally have to earn their stripes, in a flight program designed specifically by Cruise himself. "On *Taps*, Becker and Jaffe created an environment from which we, as young actors, could develop and understand what the

film was,” says Cruise. “On *Top Gun: Maverick*, that was important too, of course. But I also needed my guys to be able to get in an actual F/A-18 and not just pass out.”

So, Cruise and Bruckheimer went to meet Vice Admiral DeWolfe H. Miller III, the Air Boss, Commander of Naval Air Forces, U.S. Pacific Fleet to pitch him their vision for the movie. “We went down and explained the story and said, ‘We’re going to shoot it live. And we’re going to hire the actors and train them, otherwise we’re not going to do it,’” says Cruise. “I said, ‘If you don’t want to do it, I understand. But this is the only way that I can do it.’ Other people were asking, ‘Can’t we just shoot it *this* way?’ I always said, ‘You can. I can’t.’ And the Navy said, ‘Yes, we will do that. We will take you [guys] up.’ It was us earning their trust, every step of the way. It was a partnership. I said, ‘I’m going to deliver this for you guys.’ Flying means a lot to me. The Navy means a lot to me. They are a different kind of spirit of an aviator – they just are. And I wanted to honor that. I wanted to honor that in the first *Top Gun* – that’s why I wanted to make that movie. And I wanted to honor that in this movie too.”

With Cruise, Kosinski and cinematographer Claudio Miranda having worked closely with the Navy to develop the cameras needed to shoot inside the cockpit, there was pressure from certain quarters to shoot the movie’s aerial sequences first. Cruise disagreed. “I said, ‘Guys, you don’t know what it’s like, shooting an aerial sequence. I tell you what: We’re going to do a test shoot, to find out what this is going to take.’ So, we did my first test of the low-level run [you see in the movie] with a real TOPGUN pilot. A *great* pilot, called “Walleye”. And the detail that it took and the level of shit that went wrong, from a cinematic point of view, was huge,” laughs Cruise. “But, the footage we got was *amazing*. We cut it together and I showed them the runs and also the problems, because I said, ‘Look, I can’t just stick an actor in an F/A-18. They’re not going to get what we need. Not only are they going to pass out, there are so many things happening in that airplane. You have cameras. You have lighting. You have performance. We have to create an entire support system for these guys, so that they get comfortable with it. They’ve got to be pulling Gs. They’ve got to be low. They have to have that experience in that aircraft. You see it. You feel it. You can’t fake it.’”

That support system was built around five months of intense flight training, Cruise creating a training program, writing the young cast bespoke daily targets and enlisting instructors to teach them how to first get comfortable with aviation, then to learn how to fly and then to be

able to sustain Gs. Each day they would have to fill out a detailed form about how their day went, so that Cruise could then adjust and tailor each individual program.

“You hear all this, that Tom Cruise is going to personally read these forms you’re filling in every day and you think, ‘There’s no way that Tom Cruise is really doing that – he’s got way more important shit to be doing,’” laughs Pullman. “And then you realize, ‘Oh my word, he actually is. He is giving me personal feedback on each day of my training.’”

The process was painstaking, but essential. “I read every single form, every single night,” says Cruise. “Because I knew that eventually I had to get them into an F/A-18.” The young wannabe pilots started out their flight training in single-engine Cessna 172 Skyhawks. Ramirez recalls that one of the first things he had to do on the movie was to sign a piece of paper confirming he was comfortable with flying. “Which was a little bit of a hiccup,” he laughs, “because I was absolutely *terrified* of flying. But I signed it anyway and by the end of the first couple of weeks I couldn’t wait for my next flight!”

From the Cessna it was into the Extra 300. “In the Extra it was more aerobatic, so they could start pulling Gs,” says Cruise. “Then I could get another plane close to them, so they could start feeling comfortable in the air while having other aircraft outside. It’s harder to sit in an airplane and pull Gs than if you’re flying it yourself. It’s like if you’re in a car, if you’re a passenger in a race car. The driver knows when they’re about to turn, even if it’s a split second. You’re able to anticipate when you’re driving. Your muscles, your breathing, every aspect of you is getting ready for that turn, for the onset of Gs. So, they [the cast] had to do whole aerobatic maneuvers where they weren’t flying. It’s exhausting and it can be disorienting, particularly in an F/A-18, with so much going on.”

It was G-forces that were behind the decision to shoot as much of *Top Gun: Maverick* as practically as possible, their effects on the human body being so clear to see that faking flying in these machines was just not an option. But that pursuit of authenticity meant that Cruise and his co-pilots would have to train their bodies to sustain extreme pressure.

“Right now, on earth, there’s one force of gravity on our bodies,” explains Cruise. “Two Gs is twice our body weight. Three is three times our body weight. So if someone who weighs 200 pounds is pulling two Gs, he’s feeling 400 pounds. In this movie, the actors are pulling seven-and-a-half or eight Gs, so if you weigh 200 pounds, that’s going to be 1,600 pounds of force crushing your body, forcing the blood out of your brain. Your vision closes in and it forces

all the blood down to your legs. You have to train so you don't go into something called G-LOC, where you go unconscious. You have to build up that tolerance so that you can actually sustain the levels of G-force and be able to fly. I wanted the audience to see and experience the effect of Gs. You can't [artificially] distort a face like that."

But if the process was challenging, it was also one that *Top Gun: Maverick's* young cast wouldn't change for a second. "Tom created the aviation program for us because what we're doing is very serious," says Teller. "Everybody thought it would be impossible. And I think that's what drove it. I think that when Tom hears that something is 'impossible' or can't be done, that's when he really gets to work."

For the penultimate stage of training, the new recruits found themselves upgraded again, into L-39 Albatross single-engine, high-performance jets, to get accustomed to the sensation of going through maneuvers in a jet. "They had to get used to filming in a different stage jet because every time I put them in an F/A-18 we had to be filming," explains Cruise. "The Navy isn't just available for us [whenever we feel like it]. So, it's not just budget. It's respect for the pilots and the people. I knew that every time those guys were up there [in an F/A-18], I had to get the footage. I said to the Navy, 'I'm going to have my guys ready.'"

Being ready, of course, doesn't just mean being able to sit in a jet and not pass out or puke. It means being able to do both of those things and *then being able to act*, while a rotating roster of real Navy daredevils pilot you through a series of jaw-dropping maneuvers.

And that final step up into the F/A-18s genuinely was everything the actors had hoped for, the real Navy pilots taking them on the ride of their lives as they nailed a series of sequences that have to be seen to be believed. "The intensity is so much more palpable in one of those planes," says Barbaro. "In our first flight there were no cameras. It was just to experience what it was like, with a little bit of BFM [basic fighter maneuvers] and some low-level maneuvers, and what that feels like on the body at the end of the flight. Realizing at that moment that these were the conditions [in which] we would also have to be acting and speaking lines and turning cameras on and off and checking our make-up, fixing our props, and communicating with our pilot, that's when I started to realize exactly how much the training helped us."

Or, as Pullman puts it: "It's hard to translate the feeling of what it's like to fly in an F/A-18. But it's like sitting on a rocket, or being strapped to a dragon. One of the favorite analogies I've heard from TOPGUN pilots is that they 'strap on' the plane, because they are in such control

and really are the masters of these machines and understand them inside and out. So, for them, in strapping it on they are grounding the source of power.”

“Nothing bonds a cast together more than collective suffering,” laughs Teller. “I think, when you’re going through something and you know how tough it is yourself, and you look to the left of you and to the right of you and you see that person going through it, it kind of pushes you a little harder and further than you would normally go. It’s so unique for us that we will only be able to talk about this with each other for the rest of our lives.”

“I’m so proud of what all these guys achieved,” says Cruise. “You have to think, if they go flying for 45 minutes, I have just 20 minutes with the actor. And these guys had all made other movies, but they hadn’t made anything like *this* before. I had to show them editing because they had to understand the footage that I needed. Because they don’t have a director up there. No-one’s talking to them. They had their lines written down on a piece of paper and there were so many things they had to do up there. They had to work with the pilot. They had to understand lighting. We had geography they had to match in the shot.”

And that geography really is something to behold, Cruise and his co-stars flying some of the most challenging and picturesque courses in America, including Rainbow Canyon, on the western edges of Death Valley National Park, and Washington’s Cascade Mountains, as well as Cruise actually launching off the deck of the USS Theodore Roosevelt, the aircraft carrier that the Navy call “The Big Stick” thanks to the famous quote from the President it’s named after.

“Shooting [on the Roosevelt] was some of the most incredible and challenging filming I’ve ever done,” says Kosinski. “It’s an intense work environment but the footage we got there is spectacular. We were able to launch Tom off the catapult in an F/A-18 and get it all in camera. He did four or five launches. No one’s ever done that in a movie before – it’s something only Naval Aviators get to do. And not only a catapult launch, but catching the wire on the landing, all of which you see in the film. It was a remarkable experience. Grueling physically, and tough for the crew, but the footage we got – you just can’t fake. On a small piece of real estate, you’ve got fighter jets, at full afterburner, being launched off one end and trapped on the other. It’s a ballet of machinery to watch it in action. You’re just in awe of what’s happening.”

Like a ballet, it’s a precise process, but a muscular one, too. “It was about exploring the visual language,” says Cruise of the entire aerial sequence methodology. “I had to understand the visual language inside the cockpit and outside the cockpit, and then communicate that visual

language to the pilots and to the actors. Each shot was so specific – what is it communicating? I'd say to them [the actors]: 'I need you to look right here, then look away so that I can cut to another jet and then cut back. And when you look back, don't look too low – I need you to look right here, right at that mark, when the sun is right here, over that particular point.' And I also had to get them used to the Gs, and some of the actors never did. They were always vomiting. Sometimes they'd say 'I vomited. I'm embarrassed.' And I'd tell them, 'Don't be embarrassed. Chuck Yeager [the legendary first pilot to break the sound barrier, portrayed by Sam Shepard in 1983's *The Right Stuff*] was vomiting for a month before he got through it. And you're getting the footage. Thank you. I know it's painful, vomiting. And you don't want to vomit. And the maneuvers we're doing are heavier, more condensed ACM [Air Combat Maneuvers] than a lot of these pilots would ever do in this time period.' Heavy, *heavy* Gs we were pulling – non-stop, one after the other. It is brutal on your body."

Briefings, Cruise stresses, were critical. "A briefing for a flight is several hours – you're briefing every single maneuver," he says. "It's a briefing on temperature, location, light. We study what time we need to be out there and what position in space we need to be. When they're in the plane, the actors have to get the shots. They can't go up and come back and the cameras aren't turned on, or they didn't do their make-up right, or they didn't get the line. They have to get it. It also made them a team. I said to them, 'When it's your time and you're flying, I want you to run the meeting. I will sit at the table, but you're running it – it's your flight, so you have to run it with your pilot. You know how to do it. Now, brief the flight.' They took over for themselves – and owned it. I hope that what they walk away with is that they own their own lives and their own careers. To never compromise their own integrity. You realize that, for an artist, the way they shine most is when they're owning it themselves, not being a robot, doing what I'm telling them to do. I think that harkens back [for me] to *Taps* and what Harold Becker and Stanley Jaffe did. They got talented people and recognized their talent and then tried to put them in an environment where they would grow."

These briefings were always attended by Cruise and the actors going aloft, but also by Kosinski, director of photography Claudio Miranda, all the aerial departments, executive producer Tommy Harper and the film's editor, Eddie Hamilton. "Having the editor in the briefs and debriefs meant Eddie had an understanding of what we were trying to achieve every day," explains Kosinski. "We are generating so much footage. We've got six cameras on each flight."

We're doing four to six flights a day, and often we'll have a ground-to-air unit shooting simultaneously, so [this way] when the footage comes in at night, he's got a sense of what it is he's looking at, and can start to organize everything in a way that makes sense. There were days where I had 27 cameras running simultaneously, so it was essential to have him there." Or, as Harper puts it: "For this one movie, we basically had as much footage as the three *Lord Of The Rings* movies had collectively."

Captain Brian "Ferg" Ferguson, the TOPGUN veteran who was the Air Boss' representative on *Top Gun: Maverick* and served as the film's Naval Aviation Technical Advisor and Aerial Coordinator, is still astonished at the scale of what the whole team has achieved. "It was a challenge and a steep learning curve," he says. "You have these two massive organizations. You have this enormous scale production company with global movie stars trying to recreate an iconic film. And then you have Naval Aviation, with all its aircraft, ships, personnel and bases. About a billion moving parts collectively between them. And we had to find a way to seamlessly integrate these two robust entities with a lot of strings involved at no burden to the American taxpayer."

### **THE EVOLUTION OF CRUISE**

It was the director of *Tootsie* who first taught Tom Cruise to fly. The legendary double-Oscar-winner Sydney Pollack had first met the star when he was just 18. Cruise, off the back of his success on *Taps*, had recently hired talent agency CAA, and began embarking on a series of meetings with their roster of writers and directors.

"Every film I chose [in my career] was a development in my education," Cruise says. "Each time, studying and learning. People say to me, 'You chose well with directors.' But it wasn't just directors – it was the overall projects that I was interested in. That director with that particular material. I never felt that thing of, 'I *must* make this movie' or, 'I *have* to do this.'

"The whole thing with movies is, and my whole purpose always was, to entertain. Also, I wanted to make a wide range of films, from fantasy to action to musicals to dramas, but to make each one to evaluate and understand that it's a different way to tell a story. How do you do it? I was looking at [Alan J.] Pakula with *Klute*, [cinematographer] Gordon Willis, right there at the time with the *Godfathers*. Those guys were *on fire* in terms of storytelling. The French influence

was coming up into American cinema, but it still had an American structural sensibility in storytelling. These are the things that always interested me. So, I met with Scorsese and Coppola. All those guys. The important thing to me was *absorbing* all of this. The first time I met Sydney Pollack, I'd seen all his movies and I just interviewed him. Not as a writer, but as an actor. And we talked about aviation because he knew about my passion for flying, and we became friends."

Flash forward 13 years and the friends found the movie they wanted to make together: *The Firm*, their adaptation of the John Grisham bestseller. "I'd worked so much, seven days a week [by the time we made *The Firm*] that I'd never had any time to learn how to fly," remembers Cruise. "So, at the end of the movie, Sydney gives me a pack [of flying lessons] and says, 'You gotta learn how to fly now, or you're never gonna do it. I know it's one of your passions – you gotta go do it. It's gonna take you *forever* to do this...'"

And this is where the story turns quintessentially Tom Cruise. "So, six weeks later, I took Sydney to dinner..." Cruise laughs. "And he said, 'You fucker! You did it [learned to fly] this fast?' I said, 'Yeah, but it was *really* hard.' He just said, 'Fuck you.'"

So then it all became about the IFR. "It was a really fun game between us," says Cruise. "Sydney said, 'The IFR [Instrument Flight Rules], which is your next rating, that took me years, it's gonna take you years.' So, a little while later, I took him to dinner... And we're eating and then at the end I say, 'I'm going to pay the bill' and I opened my wallet and put it on the table as I got my cash out, and he looked down at my wallet and there was my IFR license in it. He said, 'You fucker! What are you *doing*?! You fucker!'" Cruise laughs at the memory. "I said, 'What's the deal, Sydney? You've just been fucking around, taking years. I don't have years, man.'"

But while we can thank Pollack for giving Cruise the tools to fly, the man who fanned the flames in the first place was Jerry Bruckheimer. While Cruise had been busily absorbing knowledge, moving from *Taps* to *The Outsiders* (Cruise later turning down Coppola for *Rumblefish* in favor of his first lead, in *Risky Business*) to *Losin' It* with Curtis Hanson, Bruckheimer and his late producing partner, Don Simpson, were fast establishing themselves as the hottest outfit in town.

Fresh off *Flashdance* and *Beverly Hills Cop*, Simpson and Bruckheimer had found the idea for the movie that would send their partnership stratospheric in the May 1983 issue of *California* magazine. The article, titled 'Top Guns' was written by Ehud Yonay and told the story of an F-14 crew going through TOPGUN class. And it was illustrated with stunning aerial

photography from former TOPGUN instructor Chuck “Heater” Heatley. “I thought, ‘Whoa! This is like *Star Wars*, for real.’ I threw the magazine on Don’s desk and said, ‘We’ve got to get this story,’” says Bruckheimer.

By this point, Cruise was making *Legend*, with Ridley Scott, drawn in by the opportunity to work with “a true master of design and lighting and shots” and to travel. “I wanted to see the world,” Cruise says. “For me to work with Ridley Scott, at Pinewood, in England, meant a lot to me. It was the first time I was overseas and I wanted to see how a British crew worked. It was a real privilege to go there.”

It was also the first time that Cruise had worked with a member of the Scott family. “And Ridley said, ‘You’ve got to meet my brother, Tony.’ At this point, Tony had done *The Hunger* and you could see he was a true visionary artist,” says Cruise. “So, I read the script [for *Top Gun*] went to LA to meet with Tony and saw his whole design. I’d spent over a year with his brother, and there’s Tony. And Tony is definitely like the spirited younger brother. And he had this wonderful book [on how the movie was going to look]. And there’s Don and Jerry, in their office, and I just saw – cinematically – what they were going to do. But the script wasn’t great. It didn’t work. There was no real character with Maverick. It was just kind of a *world*.”

With Cruise always Scott and the producers’ original choice, there was a lot riding on the meeting. But here’s what they didn’t know: They were very much on Cruise’s hitlist too. “I’d been following Jerry and Don. They were *the* hot producers,” remembers Cruise. “And not just hot but *inventive* producers. And when you met them, you just *knew*. So, we started talking about this *Top Gun* script. And I said, ‘Look, for me, this is a competition film. It’s a film about competition, it’s a film about honor, it’s a film about friendship, it’s about sacrifice and stakes and mistakes, and owning those mistakes.’

“After the meeting, I had to fly to New York. I said to my agent, who had come to pick me up, in a white limo... I mean, it was 1984... Anyway, we drove and I said, ‘I’m going to make this movie, but don’t tell them. Here are the things that I need for this deal: I’m going to develop the script with them for a month. I also want to be in every producerial meeting – that’s got to be a part of it. I want to see how they work, from top to bottom. And I want to fly with the Blue Angels.’”

The Blue Angels are the Navy flight exhibition team that was founded in 1946 and have been wowing crowds across the US ever since. They're also the only real point of contention in the story as to when Tom Cruise finally said yes to *Top Gun*.

Ask Bruckheimer and he'll tell you that he did indeed arrange for Cruise to fly with the Blue Angels, down in Miramar, California. He'll also tell you that Cruise turned up at the runway on a motorcycle, his long hair from *Legend* billowing freely in the breeze, and the Navy aviators took one look at this Hollywood "hippie" and vowed to give him a proper roller coaster of a ride. And that Cruise, having been flipped about at four to five Gs, finally landed, walked to a nearby phone booth, called Bruckheimer and told him, "I'm in." At least, that's what *Bruckheimer* says.

"Jerry says that, but that's not actually what happened," laughs Cruise when this legendary story is put to him. "I did have the long hair, but the pilots weren't busting my balls. They were very interested in how passionate I was about aviation. It was a dream of mine to fly with the Blue Angels! It was a great flight. For the first time I felt my paces with G-force. You can read about G-force, but you don't understand it until you go through it. And it was a great ride. They let me do what I wanted to do – and I just kept going [to about five Gs]. And what Jerry doesn't know, because I kept them on the hook for months about whether I was going to commit to the movie or not, was that I knew I was going to. I just needed to see how the script was going to change and I wanted that part of my contract with the studio was that I would fly in the F-14. So, it was put in the contract that they had to film me in the F-14."

The deal was done. And it was one that proved pivotal for all concerned. For Cruise, it marked a key part of his progression, learning the producorial ropes from – appropriately, given the movie's subject matter – the best of the best. In some ways, he still marvels at how he got away with it. "I was a kid, so it was a bit like, 'Who do you think you are? Outrageous!' But, to Don and Jerry and Tony's credit, they were incredibly generous to me and welcomed me into the process. Very much from the beginning. Every single meeting. It was the next phase for me," he says now.

Cruise embraced that next phase with typical dedication, and Simpson, Bruckheimer and Scott were true to their word, welcoming him into the process across the board. "My focus in terms of *Top Gun*," says Cruise, "was expansive." From script structure and "story engineering"

to lighting to sets to wardrobe to lenses to Scott's handmade filters, colors and composition, Cruise drank it in. "I went in," he says, "and I would just listen."

While his co-stars played in the limelight, Cruise stayed focused. "When I was doing *Top Gun*," he says, "all those guys, they had a different experience than I did. I was incredibly excited, but it didn't change my process. While most people were out at parties, I was home studying. I was training. I was *working*."

### **FEELING THE NEED**

Where do you begin, when you're thinking about making a sequel to a movie so iconic that it's still part of pop culture, 36 years after it was first released? Sometimes, it turns out, the answer has been in front of you all along.

"When we first started working on this [sequel], I said to Tony, 'We gotta watch *Top Gun*. You, me and Jerry are gonna watch the first movie,'" says Cruise. "We all think we know what *Top Gun* is. Let's watch it together. We have to go back and look at it. To *feel* it."

This, of course, was back in 2010, two years before Tony Scott tragically passed away, on August 19, 2012. But that first screening, with those three original creatives sat there together in the dark, nevertheless remains a formative moment in what *Top Gun: Maverick* would become, that morning's viewing still embedded in its DNA.

"I wanted us to watch the movie together because people think they know what *Top Gun* is. But they don't understand the mechanisms of what the movie *really* is," says Cruise. "Everyone goes, 'Oh my god! It's such an entertaining movie!' And I say, 'Yes, it is. But this guy [Maverick] lost his father, was betrayed and outcast, didn't make it to the Naval Academy. His friend dies. He's overly aggressive. He barely made it to TOPGUN. There is *serious drama* going underneath this film. It has great music and it's entertaining, but Maverick... He's not a team player. He's out there to beat Iceman and to beat everyone else. He's out there to beat *The Navy*.' It's funny, [over the years] people would come in and they'd start pitching these ideas [for a sequel] and I'd say: 'It's not *Top Gun*.'"

After the screening, Cruise, Bruckheimer and Scott, who had already worked together again on a second collaboration, *Days Of Thunder*, in 1990, had a debrief. "We watched the movie and felt it as an audience, because we hadn't watched it since it had been released," says

Cruise. “Since the premiere, we had not all sat in a movie theater together and watched it. Not since 1986. So it was a wonderful moment of us being able to look at it and talk about it, that morning. It took us back, you know? What Don and Jerry and Tony... It was the four of us, really. That was the sauce in that movie. That collision of people. And visually, what Tony accomplished! Tony, his spirit, just as a human being. The energy he brought to *Top Gun*. That understanding. That storytelling. That vibrancy.”

Bruckheimer agrees. “We were determined,” he says, “that if we were to make a new *Top Gun* film, it would have to live up to what Tony created. Like the TOPGUN pilots, Tony was the best of the best. We had a lot to live up to.” For Kosinski, meanwhile, when he came on board it would become about creating something that could stand proudly side by side with the Scott original. “His shoes are impossible to fill,” Kosinski says.

For M<sup>c</sup>Quarrie, the legendary status of that original movie was both a help and a hindrance. “One of the things that we kept encountering,” M<sup>c</sup>Quarrie says of the first discussions after he came on board around 2015, “was the power of the original movie and what the original movie had become in people’s minds. Not only what it was but what it had *become*.”

He too remembers later re-watching *Top Gun*, sat between Cruise and Bruckheimer. “I was in a very unique position during that screening,” M<sup>c</sup>Quarrie laughs, “with the greatest living DVD commentary you’ve ever had, with Tom and Jerry talking over me about scenes and the day they had shot them. It was the greatest trip down memory lane, but it was also a way to recontextualize our impression of the movie – and allow ourselves to make something new. During the writing of the film and also during the shooting and editing of the film, we found ourselves, time and again, leaning towards recreating moments from the [original] film, as opposed to creating new ground. And we found, time and again, that the more we let go of the original movie and went in our own direction, the film became much more true, and there really was the possibility to make something that stood alone. It’s very important to Tom and I, whenever we make a film, whether we’re making *Mission: Impossible* or anything else, that you didn’t have to see the original movie to enjoy this one. It was very important to us that you were never taken out of the film and forced to remember something or call back upon the other movie. There’s a great deal of nostalgia in this movie, a lot of mirrors and a lot of reflections to the past. But this film is very much its own story.”

In other words, they knew the tone they wanted to hit. But that didn't mean that finding it was easy. "It was a balance," is how Cruise describes finding the right execution. "Having now made sequels, with the *Mission: Impossible* movies, helped me to really understand how to make *Top Gun: Maverick*. People had asked for this sequel for years. Kept asking and asking. But *Mission* was the first time where I thought, 'You know, if I can do sequels and I can learn something and I can play in this kind of format, as a producer and an artist... *Maybe*.'

"Also at this point, I realized that there was a challenge to be communicating with an audience over several films. There's an interesting dialogue I can have with an audience, a progression in terms of story. And it allows the studio room to allow me to push certain areas, cinematically. I produced the first *Mission: Impossible* and was really proud of it. And after doing three of them I sat back and evaluated all three. And that's when I was able to really *start*. Then came *Ghost Protocol*. Then *Rogue Nation*. Then *Fallout* and these next ones [that we're working on now]. With a *Top Gun* sequel, the studio wanted it and audiences said they wanted it, but there needed to be the same kind of progression in terms of audience experience. In 1986 [after the original movie was released], I wasn't interested in doing sequels. I felt I'd done *Top Gun*. But having made sequels, with *Mission*, helped me to really understand how to approach *Top Gun: Maverick*. So, I laid down a template. I said, 'It's got to be nostalgic. He's gotta be Maverick. But he's older, you know?' I wanted to give the audience *Top Gun*, but the next evolution of that."

All of which meant a complete reversal of how most movies are made. "Every day we'd let go of the things we thought the movie needed to be," is how McQuarrie describes his and Cruise's early process on the screenplay.

"You've got to be willing to put something there [on paper], to evaluate it emotionally. And then you've got to be willing to take it away," agrees Cruise. "You can't be stuck on an idea. I'll give you an example: There was a scene [in an old version of the screenplay] where I had to wear the leather jacket [from the original movie]. I knew it didn't work.' I called McQ. I said, 'I know I need nostalgia in this scene, but I don't know how to find it in an organic way. I'm wearing the jacket and it's just not right. I want the jacket, but not in this scene.' He said, 'Don't wear the jacket.' I said, 'Fuck, but I gotta wear the jacket.' He said, 'We'll find another way.'

“So, there were a lot of little things throughout the movie that we removed. Things we thought we needed. We kept pulling things out, but we also kept putting things in, too,” Cruise continues. “I wanted the film to have a nostalgia and I knew how I wanted to begin the movie. I knew *exactly* how I wanted to open it because I wanted to tell the audience, ‘You’re going to be safe. It’s going to be okay. I’m going to give you this right now, because I know you’ve been waiting a long time. And here it is.’ And we found it there, that balance. That’s the opening of the movie and this is the movie I wanted to make.”

Sometimes the temptation to drift too far into nostalgic waters was high. Bruckheimer talks of his time on this movie as being akin to seeing an old friend you haven’t seen for a while, enjoying just being with them again. But he also recognizes that, firstly, a good sequel always needs to look forwards as well as back, and that – crucially – if you try and manufacture nostalgia for nostalgia’s sake, it will just feel false.

“You need to feel nostalgia, but you have to find it within what the story is,” agrees Cruise. “McQ and I talked about it, when we were making *Fallout*, actually. I said, ‘I think we’ve got the story.’ It wasn’t that we had the whole story – it was the Rooster/Maverick relationship. That was it. There’s the story. And building that from there with the Penny character and the other characters and the world. You know, what is that world, today? It really evolved from that. I said to the studio, ‘Okay, you got it. Here’s the deal. Know what you’re getting in for.’ And I said to the actors, ‘Here’s how we’re going to make it. And we’re going to make it till it works.’ Every film I make is a culmination of everything I’ve learned. Every film is that next phase. I don’t stop pushing. I know there are no absolutes. Perfection is unobtainable. It’s *unobtainable*. And that’s okay. But that doesn’t mean we don’t go for it.”

Even so, *Top Gun: Maverick* means more than all that to Cruise. Maybe more than any other movie so far. “To produce this with Jerry was in many ways full circle for me,” he says. “I didn’t have a producer credit on *Top Gun*, but it was my first real sitting in and observing. My first producorial event was with *Top Gun*. I don’t know how else to describe it, you know, because I didn’t produce *Top Gun*. But it was my education. I didn’t discuss what I was doing with people, didn’t talk about it in the press, didn’t talk about it with anyone, ever. I just did it.”

And then there’s Tony. All these years later, having made the first movie with Cruise and Bruckheimer in the early ‘80s, and then sat in that screening room to watch it again in 2010, with

a view to making a follow-up, what would Tony Scott make of *Top Gun: Maverick*? As it happens, that's a question its makers have thought about a lot. And their answer is unanimous. "He'd love it," says Cruise.

### **THE MISSION IS THE MOVIES**

Cameron Crowe tells a story about Tom Cruise that pretty much sums up his attitude to cinema. It comes from around the time of *Jerry Maguire*, the 1996 classic that saw them both nominated for Oscars. Specifically, the story centers around the boy who was originally cast in the role of Ray Boyd, the son of Renee Zellweger's Dorothy. Later, five-year-old Jonathan Lipnicki would take the role over and then win the world over with his wide-eyed delivery of lines like, "Did you know the human head weighs eight pounds?" But for the boy originally cast as Ray, it wasn't to be. As Crowe puts it, that first boy "ran out of gas" in his time on the set and asked to leave the production.

These things happen, and fairly often. But what Cruise did next, says Crowe, really doesn't. It's also, according to Crowe, acutely telling about how much Tom Cruise loves the movies, and wants everyone else to love them too. Concerned for his welfare, Cruise called the kid's family, asking to speak with him, to make sure that his time on a movie set hadn't left any scars.

"I wanted him to not feel bad that it wasn't his purpose to do it," Cruise says now. "It wasn't his purpose. I said to him, 'What do you want to do?' And he said, 'I'd like to go to Disneyland.' So, I sent him and his family." As Crowe later told *Vanity Fair*: "Tom said [to me], 'I just didn't want that first actor to go to the movies, look at the screen and think he'd failed.' He said, 'I wanted him to love movies, his entire life.'"

Twenty-five years later, Cruise's passion for the medium remains undiminished. "You know, I know the edit when I'm shooting something. I'll play the movie as we go along, in my mind, because I know the lenses and the shots and everything as we're going along," says Cruise. "So, I'll do different takes for different performances. As we're shooting, I'll create different levels. 'If the edit goes this way, I know [the editor] is going to need this shot. If the edit goes this way, he's going to need...' You've got to feel the story."

That knowledge and passion is also why Cruise fights so hard to preserve the medium, in whatever ways he can. He sees his job like this: “I’m going to make you [the audience] sit in that chair, and I’m going to make you nervous. And then I’m going to make you laugh. And you and I are having a conversation while you’re watching that movie.” But if that sounds simple, it rarely is. Not least when you’ve shot a movie and then a global pandemic tries to stop you from finishing it.

“It was intense. There have been many moments in my life when other people have said, ‘It can’t be done.’ Many, many, many times. And there are times when you sit there and go, ‘Maybe it can’t be done. But I’m going to try. I’ve got to figure it out.’”

That’s why, says Bruckheimer, that Cruise is where he is, and why he’s been there for so long. “It’s no accident that Tom is one of the biggest movie stars in the world. If not *the* biggest,” says Bruckheimer. “The reason his movies do so well and are so good is because he puts so much time and energy and commitment into them.” You get what you give.

“I very much believe that,” says Cruise. “I realize that on the first *Top Gun*, there were significant things that were valuable to me, in terms of the time people gave to me and the things that I did. And now, on *Top Gun: Maverick* and beyond, there are things I want to share with other people, if they want it. [Young actors] ask me, ‘How did you do it? What did you do?’ Well, this is what happened. This is what I did. Always for me, I saw when I was growing up there were people who were very generous – and some who weren’t. The ones who weren’t didn’t want you to know what they knew because they had created a mystique around it, so they could have power. To keep you down. Those people don’t want you to know what happens behind closed doors. It’s a point of control. And I don’t feel that way. I want everyone to know everything. I want people to be empowered, to make the movies the best they can be. Like Jerry was with me.”

If you ask Cruise’s co-stars on *Top Gun: Maverick*, they’ll all tell you he has very much succeeded in that mission, that what he’s given them is a belief in their abilities and a desire to be as generous with them as he has been and Bruckheimer was to him, all those years ago.

“Working with Tom Cruise is better than you can ever imagine,” says Powell. “A lot of times when you’re in the presence of movie stars, they make sure to remind you that they’re a movie star. Tom is exactly the opposite. He’s a guy that immediately wants to take down barriers, talk story, talk emotion, teach, be a mentor, be a friend. He looks at everyone as an

equal and a partner and an ensemble. He'll tell you, 'Hey, it's not going to be easy. It's going to be tough. We may not get it on the first shot, but we're going to work our butts off to make sure that this movie is something that matches or betters the first one.' His entire life is built around making sure he can deliver something that no one has ever done before. It's an immense amount of pressure he puts on himself to make sure everyone gets the movie they've been waiting 36 years for."

McQuarrie remembers the pressure, too. "It's not often that you are called upon to create a sequel for a film as culturally iconic and era-defining as a film like *Top Gun*," he says. "And I made a decision very early on not to try. I wasn't interested in trying to recreate or recapture any of the magic of the original film, so much of which had to do with the time in which it was released, the music that was popular in the day, the technology that was there, and who Tom Cruise was as an actor and a star compared to who he is now. More than anything, I just wanted to be part of a really good story. And that's all Tom and I focused on from the very moment that I came on board. We were challenged every day to not focus on the original film, to not be daunted by it or overwhelmed by it. Much in the [same] way that Goose is a spirit that looms over *Maverick*, the original *Top Gun* was a spirit looming over us. We knew that we owed fans of that film a film that was just as good, a film that had to stand alone."

For Cruise, it all goes back to his breakout movie, *Taps*. "I see myself as a support system and that it's my job to help them [the actors]. To help them understand what kind of film we're trying to make. What we're trying to accomplish. Those are the things I have that harken back to *Taps*. One day on that movie, I went into town and shaved my head," Cruise laughs. "I had longer hair, but I'd decided to shave my head, for my character. And I just showed up on the parade ground. I had my cap on, and there's [director] Harold Becker and we're rehearsing the whole parade ground thing. And he says, 'Okay, Cruise, go stand over there...' And I took my hat off and he shouted, '*Cruise!*' I said, 'Yes sir!' I was raised in the South, so everything was 'Yes sir, no sir/ Yes ma'am, no ma'am.' He said, 'Cruise! Whatever happened to your hair?' I said, 'I shaved my head, sir. This is my character.' He had to sit me down and explain: 'Cruise, I'm the director. There's also a producer. It's okay if you want to cut your hair, but you've got to ask someone!'

"I mean, I didn't know!" Cruise laughs. "There was so much going through my head on that movie. I was trying to understand *everything* about cinema and storytelling. At night I'd lay

there in bed, thinking, ‘If I could just know it *all!*’ I was so tense. I was sleepless, staring at the ceiling...” He chuckles at the memories. “And I just went, ‘What am I *doing?*’ I was literally there, in bed, and I started laughing. I said to myself, ‘All I can do is the best I can do. That’s it. That’s *it*. I know I want to do this for the rest of my life. So don’t take it for granted. But just do the best you can do, man. And stay focused on it.’”

Just as the new recruits of *Top Gun: Maverick* have learned from Cruise, when he was their age he was also inspired by the stories of Stanley Jaffe, the *Taps* producer who came from generations of filmmakers. “I’d hear all those stories,” says Cruise. “So I was interested in the history of cinema, the origins of cinema, *prior* to cinema – vaudeville. What were the different movements in cinema and storytelling? How did Charlie Chaplin develop? Harold Lloyd?” Seen through the Chaplin and Lloyd lenses in particular, Cruise’s much celebrated pursuit of authenticity in terms of doing his own stunts, capturing as much in-camera as possible, finding “a unique kind of staging” can be seen in a new light, born of a desire to grow the artform.

“I’ve always been a physical actor, have always been developing a physical language. But now I’m also an aerobatic pilot,” Cruise says. “I fly warbirds. The P-51 in this movie is mine, the Red Tail [the period silver plane Cruise flies Connelly in, in *Top Gun: Maverick*]. And I have done more aerial sequences than any other actor, from *Top Gun* to *American Made* [in which Cruise played infamous drug-running pilot Barry Seal] to *Fallout* [that saw him put that helicopter into a controlled spin and perform the first ever on-screen High Altitude Low Open, or HALO, skydive out the back of that C-17].

“On all of those movies,” he reveals, “I’ve worked on developing an aerial language – how to do it visually and from a production standpoint. While I was doing *Fallout* and *American Made*, I was always looking towards [this] *Top Gun*. Even though I hadn’t yet committed to it, I was already developing a visual language of what we could do. I was always developing and studying the rigs. I was interested in making those movies anyway, of course, but it was also a progression in storytelling, in understanding how to do it, from a technical standpoint and a story standpoint. I don’t make a movie just to make a movie. And I’ve been that way my whole life.”

Aged just four years old, Tom Cruise had a dream. “I grew up watching the space race,” he says. “I grew up wanting to fly these jets. Since I was a little kid, I wanted to be an astronaut, I wanted to be an aviator.” It was recently announced that Cruise will soon reteam with his *Edge Of Tomorrow* and *American Made* director Doug Liman, and collaborate with both Elon Musk

and NASA, on a currently untitled movie that will be filmed in Space. But, for now, there are other things that need to be seen to be believed, in *Top Gun: Maverick*.

Astronaut. Aviator. Pioneer. Not bad for a four-year-old turned 59. “It’s unbelievable, it really is,” Cruise says, sincerely. “I’m living my dreams.”

But is this really the end for Maverick? There’s a line in *Top Gun: Maverick* that plays with that very question. Appropriately, it’s said by the man himself, in a scene in which he’s sat behind the controls of a state-of-the-art flying machine, on the runway and about to launch off into a voyage that no man has ever dared embark on before. “Come on sweetheart,” Maverick whispers to the plane. “One last ride...”

“What does that line mean? ‘One last ride?’” laughs Cruise, when it’s suggested it might be loaded with subtext as to whether, or not, *Top Gun: Maverick* is this beloved character’s last hurrah. “I am *not* going to define that for you. People can and will take that line however they want.” Cruise smiles. “And that’s exactly how it should be.”

## ABOUT THE CAST

**TOM CRUISE (Capt. Pete “Maverick” Mitchell / Produced By)** is a global cultural icon who has made an immeasurable impact on cinema by creating some of the most memorable characters of all time. Having achieved extraordinary success as an actor, producer and philanthropist in a career spanning over five decades, Cruise is a three-time Oscar® nominee whose films have earned over \$10 billion in worldwide box office—an incomparable accomplishment

Fueled by a lifetime goal to entertain audiences around the world, Cruise has worked over the last 40 years to produce and star in movies that stand the test of time. As a result, he has starred in numerous legendary films such as *Top Gun*, *Jerry Maguire*, *Risky Business*, *Minority Report*, *Interview with the Vampire*, *A Few Good Men*, *The Firm*, *Rain Man*, *Collateral*, *The Last Samurai*, *Edge of Tomorrow*, *Born on the Fourth of July*, *The Color of Money*, and the *Mission: Impossible* series, among many others. Dialogue and scenes from Cruise’s films are part of the fabric of global culture and are referred to and quoted by generations of worldwide fans daily.

A consummate filmmaker involved in all aspects of production, Cruise not only has proven his versatility with the films and roles he chooses, but he has also impacted the evolution of cinema as he collaborates and develops new ways to capture what he has dreamed up for the big screen – always in service of story - always putting the audience’s experience first. Cruise has made 43 films, contributing in a producing role on many of them, and working with a remarkable list of celebrated film directors including Francis Ford Coppola, Ridley Scott, Tony Scott, Martin Scorsese, Barry Levinson, Oliver Stone, Ron Howard, Rob Reiner, Sydney Pollack, Neil Jordan, Brian De Palma, Cameron Crowe, Stanley Kubrick, Paul Thomas Anderson, Ed Zwick, Steven Spielberg, Michael Mann, J.J. Abrams, Robert Redford, Brad Bird, Doug Liman, Joe Kosinski and Christopher McQuarrie.

Cruise received Academy Award® nominations for Best Actor for *Born on the Fourth of July* and *Jerry Maguire* and was a Best Supporting Actor nominee for *Magnolia*. Cruise has also earned acting nominations and awards from BAFTA, the Screen Actors Guild, the Chicago Film Critics Association and the National Board of Review.

Released in July 2018, *Mission: Impossible – Fallout* was one of the biggest hits of the actor’s career, grossing nearly \$800 million worldwide. Combined, the *Mission: Impossible* franchise has brought in nearly \$5 billion since Cruise conceived the idea for a film adaptation of the classic television series and produced the first in 1996.

Twenty of Cruise’s films have grossed over \$100 million domestically, and a record 24 have made more than \$200 million globally. His last film, *Mission: Impossible – Fallout* has taken in over \$765 million worldwide becoming Cruise’s most successful film to date and his fourth film to gross over \$200 million in the United States alone. *Top Gun: Maverick* opens this Spring and *Mission Impossible 7* and *8* are currently in production. Cruise’s previous films include the critically acclaimed *American Made*, *The Mummy*, *Oblivion* and the suspense thriller *Jack Reacher*, which earned \$218 million worldwide. Prior to that, he made a memorable appearance in Ben Stiller’s comedy smash *Tropic Thunder*, as the foul-mouthed Hollywood movie mogul Les Grossman. This performance, based on a character Cruise created, earned him praise from critics and audiences once they realized it was him!

Cruise has been honored with tributes ranging from Harvard’s Hasty Pudding Man of the Year Award to the John Huston Award from the Artists Rights Foundation, for exhibiting outstanding service on behalf of artists rights and the American Cinematheque Award for Distinguished Achievement in Film. In addition to his artistic contributions, Cruise has used his professional success as a vehicle for positive change, becoming an international advocate, activist and philanthropist in the fields of health, education and human rights. He has been honored by the Mentor LA organization for his work on behalf of the children of Los Angeles and around the world. In 2011 Cruise received the Simon Wiesenthal Humanitarian Award, its highest honor for his longtime support of the center’s Museum of Tolerance. The following year he received the Entertainment Icon Award from the Friars Club, the group’s most distinguished citation, which pays “tribute to someone whose accomplishments transcend the entertainment industry by positively redefining the very culture we live in.” He is the fourth artist to receive this honor after Douglas Fairbanks, Cary Grant and Frank Sinatra. *Empire* magazine awarded Cruise its Legend of Our Lifetime Award in 2014. Cruise was the first actor to receive The Will Rogers Motion Picture Pioneers Foundation’s Pioneer of the Year Award in 2018. The award, traditionally bestowed to industry executives, is given to a respected member of the motion

picture community whose professional leadership, service, and commitment to philanthropy is exemplary.

After more than 40 years and 40 films, Cruise continues to lift fellow artists, inspire fans, and entertain audiences everywhere.

With a steadily successful career that continues to expand with each role he adds to his repertoire, **MILES TELLER (Lt. Bradley “Rooster” Bradshaw)** had the distinct honor and privilege of making his feature screen debut opposite Nicole Kidman in the critically acclaimed film *Rabbit Hole*, based on the Pulitzer Prize winning play of the same name.

Next up, Teller stars as Bradley “Rooster” Bradshaw, son of the beloved “Goose,” in Paramount’s *Top Gun: Maverick* with Tom Cruise, which is a sequel to the original *Top Gun* and reunites him with *Only the Brave* director Joseph Kosinski. He will also be seen in the making of the Godfather series “The Offer” for Paramount+.

To be released this summer, Netflix’s *Spiderhead*, an adaptation of a George Saunders short story that first ran in The New Yorker and was later included in the author’s book, “Tenth of December,” will see Teller and Kosinski team up for a third time.

Teller is set to produce and star in survival movie, *Not Without Hope*, based on the semi-autobiographical book of the same name; the actor will portray the lone survivor of the real-life boating tragedy, Nick Schuyler, with the project marking his first producing credit under the Lime Tree Productions banner.

Most recently, Teller starred in “Too Old To Die Young,” the Nic Refn (*Drive*) helmed Amazon series, which explores the criminal underbelly of Los Angeles by following characters’ existential journeys from being killers to becoming samurais in the City of Angels.

Other credits include: Universal’s Steven Spielberg produced film *Thank You for Your Service*; Sony’s *Only the Brave*, with Josh Brolin and Jeff Bridges; Warner Brothers’ *War Dogs*, along-side Jonah Hill with Todd Phillips directing; the critically acclaimed Scorsese produced film *Bleed For This* that reunited him with his *Rabbit Hole* costar, Aaron Eckhart; comedy *That Awkward Moment*, alongside Zac Efron and Michael B. Jordan; and the science fiction film *Divergent*, opposite Shailene Woodley.

In 2014, Teller starred opposite JK Simmons in the Sony Pictures Classics critically acclaimed and Oscar-nominated drama, *Whiplash*. The hit film received the Grand Jury Prize

and Audience Award at Sundance and the Deauville Film Festival, and landed Teller a Best Actor nomination at the 2014 Gotham Awards.

Teller began reaching critical success after starring in the James Ponsoldt film, *The Spectacular Now*, for which he won the Dramatic Special Jury Award for Acting at the 2013 Sundance Film Festival, with co-star Shailene Woodley. The same year, in 2013, he starred in *21 & Over*, written and directed by Jon Lucas and Scott Moore. Previously, Teller was cast in Paramount's *Footloose* and in Todd Phillips *Project X*.

Teller was born in Downingtown, Pennsylvania and at the age of 11 moved to Citrus County, FL. Currently, he resides in Los Angeles with his wife, Keleigh.

Academy Award winner **JENNIFER CONNELLY (Penny Benjamin)** continues to prove her versatility as an actress with each new project she undertakes.

Up next, Connelly will star in Paramount's highly anticipated blockbuster *Top Gun: Maverick*. The movie is a sequel to the 1986 original and will star Tom Cruise, Val Kilmer, Miles Teller, Jon Hamm, Glen Powell, Lewis Pullman, and Ed Harris alongside Connelly with Joe Kosinski at the helm. *Top Gun: Maverick* will screen at the Cannes International Film Festival on May 18th in advance of releasing theatrically in the United States on May 27th.

The actress can most recently be seen reprising her role as "Melanie Cavill" in TNT's "Snowpiercer" season three which concluded on March 28, 2022. The series is a futuristic thriller based on the critically acclaimed movie by Korean director, Bong Joon-ho and graphic novel series of the same name. The show follows the last survivors of the planet as they inhabit "The Snowpiercer," a train that travels around the globe, which is divided into two feuding classes. The series premiered in May of 2020 and was the largest debut for a TNT show since "The Alienist" in 2018. It was recently announced that the hit series would be returning for a season 4, and production is underway in Vancouver.

In 2019, Connelly starred in the Robert Rodriguez-directed, James Cameron-produced sci-fi epic *Alita: Battle Angel*, with Christoph Waltz, Mahershala Ali and Rosa Salazar. The movie went on to make over \$400M at the Global Box Office. In 2018, Connelly could be seen in firefighter drama *Only The Brave* which was also directed by her *Top Gun: Maverick* director, Joe Kosinski for Sony Pictures with Josh Brolin, Miles Teller and Jeff Bridges. The film tells the

story of the Granite Mountain Hotshots, a crew of elite firefighters combating wildfires in Arizona.

Other recent projects include Ewan McGregor's *American Pastoral*, with Ewan McGregor and Dakota Fanning, based on the book by Phillip Roth. In 2014, she starred opposite Anthony Mackie in *Shelter*, written and directed by Paul Bettany. 2014 also re-teamed her with Darren Aronofsky and Russell Crowe for the biblical epic *Noah*.

Connelly's first film was Sergio Leone's *Once Upon a Time in America* in 1984, though her big break was her role as 'Sarah' in *Labyrinth* opposite David Bowie in 1986. She earned an Independent Spirit Award nomination for her widely praised, haunting portrayal of a drug addict in Darren Aronofsky's critically acclaimed *Requiem for a Dream* in 2000. She received a Golden Globe, BAFTA, AFI, Broadcast Critics, and Academy Award for her starring role in Ron Howard's *A Beautiful Mind* opposite Russell Crowe.

Additional film credits include Dario Argento's *Phenomena*; Dennis Hopper's *The Hot Spot* with Don Johnson and Virginia Madsen; Joe Johnston's *The Rocketeer* alongside Billy Campbell, Alan Arkin, and Timothy Dalton; John Singleton's *Higher Learning* alongside Omar Epps and Kristy Swanson; Lee Tamahori's *Mulholland Falls* alongside Nick Nolte and Melanie Griffith; Alex Proyas' *Dark City* with Rufus Sewell, William Hurt, and Kiefer Sutherland; Keith Gordon's *Walking the Dead* opposite Billy Crudup; Ed Harris' *Pollock* alongside Ed Harris, Marcia Gay Harden, and Tom Bower; Ang Lee's *Hulk* opposite Eric Bana; Vadim Perelman's *House of Sand and Fog* opposite Ben Kingsley; Walter Salles' *Dark Water* opposite John C. Reilly; Todd Field's *Little Children* with Kate Winslet and Patrick Wilson; Edward Zwick's *Blood Diamond* with Leonardo DiCaprio and Djimon Hounsou; Terry George's *Reservation Road* with Joaquin Phoenix and Elle Fanning; Scott Derrickson's *The Day the Earth Stood Still* opposite Keanu Reeves; Ken Kwapis' *He's Just Not That Into You* with Jennifer Aniston, Morgan Lily, Scarlett Johansson, Bradley Cooper, Ben Affleck, and Justin Long; Jon Amiel's *Creation* opposite Paul Bettany; Dustin Lance Black's *Virginia* with Ed Harris, Carrie Preston, and Harrison Gilbertson; Ron Howard's *The Dilemma* with Vince Vaughn, Kevin James, and Winona Ryder; *Stuck in Love*, with Greg Kinnear; Claudia Llosa's *Aloft* with Cillian Murphy, Oona Chaplin, and Mélanie Laurent; and Akiva Goldsman's *Winter's Tale*.

In addition to Connelly's acting career, she also serves as a longtime ambassador for Louis Vuitton. Connelly recently recorded lines from Grace Coddington's memoir, which were then mixed by Woodkid before being featured as the soundtrack to the 2019 Cruise Show.

Connelly currently resides in New York with her family.

The nuanced portrayal of the high-powered, advertising executive Don Draper on AMC's award-winning drama series "Mad Men" has firmly established **JON HAMM (Adm. Beau "Cyclone" Simpson)** as one of Hollywood's most talented and versatile actors. He has earned numerous accolades, including an Emmy Award in 2015 for Outstanding Actor in a Drama Series, Golden Globe Awards in 2016 and 2008, Television Critics Association Awards in 2011 and 2015, a Critics' Choice Television Award in 2011, as well as multiple Screen Actors Guild-nominations. "Mad Men" concluded its seventh and final season on May 17, 2015.

Next, Hamm can be seen in the long-awaited and highly anticipated *Top Gun* sequel, *Top Gun: Maverick*. He plays Vice Admiral Cyclone in an all-star ensemble including Tom Cruise, Val Kilmer, and Miles Teller. The film is set to release theatrically on May 27, 2022. In 2021, Hamm wrapped production on *Maggie Moore(s)*, which he will star opposite Tina Fey. John Slattery directed the black comedy film. Hamm also finished production on *Fletcher*, as the star and producer alongside manager/producer Connie Tavel. Greg Mottola, whose credits include *Superbad*, *Adventureland*, and "Arrested Development," directed the film from a script by Zev Borrow.

Hamm will return his talents to the small screen in 2022, reprising his role as Gabriel in the second season of Neil Gaiman's "Good Omens." Then in 2023, he will lend his voice to the animated detective comedy series "Grimsburg" for Fox. Hamm will also produce alongside the Jackal Group's Gail Berman and Hend Baghdady, Connie Tavel, and showrunner Chadd Gindin.

No stranger to the small screen, Hamm recently appeared as a guest star in season ten of "Curb Your Enthusiasm," with critics calling his impersonation of Larry David "inspired" and a "highlight of the season." In 2020, Jon appeared opposite Emily Blunt in John Patrick Shanley's *Wild Mountain Thyme*. In 2019, he appeared in Noah Hawley's directorial debut film, *Lucy in the Sky*, opposite Natalie Portman. Additionally, Hamm starred in Scott Z. Burns' *The Report* opposite Annette Bening and Adam Driver and *The Battle of Richard Jewell*, directed by Clint Eastwood.

In 2018, he starred in Drew Goddard's *Bad Times at the El Royale* for Twentieth Century Fox as well as in Warner Bros. comedy *Tag* opposite Ed Helms and Jeremy Renner. He also starred in Tony Gilroy's *Beirut* alongside Rosamund Pike. Hamm starred as a former U.S. diplomat who returns to service to save a former colleague. Critics called Hamm's performance his "best work yet."

In 2017, Hamm starred in Edgar Wright's hugely successful heist thriller *Baby Driver* opposite Ansel Elgort, Kevin Spacey and Jamie Foxx. Hamm also appeared in the independent film *Marjorie Prime*.

In 2016, Hamm starred in 20th Century Fox's *Keeping Up with the Joneses*, opposite Zach Galifianakis and Isla Fisher. In 2015, Hamm lent his voice to the wildly successful Universal Pictures animated feature, *The Minions* alongside Sandra Bullock and Steve Coogan. Hamm's previous film credits include Disney's *Million Dollar Arm*, based on a script by Thomas McCarthy and directed by Craig Gillespie, *Friends with Kids*, written and directed by Jennifer Westfeldt; *Bridesmaids* with Kristen Wiig; Ben Affleck's *The Town*, Zack Snyder's fantasy thriller *Sucker Punch*, *Howl* with James Franco, *Shrek Forever After*, in which he voiced the character 'Brogan,' *The Day the Earth Stood Still* with Keanu Reeves, Jennifer Westfeldt's *Ira & Abby* and *Kissing Jessica Stein*, and *We Were Soldiers*.

Hamm's appearances on the Emmy-winning comedy, "30 Rock," from 2009-2012 earned him three Emmy-nominations for Outstanding Guest Actor in a Comedy Series. He has also hosted "Saturday Night Live" three times, once in 2008 and twice in 2010 to critical acclaim. In addition to "Mad Men," Hamm also appears in the second season of Netflix's "Unbreakable Kimmy Schmidt" created by Tina Fey and Robert Carlock. Hamm played Reverend Richard Wayne Gary Wayne, the senior prophet who fools four women into being held captive for fifteen years while they believe to have survived the apocalypse. The role earned him an Outstanding Guest Actor in a Comedy Series. His additional television credits include, "A Young Doctor's Notebook," a BBC miniseries in which he stars opposite Daniel Radcliffe and also executive produced the Larry David film *Clear History* for HBO. Hamm first came to audience's attention in the NBC series "Providence." Signed for a cameo role, he impressed the producers so much that he ended up with an 18-episode run on the series.

A native of St. Louis, Missouri, Hamm received his Bachelor of Arts in English at the University of Missouri-Columbia and currently resides in Los Angeles.

**GLEN POWELL (Lt. Jake “Hangman” Seresin)** next stars with Tom Cruise in the highly anticipated new film *Top Gun: Maverick*. He plays ‘Hangman,’ one of the main characters in the film opposite Cruise and Miles Teller, and recently got his pilot’s license after all his extensive training during filming. Paramount’s sequel to the classic 1986 film premieres globally May 27<sup>th</sup>, 2022.

Glen will also star in the upcoming historical war epic *Devotion* this Fall 2022 with award-winning actor Jonathan Majors for Sony Pictures and STX International. Glen will play real-life Navy hero and Medal of Honor recipient Thomas Hudner in the film, which tells the harrowing true story of two elite U.S. Navy fighter pilots during the Korean War and their heroic sacrifices, which would ultimately make them the Navy’s most celebrated wingmen.

Earlier this April, Glen starred in Richard Linklater’s animated sci-fi film *Apollo 10 ½* for Netflix. Glen stars alongside Jack Black and Zachary Levi in the film, which was shot in live-action and was animated using a technique similar to rotoscoping which Linklater has used in his films before. The film is a coming-of-age story set in the suburbs of Houston, Texas in the summer of 1969, centered around the historic Apollo 11 moon landing.

Additionally, Glen is set to write the upcoming *Captain Planet* for Paramount, which he will produce alongside Leonardo DiCaprio. He will also star in writer/director Melissa Stack’s upcoming rendition of *New York Times* Best-Seller *I Want To F\*\*\* Your Brother* for STX, and is reteaming with his *Set It Up* co-star Zoey Deutch for Netflix’s comedy *Most Dangerous Game*, which he will also executive produce.

Glen was honored as one of *Variety*’s 10 Actors to Watch in 2019 alongside Cynthia Erivo and Jessie Buckley. He notably won a Screen Actors Guild Award for his work in the Oscar-nominated film *Hidden Figures* opposite Octavia Spencer, Taraji P. Henson and Kevin Costner, in which he portrayed iconic astronaut John Glenn. Additional past credits include Netflix’s 2018 hit film *Set It Up* opposite Zoey Deutch, Lucy Liu and Taye Diggs; Richard Linklater’s critically acclaimed comedy *Everybody Wants Some*; Ryan Murphy’s hit series “Scream Queens”; as well as the final installment of the Christopher Nolan Batman trilogy, *The Dark Knight Rises*. He also voiced a role on Netflix’s animated adventure series “Jurassic World: Camp Cretaceous” from Steven Spielberg, Frank Marshall and Colin Trevorrow.

**LEWIS PULLMAN (Lt. Robert “Bob” Floyd)** has established himself as an actor on the rise with his extremely unique talent and ability to inhabit the most diverse roles.

It was recently announced that Pullman will star opposite Kathy Bates and John Malkovich in Ken Kwapis’ *Thelma*. The film recounts the true story of the mother of John Kennedy Toole (Pullman), the Pulitzer Prize winning author of “A Confederacy of Dunces.” Toole died by suicide before finding a home for his masterpiece, and his mother Thelma (Bates) made it her life’s mission, through outrageous gamesmanship, to see the book published. She eventually succeeded in getting the manuscript into the hands of writer Walker Percy (Malkovich), who became the novel’s champion.

Up next, Pullman will be seen in Amazon’s highly anticipated series, “Outer Range” starring opposite Josh Brolin. “Outer Range” centers on Royal Abbott (Brolin), a rancher fighting for his land and family, who discovers an unfathomable mystery at the edge of Wyoming’s wilderness. Pullman is set to take on the role of Rhett Abbott, the family’s younger, more rebellious son. The show will debut in April on Amazon Prime.

He will then be seen in Paramount’s highly anticipated sequel *Top Gun: Maverick* opposite Tom Cruise. Pullman plays a Navy fighter pilot named Bob who is being mentored by Tom Cruise’s “Maverick” in the highly anticipated sequel. The film, directed by Joseph Kosinski, also stars Miles Teller, Jennifer Connelly, and Ed Harris will be released Memorial Day Weekend 2022, and have its international premiere at the Cannes Film Festival.

Lastly, he will be starring as author Ben Mears in New Line’s adaptation of the Stephen King thriller *Salem’s Lot*. Mears (Pullman) returns to his childhood home of Jerusalem’s Lot in search of inspiration for his next book only to discover his hometown is being preyed upon by a vampire, leading him to band together a ragtag group that will fight the evil presence. The film, directed by Gary Dauberman and produced by James Wan, will be released on September 9th, 2022.

Pullman starred alongside Jessica Barden in *Pink Skies Ahead*. The film was best-selling author Kelly Oxford’s feature film directorial debut. The film followed the life of an unraveling wild young woman after she drops out of college, moves in with her parents, and is diagnosed with an anxiety disorder. The film premiered at the 2020 AFI Festival and was recently acquired by MTV Studios. Pullman also starred in George Clooney’s Hulu mini-series, “Catch 22” as Major Major alongside Christopher Abbott.

In 2019, Pullman starred in the Sundance favorite, *Them That Follow* opposite Walton Goggins, Olivia Colman, and Kaitlyn Dever. In 2018, he played the scene-stealing hotel manager, Miles Miller, in Drew Goddard's *Bad Times at the El Royale* opposite Cynthia Erivo, Jeff Bridges, Jon Hamm, and Dakota Johnson. He also starred in the sequel to the cult classic horror film, *The Stranger*, with Christina Hendricks and Bailee Madison.

With a career that spans 20-plus years, actor **CHARLES PARNELL (Adm. Solomon "Warlock" Bates)** is consistently elevating his performances across film and television.

Parnell will next be seen starring in Paramount's *Top Gun: Maverick*, the highly anticipated sequel to 1986's fan favorite *Top Gun*. Introducing a new generation of fighter pilots, *Top Gun: Maverick* features Peter 'Maverick' Mitchell as he trains Top Gun graduates for a specialized mission while facing an uncertain future and confronting the ghosts of his past. Parnell will star as 'Warlock,' a Naval Officer, mentor, and friend to 'Maverick.' He stars alongside Miles Teller, Jennifer Connelly, Ed Harris, Jon Hamm, Glenn Powell, and returning cast members Tom Cruise as the titular 'Maverick' and Val Kilmer. The film is set to debut in theaters on May 27, 2022.

Parnell will also be seen joining the seventh installment of Paramount's long-running franchise *Mission: Impossible*. Tom Cruise reprises his role as "Ethan Hunt" with Simon Pegg, Rebecca Ferguson, Vanessa Kirby, Hayley Atwell, Shea Whigham, Esai Morales, Rob Delaney, and Cary Elwes rounding out the cast. *Mission Impossible: 7* is set to premiere on July 14, 2023.

Recently, Parnell wrapped production on Netflix's upcoming feature *Spiderhead*. Set in the near future, when convicts are offered the chance to volunteer as medical subjects to shorten their sentence, *Spiderhead* explores the consequences of when one test subject for a new drug capable of generating feelings of love begins questioning the reality of his emotion. Chris Hemsworth, Miles Teller, and Jurnee Smollett also star. The film will debut on Netflix in 2022.

On the television side, Parnell is perhaps best known for his role as 'CMC Jeter' in TNT's "The Last Ship." Parnell was most recently seen in USA's crime drama series "Briarpatch," which starred Rosario Dawson. He has also appeared on numerous shows including NBC's "Grand Crew," FX's "Better Things," Adult Swim's "Venture Bros," CBS' "NCIS" franchise, among others.

On the big screen, Parnell most recently appeared in the 2018 drama *A Million Little Pieces*. Parnell starred in the indie drama film *Pariah*, which premiered at the 2011 Sundance Film Festival. Parnell was nominated for a NAACP Image Award for “Outstanding Supporting Actor in a Motion Picture” for his performance as *Arthur* in the film. He has also appeared in Paramount’s blockbuster *Transformers: Age of Extinction* and Warner Bros.’ Jackie Robinson biopic *42*.

Parnell is a Chicago native. When not acting, he is an avid golfer and basketball and UFC fan. He also enjoys baking.

Parnell currently resides in Los Angeles.

Emmy-nominated actor, director, writer and producer **BASHIR SALAHUDDIN (Wo-1. Bernie “Hondo” Coleman)** was born and raised on the south side of Chicago as one of six children. He is a recognized alumni of Harvard University where he was a member of the famed Hasty Pudding Theatricals

Bashir was a staff writer on NBC's “Late Night with Jimmy Fallon,” where he and college friend Diallo Riddle wrote such notable pieces as “Slow Jam the News with Barack Obama” and “The History of Hip-Hop with Justin Timberlake.” They also developed their own movie *Brothers in Atlanta* with Broadway Video at HBO. In addition to writing credit for Jordan Peele and Tracey Morgan’s TBS show “The Last O.G..”

Bashir has starred in several features, including Lionsgate's *A Simple Favor*, 20th Century's *Snatched*, Nash Edgerton’s debut feature *Gringo* opposite David Oyelowo as well as the SAG-nominated Netflix series “Glow,” and guest starred in other popular series’ such as “Curb Your Enthusiasm,” “Single Parents,” and “Superstore.” Bashir can be seen playing opposite Tom Cruise in the upcoming *Top Gun: Maverick*, and opposite Peter Dinklage in *Cyrano*.

Bashir currently star’s in both the HBO Max series “South Side,”, as well as IFC & AMC series “Sherman’s Showcase,” for which he received a Critic's Choice nomination for Best Actor In A Comedy.

A talented and charismatic actress, **MONICA BARBARO (Lt. Natasha “Phoenix” Trace)** continues to expand her repertoire with new projects and dynamic roles.

Barbaro is currently in production for Netflix's global spy adventure series opposite Arnold Schwarzenegger, where the duo will play father and daughter. Later this year, in addition to her key *Top Gun: Maverick* role, Barbaro will be seen starring in a leading role opposite Diego Boneta in Paramount Plus' romantic comedy *At Midnight*, which will serve as the banner title of the streamer's Latin American originals production.

Barbaro was most recently seen in Ricky D'Ambrose's *The Cathedral* which made its world premiere at the 2021 Venice Film Festival and was subsequently chosen as an official selection for Sundance in 2022. The semi-autobiographical film is a child's meditative, impressionistic account of an American family's rise and fall over two decades.

In 2018, Barbaro starred as the female lead opposite Josh Groban and Tony Danza in Netflix's "The Good Cop." Created by Andy Breckman, the series follows a disgraced former NYPD police officer (Danza) who lives with his son, an obsessively honest NYPD detective (Groban). Barbaro played 'Cara Vasquez,' a street smart and self-assured detective who is new to the All-City Homicide Task Force. The 10-episode series was released on September 21, 2018. Further television credits include Greg Rucka and Cobie Smulders' drama series, "Stumptown." The ABC show, which follows a sharp-witted Marine veteran (Smulders) who becomes a private investigator in Portland, was released on September 25, 2019. Prior, Barbaro reprised her guest-starring role as 'Lisa Apple' on season two of ABC's "Splitting Up Together." Executive produced by Ellen DeGeneres, the show follows a couple whose marriage is reignited by their divorce.

Barbaro is perhaps best known for her role as 'Yael' on the second season of the critically acclaimed Lifetime television series, "Unreal." The show chronicles the chaos of production behind the scenes of a dating competition program. Additional television credits include Dick Wolf's "Chicago Justice," "Chicago PD," Matthew Miller's "Lethal Weapon," "Notorious," "Crazy Ex-Girlfriend" opposite Rachel Bloom, "Hawaii Five-O," "Stitchers" and HBO's Emmy-nominated television movie, *Hemingway and Gelhorn*.

Born and raised in California, Barbaro is a classically trained ballet dancer and has also studied modern dance, salsa, flamenco and West African dance.

With a diverse skill set and resume, **JAY ELLIS (Lt. Reuben "Payback" Fitch)** has quickly become one of Hollywood's most in-demand multi-hyphenates. He will next be seen

opposite Tom Cruise in the highly anticipated film, *Top Gun: Maverick*, which will be released globally on May 27th. Ellis also recently wrapped production on the Amazon feature *Somebody I Used to Know* directed by Dave Franco. On television, Ellis appeared as the fan-favorite ‘Lawrence’ on HBO’s critically acclaimed and Emmy-nominated comedy series, “Insecure,” created by Issa Rae and Larry Wilmore. In 2018, he won the NAACP Image Award in the category of Outstanding Supporting Actor in a Comedy Series for his work on the show. He also made his directorial debut with the season 4 episode, “Lowkey Trippin.”

Ellis’s other television credits include FX’s Emmy-nominated limited series, “Mrs. America,” a starring role on the hit BET series “The Game” from 2013-2015, and roles on “Masters of Sex,” “Grace & Francie,” “How I Met Your Mother,” “Grey’s Anatomy” and “NCIS: Los Angeles.”

As a producer, Ellis recently completed production on the feature film *Black Box* for Amazon with Blumhouse Productions under his production company banner Black Bar Mitzvah, which is also in development on feature films at Sony, Netflix, Endeavor Content as well as television shows with HBO, Hulu/FX, MGM, and more. Other film credits include *Escape Room*, *A Girl*, *A Boy*, *A Dream*, which premiered at the 2018 Sundance International Film Festival.

He also serves on the board of Inside Out Writers, an L.A. non-profit that teaches creative writing classes in juvenile halls throughout Los Angeles County as well as amFAR, the Foundation for AIDS Research, is dedicated to ending the global AIDS epidemic through innovative research.

A dynamic and versatile performer, **DANNY RAMIREZ (Lt. Mickey “Fanboy” Garcia)** is quickly emerging as one of the entertainment industry’s breakout discoveries.

Ramirez is well known for his portrayal of Marvel character, ‘Joaquin Torres,’ from the Marvel series, “The Falcon & The Winter Soldier,” where he co-starred opposite Anthony Mackie. He will next appear opposite Tom Cruise in Paramount’s highly anticipated *Top Gun: Maverick*, which is due out on May 27, 2022. He was recently seen in the 20th Century Studios for Hulu suspense/thriller, *No Exit* produced by “The Queen’s Gambit” co-creator, Scott Frank.

Next up for Ramirez will be Netflix’s dual-timeline drama *Plus/Minus* opposite Lili Reinhart.

Ramirez recently completed production *Chestnut*, a queer love triangle drama from Jac Cron, where he will star opposite Natalia Dyer and Rachel Keller; and on A24's *The Stars at Noon* from director Clair Denis, where he will star opposite Joe Alwyn and Margaret Qualley.

Ramirez will be producing and starring in the Zone One Productions genre/thriller film, *To Die Sane*, co-written by Moises Zamora and Carlos Cisco. Bianca Quesada and Zamora will also produce alongside Ramirez.

Danny's film credits have sent waves through the festival circuit with Sam Levinson's *Assassination Nation* (2018 Sundance Film Festival), Katherine O'Brien's *Lost Transmissions* (2019 Tribeca Film Festival) and David Raboy's *The Giant* (2019 Toronto International Film Festival.)

His other film credits include Sonja O'Hara's *Root Letter*, and Talia Lugacy's *This Is Not a War Story*. His television credits include Netflix's "On My Block," and FOX's "The Gifted."

Born in Chicago and raised in Miami, Danny moved to New York to attend NYU Poly where he played soccer before attending NYU's Tisch School of the Arts from which he graduated with a Bachelor of Fine Arts Degree in Theatre.

**GREG TARZAN DAVIS (Lt. Javy "Coyote" Machado)** will next be seen opposite Tom Cruise in *Top Gun: Maverick* due in theaters on May 27th, 2022. He is currently opposite Chandra Wilson and Ellen Pompeo as "Dr. Jordan Wright" on the international hit series "Grey's Anatomy" and he will soon begin work on an unnamed studio feature to be released in 2024. He will also be opposite Tom Cruise again in *Mission: Impossible 7* out in July 2023.

Davis is a New Orleans native who was exposed to theater at young age when his grandmother took him to local plays. He credits his high school teacher for encouraging his love for acting which he did in his final years of college debuting as the lead in the play "By The Way Meet Vera Stark." In between pursuing an acting career full time, he followed another one of his passions, working with children, and became an elementary school teacher. The desire to pursue his "first love" soon became so great that he let his beloved students know he was headed to Los Angeles to become an actor. He made his film debut in 2020 in *The Call of the Wild*, starring Harrison Ford. Other credits include a recurring role on "Good Trouble," and guest-starring roles on series like "Chicago P.D." and "All Rise."

Davis, who is a second degree black belt in Taekwondo, makes his home in Los Angeles, California. When he is not on set he enjoys baking delicious treats for family and friends, hanging with his beloved pooch Buju and of course, watching as many movies as he can.

**VAL KILMER (Admiral Tom “Iceman” Kazansky)** graduated from Juilliard where, at 17, he was the youngest actor ever accepted to the Drama Division. He burst onto the Hollywood scene as rock star ‘Nick Rivers’ in the Zucker-Abrahams-Zucker comedy *Top Secret!*, followed by the cult classic *Real Genius*.

He rocketed to international stardom playing Iceman in *Top Gun*, Jim Morrison in *The Doors*, Doc Holliday in *Tombstone* and the Caped Crusader in *Batman Forever*. Other memorable films include Shane Black’s comedy *Kiss Kiss Bang Bang*, George Lucas and Ron Howard’s fantasy film *Willow*, and Michael Mann’s crime thriller *Heat*.

An accomplished stage actor, he made his Broadway debut in “Slab Boys” with Sean Penn and Kevin Bacon, and appeared in numerous theatre productions including Joseph Papp’s “Henry IV: Part One,” “As You Like It” with Patti LuPone and “’Tis Pity She’s A Whore.” He also starred in the title role in “Hamlet” for the Colorado Theater Festival, and in Andrew Rattenbury’s stage adaptation of “The Postman Always Rings Twice” on London’s West End.

Recently, Kilmer toured the U.S. with the film production of his one man show “Citizen Twain,” aptly rechristened *Cinema Twain*, which he wrote, starred in and produced. He is also a prolific artist, with shows across the country and internationally highlighting his art.

In 2020, Kilmer’s memoirs, “I’m Your Huckleberry,” was published by Simon & Schuster.

A documentary Kilmer co-produced about his life, entitled *Val*, was released by Amazon Studios in 2021 after premiering at the Cannes Film Festival.

## ABOUT THE FILMMAKERS

**JOSEPH KOSINSKI (Directed By)** is a director whose uncompromising style has quickly made a mark in the filmmaking zeitgeist. His feature film debut, *TRON: Legacy* for Disney, grossed over \$400 million worldwide and was nominated for several awards, including an Academy Award for Sound Editing and a Grammy for the score by Daft Punk. For his sophomore feature, Kosinski created the science-fiction thriller *Oblivion* for Universal, starring Tom Cruise and Morgan Freeman, which grossed \$288 million worldwide. Kosinski's third feature was the critically acclaimed action-drama *Only the Brave* for Black Label Media and Columbia Pictures. The film starred Josh Brolin, Miles Teller, Jennifer Connelly, and Jeff Bridges.

Later this summer, Netflix will release Kosinski's *Spiderhead*, a film based on a short story by acclaimed author George Saunders. The film stars Chris Hemsworth, Miles Teller, and Jurnee Smollet. Currently, Kosinski is in pre-production on his upcoming Formula One racing film for Apple TV+. The film, which he will produce alongside Jerry Bruckheimer and F1 Champion Lewis Hamilton, will star Brad Pitt.

Joseph received his undergraduate degree in Mechanical Engineering with an emphasis on Design at Stanford University and a Masters Degree in Architecture from Columbia University.

Perhaps the most successful film and television producer of all time, **JERRY BRUCKHEIMER (Produced By)** productions include the monumentally successful *Pirates of the Caribbean*, *National Treasure*, *Bad Boys*, and *Beverly Hills Cop* franchises, *Black Hawk Down*, *Pearl Harbor*, *Remember the Titans*, *Armageddon*, *The Rock*, *Crimson Tide*, *Top Gun* and *Flashdance*.

Bruckheimer enjoyed incredible critical and box office success with *Bad Boys For Life*, which set the record for the biggest opening of any January release in history when it debuted in 2020.

The producer's upcoming slate includes the highly anticipated *Top Gun: Maverick*, which reunites Bruckheimer with star Tom Cruise 36 years after the original film's release. He also

completed production on Owen Wilson starrer *Secret Headquarters* for Paramount Pictures in summer 2021.

Started in 1997, Jerry Bruckheimer Television (JBTv) found success almost immediately with “CSI: Crime Scene Investigation” which quickly became the number one show on television, and launched three successful spin-offs, “CSI: Miami,” “CSI: NY” and “CSI: Cyber.” In the 2005-6 season, Bruckheimer had a then record-breaking 10 series on network television including an unbelievable five shows ranked in the top 10 in the U.S. ratings.

JBTv broadened its imprint with such shows as “Without a Trace,” “Cold Case,” and ten-time Emmy Award-winning “The Amazing Race,” on CBS. “Lucifer” has had a successful six seasons on Netflix and was named the #2 most binged television show of 2020, while “Hightown” has been renewed for a third season on STARZ and hit revival “CSI: Vegas” is renewed for season two.

Jerry Bruckheimer has been honored with some of the entertainment industry's most distinguished awards. Bruckheimer was one of the “Time 100,” a list in the renowned publication of the most influential people in the world. He is a three-time recipient of the ShoWest Producer of the Year Award, and was given the David O. Selznick Award for Lifetime Achievement by the Producers Guild of America. His hand and footprints can be seen in the forecourt of the famed Grauman’s Chinese Theatre on Hollywood Boulevard alongside so many other film industry luminaries, not far from his star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame. Bruckheimer also received a major tribute from the American Film Institute, including retrospective screenings of his huge body of work. Among many other honors, he was bestowed with ShoWest’s Lifetime Achievement Award, Variety's Showman of the Year, and was the first producer ever to be honored with an American Cinematheque Award.

In a career spanning more than 40 years, Bruckheimer’s films have collectively grossed more than \$20 billion including box office and ancillary sales. He has produced nearly 2000 hours of television. His projects have been honored with 43 Academy Award-nominations, 6 Oscars, 8 Grammy Award-nominations, 5 Grammys, 23 Golden Globe-nominations, 4 Golden Globes, 145 Emmy Award-nominations, 23 Emmys, 36 People’s Choice-nominations, 15 People’s Choice Awards, and numerous MTV Awards, including one for Best Picture of the Decade for *Beverly Hills Cop*.

Jerry Bruckheimer was born in Detroit, Michigan, the son of German immigrant parents who instilled in him a strong work ethic and desire to succeed. Growing up, Bruckheimer developed a lifelong passion for movies, photography, and sports, especially ice hockey. A lifelong dream became a reality in 2019 when he joined the expansion NHL franchise for Seattle, Washington, as an investor for The Seattle Kraken.

**CHRISTOPHER MCQUARRIE (Screenplay By / Produced By)** is a writer, producer and director whose credits include *The Usual Suspects*, *Edge of Tomorrow* and *Mission: Impossible Fallout*. He is also known in the industry for his uncredited work as a script doctor, film editor and production consultant across numerous genres. A frequent collaborator of Tom Cruise, he is currently working the 7th and 8th installments of *Mission: Impossible*.

**DAVID ELLISON (Produced By)** is Chief Executive Officer of Skydance Media, the diversified media company he founded in 2010 to create elevated, event-level entertainment for global audiences. As CEO, he sets and executes the strategic vision for the company across all of its divisions: Feature Film, Television, Interactive, Animation, New Media and Sports.

David currently oversees Skydance's current film slate including *Top Gun: Maverick*, *The Adam Project*, *The Greatest Beer Run Ever*, *Ghosted*, *Heart of Stone*, *Transformers: Rise of the Beasts* and the upcoming seventh and eighth installments of the *Mission: Impossible* series. Under his leadership, Skydance has produced a number of blockbuster and critically acclaimed films including *The Tomorrow War*, *The Old Guard*, *6 Underground*, *Tom Clancy's Without Remorse*, *Mission: Impossible – Fallout*, *Annihilation*, *Star Trek Into Darkness* and *Star Trek Beyond*, the *Jack Reacher* films and the Academy Award-nominated *True Grit*.

In 2013, David launched Skydance Television, which boasts a diverse slate of series across a range of platforms including Netflix, Amazon Prime and Apple TV+ including several Emmy-nominated series such as "Grace and Frankie" and "Tom Clancy's Jack Ryan" as well as "Reacher," "Foundation," "The Big Door Prize," "Condor" and an Untitled Series starring Arnold Schwarzenegger in his first ever scripted television show.

Furthermore, in 2016, David formed Skydance Interactive, a dedicated subsidiary that creates and owns original virtual reality games and licensing. The studio's library includes the

critically acclaimed VR survival-horror game *The Walking Dead: Saints and Sinners* as well as its recently announced sequel: *Chapter 2—Retribution*.

David launched an animation division at Skydance in 2017, with the purpose of producing a bold and original slate of high-end animated feature films and television series. *Blush*, the studio's inaugural short debuted at the prestigious Tribeca Film Festival in 2021 and went on to receive a number of nominations and awards. The division's animated feature film slate includes *Luck and Spellbound*. In 2020, David formed Skydance Animation Madrid which expanded the creative capability, scale and leverage of the studio.

In 2019 David established Skydance New Media to create narratively focused interactive experiences crafted as original series, putting the audience at the center of the action and adventure, with the first production being with Marvel Entertainment.

The studio's newest division, Skydance Sports, was launched in 2021 to develop premium scripted and unscripted sports-related content, documentaries and events. The division's slate includes a number of projects in various stages of development.

David announced in 2018 that Skydance had entered into a partnership with Tencent Holdings Limited, a leading provider of Internet value added services in China. In 2020, he announced the formation of strategic partnerships with Redbird Capital and CJ E&M, culminating in a \$275 million equity capital expansion that saw Skydance's valuation increasing to \$2.3 billion. This partnership with CJ E&M expanded Skydance's global television business, providing the company a strong foothold in South Korea's entertainment market and access to CJ E&M's expansive library of wildly popular entertainment.

David is an accomplished pilot and a lifelong film enthusiast. He attended the School of Cinematic Arts at USC and is a member of the Producers Guild of America as well as the Television Academy. He resides in Southern California with his wife, musician Sandra Lynn.

**TOMMY HARPER (Executive Producer)** is an American Film and Television Producer who has worked on various blockbuster films that have grossed over several billion dollars at the box office, including: *Star Wars: Episode VII – The Force Awakens*, *Alice in Wonderland*, *Mission: Impossible III*, *Mission Impossible: Ghost Protocol*, *Star Trek*, *Star Trek: Into Darkness* and *Star Trek: Beyond*. Other film credits include *Battle: Los Angeles*, *Jack Ryan*, and *Big Eyes*, to name a few.

Harper has been fortunate to collaborate with Tim Burton, J.J. Abrams, Angelina Jolie, Lee Tamahori, Kenneth Branagh, Gary Marshall, Joseph Kosinski, Doug Liman, and Brad Bird during his twenty + year career. In addition, numerous films have represented the talents of actors such as Julia Roberts, Eddie Murphy, Robert DeNiro, Meryl Streep, Jim Carrey, Johnny Depp, Leonardo DiCaprio, Sandra Bullock, Harrison Ford, Ewan McGregor, Jessica Lange, Chris Pine, Chris Hemsworth, and Tom Cruise.

After finishing principal photography on *Star Wars: Episode VII: The Force Awakens* as Executive Producer for Walt Disney Pictures, LucasFilm, and Bad Robot, Harper continued his long-standing relationship with J.J. Abrams and Bad Robot by officially joining the team in 2014 as COO and head of Production. Today, Harper is working on film and television projects outside of Bad Robot, continuing to Produce for his studio partners, producers, and directors. Harper is currently Executive Producing *Top Gun: Maverick*. For Paramount Pictures and is Producing *Spiderhead* for Netflix. In addition, Harper is an Executive Producer on two TV projects in post-production, “Wednesday” for Netflix with Tim Burton directing, and “Willow” for Disney+ and Lucasfilm.

As Chief Creative Officer of Skydance, **DANA GOLDBERG (Executive Producer)** helps to set and execute the Company's overall creative vision across its feature film, television and animation units. She oversees Skydance’s current feature film slate which includes *Top Gun: Maverick*, *The Adam Project*, *The Greatest Beer Run Ever*, *Ghosted*, *Heart of Stone*, *Transformers: Rise of the Beasts* and the upcoming seventh and eighth installments of the critically acclaimed *Mission: Impossible* series. Dana also helps to oversee Skydance’s animated slate including the films *Luck* and *Spellbound*.

In addition to feature films, Dana has creative oversight of Skydance Television’s slate of original series which includes several Emmy-nominated series such as “Grace and Frankie” and “Tom Clancy’s Jack Ryan” as well as “Foundation,” “Reacher,” “Condor,” “The Big Door Prize” and an Untitled Project starring Arnold Schwarzenegger across a range of platforms including Netflix, Amazon Prime and Apple TV+.

Dana joined Skydance in 2010 as President of Production, and was responsible for the entire film slate, which has included *The Tomorrow War*, *The Old Guard*, *Tom Clancy’s Without Remorse*, *6 Underground*, *Mission: Impossible – Fallout*, *Rogue Nation* and *Ghost Protocol*, *Star*

*Trek Into Darkness* and *Star Trek Beyond*, the *Jack Reacher* films, *Terminator: Dark Fate*, *Gemini Man*, *World War Z*, *G.I. Joe: Retaliation* and *True Grit*.

Prior to joining Skydance, Dana served as President of Production at Village Roadshow Pictures where she oversaw and served as executive producer on many of the studio's blockbuster and award-winning films including, *I Am Legend* and *Happy Feet*. Before Village Roadshow, Dana served as Vice President of Production at Baltimore/Spring Creek Pictures. She has been a member of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences since 2007 and is a member of the Producers Guild of America and the Television Academy. Dana holds a B.A. degree from the University of Missouri.

As President of the Feature Film Division at Skydance, **DON GRANGER (Executive Producer)** is responsible for overseeing the development and production of the company's robust feature film slate, including *Top Gun: Maverick*, *The Adam Project*, *The Greatest Beer Run Ever*, *Ghosted*, *Heart of Stone*, *Transformers: Rise of the Beasts* and the upcoming seventh and eighth installments of the critically acclaimed *Mission: Impossible* series.

Don has more than 30 years of experience in shepherding tentpole films, serving as producer on past Skydance releases including *The Tomorrow War*, *Tom Clancy's Without Remorse*, *The Old Guard*, *6 Underground*, *Mission: Impossible – Fallout*, *Terminator: Dark Fate*, *Jack Reacher* and *Mission: Impossible – Rogue Nation*. In addition, Don also served as executive producer on the commercially and critically acclaimed *Reacher* television series, which premiered in 2022.

Prior to joining Skydance, Don served as President of Motion Picture Production at United Artists, where he ran the day-to-day development and production operations for five years. Before that, he oversaw production, development and operations at C/W Productions as a senior executive, where he helped bring *War of the Worlds*, *Mission: Impossible III* and *Elizabethtown* to the big screen. He also served as Producer on *Ask the Dust* and *The Eye* and as Executive Producer on *Death Race*. Prior to C/W, he served as Executive Vice President of Motion Picture Production at Paramount Pictures, where he was responsible for supervising such franchises as *Mission: Impossible*, *Star Trek*, *Tomb Raider* and the *Jack Ryan* films, as well as *Patriot Games*, *Clear and Present Danger*, *Sum of All Fears*, *Varsity Blues*, *The Saint*, *Kiss the Girls*, *Along Came a Spider* and the Academy Award-winning *Saving Private Ryan*, among

others. Before his time at Paramount, Don served as a creative executive and producer at the Mutual Film Company, The Weintraub Entertainment Group and Touchstone Pictures.

Don is a member of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences and the Producers Guild. He holds a B.A. from Yale University and resides in Southern California with his family.

**MIKE STENSON (Executive Producer)** served as President of Jerry Bruckheimer Films, supervising all aspects of film development and production, through 2014. Before joining the company, he was an executive in charge of production at Disney, responsible for many Bruckheimer films including *Armageddon*, *The Rock*, *Crimson Tide* and *Dangerous Minds*.”

At Jerry Bruckheimer Films, Stenson served as a Producer on *Bad Company* and *Gone in Sixty Seconds* and as an Executive Producer on the *Pirates of the Caribbean* series, *Bad Boys* series, *National Treasure* series, as well as *Veronica Guerin*, *Black Hawk Down*, *Pearl Harbor*, *Coyote Ugly*, *Remember the Titans*, *Deja Vu* and *Gemini Man*.

Born and raised in Boston, Stenson graduated from Harvard College with a bachelor's degree in economics. He subsequently started as a production assistant in New York and worked for two years in independent films and television as an assistant director and production manager before returning to Boston for graduate school.

After completing an MBA at Harvard, Stenson moved to Los Angeles where he began his tenure at Walt Disney Studios in Studio Special Projects for two years before joining the production department at Hollywood Pictures as a creative executive. He ultimately rose to Executive Vice President, overseeing development and production for Hollywood Pictures as well as Touchstone Pictures. In addition to the many Bruckheimer films, Stenson also developed and oversaw a number of productions including the *Rush Hour* franchise, *Six Days*, *Seven Nights* and *Mr. Holland's Opus*.

Mr. Stenson is currently on walkabout in an undisclosed location.

**EHREN KRUGER (Screenplay By)** is an award-winning, genre-hopping American screenwriter and producer of global blockbusters and independent cinema alike. He is the writer of such international hits as *The Ring*, directed by Gore Verbinski, *Dumbo*, directed by Tim Burton, and three installments of Michael Bay's multi-billion-dollar *Transformers* franchise. His other credits include acclaimed suspense dramas, twisty thrillers, and subversive sci-fi and

fantasy tales, including *Arlington Road*, directed by Mark Pellington; *The Skeleton Key*, directed by Iain Softley; *Ghost in the Shell*, directed by Rupert Sanders; *The Brothers Grimm*, directed by Terry Gilliam; and, as producer, *Ophelia*, directed by Claire McCarthy. Mr. Kruger received the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences' prestigious Nicholl Fellowship in Screenwriting in 1996. He is a native of Alexandria, Virginia and a graduate of New York University's Tisch School of the Arts.

**ERIC WARREN SINGER (Screenplay By)** is a highly acclaimed screenwriter who has written movies for such noted directors as David Fincher, Gore Verbinski, Michael Mann, Ron Howard, Ridley Scott, Ben Affleck, and Tom Tykwer. His first script, *The Sky Is Falling*, sold to Sony and made Mr. Singer an in-demand writer. This script was later named by both *Premiere* and *Empire Magazine* as one of the top ten of all-time unproduced screenplays. Mr. Singer's first feature film, conspiracy thriller *The International*, starring Clive Owen and Naomi Watts, opened the 59th Berlin International Film Festival in 2009. His follow-up film, *American Hustle*, was directed by Oscar-nominated director David O. Russell and won several best original screenplay awards including the New York Film Critics Circle, BAFTA, and Australian Academy Award as well as earning ten Academy Award nominations. After writing the critically-acclaimed *Only the Brave* (directed by Joseph Kosinski), Singer went on to write *Top Gun: Maverick*, starring Tom Cruise. Mr. Singer also created and executive produced the upcoming Apple series, "Shantaram," based on the acclaimed novel and starring Charlie Hunnam.

**PETER CRAIG (Story By)** is a screenwriter and novelist whose first feature was *The Town* in 2010, directed by Ben Affleck. He went on to write Parts 1 and 2 of *The Hunger Games: Mockingjay* with Danny Strong, directed by Francis Lawrence; then the adaptation of his own novel, *Blood Father*. Before *Top Gun: Maverick*, Peter contributed to two other Jerry Bruckheimer productions: *12 Strong* and *Bad Boys For Life*. His most recent feature was *The Batman*, co-written with director Matt Reeves. This winter, Netflix will release *The Mother*, written with Misha Green, and directed by Niki Caro.

**JUSTIN MARKS (Story By)** is a screenwriter and television Creator and Executive Producer.

In feature film, Justin wrote the Walt Disney Company's hit film *The Jungle Book* directed by Jon Favreau and earned nearly \$1 billion in worldwide box office. The cast included Scarlett Johansson, Idris Elba, Lupita Nyong'o, Bill Murray, Christopher Walken and Ben Kingsley. A sequel is in development now. Currently, Justin is writing Netflix's animated musical *The Prince Of Port-Au-Prince* based on the life of Wyclef Jean. Justin also was a writer on the upcoming *Top Gun: Maverick* for producer Jerry Bruckheimer and Paramount, with Tom Cruise set to reprise his iconic role.

In television, Justin is the creator and showrunner of the FX upcoming epic series "Shogun" based on the novel by James Clavell.

Previously, Justin was the creator and showrunner of the Starz drama "Counterpart" that starred JK Simmons and ran for two seasons.

**HAROLD FALTERMEYER (Music By)** is a composer, musician, and record producer from Berlin. After originally studying classical music, Harold began working with the legendary musician and composer Giorgio Moroder. This collaboration resulted in Harold defining the early 80s sound, and producing standout tracks for artists such as Donna Summer. Harold's breakthrough as a composer came with the acclaimed, hip-hop infused score of *Beverly Hills Cop*. The Theme for *Beverly Hills Cop* "Axel F," became a worldwide hit and international #1 song. Following *Beverly Hills Cop*, Harold composed the score for standout films including: *Top Gun*, *Fletch*, *The Running Man*, *Tango & Cash*, and etc.. As an arranger and producer, Faltermeyer has worked with top pop stars including: Donna Summer, Barbara Streisand, Blondie, Billie Idol, Bob Seger, Pet Shop Boys, and more. Harold recently scored the highly anticipated sequel *Top Gun: Maverick*.

Academy Award, Golden Globe and 12-time Grammy-winner **LADY GAGA (Music By / "Hold My Hand" Written, Produced, and Performed By)** is a one-of-a kind artist and performer. She has amassed an outstanding 36 million global album sales, 60 billion streams and 393 million in song consumption, making her one of the best-selling musicians of all time.

Gaga is also one of the biggest living forces in social media with over 55 million likes on Facebook, over 83 million followers on Twitter and over 49 million followers on Instagram.

In 2008, Gaga released her first album *The Fame* swiftly followed by *The Fame Monster* (2009). Gaga then went on to release the iconic *Born This Way* album in 2011. To celebrate the 10-year anniversary of this album, in June 2021 Gaga released a reissue of the original album as *Born This Way The Tenth Anniversary*, that featured reimagined versions of her classic songs from prominent LGBTQIA+ musicians and advocates. Gaga also received a key to the city of West Hollywood, forever marking May 23<sup>rd</sup> as “Born This Way Day.”

In 2013, Gaga released her third studio album *ArtPop* (2013) followed by *Cheek to Cheek* (2014), her collaborative album with Tony Bennett. The album dedicated to the American Songbook debuted at #1 on the Billboard album charts. In 2016, Gaga released her fifth studio album *Joanne*, earning her a Grammy for Best Pop Solo Performance of “Joanne, Where Do You Think You’re Going?”

In 2017, Gaga headlined the Pepsi Zero Sugar Super Bowl LI Half Time show. Her 13-minute solo performance amassed 117.5 million viewers. In September 2017, she released her Chris Moukarbel directed documentary *Lady Gaga: Five Foot Two* via Netflix that went on to win an MTV Movie & TV Award for Best Music Documentary, an NME Award for Best Music Film and a Webby Award in Film and Video for Music. Other acting credits include *American Horror Story: Hotel* (2015), a role that earned her a 2016 Golden Globe award for Best Actress in a Mini-Series or TV Film.

In October 2018, Gaga starred alongside Bradley Cooper in the Warner Brothers remake of the classic film, *A Star is Born*. Her performance led her to an Oscar Nomination for Best Actress, a Golden Globe nomination for Best Performance by an Actress in a Motion Picture, a Critics’ Choice Award and National Board of Review Award for Best Actress in a Motion Picture. That same year, Gaga reached her 5<sup>th</sup> consecutive #1 album on the Billboard Top 200 chart for the *A Star is Born* soundtrack. In June 2019, the soundtrack went on to be certified double platinum in the US, has been #1 four times since its release in 2018 and has sold over 6 million copies worldwide. Gaga co-wrote, produced and performed the song “Shallow,” for the film, for which she has won an Oscar, a Golden Globe and a Critics’ Choice award for Best Original Song. She also received two Grammy wins for “Shallow” including Best Pop Duo/Group Performance and Best Song Written for Visual Media and two nominations including Song of the Year and Record of the Year. In 2020, Gaga received two more Grammy wins for

the film, including Compilation Soundtrack for Visual Media and Song Written for Visual Media for the song “I’ll Never Love Again.”

In December 2018, Gaga launched her exclusive Las Vegas residency at the Park Theater which consisted of two unique shows. LADY GAGA ENIGMA was a brand-new odyssey of her pop hits built as an experience unlike any other that ROLLINGSTONE magazine called “a show that confirms and begins her legacy.” LADY GAGA JAZZ & PIANO featured stripped-down versions of her hits as well as music from the Great American Songbook. Gaga recently announced her return to Vegas for nine performances in October 2021. In 2019, Gaga launched her beauty brand Haus Laboratories, which includes eyeliners, lip liners, stickers and eyeshadow shimmers in various shades.

In May 2020, Gaga released her sixth studio album *Chromatica*, which features collaborations with Ariana Grande, Elton John and Blackpink and is executive produced by BloodPop® and Lady Gaga. *Chromatica* marked Gaga’s 6<sup>th</sup> consecutive #1 album on the Billboard 200 chart, making her the first female artist to do so over a ten-year period (2011-2020). Her collaboration with Ariana Grande for “Rain On Me,” marked the biggest Spotify debut of 2020, reaching #1 on the Global and US Spotify Charts upon release and peaking at #1 on the iTunes charts in 29 countries and #1 on the Apple Global Chart. It also set a record for the most single-day streams from an all-female collaboration in Spotify history. The video for “Rain On Me” has amassed over 338 million views, and was nominated for four MTV Video Music Awards, winning Best Cinematography. That same year, Gaga took home the inaugural MTV Tricon Award, for being a triple icon in music, acting, fashion, and activism. USA Today called *Chromatica* “her best album in a decade,” earning her a Grammy for Best Pop Duo Group Performance for “Rain On Me” with Ariana Grande.

In September 2021, Gaga released the *Chromatica* remix album, *Dawn of Chromatica*, executive produced by BloodPop®. The album featured new collaborations and remixes of the original *Chromatica* album tracklist from A. G. Cook, Arca, Ashnikko, Bree Runway, Charli XCX, Chester Lockhart, Clarence Clarity, COUCOU CHLOE, Dorian Electra, Doss, Jimmy Edgar, Lil Texas, LSDXOXO, Mood Killer, Mura Masa, Pablllo Vittar, Planningtonrock, Rina Sawayamaand Shygirl. Many of the collaborative artists were sourced by publicly asking fans who they would like to see on this project and launched at No. 1 on Billboard's Top Dance/Electronic Albums chart.

In October 2021, Lady Gaga and Tony Bennett teamed up again to release their second collaborate jazz album, *Love For Sale*. The album, celebrating the music of Cole Porter, debuted at #1 on Billboard's Jazz Album charts, Amazon and iTunes in its first week of release, with Apple Music confirming it was also the highest streamed jazz album globally in its first week of release. The album also debuted at #8 on the all-genre Billboard 200 chart.

Next up, Gaga will star in Ridley Scott's *House of Gucci* as Patrizia Reggiani, the ex-wife of Maurizio Gucci, who was tried and convicted of orchestrating his assassination set to hit theaters on November 24, 2021.

Lady Gaga is also an outspoken activist, philanthropist and supporter of many important issues including LGBT rights, HIV/AIDS awareness and body image issues. In 2012, she launched Born This Way Foundation, a non-profit organization dedicated to empowering youth, embracing differences, and inspiring kindness and bravery. Through the years, they've collected stories of kindness, bravery and resilience from young people all over the world, proving that kindness truly is the universal language. These stories have been collected, along with personal notes of empowerment from Lady Gaga, in her new book, "Channel Kindness: Stories of Kindness and Community," available now.

**HANS ZIMMER (Music By)** has scored more than 200 projects across all mediums, which, combined, have grossed more than 28 billion dollars at the worldwide box office. Zimmer has been honored with two Academy Awards, three Golden Globes, three Grammy Awards, an American Music Award, and a Tony Award. His work highlights include *Dune*, *No Time to Die*, *Gladiator*, *The Thin Red Line*, *As Good as It Gets*, *Rain Man*, *The Dark Knight* trilogy, *Inception*, *Thelma and Louise*, *The Last Samurai*, *12 Years A Slave*, *Blade Runner 2049* (co-scored w/ Benjamin Wallfisch) and *Dunkirk*, as well as recent film scores including *Wonder Woman 1984*, Ron Howard's *Hillbilly Elegy* and *The SpongeBob Movie: Sponge on the Run*. Most recently, Zimmer won the Academy Award for Best Achievement in Music Written for Motion Pictures for *Dune*. In 2019, Zimmer scored the live-action remake of *The Lion King*, for which he received a Grammy nomination for Best Score Soundtrack for Visual Media.

Zimmer has completed highly successful Hans Zimmer Live tour stops around the globe and will continue to perform in an upcoming European tour, which began in March 2022.

Grammy Award-winning, and Emmy & Bafta-nominated composer **LORNE BALFE (Score Produced By)** has created music in virtually all genres and for all visual media with projects ranging from major studio to independent films, tentpole video game franchises, beloved animated feature films, critically acclaimed television series, and documentary features.

Originally from Inverness, Scotland, Lorne's love of music and writing was evident from an early age. His childhood home had a residential recording studio where the likes of Ozzy Osbourne and InnerCircle would record—the latter of which he serendipitously worked with for his score to *Bad Boys for Life*.

As early as eight years-old, Lorne began writing and selling his composed “jingles” for advertisements, and at the age of thirteen he auditioned to be a percussionist with the Edinburgh Symphony Orchestra, becoming their youngest member, and traveled around Scotland with them professionally. It became clear to Lorne that he wanted to become a film composer and in his late teens he started writing letters to other composers in the hope of an opportunity. It was then he decided to move to the U.S., and soon his exceptional career took off.

Consistently receiving accolades for his musical compositions, he received critical acclaim for his score in the most successful film of the Mission Impossible franchise, Writer/Director Christopher McQuarrie's *Mission: Impossible - Fallout* (Paramount Pictures) and has been announced as the composer of *Mission: Impossible 7 & 8*.

Other notable credits include *Black Widow* (Disney/Marvel), *Ambulance* (Universal), *Jungleland* (Paramount), *The Lego Batman Movie* (Warner Bros), and the Oscar nominated film *The Florida Project* (A24). Coming up Lorne's work will be heard in *Argylle* directed by Matthew Vaughn.

In addition to his work with Christopher McQuarrie, Lorne has worked with many of the most prestigious directors in the industry including Christopher Nolan, Ron Howard, Michael Bay, Cate Shortland, Ang Lee, Christophe Waltz, Jerry Bruckheimer, Sean Baker, and Chris McKay.

**MARLENE STEWART (Costumer Designer)** is an award-winning and groundbreaking designer who has built a long and illustrious career working with some of cinema's most prominent filmmakers.

Stewart's work will next be featured in *Top Gun: Maverick*, the eagerly anticipated sequel to *Top Gun*, starring Tom Cruise, Jennifer Connelly, Jon Hamm, Ed Harris and Miles Teller, and directed by Joseph Kosinski, set for release in May 2022. Most recently she designed *Uncharted*, starring Mark Wahlberg and Tom Holland and *Free Guy*, starring Ryan Reynolds, Jodie Comer and Taika Waititi.

Her early collaborations began with Academy Award®-winning Oliver Stone, on the bio pics *The Doors* and *JFK*. She then went on to work with James Cameron on the iconic *Terminator 2: Judgment Day* and *True Lies*.

She continued her period work on *Ali* with the accomplished director Michael Mann, and then began working in more contemporary drama with award winning director Alejandro González Iñárritu on *21 Grams*.

Stewart has designed costumes for many other noted directors and producers on contemporary films including Jerry Bruckheimer's *Gone in 60 Seconds* and *Coyote Ugly*; Joel Schumacher's *Falling Down* with Michael Douglas; David Dobkin's *The Judge* with Robert Downey Jr.; Curtis Hanson's *The River Wild* starring Meryl Streep; Nancy Meyers's *The Holiday*, Phillip Noyce's *The Saint*; and Kimberly Peirce's *Stop-Loss*.

She has collaborated with Ben Stiller on three projects: *Tropic Thunder*, *Night at the Museum: Battle of the Smithsonian* and *Night at the Museum: Secret of the Tomb*. Her work with Will Smith also spans three films: *Ali*, *Hitch* and director Tony Scott's *Enemy of the State*.

*Free Guy* marks Stewart's fifth film with director and producer Shawn Levy. Their previous productions include Hugh Jackman in *Real Steel*, and Steve Carrell in *Date Night*, as well as on the two films from the *Night at the Museum* franchise.

Her repertoire also includes *Triple Frontier*, starring Ben Affleck, Oscar Isaac, Charlie Hunnam, Garrett Hedlund, and Pedro Pascal; the sci-fi film *Oblivion* directed by Joseph Kosinski, and starring Tom Cruise; *Allegiant*, the third film in the Divergent series; the period fantasy *Hansel and Gretel: Witch Hunters*, with Jeremy Renner; the 1930's period film *The Phantom*, starring Billy Zane; and the flamboyant *To Wong Foo Thanks for Everything, Julie Newmar*, featuring Patrick Swayze.

Other early films include *Siesta* with Ellen Barkin and Jodie Foster, the *Pet Sematary* series, James L Brooks' *I'll Do Anything* and Abel Ferrara's *Dangerous Games*, starring Madonna and Harvey Keitel.

Stewart has also designed for TV and commercials, but she was a pioneer in the world of music videos and MTV, collaborating with Madonna on such groundbreaking videos as “Material Girl,” “Vogue,” “Express Yourself,” “Papa Don’t Preach,” “Like a Prayer,” and several of Madonna’s world tours. During this seminal time, she also created looks for other well-known artists including The Rolling Stones, Rod Stewart, Janet Jackson, The Eurythmics, Smashing Pumpkins, Cher and Bette Midler, as well as Gloria Estefan and the Miami Sound Machine.

Stewart won the very first MTV Red Carpet Video Award for Best Costume, as well as the Bob Mackie Design Award, and in 2012 Stewart was presented with a Career Achievement Award from the Costume Designers Guild.

Prior to work in the music world, Stewart designed a contemporary line of clothing called “Covers” which was sold in all the major department stores in the United States. She was known as one of the top California designers, but she also worked extensively in England and Europe.

Hailing from Boston, Stewart received her masters from UC Berkeley in European History, and has a degree in design from the Fashion Institute of Design and Merchandising in New York.

Marlene Stewart’s website is: [www.marlenestewart.com](http://www.marlenestewart.com)

Editing *Top Gun: Maverick* was a dream come true for **EDDIE HAMILTON, ACE (Editor)**, having seen the original *Top Gun* six times in theatres during its 1986 release, and this project was his third collaboration with producers Tom Cruise and Christopher McQuarrie. Before that, Eddie cut *Mission: Impossible - Fallout* and *Mission: Impossible - Rogue Nation* for the same team. Other credits include *Kingsman: The Secret Service*, *Kingsman: The Golden Circle*, *X-Men: First Class* and *Kick-Ass* for director Matthew Vaughn. After 25 years in the industry Eddie has cut over 20 feature films (both indies and studio movies) in a wide variety of genres as well as TV dramas, documentaries and award-winning short films. His enthusiasm for big screen storytelling is matched only by his total dedication to the craft of film editing, his nerdy technical expertise and his undisputed love of chocolate. He has given presentations on Avid Media Composer editing at NAB and IBC. Eddie is a member of the Academy Of Motion Picture Arts & Sciences, American Cinema Editors, British Film Editors and BAFTA, and was

on the feature film panel at EditFest London in 2013 and 2018. Eddie is currently editing the next two chapters in the Mission: Impossible movie series.

**JEREMY HINDLE (Production Designer)** was born in Ontario Canada 1969. He studied film at Ryerson University in Toronto. He began his career as a Set Decorator in Toronto before moving into Production Designing commercials. He got his start in commercials - working with big name directors, such as Fredrik Bond, Nicolai Fugilsg, Andrew Dominic and Alejandro Gonzalez Inarritu. Jeremy made the jump to features thanks to his working relationship with DP Greig Fraser. Based on Greig's recommendation, Jeremy was hired as the production designer for Kathryn Bigelow's Academy Award-nominated film, *Zero Dark Thirty*. He received an Art Directors Guild Award nomination for his work on the film. Jeremy also served as Bigelow's production designer on *Detroit*. Additionally, he designed *True Story* for Rupert Goold and *Top Gun: Maverick* for Joseph Kosinski. Most recently, Jeremy worked with Ben Stiller on his television series "Severance," for Apple TV+ and another Joseph Kosinski film *Spiderhead* for Netflix.

Oscar-winning cinematographer **CLAUDIO MIRANDA (Director of Photography)**, ASC is currently filming *Nyad*, starring Annette Benning and Jodie Foster. Directed by Oscar-winning duo Elizabeth Chai Vasarhelyi and Jimmy Chin (*Free Solo*), the film is a biopic about the first person to swim from Cuba to Florida.

Previously, he worked with long-term collaborator director Joseph Kosinski on both *Top Gun: Maverick* and *Spiderhead*. The former opens in theaters worldwide on May 27, with the latter slated for a late 2022 release

In *Top Gun: Maverick*, Tom Cruise reprises his role in the sequel to the legendary 1986 film, along with a new cast of characters played by Miles Teller and Jennifer Connelly. *Spiderhead*, starring Chris Hemsworth, marks Miranda's sixth collaboration with Kosinski.

Miranda also photographed the mysterious *100 Years* short with director Robert Rodriguez for Louis XIII Cognac. An experimental sci-fi film with the tagline, "The Movie You Will Never See," *100 Years* is written by and stars John Malkovich. The film is due to be released on November 18, 2115.

His credits include: *Only the Brave*, based on the real-life story of the Granite Mountain Hotshots, with Josh Brolin, Miles Teller and Jeff Bridges starring; Disney's *Tomorrowland* for director Brad Bird, starring George Clooney and Britt Robertson; and Kosinski's post-apocalyptic sci-fi action drama *Oblivion*, starring Tom Cruise.

For his visionary work on director Ang Lee's *Life of Pi*, Miranda won the 2013 Academy Award for Best Cinematography. He also received a BAFTA award, a Satellite award, multiple Critics Society awards and a nomination from the American Society of Cinematographers.

In 2009 the Academy recognized Miranda's work on director David Fincher's *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button* with a Best Cinematography nomination. The film earned him best cinematography nominations at the 2009 ASC Awards, the BAFTAs and the Satellite Awards and Best Cinematography awards from the North Texas, Phoenix, Las Vegas and Houston Film Critics Societies. Ahead of Benjamin Button's release, Variety named Miranda one of its 2008 "10 Cinematographers to Watch."

Miranda's big break came in 1994, when Dariusz Wolski hired him as chief lighting technician on Alex Proyas' *The Crow*. As a gaffer, Miranda worked on many powerful films including David Fincher's *The Game* and *Fight Club*, as well as the late Tony Scott's *Crimson Tide*, *The Fan* and *Enemy of the State*. The 2005 Sundance Film Festival hit *A Thousand Roads*, from director Chris Eyre, marked Miranda's first feature cinematography credit.

Evidence of Miranda's thriving television commercial career is evident in the multiple accolades he has received including: Best Cinematography AICP and Clio awards for the Pocari Tennis spot in 2002; a Clio for Xelibri in 2004; an MVPA for Beyoncé (feat. Sean Paul) music video in 2004; and an AICP award for Heineken in 2005. Miranda is represented by Iconic Talent Agency.

**RYAN TUDHOPE (Visual Effects Supervisor)** is currently Visual Effects Supervisor on "The Lord of the Rings: The Rings of Power." He previously supervised the visual effects for two upcoming films, *Spiderhead* and *Top Gun: Maverick*.

Over his 20+ year career, Ryan has provided creative leadership to more than fifty feature films and premiere episodic content. He takes special interest in the convergence of live-action stunts and visual effects; sophisticated and invisible work born from collaborations with directors, cinematographers, and physical departments. He combines this appreciation for "the

real thing” with a deep understanding of digital effects, and strives for results that are grounded, persuasive, and award-winning.

Ryan is also an entrepreneur, having co-founded the visual effects studio Atomic Fiction. As CEO, he led the company’s growth to over 350 employees, where he oversaw projects such as *Ad Astra*, *Blade Runner 2049*, *Deadpool*, *Pirates of the Caribbean*, *Ghost in the Shell*, “Game of Thrones,” *Star Trek Beyond*, and “Cosmos”, which earned him an Emmy nomination. Atomic Fiction was acquired by Deluxe in 2018.

Before Atomic Fiction, his supervisor credits included *Hellboy*, *Sin City*, and *Superman Returns*, among others. He started his career at Lucasfilm’s Skywalker Ranch at the age of 18, working directly with George Lucas to design key sequences for “Star Wars: Episode One”.

He is a member of the Visual Effects Society, the Television Academy, and the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences.

**KEVIN LaROSA II (Aerial Coordinator)** is a third generation pilot and second generation aerial coordinator and stunt pilot. From *Iron Man* to *The Avengers* and *Transformers 5*, LaRosa has piloted on an extraordinary list of film credits.

He started logging flight time at the early age of 14 and accumulated his ratings as quickly as he could. By the time he was 18, Kevin was a commercially rated helicopter and multi-engine fixed wing pilot logging time in everything from King Airs to Hueys.

Today, he is an accomplished ATP rated pilot in a multitude of fixed wing and rotorcraft, and works heavily in the motion picture and television industries worldwide coordinating and directing film sequences in the air and on the ground. LaRosa is a member of SAG and the Motion Picture Pilots Association and his latest work can be seen in Paramount’s *Top Gun: Maverick* premiering May 27, 2022. For more info, visit [www.kevinlarosa.com](http://www.kevinlarosa.com)

**CAPTAIN BRIAN M. “FERG” FERGUSON (Naval Aviation Technical Advisor, Aerial Coordinator)** (Commanding Officer, U.S. Naval Forces Europe/Africa, Commander, U.S. SIXTH Fleet, Navy Reserve N5/N7) is a native of Sarasota, Florida and holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Aeronautical Science from Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University. He was commissioned in September 1993 through the Aviation Officer Candidate School in Pensacola, FL.

CAPT Ferguson's operational assignments include: Strike Fighter Squadron ONE ONE FIVE (VFA-115), NAS Lemoore CA; Instructor Pilot and Landing Signal Officer at Marine Fighter Attack Training Squadron ONE ZERO ONE (VMFAT-101), MCAS Miramar CA; and Assistant Air Operations Officer aboard USS CONSTELLATION (CV-64). During the 2002-2003 WESTPAC deployment he flew with the Vigilantes of VFA-151 and led numerous night combat missions into Iraq in the F/A-18 Hornet in support of Operation IRAQI FREEDOM. He also served as Department Head, Threat Aircraft Subject Matter Expert and Threat Lecture Standardization Officer at Fighter Composite Squadron THIRTEEN (VFC-13), NAS Fallon NV, and attended the Navy Fighter Weapons School (TOPGUN) Adversary Instructor Course. CAPT Ferguson commanded VFC-13 (2012-2013), which won the Battle "E", Safety "S", Golden Wrench Maintenance Award, and the Golden Anchor Retention Excellence Award during his XO/CO tour. He has logged over 7,200 total flight hours, with over 3,000 in single seat fighter aircraft (F-18/F-5), and has over 375 carrier-arrested landings aboard USS KITTY HAWK (CV-63), USS CONSTELLATION (CV-64), USS ABRAHAM LINCOLN (CVN-72), and USS JOHN C. STENNIS (CVN-74). His staff and shore assignments include: Commanding Officer, Space and Naval Warfare Systems Command NR Det 220; Chief Staff Officer, Naval Aviation Warfighting Development Center NR Det 0194; Deputy Commander, Naval Air Force Reserve; Commanding Officer, Navy Reserve, Carrier Strike Group FIFTEEN; and as the active duty Technical Advisor and Aerial Coordinator for the film *Top Gun: Maverick*. He has completed Joint Professional Military Education through the Air Force Command and Staff College, and is the current Director of the Aviation Mentoring Network for Commander, Naval Air Force Reserve.

He left active duty in February 2007, becoming a Federal Agent with the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) where he served as a pilot, tactical team member, weapons and tactics instructor, and airborne sniper cover officer. He is currently a captain for a major US airline, and is type-rated in the Airbus A320, Boeing 737, CE-550 Citation II and the L-39. His personal awards include the Legion of Merit (two awards), Meritorious Service Medal (two awards), Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal (3 awards – 1 with Combat "V"), Air Medal (2 Strike/Flight Awards), Navy Achievement Medal (three awards) and various other personal and unit awards and citations.

**CHRIS BURDON (Re-Recording Mixer)** has established himself as one of the best and most in demand re-recording mixers in the UK. This has led to him working with many of the world's leading directors and producers on a wide range of award winning films. "Growing up in a musical household nurtured a keen interest in music which developed over time into a passion for film sound. I cannot overstate how much I enjoy collaborating with the whole 'team' to create the best sound mix for any given project. What a privilege to have worked with so many brilliant movie makers with the added bonus of mixing music by some of the best film composers on the planet." Chris' many credits include *Children of Men*, *Captain Phillips*, *Edge of Tomorrow*, *Wonder Woman*, *Three Billboards Outside Ebbing Missouri* and *Top Gun: Maverick*. He has received an Academy Award nomination in addition to a number of BAFTA and CAS nominations.

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