THE VVITCH

PRESS NOTES



CONTENT

SYNOPSIS	3
ABOUT THE PRODUCTION	5
ABOUT THE FILMMAKERS	14
ABOUT THE CAST	21
CREDITS	23



SYNOPSIS

n this exquisitely made and terrifying new horror film, the age-old concepts of witchcraft, black magic and possession are innovatively brought together to tell the intimate and riveting story of one family's frightful unraveling in the New England wilderness circa 1630.

New England, 1630. Upon threat of banishment by the church, an English farmer leaves his colonial plantation, relocating his wife and five children to a remote plot of land on the edge of an ominous forest — within which lurks an unknown evil. Strange and unsettling things begin to happen almost immediately — animals turn malevolent, crops fail, and one child disappears as another becomes seemingly possessed by an evil spirit. With suspicion and paranoia mounting, family members accuse teenage daughter Thomasin of witchcraft, charges she adamantly denies. As circumstances grow more treacherous, each family member's faith, loyalty and love become tested in shocking and unforgettable ways.

Writer/director Robert Eggers' debut feature, which premiered to great acclaim at the 2015 Sundance Film Festival — winning the Best Director Prize in the U.S. Narrative Competition — painstakingly recreates a God-fearing New England decades before the 1692 Salem witch trials, in which religious convictions tragically turned to mass hysteria. Told through the eyes of the adolescent Thomasin — in a star-making turn by newcomer Anya Taylor-Joy — and supported by mesmerizing camera work and a powerful musical score, THE WITCH is a chilling and groundbreaking new take on the genre.



riter-director Robert Eggers — in his feature debut — provides a modern take on witchcraft by returning to the nightmares of the past, when a God-fearing public perceived witches as real, women were routinely persecuted for practicing folk magic that threatened the patriarchy of the Church, and the old crone on the village outskirts was thought to actually be killing children. Centering on one Puritan family living in rural isolation whose faith and devotion is disrupted by a primal horror lurking in the woods, THE WITCH is a meticulously composed shocker that celebrates the filmmaking craft at every level of its production. Winner of the Directing Prize at the 2015 Sundance Film Festival, it marks the debut of a major new voice in the horror genre. One of the most terrifying movies in years, THE WITCH succeeds in producing jolts of horror that are disturbing without feeling cheap. In the words of its creator, "There are jump scares in the movie, which are fun and necessary, but they don't ask the big questions about life," Eggers insists. "The dark side of humanity is right up there with the light side — it needs to be examined so we can better understand who we are. The horror stories that cut the deepest are ones that confront us with the darkness we contain as a society, and also individually."

THE ENDURING POWER OF THE WITCH

For many, the witch is synonymous with cheap Halloween costumes or a cackling Margaret Hamilton as the Wicked Witch of the West in THE WIZARD OF OZ. But witchcraft has deep and enduring roots in early American life, particularly in New England, where in 1692 hysteria reached a fever pitch with the Salem witch trials, in which scores of women were put to death for charges of witchcraft and consorting with the devil. In her October 2015 volume, *The Witches: Salem 1692*, Pulitzer Prize-winning historian Stacy Schiff documents the evolution of the witch as a feminine force of evil coursing through the ages. "Any seventeenth-century New Englander could have told you (what exactly was a witch)," Schiff writes. "As workers of magic, witches and wizards extend as far back as recorded history. The witch as Salem conceived her materialized in the thirteenth century, when sorcery and heresy moved closer together. She came into her own with the inquisition, as a popular myth yielded to popular madness." And she made the leap to the Massachusetts Bay Colony in North America in the 17th century, the setting of THE WITCH.

Three centuries before THE BLAIR WITCH PROJECT, the supernatural was considered part of everyday life in colonial North America. The Church of England held rigid power over the entire community, reinforcing the popular view that Satan was real — a force of evil working in opposition to God's benevolent force for good. Those accused of performing the Devil's work that weren't condemned were often cast out to the margins of society, like Hester Prynne in Nathaniel Hawthorne's THE SCARLET LETTER. Stories of demonic possession were routine in the colonies, documented in widely circulated Church pamphlets like *Memorable Providences: Relating to Witchcraft and Possessions* and *The Wonders of the Invisible World* by the fiery fatherand-son preachers Cotton and Increase Mather. In these lurid tracts, accounts of "agitations, writhings, tumblings, tossings, wallowings, foamings" — as described in Schiff's *The Witches* and depicted in THE WITCH in the film's harrowing centerpiece — were often terrifying, visceral, and viral, spreading through families and communities like wildfire, intensifying the suspicion and paranoia in a devout society that was obsessed with witchcraft and diabolical influences.

"In modern times when we think of witches and demonic possession we assume that means hocus pocus," says newcomer Anya Taylor-Joy, whose central character, Thomasin, in THE WITCH becomes engulfed in hysterical accusations of witchcraft by her own family in 1630s Massachusetts. "It's hard for us today to think of such things as real, but for people living in 17th-century New England, a witch was a perfectly legitimate answer for why something was going wrong." Adds Eggers: "Everyday life in this era had a supernatural element and the witch was the answer to unanswerable tragedies, gaining power from despair. If a child died, or a cow stopped giving milk, the reason was frequently attributed to witches." Today, these accusations might seem quaint. But back then witches were real.

ROBERT EGGERS AND THE WITCH

With THE WITCH, Eggers wanted to bring to life on screen the persecution and puritanism of a time when women were frequently viewed as symbols of darkness and evil — as they continue to be viewed today in certain restrictive societies. Fascinated by what he calls "the dark feminine," he sought to explore the myth of the witch through the prism of modern life. "The shadows of Salem are very much alive in the unconscious of people today," says Eggers. "We're trapped in some of those same cycles of thought that are truly regressive and ugly. The witch still represents the darkness of the unknown — she's still that thing people point fingers at accusingly."

Eggers grew up in a rural New Hampshire town filled with dilapidated farmhouses, old graveyards in the middle of the woods and things that went bump in the night. "New England's past was always in my consciousness," he remarks. "The region's history of witches and witchcraft was a strong part of my childhood's imaginary playground."

He watched scary movies growing up, including Universal horror classics and Hammer Studios productions, a series of atmospheric chillers produced in England from the mid-1950s until the 1970s. He was also drawn to German Expressionist silent film, including THE CABINET OF DR. CALIGARI and the works of F.W. Murnau, as well as the philosophical dramas of the Swedish filmmaker Ingmar Bergman. "Bergman is the most effective horror director in my mind," Eggers states. "And I don't mean the one to three movies in his body of work that are categorized as horror. I'm more interested in the psychological and emotional stakes of CRIES & WHISPERS, one of the most terrifying horror movies I've ever seen." It was crucial for Eggers that the archetypal horror in THE WITCH was approached with emotional and psychological rigor.

Another formative influence on Eggers was THE SHINING, Stanley Kubrick's widely hailed masterpiece of the horror genre, celebrated for it's utilization of exceptional cinematic artistry to create one of the most frightening films of all time. Eggers also approached his movie from a place of intense cinematic craftsmanship, paying homage to many of the genre's best tropes while making it completely his own. Like THE SHINING, Eggers' film centers on a single-minded patriarch moving his family to a remote location, becoming torn apart by despair, madness, and violent possession.

RESEARCHING THE WITCH

The film began taking shape over five years ago, during a period of research and writing that was as meticulous as anything in the film's elaborate production and post-production phases. Eggers first focused on the writing, in particular creating the language of his characters — a spoken realism of common agricultural people. To get himself in the spirit and rhythm of the language and the time while he wrote the script, he reread Shakespeare, paying close attention to the cadence of Jacobean grammar. He made phrase books from quotations culled from other period sources, including folktales, witch pamphlets — which he likens to the tabloid newspapers of the day — court documents, the Geneva Bible, and everyday Puritan diaries, from which he lifted verbatim dialogue that wound up in the shooting script. Even the prayers uttered in the film were truncated versions of scripture derived from authentic Puritan prayer manuals. "Many of the things the children say in the movie come straight from Cotton Mather or Samuel Willard's accounts of witchcraft and possession in New England at the time," he explains.

For a project with themes of possession, Eggers himself became entranced by the stories he came across in his research. He learned of a Massachusetts teenager named Elizabeth Knapp, who became prone to seizures and fits — something that today would be attributed to hormones. When the local pastor came to investigate her predicament, the young woman flew into hysterics, prompting the religious official to conclude she was possessed by the Devil. "I wanted to explore the traditions of these witch stories, both the real versions and the fairy tale versions — and in the period, the line between the two was blurry." Eggers explains. "I focused my research on New England, where I saw the same stories and tropes repeating themselves — stories that were exotic, primal, unexpected, but also simple. When you're living in a society where these beliefs existed, they become powerful forces that succeed in dominating a community. This became a big germ of the story."

Once Eggers had an initial draft of the script, Lars Knudsen and Jay Van Hoy of the production company Parts & Labor came on board, helping him refine his story. Another producer, Jodi Redmond, contacted Plimoth Plantation, a Massachusetts-based recreation of Plymouth Colony circa 1627, urging its cooperation with the production. Eggers gained access to the plantation, colonial village and library, where he studied the vernacular architecture and details of the period, right down to the chimneys and dirt floors of rural dwellings where people like William and his family might have lived. "How we interpreted 1630s New England in THE WITCH would have been impossible without the cooperation of Plimoth Plantation," insists Eggers. "It's simply the best resource we have on these early English settlements."

CASTING THE WITCH

As the casting process began, Eggers sought out authentic-looking people to embody the members of his close-knit Puritan clan — not actors with dirty faces. He was already aware of Ralph Ineson, a British character actor known for his supporting work on "Game of Thrones" and the blockbusters GUARDIANS OF THE GALAXY and HARRY POTTER AND THE DEATHLY HALLOWS. With his rough-hewn features and thick Northern accent, Ineson was an inspiration on

Eggers during the writing phase. He became the first actor cast, in the role of the beleaguered patriarch William, fighting to save his family from forces natural and otherwise. "Ralph was the father of this movie in many ways," explains Eggers. "He grew a beard and long hair early on and mastered the art of chopping wood. Then he starved himself for the shoot, arriving in Canada looking grim and malnourished. Basically he was William." Ineson also has a background in directing children's theater, specifically Shakespeare, which came in handy during rehearsals, when some of the child actors needed help perfecting the Yorkshire accent.

Kate Dickie ("Game of Thrones," PROMETHEUS), cast as William's zealous wife Katherine, came to Eggers' attention through the Canadian producer Daniel Beckerman. After watching her performance in Andrea Arnold's slow-burn drama RED ROAD, Eggers knew he had his second female lead, the staunch family matriarch who retreats into prayer — and hysteria — as the horrors mount. Dickie was already preparing for another role that required her to appear starving when she was cast as Katherine, confirming Eggers' instinct that she could bring to life a histrionic zealot at the end of her tether. "During her preparation for the movie, she became obsessed with a Puritan prayer book from my research," says Eggers. "She carried it around on set on her iPad, reciting prayers between shots. She was always in the moment — I've never seen someone so facile with their craft and possessed by their character."

Eggers worked with U.K.-based casting director Kharmel Cochrane to find child actors who could play Caleb (Harvey Scrimshaw) and younger siblings Jonas and Mercy (Lucas Dawson and Ellie Grainger), whose collective work became one of the film's highlights. The duo scoured schools across England, finding Scrimshaw and Grainger in Nottingham and Dawson in Yorkshire. "It was crucial that the youngest actors were using their native accents, or the authenticity of their performances would fall apart," insists Eggers. "Also, it was very hard to find parents who would let their children appear in this movie due to the sensitive nature of some scenes."

In the film's most harrowing sequence, Caleb returns to the family cabin after disappearing into the forest, slipping into a religious ecstasy that turns demonic. His family members, including Jonas and Mercy, watch in horror at his shocking transformation. What could have been a traumatic scenario for the young cast members instead became a symbol of the cast and crew's intimate bond, which flourished on set and continued after the project wrapped. Ralph and Kate worked hard from the earliest days of rehearsals to cultivate this close-knit union with the child actors, alleviating any stress they might have experienced during the demanding possession scenes.

For his part, Eggers showed the children YouTube videos depicting people in Southeast Asia in the throes of purported demonic possession. "Ellie was excited to roll around on the floor and twist her body into strange positions like in the videos," Eggers recalls. "Ralph used soccer metaphors to help Harvey get into the physical contortions necessary for those scenes. It was a team effort putting those scenes together — the film hinged on it. Family was everything." Indeed, family and familial love emerges as one of the strongest themes in THE WITCH, for the way that it's held up as a unifying force only to be torn apart by outside forces. "In this story we see a family at its worst," says Eggers. "That sense of familial love needed to be authentic and believable, and the cast found it."

THE HEART OF THE WITCH

Many actresses auditioned for the central role of Thomasin — the eldest child in the family who becomes increasingly at odds with Puritan values and traditions until she is accused of witchcraft by her own family members. "I wish there was a cool story about discovering Anya Taylor-Joy in a London street selling matches," says Eggers. "In truth, I had a fantastic casting director Kharmel Cochrane, who already knew of Anya. After her audition, I knew she had what it took to bring Thomasin to life. I had originally pictured the character as more awkward and homely, but Anya had this fairytale quality about her that also felt grounded and real. We saw right away that she could never be a successful Puritan, which made her ideal for the role."

Newcomer Taylor-Joy was born in Miami and raised in Argentina, but had lived in London as a child — though her first language growing up was Spanish. She had never encountered anything like the regional Yorkshire accent that permeates the script. "When I read it, I saw right away that it wasn't just a Yorkshire accent, it was North Yorkshire," she says. Thanks to her peripatetic childhood, she had developed a good ear for dialects, playfully mimicking the accents of her international friends. To prepare further, she watched THE FULL MONTY and relied on her screen sibling Lucas Dawson — who was six at the time of shooting — to help develop her rugged accent on set. "He had the strongest Yorkshire accent you could imagine," she says. "We'd play together during breaks and instantly his accent became my own. When I went to do my lines, it flowed easily."

In an astonishing breakthrough performance, Taylor-Joy brings authenticity and conviction to a character undergoing physical and emotional turmoil as she grapples with a Puritan adolescence in the remote wilderness. The actress — who admits she skipped teenage life because she moved around so much in her youth — experienced the pains of growing up through her own character. "In that world they knew so little about what was changing hormonally in the body; you were taught to hide your sexuality or pretend maturity wasn't happening," she says. "I just tried to be true to her situation and accept that her feelings were valid. Every time a feeling comes up, Thomasin has to put it away in a drawer."

Taylor-Joy was mesmerized by Thomasin's plight— long after production wrapped she found herself carrying her character's hair ribbons in her bag wherever she traveled. "She's this fiery soul concealed under so many layers," she says. "And I'm not just talking about the costumes. She doesn't understand the Puritan life — whenever she tries to follow her instincts, or do something right, she's put down or told she's wrong. I think she's a wonderful person who happens to be constantly dowsed by the reality of her situation." Eggers was equally mesmerized by his young star's committed performance. "Her screen presence is electric," he remarks. "We don't know what's going on inside her, which makes her performance feel that much more haunted. But you can see every thought in her head, every flash of emotion in her eyes. She's a mature, intelligent actress who imbues her work with a weight that's beyond her years."

THE LOOK OF THE WITCH

THE WITCH is steeped in the language and imagery of classic fairy tales, hearkening back to the folklore and forest enchantment that shaped the work of the Brothers Grimm and other storytellers during the so-called Golden Age of Fairy Tales, spanning the late 19th century to the end of the First World War. This period enthralled Eggers as a child — both for the wondrous content of its primal stories and its rich illustrations from the likes of Harry Clarke and Arthur Rackham, whose style would become a considerable influence on the look of his debut feature. "Those golden age illustrators shaped my taste more than any film or filmmaker," Eggers admits.

The Golden Age of Fairy Tales is also an obsession of Jarin Blaschke, the cinematographer who shot several of Eggers' short films in addition to THE WITCH. Hailing from the Pacific Northwest, Blaschke developed an easy familiarity with the landscape and luminosity of New England, describing the look of the film as "believably yet deceptively naturalistic," and permeated with an oppressively controlled, almost inescapable dread. "We wanted the camera to pull viewers towards the horror," explains Blaschke. "Your imagination is required to complete the imagery, in a way personalizing the experience."

To cultivate the film's look, including its levels of darkness and light, the duo made research forays to Plimoth Plantation, spending extensive time with a light meter to master the darkness of the particular type of cottage that would house rural 17th-century settlers. The domestic lives of these people were illuminated by sunlight during the day and candlelight or fireplace flicker at night. THE WITCH is lit accordingly — the filmmakers used only open flames for lighting scenes, using customized, triple-wicked candles that were hand-dipped to resemble the lumpish tallow used during the period. "With the light wavering, flickering and falling away to gloom, these scenes look like they would have to people at the time," Blaschke remarks. "Combine that with so much truthful acting, costumes and production design, and you're effectively transported to New England in the 1630s."

THE ART OF THE WITCH

An authentic farmhouse based on architectural renderings discovered in the Plimoth Plantation library was recreated piecemeal by production designer Craig Lathrop in the Canadian wilds of Northern Ontario, outside a small lumber town called Kiosk. Lathrop went so far during his construction of the cabin as to enlarge the window openings by almost a third — otherwise it would have been too dark to shoot. "Craig was fanatically uncompromising about the creation of the sets, many of which were often closer to real structures," explains Eggers. "Everything that appears on camera is made from the correct and authentic building materials that a Puritan family would have used in the 1630s, including hand-riven oak clapboards and reed-thatched roofs. Authentic techniques and tools were used wherever necessary to make the world of the story more credible and authentic."

Costume designer Linda Muir (THIRTY TWO SHORT FILMS ABOUT GLENN GOULD, EXOTICA) examined archived clothing from the era at Plimoth Plantation and consulted with Stuart Peachey, the foremost expert on English common people's garments. From these models she fashioned

costumes out of wool and linen — all hand-stitched, in keeping with Eggers' meticulous commitment to period authenticity at every level of the filmmaking process. The materials were heavy and often constraining, creating challenges for the adult actors, who had to grapple with farm animals, and dense forests — and each other — during the course of filming. "I had to ask myself how these women dressed themselves every time I put on my costume," says Taylor-Joy. "You need at least two people to put these garments on. By the second week I was dressing myself, and I began to take great pride in being able to properly dress myself as a Puritan woman."

Taylor-Joy also found the costumes useful in understanding how limited the roles of women were in this society and setting. Restriction and repression were omnipresent in Puritan times — and often cumbersome on females. "What we wore was a great way to see the difference between men and women at that time," she says. "In their big, baggy trousers boys and men could do what they wanted. And then there's me, trying to run and fight in a garment that doesn't allow you room to breathe or move. I was lucky to be able to stand upright."

Very little makeup was used during the shoot. The filmmakers relied instead on dirt, bodily fluids and the natural results of physical exhaustion, lending an authentically grizzled look to William and Katherine. For the elusive shots of the witch herself, Eggers cast 90-year-old Bathsheba Garnett, who had the physiognomy to pass as an archetypal witch. Makeup artist Traci Loader focused on natural details, including grit and grime on faces, fingernails and teeth — augmenting Ms. Garnett with shadow and filth.

THE SOUND OF THE WITCH

First and foremost a horror movie, THE WITCH is steeped in the natural world, which called for an effective musical score and sound design that is equal parts awe-inspiring, transcendent and malevolent. "The sound of nature always had to be present — and big," explains Eggers. "It was about gathering the right tones and creating this dense sonic atmosphere from the sound of trees, creaking floorboards, rushing brooks and shrieking winds." The film's composer, Mark Korven, has an extensive knowledge of musical history, including sounds of the period, while also possessing an ear for the uncanny and the bizarre. He worked closely with Eggers to transform 17th-century psalm settings sung by actual Puritans into dissonant and at times hysterical atonal music that greatly enhances the film's more terrifying scenes.

Eggers originally wanted the score played by a viol consort, a sort of 17th century string quartet. Korven used viols, but also introduced Eggers to more unique period instruments like the nyckelharpa, a traditional Swedish string instrument similar to a fiddle — and the jouhikko, an ancient bowed lyre. Korven also brought in the experimental Element Choir — led by the Toronto-based Christine Duncan — to serve as the voice of the forest in the movie, intensifying nature scenes with the group's cinematic approach to vocalizing.

Korven's score is enhanced by a sound design by Adam Stein (TV's "The Strain"), who set about cultivating a minimalist, all-natural accompaniment to the film's imagery after viewing a rough cut

devoid of music. "Mark's score was powerful stuff in its own right, so I tried to think of quieter moments that would compensate for the emotion of his work," says Stein. "I spent a lot of time recording cold winds and wood-derived nature sounds, using drones for the forest scenes to create a low-frequency tension without ever taking over the scene." The result is a virtuosic use of cinematic sound that seamlessly blends with the film's enveloping atmospherics. "The sound design is a great marriage between Mark's score and Adam Stein's incredible sound work," Eggers insists. "There are times in the movie where the sound design becomes the score and the score becomes the sound design."

SHOOTING THE WITCH

THE WITCH filmed for 26 days in Northern Ontario in an area overgrown with forest — one bearing a remarkable resemblance to the New England woodlands of Eggers' childhood. Trees in the region, including White Pines and Hemlocks, exuded scope, awe and depth and became screen characters in their own right. Because there is so much logging in Canada, crewmembers had to travel off the map to find pristine forest land, making logistics difficult, including the delivery of cast and crew members, who stayed in motels in the nearby town of Mattawa. "It was a remote and difficult location with no wi-fi or cell phone service and very few toilets," Eggers recalls. "It created a kind of magic in its own way because we were desperate and afraid people trying to function in the wilderness just like the Puritan family at the heart of the film."

A late-spring shoot segued into the warmer months of summer, but snow remained on the ground, prompting cast and crew to blanket deep drifts with peat moss. Larger drifts were blown away with high-pressure fire hoses. Trees had begun blossoming in the region, compromising the story's autumnal setting of dying leaves, prompting Eggers and company — including the actors — to hand-pick newer buds in order to preserve the authenticity of a barren forest. The film's primary location — the family's cabin — sat in a picturesque clearing with a strong, almost overbearing tree line suggesting a border between civilization and the terrifying unknown. For exterior shots, Blaschke shot in actual gloom as much as possible. "The setting and tone would have been destroyed if we'd shot on sunny days," says Blaschke. "No amount of color correction in post-production can replicate authentic gloom. Faking it would have undermined the truthfulness we sought throughout all aspects of filming."

Blaschke shot with the Arri Alexa "Arriraw" with a 4x3 sensor using rehoused Cooke lenses from the 1950s and '60s, which distorted background shots into a globular swirl, "almost as if you're watching the film through a crystal ball," he comments. The team shot in a 1:66 aspect ratio to give the frame more height so the woods would appear taller and more imposing while providing deeper intimacy and claustrophobia in the interiors.

The production had to constantly juggle the shooting schedule around the elements. "It was a tough shoot," admits Eggers. "We were chasing bad weather all the time and constantly rescheduling exterior shots — it was a nightmare." Adds Blaschke: "When the sun does appear in the movie, 90 percent of the time it can be justified by the story, or even heighten the story, as when Thomasin and Caleb experience brief fortune hunting wild game in the forest. Then all goes to hell again as the clouds rolled in."



Relation obert Eggers (Writer-Director) is a Brooklyn-based writer and director. Originally from New Hampshire, Eggers got his professional start directing and designing experimental and classical theatre in New York City. Eggers eventually transitioned to film, directing several short films, and throughout his twenties, worked extensively as a designer for film, television, print, theater and dance. THE WITCH, his feature film debut as writer and director, won the Directing Award in the U.S. Dramatic category at the 2015 Sundance Film Festival, where it premiered to critical acclaim. Eggers is currently in development on the medieval epic fantasy THE KNIGHT, with Jeff Robinov's Studio 8 and Parts & Labor. Also on his slate is a reimagining

of F.W. Murnau's classic NOSFERATU.

Jay Van Hoy (Producer) and Lars Knudsen (Producer) are producing partners in directordriven, collaborative filmmaking whose New York-based film and TV production company Parts & Labor was established in 2004. Integral to the company's vision is an unwavering dedication to each project, respect for the process, and a true love of film. Previous Parts & Labor productions include Mike Mills' BEGINNERS starring Ewan McGregor and Christopher Plummer (which won the Academy Award for Best Supporting Actor for Plummer); Aaron Katz's COLD WEATHER; Ira Sachs' KEEP THE LIGHTS ON; Kelly Reichardt's OLD JOY; David Lowery's AIN'T THEM BODIES SAINTS, starring Rooney Mara, Casey Affleck and Ben Foster; photojournalist Shaul Schwarz's documentary NARCO CULTURA; and Andrew Dosunmu's MOTHER OF GEORGE. In 2014, Parts & Labor released Ira Sachs' critically acclaimed LOVE IS STRANGE starring John Lithgow and Alfred Molina through Sony Pictures Classics, and Adam Rapp's LOITERING WITH INTENT starring Marisa Tomei and Sam Rockwell through The Orchard. Robert Edwards' WHEN I LIVE MY LIFE OVER AGAIN starring Christopher Walken and Amber Heard is currently in post-production. Additionally Parts & Labor founded Creative Alliance, an international development and production company based in Copenhagen, with some of Scandinavia's most prominent filmmakers. Through this partnership, Parts & Labor is currently in development on projects from Danish filmmakers Lone Scherfig and Per Fly, among others. In addition to the Creative Alliance endeavors, Parts & Labor is developing the next films from Andrea Arnold, Bill Paxton and Joshua Marston.

Jodi Redmond (Producer, Code Red Productions) is a former professional dancer and arts educator whose production experience in film and television began when she conceived and signed deals on three reality television series and the web drama "Gotham: The Series," which was nominated for an Emmy Award. Recent work includes the multi-award winning feature film FRAY and CRAZY BEATS STRONG EVERY TIME, which premiered at the 2011 Sundance Film Festival. In 2012, Jodi took part in the Trans-Atlantic Partners Fellowship in collaboration with IFP and IFP's 2013 No Borders international co-production market. She currently has two television series in development, including the North American version of "Rugby Motors," which aired on prime-time as South Africa's first mockumentary-style workplace sitcom. Jodi received her graduate degree from Harvard University.

Daniel Bekerman (Producer, Scythia Films) is based in Canada and has broad experience in creative producing, financing and service production. THE PIN, a WWII-set love story, and

THE HUSBAND, directed by Bruce McDonald, were theatrically released in 2014. BANG BANG BABY, a musical directed by Jeffrey St. Jules, starring Jane Levy, Justin Chatwin and Peter Stormare, won the Best Canadian First Feature Film Award at the Toronto International Film Festival. PAY THE GHOST, directed by Uli Edel and starring Nicolas Cage, is currently in post-production. Currently in production is THE PEOPLE GARDEN, written and directed by Nadia Litz and starring Dree Hemingway and Pamela Anderson.

Rodrigo Teixeira (Producer), Lourenço Sant'Anna (Executive Producer) and Sophie Mas (Executive Producer) are producers at RT Features. Since 2008, the company has focused on developing, producing and financing international projects. RT's first English-language film, Noah Baumbach's FRANCES HA, starring Greta Gerwig and Adam Driver, was selected for several film festivals, including Telluride, Toronto, New York and Berlin. RT's other films include NIGHT MOVES, directed by Kelly Reichardt, LOVE IS STRANGE by Ira Sachs, and MISTRESS AMERICA by Noah Baumbach. Upcoming projects include Gaspar Noé's LOVE and James Gray forthcoming sci-fi thriller. In 2014, RT announced a venture with Sikelia Productions, launching a fund to finance and produce projects by emerging filmmakers. Rodrigo Teixeira is the founder, CEO and producer at the company while Sophie Mas and Lourenço Sant'Anna serve as Executive Producers on all projects.

Michael Sackler (Executive Producer) and Julia Godzinskaya (Executive Producer) are producers at Rooks Nest Entertainment. Since establishing the company in 2010, Michael Sackler has produced or executive produced ten feature films, including Sally El Hosaini's debut MY BROTHER THE DEVIL, Joanna Hogg's EXHIBITION, Gillian Robespierre's OBVIOUS CHILD, starring Jenny Slate, and Francesca Gregorini's THE TRUTH ABOUT EMANUEL starring Jessica Biel, Alfred Molina and Kaya Scodelario. Prior to RNE, Michael worked at Miramax and BSkyB as well as in the non-profit sector. Julia Godzinskaya joined Rooks Nest in early 2011 to help build the company's slate and continues to oversee all production and finance projects. She produced MY BROTHER THE DEVIL and executive produced THE TRUTH ABOUT EMANUEL, Lance Edmands' critically acclaimed BLUEBIRD, EXHIBITION, and OBVIOUS CHILD, which was distributed by A24 in North America. Prior to Rooks Nest, Julia was an assistant producer for James Wilson at JW Films/Big Talk Productions, where she worked on Joe Cornish's ATTACK THE BLOCK, Jonathan Glazer's UNDER THE SKIN, Sophie Fienne's THE PERVERT'S GUIDE TO IDEOLOGY and helped develop a number of feature films. Before moving to London, she worked at the William Morris Endeavor Agency as a trainee under Christopher Donnelly in the Motion Picture Literary Department.

Alex Sagalchik (Executive Producer) is founding producer at Mott Street Pictures. After receiving a BA from USC, Alex began his film career in the talent department of Endeavor. After a brief stint at Vogue Magazine he went on to form Mott Street Pictures in 2010. His first feature as executive producer, 28 HOTEL ROOMS, premiered at the 2012 Sundance Film Festival and became one of the final films acquired by Adam Yauch for Oscilloscope Laboratories. The following year, Alex produced the psychological drama THE TRUTH ABOUT EMANUEL starring Jessica Biel and Alfred Molina. The film premiered in competition at Sundance and was released theatrically in early 2014. Most recently, Alex produced the Tribeca Film Festival Competition title LOITERING

WITH INTENT, starring Sam Rockwell and Marisa Tomei. Alex is currently in post-production on Justin Tipping's KICKS. He is also developing the big screen adaptation of the young adult novel HERE LIES BRIDGET.

Chris Columbus (Executive Producer) and Eleanor Columbus (Executive Producer) are producers at Maiden Voyage Pictures. For over twenty-five years, Academy Award® nominated filmmaker Chris Columbus has written, directed and produced some of the most successful box-office hits, establishing him as a major force in contemporary Hollywood. Columbus is the masterful filmmaker behind several of the most revered and successful literary adaptations of the HARRY POTTER series, as the director and producer of the first three blockbuster films. As the director of HARRY POTTER AND THE SORCERER'S STONE, the first film based on J.K. Rowling's monumentally successful book series, Columbus delivered a film that was equally satiating to both readers and fans, while capturing the essence of the beloved characters. He cast newcomers Daniel Radcliffe, Emma Watson and Rupert Grint in the leading roles, demonstrating his facility for nurturing and cultivating young talent. The film triumphed at the box office and Columbus followed the film as director and producer of HARRY POTTER AND THE CHAMBER OF SECRETS in 2002, and as producer of the third film of the series, HARRY POTTER AND THE PRISONER OF AZKABAN in 2005. All three films went on to collectively gross over \$2.6 billion worldwide. Columbus produced the highly successful family/adventure comedy NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM, and its sequel NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM: BATTLE OF THE SMITHSONIAN. Other film credits include: the 2005 screen adaptation of the Pulitzer Prize winning Broadway musical RENT; STEPMOM, starring Julia Roberts and Susan Sarandon; NINE MONTHS with Hugh Grant and Julianne Moore; MRS. DOUBTFIRE, starring Robin Williams and Sally Field; ONLY THE LONELY, based on his original screenplay, and the worldwide hits HOME ALONE and HOME ALONE 2: LOST IN NEW YORK. In 2011, Columbus released his latest blockbuster hit, THE HELP, starring Emma Stone, Bryce Dallas Howard, Allison Janney, Sissy Spacek, Jessica Chastain and Viola Davis under his 1492 Pictures banner. At the 84th Academy Awards, THE HELP was nominated for Best Supporting Actress and Best Picture Academy Awards, with Octavia Spencer winning the award for Best Actress in a Supporting Role for her portrayal of the character Minny Jackson. To date, the film has grossed over \$212 million worldwide.

Eleanor Columbus began her career as an assistant to writer/director Peter Glanz on his debut feature, THE LONGEST WEEK, starring Jason Bateman, Olivia Wilde, and Billy Crudup. Columbus then went on to work under producer Neda Armanian at Armanian Pictures on such films as Sam Shepard's short, INDIANAPOLIS, with Bill Pullman and Gabourey Sidibe. Additionally, Columbus worked on the 2013 comedy THE INTERNSHIP starring Vince Vaughn and Owen Wilson. In February of 2013 Eleanor assumed the position of Co-Chairman of Maiden Voyage Pictures, a company that partially finances and produces independent feature films. Maiden Voyage's first project LITTLE ACCIDENTS premiered at the 2014 Sundance Film Festival. The film is written and directed by Sara Colangelo and stars Elizabeth Banks, Chloe Sevingy and Josh Lucas. Columbus serves as an executive producer on the film. Columbus is executive producing MEDITERRANEA, which is Maidens Voyage's second feature film. The film is written and directed by Jonas Carpignano. Eleanor is a graduate of New York University's Tisch School of the Arts.

Jonathan Bronfman (Executive Producer) is a Toronto-based film producer and entrepreneur. He is the founder of JoBro Productions Inc., a company that specializes in the financing, development and production of contemporary film projects and JoBro Film Finance Ltd., which provides short-term bridge loans and financial consultation to independent productions. Jonathan's past credits include Executive Producer on THE CALLING and EXTRATERRESTRIAL. Forthcoming films include TOTAL FRAT MOVIE and RACE, the Jesse Owens biopic starring Jason Sudeikis. He recently produced BANG BANG BABY and is in production on THE PEOPLE GARDEN. He received a Bachelor of Commerce from the Desautels Faculty of Management at McGill University.

Thomas Benski (Executive Producer) and Lucas Ochoa (Executive Producer) are producers with Pulse Films, an integrated production company that produces award-winning feature films, television, commercials, music videos and branded content. Focused on director-driven storytelling, Pulse has offices in London, New York, Los Angeles and Paris. Pulse's work and talent pool has been recognized across all disciplines and has been both nominated for and won many creative and industry awards including GRAMMYs, BAFTAs, MTV Video Music Awards and prizes at the Sundance and South By Southwest Film Festivals. Pulse has produced multiple award-winning films including LCD Soundsystem documentary SHUT UP AND PLAY THE HITS, Paramount Pictures' Katy Perry documentary PART OF ME, Blur documentary NO DISTANCE LEFT TO RUN and WEREWOLVES ACROSS AMERICA. Other theatrical releases include the Nick Cave documentary 20,000 DAYS ON EARTH, THE POSSIBILITIES ARE ENDLESS with Edwyn Collins, and WHO IS DAYANI CRISTAL? starring Gael García Bernal. As a distributor Pulse is set to release the Kevin Smith endorsed dark comedy THE DIRTIES across the UK & Ireland. Pulse has an esteemed record of producing award-winning TV programming across factual and entertainment formats, reality and documentary. Productions include "When Björk Met Attenborough" (Channel 4), "Take That: Look Back Don't Stare" (ITV1), "Sleeping with the Family" (MTV), "Payday" (Channel 4), and the forthcoming ITV1 primetime docu-soap series "The Cruise Ship."

Alexandra Johnes (Executive Producer) is a primetime Emmy-winning producer who has worked most notably on feature documentaries for acclaimed documentary directors Alex Gibney, Eugene Jarecki, Jehane Noujaim and Lucy Walker. Johnes' documentaries have received several awards and nominations, including an Oscar nomination for Jehane Noujaim's THE SQUARE, the Grand Jury Prize and Audience Award at the Sundance Film Festival, a DGA award, several Peabody Awards, and several Primetime Emmys.

Other recent films include MEA MAXIMA CULPA: SILENCE IN THE HOUSE OF GOD, THE HOUSE I LIVE IN, THE LAST GLADIATORS, RAFEA: SOLAR MAMA, REAGAN, MAGIC TRIP: KEN KESEY'S SEARCH FOR A KOOL PLACE, CLIENT 9: THE RISE AND FALL OF ELIOT SPITZER, CASINO JACK AND THE UNITED STATES OF MONEY, MY TRIP TO AL-QAEDA and FREAKONOMICS.

Production and distribution partners on her films have included Magnolia Pictures, Participant Media, Netflix Originals, Disney, A&E, ITVS, BBC, ZDF/ARTE, Optimum Releasing and HBO. From 2007 – 2012, Alexandra ran Alex Gibney's company, Jigsaw Productions, managing all aspects of development and production. Johnes is currently VP of Development & Production for Rampante where she is overseeing creative development and production of documentaries and series in

partnership with Time Inc. THE WITCH is her first endeavor into producing fiction; her next fiction project in the pipeline is with director Jen McGowan (Kelly & Cal).

Alexandra is a graduate of NYU's Tisch School of the Arts and a former child actress. She is a frequent contributor to film labs and workshops, including Sundance and Film Independent and enjoys teaching and mentoring.

Jarin Blaschke (Director of Photography) was born in central Oregon and spent his teenage years in New York City. Prior to THE WITCH, Blaschke's work has been a mainstay at premier film festivals — three films he photographed premiered at the Sundance Film Festival in 2007. He subsequently attended the Sundance Directors Lab in 2008, working with directors Moon Molson and Dee Rees (PARIAH). Blaschke's feature film BABYGIRL premiered at the 2012 Tribeca Film Festival, and FRAY, another film he did the cinematographer for, found critical acclaim that same year, winning three grand jury prizes at festivals. I BELIEVE IN UNICORNS premiered at South by Southwest and won the Best Cinematography prize at First Time Fest. Blaschke has been collaborating with Robert Eggers since 2008, with the short films "Tell Tale Heart" and "Brothers." Early on, they developed their mutual sensibility through a number of other collaborations. Between films, Blaschke collaborates with commercial clients including Dior, Heineken, Converse, Claritin, Reebok, Atlantic Records and others.

Mark Korven (Composer) grew up in the Canadian Prairies and is currently an award-winning Toronto-based composer of music for film and television, including the cult sci-fi horror feature CUBE, the psychological horror feature CRUEL & UNUSUAL and the gripping documentary SHAKE HANDS WITH THE DEVIL. He has worked with Canadian directors including Patricia Rozema, Deepa Mehta and Vincenzo Natale. Mark also plays many instruments from all over the world, such as the 14th-century Swedish nyckelharpa, which features prominently in THE WITCH.

Adam Stein (Sound Designer) started his career in music before progressing into film in 2009. He has performed a myriad of disciplines within the sound department on over 50 projects. By working with productions at the early stages of development, Adam is able to design an overall soundscape that brings auditory life to a story, its creator's vision, and its blueprint. His goal is to compliment the film's elements and build upon the life that the film has already revealed. To Adam, the most genuine and effective sound design is that which is felt and not heard. Through his career, Adam has worked with such talents as Guillermo Del Toro, Donald Sutherland, Brad Peyton, Bruce McDonald, Jon Cassar, William Steinkamp, and Roland Joffe. He has numerous award nominations, including his most recent Primetime Emmy nomination for Outstanding Sound Editing for "Texas Rising."

Linda Muir (Costume Design) is an award-winning costume designer for film, television and theatre for over thirty-five years. She has designed costumes for a wide array of characters in projects as varied as Steven Shainberg's contemporary sci-fi film RUPTURE, starring Noomi Rapace, Lesley Manville and Peter Stormare and the period biography THIRTY-TWO SHORT FILMS ABOUT GLENN GOULD, directed by Francois Girard. Other works include Atom Egoyan's EXOTICA and John Greyson's LILIES, for which she won Canadian Genie Awards for Best

Costume Design. Other feature-film credits include LONG DAYS JOURNEY INTO NIGHT, WHEN NIGHT IS FALLING, DOG PARK, ALL HAT, FOOLPROOF and JACOB TWO TWO MEETS THE HOODED FANG. From 1975 to 1991, she designed for the theatre, winning Dora Mavor Moore Awards for Outstanding Costume Design for productions of Tamara and Jump. Her television work includes "XVIII," "The Associates," "Little Men" and three seasons of "The Eleventh Hour." She is currently designing costumes for werewolves and witches on the third season of the series "Bitten," starring Laura Vandevoort.

Louise Ford (Editor) worked as a journalist in London before moving to New York and becoming a film editor. Prior to THE WITCH, she cut THE HEART MACHINE (with John Gallagher Jr and Kate Lyn Sheil), which was nominated for the Grand Jury Prize at SXSW 2014. She also previously collaborated with director Robert Eggers on his short films "The Tell-Tale Heart" and "Brothers."

Kharmel Cochrane (Casting Director) has worked in casting for just over 10 years, having first started casting for commercials and music videos at age 18. After 3 years assisting and working on award winning films such as Ridley Scott's PROMETHEUS, THE IRON LADY, and the Oscar award winning THE KING'S SPEECH, Kharmel set up her own company in 2011. Since then, Kharmel has carved a reputation for discovering new talent, as well as working with up and coming directors in film. Recent credits include LILTING, which premiered at Sundance, and Guy Myhill's THE GOOB, which won a BIFA and Best Film at Dinard.

Kharmel continues to cast award winning commercials for stellar Directors such as Daniel Wolfe, Frederik Bond and David Wilson, with features with THE BUREAU due for release in 2016.



ABOUT THE CAST

nya Taylor-Joy (Thomasin) recently completed filming the Ridley Scott-produced science-fiction thriller MORGAN alongside Kate Mara, Paul Giamatti, Toby Jones and Boyd Holbrook. Directed by Luke Scott, the story centers on a corporate risk-management consultant who is summoned to a remote research lab to determine whether or not to terminate an at-risk artificial being. She also recently completed filming on the independent feature, VIKINGS QUEST, and Series Two of the fantasy-drama series ATLANTIS for the BBC. Last year, she was seen in Mark Waters' VAMPIRE ACADEMY: BLOOD SISTERS. She also appeared in the crime-drama ENDEAVOUR for ITV.

Ralph Ineson (William) is a veteran actor of film, television and theater. Known most recently for his roles in KINGSMAN: THE SECRET SERVICE, GUARDIANS OF THE GALAXY, THE SELFISH GIANT, HBO's "Game of Thrones," Ridley Scott's ROBIN HOOD and the Harry Potter series. Ralph has also appeared in numerous British television series including TITANIC, THE IT CROWD, MERLIN, and series regular 'Chris Finch' in THE OFFICE. He will next be seen in Martin McDonagh's new play HANGMEN at The Royal Court directed by Matthew Dunster.

Kate Dickie (Katherine) won accolades for her lead role in Andrea Arnold's RED ROAD, for which she won the Best Actress prize at the British Independent Film Awards. Notable feature film credits include COUPLE IN A HOLE, THE SILENT STORM, opposite Damian Lewis, FOR THOSE IN PERIL, SHELL, FILTH, SOMERSTOWN and Ridley Scott's PROMETHEUS. On television she appears in a leading role in the BBC ensemble miniseries "One of Us," the ITV Encore production "The Frankenstein Chronicles," opposite Sean Bean, and the occult thriller "Midwinter of the Spirit." She also appeared as the crazy woman Lysa Arryn in Seasons Two and Four of HBO's "Game of Thrones." She appears in recurring or guest roles in "The Pillars of the Earth," "Five Daughters," "By Any Means," "The Escape Artist," "Injustice," "Dive," "New Tricks," "Garrow's Law," "He Kills Coppers," "Taggart" and "The Vice." In 2000 she was nominated for a BAFTA (Scotland) Best Actress award for the BBC drama series "Tinsel Town." Highlights in her considerable stage career include the London production of David Cromer's award-winning OUR TOWN as well as AALST, ANY GIVEN DAY and ELECTRA, for which she was nominated Best Actress at the U.K. Stage Awards. She trained at the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama, now the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland.

Harvey Scrimshaw (Caleb) hails from Nottingham in the United Kingdom, where he has appeared on stage and in short films, commercials and advertisements. THE WITCH is his first featured role. He enjoys football, comedy, cycling and swimming.

Ellie Grainger (Mercy) hails from Nottingham in the United Kingdom, where she attends primary school. She has appeared in the feature film THE LIST (2012) and the television dramas "The Village" and "Coronation Street." She has appeared on stage at the Royal Exchange Theatre in Manchester and enjoys reading, swimming and dancing.

Lucas Dawson (Jonas) makes his film debut in THE WITCH.



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