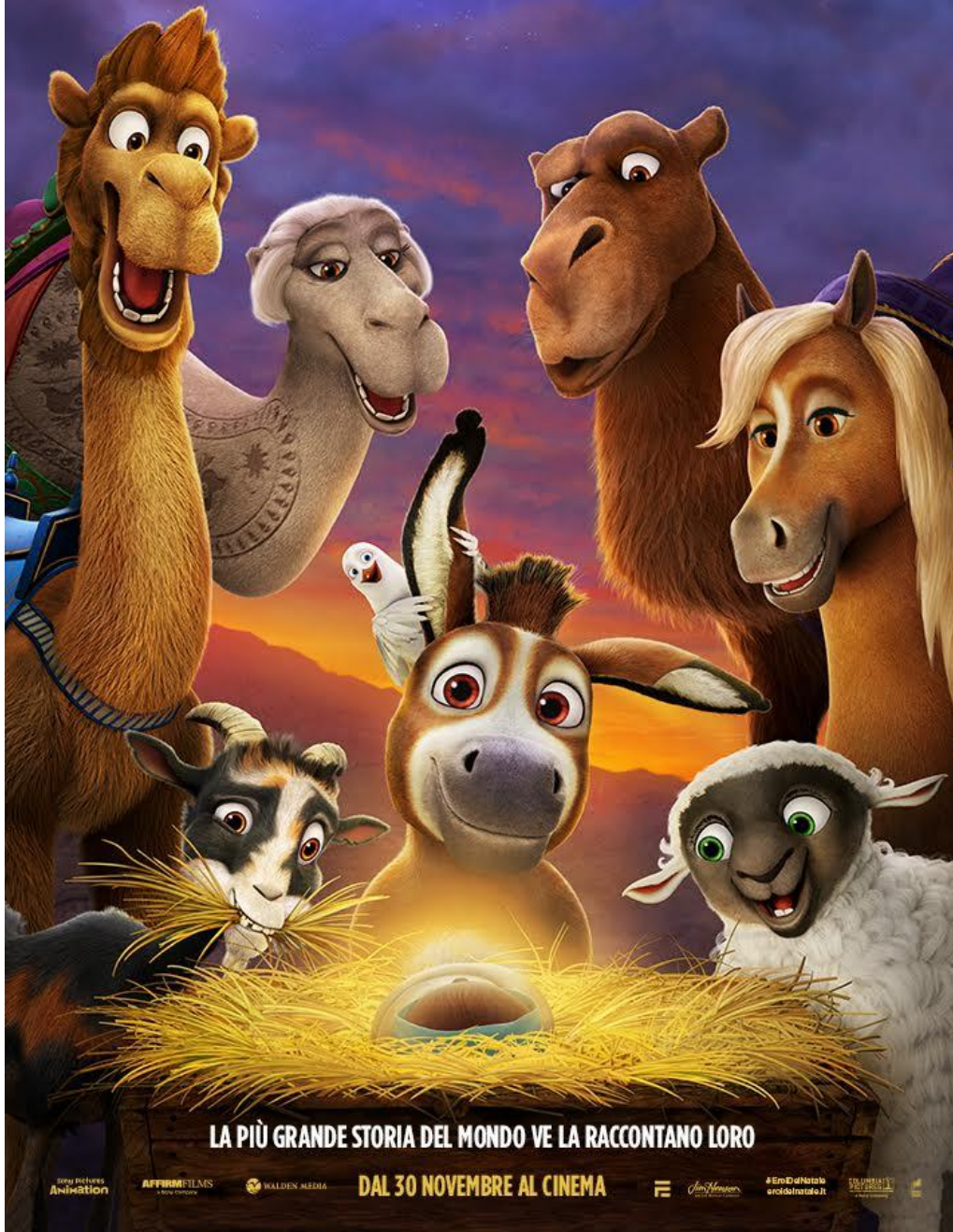


# GLI EROI DEL NATALE



LA PIÙ GRANDE STORIA DEL MONDO VE LA RACCONTANO LORO

Sony Pictures  
Animation

AFFIRM FILMS  
A Sony Company

WALDEN MEDIA

DAL 30 NOVEMBRE AL CINEMA

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Ami Animation

#Eroi del Natale  
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COMPTON  
DIGITAL

**Affirm Films e Sony Pictures Animation** presentano  
in associazione con **Walden Media e The Jim Henson Company**  
una produzione **Franklin Entertainment**  
un film **Sony Pictures Animation**



Diretto da **Timothy Reckart**

Prodotto da **Jennifer Magee-Cook, p.g.a.**  
Produttori esecutivi **DeVon Franklin, Brian Henson, Lisa Henson**  
Sceneggiatura di **Carlos Kotkin**  
Da una storia di **Simon Moore e Carlos Kotkin**  
Musica di **John Paesano**  
Montaggio di **Pamela Ziegenhagen-Shefland**  
Scenografia di **Craig Elliott**  
Art director **Sean Eckols**  
Character Designer **David Colman, Patrick Mate**

Distribuito da **Warner Bros. Entertainment Italia**

Durata del film: **86 minuti**

Uscita italiana: **30 novembre 2017**

**Materiale stampa:** [www.cristianacaimmi.com/GEDN.zip](http://www.cristianacaimmi.com/GEDN.zip)

**Trailer:** [www.cristianacaimmi.com/GEDN\\_Trailer](http://www.cristianacaimmi.com/GEDN_Trailer)

**Senior Publicity Manager consultant** - Ufficio Stampa Film

Cristiana Caimmi: [cristianacaimmi.press@gmail.com](mailto:cristianacaimmi.press@gmail.com)

**Publicity Manager Sony Pictures** - Warner Bros. Entertainment Italia

Antonio Viespoli: [antonio.viespoli@warnerbros.com](mailto:antonio.viespoli@warnerbros.com)

## **Production Information**

In AFFIRM Films and Sony Pictures Animation's *The Star*, a small but brave donkey named Bo yearns for a life beyond his daily grind at the village mill. One day Bo finds the courage to break free and ends up befriending newlyweds Joseph and Mary. Mary's kindness soon sets Bo on the adventure of his dreams. On his journey, he teams up with Ruth, a loveable sheep who has lost her flock, and Dave, a dove with lofty aspirations. Along with three wisecracking camels and some eccentric stable animals, Bo and his new friends follow the Star and become unlikely heroes in the greatest story ever told – the first Christmas.

The voice cast is led by Steven Yeun (Bo the donkey), Gina Rodriguez (Mary), Zachary Levi (Joseph), Keegan-Michael Key (Dave the dove), Kelly Clarkson (Leah the horse), Anthony Anderson (Zach the goat), Aidy Bryant (Ruth the sheep), Ving Rhames (Thaddeus the dog), Gabriel Iglesias (Rufus the dog), Patricia Heaton (Edith the cow), Kristin Chenoweth (Abby the Mouse), Christopher Plummer (King Herod), and Tracy Morgan (Felix) and Tyler Perry (Cyrus) and Oprah Winfrey (Deborah) as the three camels.

*The Star* is directed by Academy Award®-nominated writer/director Timothy Reckart; executive-produced by DeVon Franklin, Brian Henson and Lisa Henson; and produced by Jennifer Magee-Cook. The story is by Simon Moore and Carlos Kotkin; and the screenplay is by Carlos Kotkin. *The Star* is presented by AFFIRM Films and Sony Pictures Animation in association with Walden Media, Franklin Entertainment, and The Jim Henson Company.

## **ABOUT THE FILM**

How do you tell one of the most famous stories ever recorded and bring it to the screen in a fresh, new way? This was the challenge facing the filmmakers behind *The Star*, AFFIRM Films and Sony Pictures Animation's family film about the events leading up to the very first Christmas.

"It's the Nativity story from the point of view of the animals, and in this film, we follow Bo, who is the donkey that carries Mary and Joseph to Bethlehem," explains director Timothy Reckart.

"We looked at it as the greatest story *never* told," kids executive producer DeVon Franklin. Having previously produced the faith-based hit *Miracles from Heaven* and overseen the blockbuster *Heaven Is for Real* as an executive at Columbia Pictures, Franklin was inspired to translate the meaning of the story beyond the literal telling into a journey about the choices we all make in our daily lives that have an impact and, eventually, fit into the framework of the human story at the heart of it all. "It says a lot about teamwork, stepping outside of their own somewhat narrow perspectives and working together. Our hero, Bo the donkey, needs all of the other animals to help to become successful. It's also about hope—you've got to believe in the impossible for it to happen."

"It's about how something that seems small can be bigger than it looks on the outside. Bo has been looking to do something important, and he starts seeking that in a self-aggrandizing way," says Reckart. "Along the journey, by doing a small thing – helping these two people, which, for all he knows, are just some random couple – he winds up doing the most important thing he could ever achieve. Greatness comes in the most humble appearance, which is the

message of the Christmas story itself.”

It was the world’s familiarity with the story that excited the director. “Most people have some knowledge of it, and that presents a wonderful opportunity,” says Reckart. “Of course, the challenge is that people may feel that they know the story, they’ve seen it. But we can make the most of it by letting some of those elements take place off-screen, and look at what might have been going on in the background, or ask questions like ‘What were the camels doing at that moment?’ That awareness of the story allows us to veer off into the corners and shine a light on other things going on and tell new stories in the midst of the familiar.”

“We found opportunities for fun and invention,” says Franklin. “Audiences aren’t coming for the documentary or the historical exposition – they’re coming for enjoyment and creativity. I think we found ways to present Mary and Joseph as recognizable characters who laugh, who are afraid, who find themselves at the center of this amazing story and display their humanity throughout it all.”

### **ABOUT THE MUSIC**

Grammy winner Mariah Carey wrote and performs the title track for *The Star*’s soundtrack, which is also loaded with music from some of today’s top artists. “What would a Christmas movie be without Christmas music?” says DeVon Franklin. The soundtrack for the film features a compilation of Christmas classics old and new that not only perfectly fit the film, but make the perfect soundtrack for the season.

Leading the way is Mariah Carey. One of the most popular and acclaimed performers of all time, with multiple Grammy Awards, 20 World Music Awards, 11 American Music Awards, 32 Billboard Music Awards, and 18 #1 hits – a record

for a female solo artist – Carey’s love for the season is well-known and reflected in her two bestselling Christmas albums. For “The Star,” the lead single and title track for the film, Carey reteamed with Marc Shaiman, a Grammy-, Emmy-, and Tony-winner whose five Oscar® nominations show his range – they include nods for his original songs “A Wink and a Smile” from *Sleepless in Seattle* and “Blame Canada” from *South Park: Bigger, Longer and Uncut*. With Carey, Shaiman previously co-wrote and co-produced tracks for Carey’s album “Merry Christmas II You.” Carey also recorded, along with Whitney Houston, “When You Believe,” the Academy Award® winner for Best Original Song for *The Prince of Egypt*.

“Mariah Carey is nothing less than a living legend. That’s why, from day one, when we talked about the music, the number one name was Mariah Carey,” Franklin continues. “Now, we can all dream, but when Mariah said yes to the film, all of us were excited and we were shocked – as much as we thought it would be great, you don’t always get your first choice. She came to the studio with Marc Shaiman and I showed them a few scenes from the movie. Well, as soon as I finish showing them the scenes, they go into a booth with a piano and start writing. Less than 48 hours later, Mariah calls and says, ‘Can you come down to the studio? We’ve finished the song.’ When I heard it, it is truly one of the most inspirational songs I have ever heard. And that is the power of Mariah Carey and Marc Shaiman. She felt the inspiration of the film: there still is hope if we only look up.”

“This song is going to inspire you; it is going to bring you hope,” says Franklin. “I don’t think I’ve ever heard a Mariah Carey song like this.”

“The song was inspired by the beautiful way in which the story of Christmas is told in the film,” says Carey. “I thought about the star of Bethlehem while writing

this song, but also about following your heart, following your dreams.”

“I’ve loved Christmas since I was a kid,” Carey continues, “even when we didn’t have any money and my mother would wrap fruit for a Christmas gift. It wasn’t about the gift – I just loved the spirit of Christmas.”

“When Mariah Carey walks in a room, you know ‘a star’ has arrived,” says Shaiman. “But when it came time to co-write our song for *The Star*, she became only a great songwriter intent on getting her love of Christmas into the words and music. And when our song was complete, she proceeded to sing a thrilling vocal, filled with that passion. It was my honor to be able to share and help illuminate her joy.”

The soundtrack is rounded out by Christmas songs from many of today’s top acts. Fifth Harmony joins with “Can You See,” another original song for the movie. Among the Christmas classics, Kirk Franklin performs a reinterpretation of “We Three Kings,” Casting Crowns turn in “His Eye Is on the Sparrow,” and Yolanda Adams records “O Holy Night.”

## **ABOUT THE CHARACTERS AND THE VOICE CAST**

“Watching this cast work was really inspiring. The thing that really surprised me was how each of these artists approached their particular roles,” says Reckart. Oprah Winfrey, Tyler Perry, and Tracy Morgan all became the perfect counterpoints to each other – Tyler as the self-appointed leader who thinks he’s smarter than he actually is; Tracy as his belligerent, hilarious brother; and Oprah as the wise camel who is the only one who may actually see what’s going on.

Kelly Clarkson plays her sleep-deprived horse in a way we can all recognize – like it's 2 a.m., you're hanging with your friends, and suddenly everything is hilarious in a way it isn't in the mid-afternoon. The actors all made these characters leap off the page."



**BO (Steven Yeun)**

*Small donkey, big dreams*

He's a pint-sized donkey who wholeheartedly believes he is destined for a bigger purpose...greatness awaits him outside the mill walls!

Steven Yeun of "The Walking Dead" brings to life this little donkey with a big heart. "Even though Bo is in a pretty dire situation, he's pretty hopeful," he says. "He has really large dreams. But as his plans start to go awry, he starts to doubt himself and take back all of that ambition he started with... but the universe will tell him in other ways that he's just as important as he ever thought he was. He finds something within himself bigger than anything he ever imagined."

It's a role that Yeun could recognize. "Bo is an underdog," he says. "He sometimes puts limitations on himself. I saw that in myself – I was an immigrant to this country, and there were limitations that I would place on myself based on what I saw. Bo comes to a full realization that he has much more potential than he thinks he has, and that's something I very much relate to."

"I think Bo is a lot like us," says Reckart. "He's a character that dreams of doing something remarkable, and he knows in his heart that he's meant to do something great. I feel everyone has a conviction that they are here to do something, that they're here for a reason. Bo's just trying to figure out what. He starts out with a mistaken idea of what that is, but through his journey, he finds



his purpose. On top of everything else that this story does, I feel that drive and that individual search for purpose will resonate with everyone.”



**MARY (Gina Rodriguez)**

*Bravely embraces her destiny*

A strong, confident, and optimistic young woman who always treats others with love and kindness—especially Bo.

Golden Globe winner Gina Rodriguez, the star of “Jane the Virgin,” plays the role. She says that while you might think it would be intimidating to play a role like Mary, she turned for inspiration to the greatest role models in her life. “I think Mary’s strength exists in all women, so I pulled from my own life, from the women around me who show that kind of strength every day,” she says. “I played her like the way my mother walks and talks, and the way my sisters are with their children.”

Rodriguez was also inspired in her performance by her grandmother’s faith. “I’ve been researching this role my whole life, growing up in a very Catholic household with a grandmother who was not only super faithful, but lived by the faith and gave it to others.”



**JOSEPH (Zachary Levi)**

*First-time dad*

A humble carpenter, loyal husband, and friend to Mary, and understandably anxious about the extraordinary task before him.

Zachary Levi (*Tangled*) says that the roles of Bo and Joseph are on similar tracks. “They’re on separate journeys, but they’ve both strong-willed and independent spirits,” he says. “At first, they don’t exactly endear themselves to each other, but as they are forced together, they break each other down – their hearts soften. Joseph begins to realize that Bo is a real hero who would do everything he can, including potentially saving Joseph and Mary’s lives, and appreciates it.



**DAVE (Keegan-Michael Key)**

*The wise-cracking best friend*

A dove with a big personality and Bo’s only friend. He knows that the Royal Caravan is the place for a bird like him – if only he can keep Bo on track!

“Keegan-Michael Key brought so much energy and heart to Dave,” says Reckart. “The ‘dance of the royal dove,’ which is one of my favorite scenes, was built around some scat singing that Keegan completely improvised. He scatted for two minutes straight. It was amazing! All of us were holding our breath because we didn’t want to ruin the take!”



**RUTH (Aidy Bryant)**

*Fluffy, friendly and flocky*

An adorably smart and helpful sheep who left her flock to follow the new star in the sky. Now that she has a new friend who also thinks the star is special, she hopes to follow it together.

**THADDEUS (Ving Rhames) & RUFUS (Gabriel Iglesias)**

*Vicious palace dogs*



Thaddeus is focused on the mission. Rufus is focused on his next meal. Both are intent on hunting down Mary, Joseph, and Bo.

“Ving Rhames and Gabriel Iglesias make such a great comedic odd couple,” says Reckart. “Ving has this deep, slow voice that’s so commanding, and in comparison, Gabriel is practically chirping his lines, dancing around with this manic energy. They’re very fun to watch together.”



**CYRUS (Tyler Perry), FELIX (Tracy Morgan), DEBORAH (Oprah Winfrey)**

*The three not-so-wise camels*

Cyrus is a know-it-all, Felix is not sure if he knows anything, and Deborah is the one actually paying attention. These three will do more than just carry the Wise Men.



“*The Star* is one of the coolest ways of telling this story, because it’s so fun,” says Perry. “Just when I thought there was no other way to be able to tell the story of Christmas and the birth of Christ, here comes this incredibly genius idea to tell it through the eyes of a camel. It’s very true to the scripture, but approaches the story in a fresh, fun way that will make it entertaining and inspiring for audiences of all ages.”

“What makes this movie so unique is that it’s told with such humor – it is delightful,” says Winfrey. “I grew up going to Sunday school and know all of these stories very well, but I’ve never seen it expressed this way. If nothing else, I think it’s wonderful for families to be able to come together for an experience of being with each other and being inspired through joy and laughter.”

Winfrey and Perry both say they were inspired to join the cast by being part of a trio with Morgan. “The three of us playing these roles, playing off each other, worked well because it was great chemistry,” says Perry. “Who doesn’t love Tracy Morgan? He’s hysterical. And Oprah’s one of the funniest people – she’s always so serious, but she’s very funny. I’m telling you, she could have been a stand-up comedian – she is that funny.”



**LEAH (Kelly Clarkson), ZACH (Anthony Anderson)  
& EDITH (Patricia Heaton)**



*These animals are anything but stable*

Residents of the most famous stable in history who haven’t been able to sleep for nine months – ever since that star appeared in the sky. Zach the Goat is nervous and paranoid, Edith the Cow is cool and just wants some peace, and Leah the Horse thinks the beauty of the spotlight is worth missing some sleep.



Grammy Award winner Kelly Clarkson, who plays Leah, says that playing a character suffering from a lack of sleep was maybe not a huge stretch. “I have four children, so I’m sleep deprived,” she kids. “Also, it was cool to be able to play a horse – I own a horse, because my daughter is an equestrian. It felt like the right time to play a Southern Belle who hadn’t had sleep in nine months.”

For Clarkson, it was gratifying to play a character in a story about faith. “For me personally, it’s so important – without faith, it would be a very lonely life,” she says. “I have to have faith in something bigger, the majestic world around us. And that’s what all of these characters are looking for – they’re all looking to be part of something greater than themselves.”

“I was so surprised when I read the script, because it was funny while still honoring this wonderful, timeless story,” says Heaton. “There’s adventure and a lot of action – I think the writers did an amazing job of bringing a completely new viewpoint to a story we all love and have heard all our lives.”

And *The Star* may just be what we all need this season, Heaton continues. “It’s easy, as we all know, to get caught up in the hustle and bustle of the Christmas season,” she says. “It’s fun, it’s festive, but it can get to be overwhelming. So to be able to go to the theater with your entire family – from grandparents to the little ones and everybody in-between – and just relax and enjoy this new telling of this story is a great break for everyone to bond.”



**KING HEROD (Christopher Plummer)**

*A king, threatened and deadly*

Contemptuous ruler of Judea determined to destroy the coming newborn King and ruin the first Christmas.



**ABBY (Kristin Chenoweth)**

*Small mouse with a big mouth*

After unexpectedly being present for the moment that started it all, this little mouse has a big tale to tell.

The Tony and Emmy Award-winner Kristin Chenoweth says that in some ways she’s just like her murine counterpart. “She’s little – I can relate to that. She’s got an interesting speaking voice – I can relate to that as well. But when she just happens on this big secret, what does she do with it? Does she keep it inside? No, she runs and tells the whole town. I admire that about Abby, how different

she is from me. I know it seems like I have a big mouth and won't shut up, but I have a tendency to go into a corner and keep things to myself. There's a part of me that wishes I had a megaphone instead of feeling shy or embarrassed."



**OLD DONKEY (Kris Kristofferson)**

*Life in a mill isn't so bad...*

A curmudgeon and longtime worker at the mill — he wants Bo to stop wasting time with big dreams. But, there is something about the little donkey that even the hardest heart can't resist.



**ELIZABETH (Delilah) and ZECHARIAH (Joel McCrary)**

*Surprised and doting parents*

Mary's plain-talking cousin and her affable husband who were surprised with a baby of their own, John.

"Elizabeth is Mary's older cousin and a mama herself," says Delilah. "It's her job to convince Mary to have a very difficult conversation with Joseph. She's an encourager — Mary is going through a very tough time in her life, and Elizabeth is there to tell her that she needs to get honest with Joseph."



**CASPAR (Joel Osteen)**

*One of the wisest of men*

Having traveled far across the land to be there to greet the new king, Caspar and his two traveling companions can't believe they went to the wrong place.

## **ABOUT THE CAST**

**STEVEN YEUN** (Bo) is currently filming the lead role of Ben, a mysterious presence who enters the character Jongsu's life, in Director Lee Chang Dong's film *Burning*. *Burning* is an adaptation of the acclaimed author Haruki Murakami shot entirely in Korean.

Most recently, he joined an acclaimed cast co-starring in Joon-ho Bong's *OKJA*. *OKJA* follows a young girl named Mija who risks everything to prevent a powerful, multi-national company from kidnapping her best-friend - a massive animal for which the movie is named. Starring alongside Jake Gyllenhaal and Lily Collins, the film can now be seen on Netflix.

Yeun will also be seen starring alongside Dallas Roberts and Kerry Fox in Joe Lynch's *Mayhem*. The film tells the story of a virus that infects a corporate law office on the day attorney Derek Saunders (Yeun) is framed by a co-worker and wrongfully fired. Trapped in the quarantined building, he is forced to savagely fight for not only his job but his life. The film is currently in post-production with a to be confirmed release date.

He also starred opposite Michael Pitt, Brit Marling and Astrid Bergès-Frisbey in Mike Cahill's independent sci-fi drama, *I Origins*, which premiered at the 2014 Sundance Film festival where it earned raves and was sold in one of the biggest deals at the festival.

Best known for his starring role in the AMC smash hit "The Walking Dead" as Glenn Rhee, a role which he originated and developed into a pivotal character, becoming a favorite for both fans and critics alike for seven seasons.

Born in Seoul, South Korea and raised in the city of Troy, Michigan, Yeun began his foray into acting while studying psychology at Kalamazoo College in Kalamazoo, MI. After seeing a performance of the school's improv group, he decided to switch his focus to acting. Following graduation, Yeun moved to Chicago, where he performed with the famed Second City Theatre comedy troupe in various shows with their Touring Company. He has been a part of several improvisational / sketch comedy groups including Stir Friday Night, Hands and Detective Detective.

On stage, Yeun has a number of theatre credits including the Steppenwolf Theatre's production of "Kafka on the Shore," where he understudied the roles of Kafka and Crow. Yeun's additional television credits include appearances on "The Big Bang Theory," "Law & Order: Los Angeles," "Warehouse 13," and "NTSF:SD:SUV." He has also lent his vocal talents to the animated series "The Legend of Korra," "Voltron," "Stretch Armstrong," "Final Space," "Trollhunters," and "Three Below."

Yeun currently resides in Los Angeles with his wife and son.

Golden Globe winner **GINA RODRIGUEZ's** (Mary) profile has been rising steadily since her breakout performance as the titular character in *Filly Brown* at the Sundance Film Festival in 2012. Named the Next Big Thing and one of the Top 35 Latinos Under 35 by The Hollywood Reporter, Rodriguez continues to be



noticed for her incredible acting ability, philanthropy, producing, and *Movement Mondays*. The Los Angeles Times has referred to her as “forthright and formidable, a festival ingénue who deserves to be discussed in the same breath as Elizabeth Olsen and Jennifer Lawrence.” She was recently named by Time magazine as one of the 100 most influential people in the world and awarded Variety’s Humanitarian Award.

Rodriguez can currently be seen playing the title role on the CW series “Jane the Virgin,” which recently returned for its fourth season. It is for her work on the show that Rodriguez won the Golden Globe for Best Actress – Television Series Musical or Comedy in 2015. “Jane the Virgin” has also gained recognition and been honored with Golden Globe nomination for Best Television Series – Musical or Comedy in 2016 and 2017 and a Critics’ Choice Award for Best Comedy Series in 2015 and 2016 as well as an America Film Institute Award, People’s Choice Award and Peabody Award. The show is based on the successful Venezuelan telenovela “Juana la Virgen,” the series centers on Jane, a hard-working religious girl who, due to a series of outrageous events, is accidentally arterially inseminated. The series is from writer Jennie Snyder Urman and executive produced by Ben Silverman, Gary Pearl, and Jorge Granier.

Rodriguez will also lend her voice to Twentieth Century Fox’s animated film *Ferdinand* in which she will play a hedgehog named Una alongside John Cena, Kate McKinnon, Anthony Anderson and Daveed Diggs. Based on the beloved children’s story about a bull who would rather smell the flowers than fight, the film is scheduled to be released on December 15.

She will soon be seen in Paramount’s *Annihilation* alongside Natalie Portman, Jennifer Jason Leigh and Tessa Thompson. Written and directed by Alex

Garland (*Ex Machina*), the film will tell the story of a biologist that signs up for a dangerous, secret expedition where the laws of nature don't apply. The film will be released on February 23, 2018.

She recently wrapped production on Catherine Hardwicke's *Miss Bala*, to be released next year.

Rodriguez was recently seen on the big screen in Peter Berg's Sept. 2016 release *Deepwater Horizon* opposite Mark Wahlberg. The film details the 2010 explosion on the BP rig that resulted in the biggest oil spill in U.S. history. Gina portrayed Andrea Fleytas, the 23-year-old, who was monitoring the oil rig's safety systems in the moments before the explosion.

In addition to acting, Rodriguez is a leader in supporting and empowering women and diversity. This passion led Rodriguez to create, with her production company, I Can & I Will Productions, the first annual Marie Claire's Young Women's Honors. Young Women's Honors is a global platform that discovers, honors and celebrates women who demonstrate confidence, intelligence and leadership, that will inspire others to follow. The second annual installation of the awards show is scheduled for 2018.

Additionally, Rodriguez created another passion project, Movement Mondays which has her highlighting artists of diversity each Monday to her social media following.

Currently, Rodriguez is working on a book being published by Simon & Schuster encompassing all of the lessons she has learned from her father, Genaro

Rodriguez. The book, titled I Can And I Will: Tools My Daddy Gave Me, is expected to be released in 2018.

Rodriguez is a grand supporter of the Latino community and is actively involved with the National Hispanic Foundation for the Arts, NCLR, CHCI, NALIP and Votolatino. Additionally, she recently established her We Will Foundation, which is designed to focus on arts education and scholarship funding for the less fortunate, with the aim of empowering young woman.

Born and raised in Chicago, Gina currently lives in Los Angeles, and is a graduate of New York University's Tisch School of the Arts.

**ZACHARY LEVI's** (Joseph) exuberance and charm have made him a Hollywood first pick and a favorite among his devoted fans.

Levi was recently cast as the lead in the upcoming DC Universe film *Shazam*.

Fans are eagerly awaiting his upcoming role in *Pysch: The Movie*, playing a mysterious villain named The Thin White Duke, arriving Christmas 2017.

Last year, he had a successful run in the Broadway revival of "She Loves Me," also starring Laura Benanti and Jane Krakowski. He earned a Tony Award nomination for his portrayal of Georg in the critically acclaimed show. Previously, Levi made his Broadway debut opposite Krysta Rodriguez in the witty musical "First Date." The romantic comedy also received critical acclaim, as did Levi for the run of the show.

Levi can currently be seen in the Netflix limited drama series “Alias Grace,” as well as a brief appearance in Marvel’s new *Thor: Ragnarok*, reprising his role of Fandral the Dashing. He can also be heard reprising his role as the delightful Flynn Rider, re-teaming with Mandy Moore’s Rapunzel for Disney’s animated “Tangled” television series, currently in its second season.

Levi appeared in the NBC mini-series “Heroes Reborn,” the revamp of the fan favorite show, which premiered in the fall of 2015. This marked a return to NBC for Levi, who portrayed the beloved “Chuck” for five seasons. Levi also starred as Kipp Steadman in the lovable office comedy “Less Than Perfect” for four seasons on ABC.

On the big screen, Levi appeared in the Marvel film *Thor: The Dark World* as the cunning and charming Fandral the Dashing. Levi also commanded the lead role opposite Mandy Moore in Disney’s twist on its classic Rapunzel, entitled *Tangled*. The Oscar®-nominated film was a huge success at the box office and DVD release.

Other notable big screen appearances include the 20th Century Fox film *Alvin and the Chipmunks: The Squeakquel*, which broke box office records in its Christmas release, the independent feature film *Spiral* with Amber Tamblyn, and a starring role in the franchise film *Big Momma’s House 2* with Martin Lawrence.

Levi grew up in Ventura, CA. He began acting in theater at the early age of six, performing lead roles in regional productions such as “Grease,” “The Outsiders,” “Oliver,” “Godspell,” “The Wizard of Oz,” “Big River,” and “Marvin’s Room.” It was this early training that ultimately brought him to the attention of Hollywood.

Levi devotes much time and energy doing philanthropic work as an ambassador for Operation Smile, through his company The Nerd Machine and his annual comic con event NERD HQ, that has raised over a million dollars for the charity to date.

Levi currently resides in Austin, TX.

As an actor, writer, and creator, **KEEGAN-MICHAEL KEY** (Dave) has become one of the most creative and in-demand faces in Hollywood. With his extraordinarily diverse skill set and wide-ranging talent in both comedy and drama, Key redefines what it means to be a chameleon and multi-hyphenate in the worlds of film, television, and theater.

Currently, Key is making his Broadway debut in Steve Martin's play "*Meteor Shower*," which will officially open November 29<sup>th</sup> at the Booth Theatre. Previews began November 1<sup>st</sup>, following his New York stage debut as Horatio in Sam Gold's production of "*Hamlet*" at The Public Theater in the Summer of 2017. He is also starring in Nick Stoller's comedy series "Friends from College," currently streaming on Netflix, which follows a group of Harvard alumni and their adult successes – or lack thereof. The show was recently renewed for a second season and will debut sometime next year.

He recently wrapped production on Shane Black's *The Predator*, which is expected to hit theaters August 3, 2018. A sequel to the 1987 sci-fi hit *Predator*, the film also stars Sterling K. Brown, Trevante Rhodes, and Jacob Tremblay.

Key is the co-creator and co-star of Comedy Central's "Key & Peele" with Jordan Peele. The show won the 2016 Emmy Award for Outstanding Variety Sketch Series, with Key being individually nominated for acting and co-writing with Peele. Key was previously nominated for 5 Emmy Awards for his work on the show, as well as a 2016 Screen Actors Guild Award for Outstanding Performance by an Ensemble in a Comedy Series. "Key & Peele" won a 2014 Peabody Award and an American Comedy Award for Best Alternative Comedy Series. The show has become a TV and viral sensation, with 15 total Emmy nominations and approaching a billion cumulative online hits. The series concluded its five-season run in September 2015.

On the big screen, Key was last seen in Joe Swanberg's film *Win It All*, which premiered at the 2017 South by Southwest Film Festival, in advance of its April launch on Netflix. Before that, he starred in John Hamburg's comedy *Why Him?*, in which he stars alongside James Franco, Bryan Cranston, and Megan Mullally. He also starred in Mike Birbiglia's critically acclaimed indie *Don't Think Twice*, which premiered at 2016's South by Southwest and Tribeca Film Festivals, and was widely regarded as one of the best films of the year. Additional past film work includes *Keanu*, which he co-starred and produced alongside Jordan Peele, *Pitch Perfect 2*, *Horrible Bosses 2*, *Let's Be Cops*, *Wanderlust*, *Just Go with It*, *Role Models*, *Hell Baby*, *Afternoon Delight*, and *Due Date*. He has also done vocal work for *Storks*, *Angry Birds*, *Hotel Transylvania 2*, and *The Wild Bunch*.

On television, Key has recurred on the Emmy-winning FX series " Fargo," USA's "Playing House," Adult Swim's "Children's Hospital," and NBC's "Parks & Rec." He was also a series regular on FOX's "MADtv" for six seasons and CBS's "Gary Unmarried." Additional TV credits include "The League," "The Middle," "How I Met Your Mother," "Bob's Burgers," "Reno 911!" and "ER." Key also received a

2016 Emmy nomination for his voiceover work in Crackle's animated comedy "SuperMansion."

Key was named among Time Magazine's Most Influential People of 2014 and Entertainment Weekly's Entertainers of the Year of 2012. He is a veteran of Detroit and Chicago's The Second City, and received his Bachelor's Degree in Fine Arts from the University of Detroit Mercy, and his Master of Fine Arts in Theater from Pennsylvania State University.

Grammy Award winner **KELLY CLARKSON** ([Leah](#)) recently released her eagerly anticipated eighth studio album, "Meaning of Life." Her first release with Atlantic Records, "Meaning of Life" is the album Clarkson was destined to make, a collection of smart and sensual soul-inspired pop that immediately belongs among the legendary label's classic canon. The Texas-born, Nashville-based singer-songwriter first came to fame in 2002 as the winner of American Idol's inaugural season and has grown to be one the most popular artists of this or any other era, with over 100 #1 Billboard singles and total worldwide sales of more than 25 million albums and 36 million singles. Clarkson has released eight studio albums ("Thankful," "Breakaway," "My December," "All I Ever Wanted," "Stronger," "Wrapped In Red," "Piece By Piece," "Meaning of Life"), one greatest hits album, and two children's books ([New York Times](#) Top 10 best seller [River Rose and the Magical Lullaby](#) and the recent follow up [River Rose and the Magical Christmas](#)). She is the recipient of three Grammy Awards, four American Music Awards, three MTV Video Music Awards, two Academy of Country Music Awards, two American Country Awards, and one Country Music Association Award. Clarkson was also recently announced as a coach on the 14<sup>th</sup> season of

“*The Voice*,” in addition to serving as a Key Advisor on the current season’s Knockout Round.

Emmy and Golden Globe nominated actor **ANTHONY ANDERSON** (Zach) is the star and executive producer of ABC’s multi-award nominated sitcom “black-ish.” He portrays Andre “Dre” Johnson, a family man who struggles to gain a sense of cultural identity while raising his kids in a predominantly white, upper-middle class neighborhood. Anderson has received three consecutive Emmy nominations for Outstanding Lead Actor in a Comedy Series, a Golden Globe nomination and two Critics Choice nominations for his popular role in “black-ish.” Additionally, in 2016, he won his third individual Image Award in the category of Outstanding Actor in a Comedy Series.

Currently, Anderson is set to host his third season of the ABC game show “To Tell the Truth,” a popular primetime re-imagination of the beloved classic game show of the same name. He is also producing “grown-ish,” a “black-ish” spin off to debut in 2018 on Freeform.

On the big screen, Anderson most recently starred in Warner Bros.’ *Barbershop: The Next Cut* and is starring in the January 2018 film *Small Town Crime* opposite Octavia Spencer, John Hawkes and Dale Dickey, which premiered at SXSW. Anderson has two animated projects debuting this holiday season. In the 20th Century Fox feature *Ferdinand*, Anderson portrays a bull named Bones helping the film’s eponymous bull (John Cena) to get back home after a series of misadventures.



Anderson has become familiar to audiences through roles in such prominent films as the Michael Bay blockbuster *Transformers*, Martin Scorsese's Oscar®-winning feature *The Departed* alongside a stellar cast including Leonardo DiCaprio, Matt Damon and Jack Nicholson, and the all-star comedy *The Big Year*. Anderson first gained attention as one of Jim Carrey's sons in *Me, Myself and Irene* and has since appeared in such films as *Barbershop*, *Scary Movie 3*, *Kangaroo Jack*, *Exit Wounds*, *Cradle 2 the Grave*, *Two Can Play That Game*, *Malibu's Most Wanted*, *My Baby's Daddy*, *Agent Cody Banks 2*, and *Harold and Kumar Go to White Castle*.

On the small screen, Anderson brought his talent and humor to his own WB sitcom "All About the Andersons" which was loosely based on his life. Anderson also had a recurring role in the police-drama television series, "The Shield," opposite Michael Chiklis and Glenn Close and in NBC's "Guys with Kids." He went on to star as Kevin Bernard in "Law & Order" where he earned his fourth consecutive NAACP Image Award nomination for Outstanding Actor in a Drama Series for the 2010 season. He has received 12 total Image Award nominations in his career.

Active in his community as an advocate and philanthropist, Anderson recently hosted his first annual Anthony Anderson Celebrity Golf Classic, benefiting the American Diabetes Association, Los Angeles Mission and Boys & Girls Club of America. He also proudly serves on the GOOD+ Foundation's Fatherhood Leadership Council and was recently inducted into the Class of 2017 Boys & Girls Club of America National Alumni Hall of Fame.

Born in Compton, California in 1970, Anderson pursued his acting career as he continued his education by attending Hollywood High School for the Performing

Arts, where he earned first place in the NAACP's ACTSO Awards with his performance of the classic monologue from "The Great White Hope." That performance, along with his dedication to his craft, earned him an arts scholarship to Howard University.

Anderson currently lives in Los Angeles.

**AIDY BRYANT** (Ruth) returns to the "SNL" cast for her sixth season.

Since her debut season, Bryant has entertained viewers with her slew of characters, including the recurring "Girlfriends Talk Show" sketch and she received an Emmy nomination for the digital short "(Do It on My) Twin Bed." In 2015, Entertainment Weekly recognized Bryant with their fan favorite EWwy Award for Best Supporting Actress in a Comedy.

Bryant began studying improv in her hometown of Phoenix. She graduated from Columbia College in Chicago while simultaneously completing the iO improv training program. An ensemble member of the Second City E.T.C. stage, she has also performed at iO Chicago and the Annoyance Theatre. Bryant additionally performed around the world with the musical improv group "Baby Wants Candy." Bryant has also appeared in "Broad City" and had recurring roles on "Girls" and "Horace and Pete." Bryant's short film, *Darby Forever*, was released on Vimeo in 2016 and she appeared in Judd Apatow and Kumail Nanjiani's *The Big Sick*. She voices the character of D.D. Danger in Amazon's animated series "Danger & Eggs" and will appear in Amy Schumer's *I Feel Pretty*, to be released in 2018.

Bryant resides in New York City.

**VING RHAMES** (Thaddeus) was born and raised in Harlem, New York. His thespian career began at the New York High School of Performing Arts followed by the prestigious Julliard School of Drama. His training quickly landed the talented actor his first role on Broadway in “The Winter Boys.” After the play, he made the transition to television, making his first appearance on “Go Tell It On the Mountain” in 1985 followed by “Miami Vice.” He then effortlessly segued to feature films such as *Jacob’s Ladder* and *Homicide*.

A few years after his onscreen debut, Rhames was cast as a merciless drug dealer opposite Samuel L. Jackson and John Travolta in Quentin Tarantino’s *Pulp Fiction*. His performance in the film helped land him the role of Luther Stickell in Brian De Palma’s *Mission: Impossible* opposite Tom Cruise and Jon Voight. Rhames’ notable performances in the above-mentioned films led him towards the long path of starring in many other blockbuster hits, such as John Singleton’s *Rosewood* with Jon Voight and Simon West’s *Con Air* with Nicolas Cage, John Malkovich and John Cusack. In 1997, the busy actor played the role of Don King in HBO’s “Don King: Only in America.” His portrayal earned him a Golden Globe in 1998 for Best Actor in a Miniseries. From this award-winning performance, he went on to star in Steven Soderbergh’s *Out of Sight*, with George Clooney and Jennifer Lopez, Jon Amiel’s *Entrapment* with Sean Connery and Catherine Zeta-Jones, and Martin Scorsese’s *Bringing Out the Dead* with Nicolas Cage, Patricia Arquette and Tom Sizemore.

In 2000, Rhames returned as Luther Stickell in John Woo’s *Mission: Impossible 2* with Tom Cruise, Thandie Newton and Dougray Scott. Following *Mission: Impossible 2* he starred in John Singleton’s *Baby Boy* with Tyrese Gibson, Walter

Hill's *Undisputed* with Wesley Snipes, Ron Shelton's *Dark Blue* with Kurt Russell, Zack Snyder's *Dawn of the Dead* with Sarah Polley and Mekhi Phifer and *Mission: Impossible III* with Tom Cruise and Phillip Seymour Hoffman.

Rhames ventured behind the camera in 2005 as a producer for the USA series "Kojak." His producer credits also include *Back in the Day*, *Animal*, and *Shooting Gallery*.

Rhames has starred in *I Now Pronounce You Chuck and Larry* with Adam Sandler and Kevin James, *Surrogates* with Bruce Willis and Radha Mitchell, *The Goods: Live Hard, Sell Hard* with Jeremy Piven and *Piranha 3D* with Elisabeth Shue and Christopher Lloyd.

Rhames was a series regular in the TNT series "Monday Mornings" from writer-producer David E. Kelley and Sanjay Gupta, on whose book the project is based.

He returned to his role as Luther Stickell in *Mission: Impossible – Rogue Nation* with Tom Cruise, Jeremy Renner and Simon Pegg.

Recently, he had a cameo in Marvel's *Guardians of the Galaxy Vol. 2*. He will be seen in the up- and-coming Warner Bros. comedy *Father Figures* starring Owen Wilson, Ed Helms and J.K. Simmons, which will be in theaters December 22, 2017.

He is currently filming *Mission: Impossible 6* with Tom Cruise, Rebecca Ferguson and Simon Pegg.

Born in Chula Vista, California, **GABRIEL IGLESIAS** (Rufus) is the youngest of six children, raised by a single mother in Long Beach, CA. It was during his childhood that he developed a strong sense of humor to deal with the obstacles he faced. In 1997, he set out to hone his comedic skills, and performed stand-up anywhere he could find an audience; including biker bars and hole-in-the-wall joints. Iglesias's stand-up comedy is a mixture of storytelling, parodies, characters and sound effects that bring his personal experiences to life. His unique and animated comedy style has made him popular among fans of all ages.

Iglesias is one of America's most successful stand-up comedians performing to sold-out concerts around the world. He is also one of the most watched comedians on YouTube with over 300,000,000 views. The comedian has also had the distinct honor of being one of the few to headline and sell-out Madison Square Garden and The Microsoft Theater. Celebrating 20 years in standup comedy, Iglesias is currently on the new world tour, *FluffyMania World Tour: 20 Years of Comedy*.

Iglesias can next be heard voicing the role of Head Clerk in Pixar's upcoming animated film *Coco*, in theaters November 22. He will also voice Cuatro in 20<sup>th</sup> Century Fox's animated film *Ferdinand*, in theaters December 15. Iglesias also reprised his role of Jimmy in the animated film *The Nut Job 2* along with Will Arnett and Maya Rudolph and Katherine Heigl.

"Fluffy's Food Adventures," a non-scripted comedic docu-follow series co-starring Iglesias's eccentric tour mates and fellow comedians Martin Moreno, Rick Gutierrez, G Reilly and Alfred Robles, launched its third season (formally *Fluffy Breaks Even*) on FUSE TV in July 2017. The show follows Iglesias and his crew

on a coast-to-coast culinary trip in search of the country's most mouthwatering dishes as they discover local gems, unique activities and a few celebrities along the way.

At the end of 2016, Iglesias released his sixth one-hour comedy special, "I'm Sorry For What I Said When I Was Hungry," on Netflix worldwide. He filmed the special at the Allstate Arena in Chicago to two sold-out shows with a total of 20,000 fans in attendance.

In 2015, he co-starred with Channing Tatum in Warner Bros' *Magic Mike XXL*, reprising his role as Tobias. Iglesias also lit up the small screen on the ABC sitcom "Cristela."

Other feature film credits include co-starring roles in *A Haunted House 2*, and his voice can be heard in numerous animated films *Smurfs: The Lost Village*, *Norm of the North*, *The Book of Life*, *The Nut Job* and Disney's *Planes*. Iglesias also starred in the theatrical stand-up concert comedy film, *The Fluffy Movie*. For the past three years, Comedy Central has aired Iglesias' hit series "Stand-Up Revolution." The cable network also premiered "Gabriel Iglesias: Aloha Fluffy" in an unprecedented two-night comedy special to over 15 million viewers. The special was a follow-up to his previous DVD specials, "Hot & Fluffy" and "I'm Not Fat...I'm Fluffy," which have sold a combined total of over 2 million copies

**PATRICIA HEATON** (Edith) stars in ABC's critically acclaimed comedy "*The Middle*" as Frankie, a super mom who is trying to find balance between her family and career in the midwest. She is perhaps best known for her role as Debra Barone on the classic series "*Everybody Loves Raymond*." She won two Emmy

Awards for the role and was nominated seven times. In addition to her Emmy wins, Heaton is also the recipient of the Best Comedy Actress award from the Viewers for Quality Television, a SAG award and three SAG nominations in the Best Actress category for her role on "*Raymond*."

On the Emmy Award-winning Food Network series "*Patricia Heaton Parties*," she drew inspiration from her family and travels and invited the audience in while she served up incredible, party friendly foods for her co-stars, friends and family. Now, she has brought that same sensibility to print. On February 6, her first cookbook, Patricia Heaton's Food for Family & Friends, will be published. The book is full of recipes and tips for easy, fun meals, many of which can be made ahead of time.

In 2001, Heaton co-founded FourBoys Films, a production company which she runs with her husband David Hunt. The company produced the Sony feature comedy *Moms' Night Out* and TNT's production of "The Engagement Ring," both of which starred Heaton. She also starred in Hallmark Hall of Fame's "Front of the Class." Her other credits include the TNT/Neil Simon production of "The Goodbye Girl" and ABC's "The Path to 9/11." FourBoys additional projects include "The Christmas Heart" for The Hallmark Channel, and the documentary feature film "The Bituminous Coal Queens of Pennsylvania." FourBoys Films also produced the critically acclaimed film *Amazing Grace*, directed by Michael Apted, in conjunction with Bristol Bay Productions. FourBoys partnered on the web series, *Versailles* for MyDamnChannel.com. Heaton appeared in the series which was co-created, produced and directed by Hunt.

Heaton garnered praise for the role as Stella in the Second Stage production of "The Scene" by Theresa Rebeck. She received a Lortel Award nomination for

her performance. Her feature film credits include *Memoirs of an Invisible Man*, *Beethoven*, *New Age* and *Space Jam*. In addition to her acting and producing credits, Heaton is a bestselling author whose book Motherhood and Hollywood – How to Get a Job Like Mine appeared on The New York Times best-sellers list. A committed philanthropist, Heaton is the founding member of World Vision’s Celebrity Ambassador Network. She has travelled to both Zambia and Syria with the humanitarian organization which focuses on conducting relief, development, and advocacy activities in its work with children, families, and their communities in nearly 100 countries.

Heaton is a mother to four sons and lives in Los Angeles with her husband.

Emmy and Tony Award winning actress and singer **KRISTIN CHENOWETH**’s (Abby) career spans film, television, voiceover and stage. In 2015, Chenoweth received a coveted star on The Hollywood Walk of Fame. In 2009, she received an Emmy Award for Best Supporting Actress in a Comedy Series for her role in *Pushing Daisies*. In 1999, she won a Tony Award for *You’re A Good Man, Charlie Brown* and she was also nominated for her original role of Glinda the Good Witch in *Wicked* in 2004. Chenoweth has been nominated for two Emmy Awards and for a People’s Choice Award for her role on “Glee.”

In 2009, she wrote an upliftingly candid, comedic chronicle of her life so far, A Little Bit Wicked, which debuted on the New York Times Hardcover Non-Fiction Best Seller List.

In 2015, Chenoweth earned a Drama Desk Award, Outer Critics Circle Award and Broadway.com Audience Choice Award for her lead role in the Roundabout



Theatre Company's "On the Twentieth Century." She also earned nominations for a Tony Award and a Drama League Award. Chenoweth has performed to sold-out audiences across the world, including performances at Carnegie Hall and Royal Albert Hall. In 2014, she released a CD and DVD of her own live concert performance, *Kristin Chenoweth: Coming Home*.

Notable television roles include appearances in "The West Wing," Disney's "Descendants," and "The Muppets."

In film, Chenoweth voiced the role of Gabi in the hit animated film *Rio 2* and Fifi, Snoopy's beloved French poodle, in *The Peanuts Movie*. She starred in the indie teen drama entitled *Hard Sell* and additional film credits have included *The Boy Next Door*, *Deck the Halls*, *Twelve Men of Christmas*, *Four Christmases*, *RV*, *Bewitched*, *The Pink Panther*, *Hit & Run*, and *Family Weekend*.

She also starred in NBC's "Hairspray Live!" as Velma Von Tussle in December 2016. She was recently seen in the Starz original series "American Gods," where she has reunited with executive producer Bryan Fuller in the role of Easter. Chenoweth also recently voiced the role of Princess Skystar in Lionsgate/Hasbro's *My Little Pony: The Movie*.

In addition to her film projects, Chenoweth will star and produce the upcoming ABC comedy "The Real Fairy Godmother."

Last year, Chenoweth released "The Art of Elegance," her first album of American Songbook classics via Concord Records. The album debuted at #1 on Billboard's Current Jazz and Traditional Jazz charts, and #1 on Amazon's Vocal

Pop chart. Chenoweth also returned to the stage in her limited engagement “My Love Letter to Broadway” at the Lunt-Fontanne Theatre, receiving rave reviews.

Chenoweth is a graduate of Oklahoma City University with a Master’s degree in Opera Performance. She formed a charity partnership with the Broken Arrow Performing Arts Center (BAPAC) Foundation in her home state of Oklahoma. Chenoweth’s accomplishments were honored by her hometown with BAPAC naming “The Kristin Chenoweth Theatre” in 2012. Partnering with the BAPAC in a labor of love, Kristin launched an annual Broadway Bootcamp in 2015, providing young Broadway hopefuls with the opportunity to take classes, hold performances and learn from top mentors in the entertainment industry including Kristin herself. Kristin is also a passionate supporter of charities which dedicate their time and efforts to helping those in need. She is an inductee into the Oklahoma Hall of Fame, as well as the Oklahoma Music Hall of Fame.

**CHRISTOPHER PLUMMER** (King Herod) has enjoyed almost 70 years as one of the theatre’s most respected actors and as a veteran of over 100 motion pictures. Raised in Montreal, he began his professional career on stage and radio in both French and English. After Eva Le Gallienne gave him his New York debut (1954) he went on to star in many celebrated productions on Broadway and London’s West End winning accolades on both sides of the Atlantic. He has won two Tony Awards, for the musical *Cyrano* and for *Barrymore*, plus seven Tony nominations, his latest for his *King Lear* (2004) and for his Clarence Darrow in *Inherit the Wind* (2007); also three Drama Desk Awards and the National Arts Club Medal. A former leading member of the Royal National Theatre under Sir Laurence Olivier and the Royal Shakespeare Company under Sir Peter Hall, where he won London’s Evening Standard Award for Best Actor in *Becket*, he

has also led Canada's Stratford Festival in its formative years under Sir Tyrone Guthrie and Michael Langham.

Since Sidney Lumet introduced him to the screen in *Stage Struck* (1958), his range of notable films include *The Man Who Would Be King*, *Battle of Britain*, *Waterloo*, *Fall of The Roman Empire*, *Star Trek VI*, *Twelve Monkeys* and the 1965 Oscar®-winning *The Sound of Music*. More recent films include *The Insider* (as Mike Wallace; the National Film Critics Award), the acclaimed *A Beautiful Mind*, *Man in the Chair*, *Must Love Dogs*, *National Treasure*, *Syriana* and *Inside Man*. His TV appearances, which number close to 100, include the Emmy-winning BBC *Hamlet at Elsinore* playing the title role; the Emmy-winning productions *The Thornbirds*, *Nuremberg*, *Little Moon of Alban* and HBO's *Muhammad Ali's Greatest Fight* earning him seven Emmy nominations and taking home two Emmys.

Apart from honors in the UK, USA, Austria and Canada, he was the first performer to receive the Jason Robards Award in memory of his great friend, the Edwin Booth Award and the Sir John Gielgud Quill Award. In 1968, sanctioned by Elizabeth II, he was invested as a Companion of the Order of Canada (an honorary knighthood). An Honorary Doctor of Fine Arts at Juilliard, he also received the Governor General's Lifetime Achievement Award in 2000. In 1986 he was inducted into the Theater Hall of Fame and in 2000 Canada's Walk of Fame.

Plummer's more recent projects include the highly praised animated films *Up*, 9 and *My Dog Tulip*, as well as the title role in *The Imaginarium of Doctor Parnassus*, directed by Terry Gilliam. He played the great novelist Tolstoy opposite Helen Mirren in *The Last Station* for Sony Classics where he received

his first Academy Award nomination in 2010. He followed that up the next year with another nomination and a win for Best Supporting Actor in *Beginners* from writer/director Mike Mills and appeared in David Fincher's *The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo* that same year.

In July and August 2012, he returned to the Stratford Festival to perform his one-man show that he created entitled *A Word or Two*, directed by Des McAnuff. In 2013, he starred opposite Oscar winner Shirley MacLaine in *Elsa & Fred* directed by Michael Radford, *Hector And The Search for Happiness* directed by Peter Chelsom, *Danny Collins* opposite Al Pacino and Annette Bening for writer/director Dan Fogelman and *The Forger* opposite John Travolta directed by Phillip Martin.

In 2015, he starred in *Remember*, directed by Atom Egoyan, and in 2017 *The Exception*, based on the novel The Kaiser's Last Kiss co-starring Lily James, Jai Courtney and Janet McTeer. Future releases include the feature films *Boundaries*, co-starring Vera Farmiga, and *Last Full Measure* with Sebastian Stan, Ed Harris and Samuel L. Jackson.

His recent self-written bestselling memoir, In Spite of Myself (Afred A. Knopf Publishers), is being much lauded by critics and public alike and remains a best seller.

**TRACY MORGAN** (Felix) is one of the most respected comedians in his field. Starring for seven seasons on NBC's Emmy and Golden Globe Award-winning "30 Rock," Morgan appeared opposite Tina Fey and Alec Baldwin as Tracy Jordan, the unpredictable star of Lemon's (Fey) hit variety show, "TGS with Tracy

Jordan.” At the beginning of 2016, he headlined a nationwide stand-up tour titled *Picking Up the Pieces*, which culminated in his newest stand up special “*Staying Alive*,” which is now streaming on Netflix. Morgan will next be seen in the TBS show “The Last OG,” which he will star in and executive produce, to air early next year. Additionally, Morgan has been selected to receive a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame in the 2016 class.

**TYLER PERRY**’s (Cyrus) inspirational journey from the hard streets of New Orleans to the heights of Hollywood’s A-list is the stuff of American legend. Born into poverty and raised in a household scarred by abuse, Perry fought from a young age to find the strength, faith and perseverance that would later form the foundations of his much-acclaimed plays, films, books and shows.

It was a simple piece of advice from Oprah Winfrey that set Perry’s career in motion. Encouraged to keep a diary of his daily thoughts and experiences, he began writing a series of soul-searching letters to himself. The letters, full of pain and in time, forgiveness, became a healing catharsis. His writing inspired a musical, “I Know I’ve Been Changed,” and in 1992, Perry gathered his life’s savings in hopes of staging it for sold out crowds. He spent all the money but the people never came, and Perry once again came face to face with the poverty that had plagued his youth. He spent months sleeping in seedy motels and his car but his faith – in God and, in turn, himself – only got stronger. He forged a powerful relationship with the church, and kept writing. In 1998 his perseverance paid off and a promoter booked “I Know I’ve Been Changed” for a limited run at a local church-turned-theatre. This time, the community came out in droves, and soon the musical moved to Atlanta’s prestigious Fox Theatre. Tyler Perry never looked back.

And so began an incredible run of 13 plays in as many years, including *Woman Thou Art Loosed!*, a celebrated collaboration with the prominent Dallas pastor T.D. Jakes. In the year 2000, *I Can Do Bad All By Myself* marked the first appearance of the now-legendary Madea. The God-fearing, gun-toting, pot-smoking, loud-mouthed grandmother, Madea, was played by Perry himself. Madea was such a resounding success, she soon spawned a series of plays - *Madea's Family Reunion* (2002), *Madea's Class Reunion* (2003), *Madea Goes To Jail* (2005) - and set the stage for Perry's jump to the big screen. In 2015 Perry returned to the stage, performing his new original play, *Madea on the Run*, to sold out audiences across the United States.

In early 2005, Perry's first feature film, *Diary of a Mad Black Woman*, debuted at number one nationwide. His ensuing films, *Madea's Family Reunion*, *Daddy's Little Girls*, *Why Did I Get Married?*, *Meet The Browns*, *The Family That Preys*, *I Can Do Bad All by Myself*, *Why Did I Get Married Too?*, *For Colored Girls*, *Madea's Big, Happy Family*, *Good Deeds* and *Madea's Witness Protection* have all been met with massive commercial success, delighting audiences across America and around the world. He also starred in the Rob Cohen directed *Alex Cross* and helped release Academy Award®-nominated *Precious*, a movie based on the novel Push by Sapphire, in conjunction with his 34th Street Films banner, Oprah Winfrey's Harpo Films and Lionsgate.

2006 saw the publication of Perry's first book, *Don't Make A Black Woman Take Off Her Earrings: Madea's Uninhibited Commentaries On Life And Love*, which shot to the top of the New York Times nonfiction bestseller list and remained there for eight weeks. It went on to claim Quill Book Awards for both Humor and Book of the Year (an unheard-of feat for a first-time author), and spread Tyler

Perry's unique brand of inspirational entertainment to a devoted new audience. It is a brand that quickly became an empire. In 2007, Perry expanded his reach to television with the TBS series "House of Payne," the highest-rated first-run syndicated cable show of all time, which went into syndication after only a year. His follow up effort, "Meet the Browns," was the second highest debut ever on cable – after "House of Payne." In late 2012, Perry teamed up with Oprah Winfrey in an exclusive deal to bring scripted programming to her cable network, OWN, and launched with the half hour sitcom, "Love Thy Neighbor," and the hour-long drama, "The Haves and The Have Nots," which made its debut in 2013 and has continued to break ratings on the network. This past summer, Perry debuted a new drama series called "Too Close to Home" on TLC, the network's first scripted series. OWN recently announced that they would be premiering a "House of Payne" spinoff series, "The Paynes," on the network in 2018. It was also recently announced that Perry signed a multi-year content partnership with Viacom, in which he will produce original drama and comedy series across the Viacom networks, in addition to having a first-look feature film deal with Paramount Pictures group.

In the fall of 2008, Perry opened his 200,000-square-foot Studio in Atlanta, situated on the former Delta Airlines campus in the Greenbriar area of southwest Atlanta. During the course of its operation, the space was home to production of over 15 films and over 800 episodes of Perry's five television series. In 2015 TPS announced plans to expand operations with the acquisition of Fort McPherson, which sits on over 330 acres. Perry and the studio's Atlanta-based employees will remain in production of Perry's five current television series, in addition to major feature films and television shows filming in Atlanta. Production is already underway at the new studio, which will contain twelve soundstages ranging in size between 10,000 and 60,000 square feet.

Not one to rest on success, Tyler Perry and his Atlanta-based employees have been hard at work. His latest films include *Temptation: Confessions of a Marriage Counselor*, released in March 2013 and his 34th Street Films banner, *Peeples*, released in May 2013. In late 2013, Perry starred in *A Madea Christmas*, adapted from his stage play by the same name. In 2014 he was seen in 34th Street Film's production that he also directed, *Single Mom's Club*. A show for OWN entitled *If Loving You Is Wrong*, based on the film, premiered in 2014. That year, Perry also garnered rave reviews for his role opposite Ben Affleck in David Fincher's critically acclaimed box office hit, *Gone Girl*. He was most recently seen on the big screen in 2016 for Paramount's *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles: Out of The Shadows* as the villain "Baxter Stockman," and will next appear opposite Chloe Moretz in the independent film *Brain on Fire*. In 2016, Perry recently reprised the role of Madea in Lionsgate's smash-hit *Boo! A Madea Halloween*, which spent two weeks at number one on the US box office. The sequel to the film was released in October 2017 and took top spot at the weekend box office. Perry is also releasing two more films with Lionsgate in 2018 – *Acrimony* starring Taraji P. Henson and *A Madea Family Funeral*, which will bring his popular character back to the big screen.

But listen to Tyler Perry and you'll hear a man who hasn't forgotten about the people that have helped him reach the top of a mountain he could once only dream of climbing. He has been intimately involved and donated generously to civil rights causes through work with the NAACP and NAN. He also strongly supports charities that focus on helping the homeless, such as Global Medical Relief Fund, Charity Water, Feeding America, Covenant House, Hosea Feed the Hungry, Project Adventure, and Perry Place - a 20-home community that Perry built for survivors of Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans. In January 2010, Perry



pledged \$1,000,000 via The Tyler Perry Foundation to help rebuild the lives of those affected by the earthquakes in Haiti. He matched that in September 2017 by donating \$1,000,000 to Hurricane Harvey relief and loaning his plane to groups bringing life-saving supplies into Puerto Rico and flying those in need back to the US mainland after Hurricane Maria.

Tyler Perry practices what he preaches, and what he preaches has endeared him to millions of fans drawn by that unique blend of spiritual hope and down-home humor that continues to shape his inspiring life story and extraordinary body of work.

**OPRAH WINFREY** (Deborah) is a global media leader, philanthropist, producer and actress. She has created an unparalleled connection with people around the world, making her one of the most respected and admired figures today.

For 25 years, Winfrey was host of the award-winning talk show “The Oprah Winfrey Show.” As Chairman and CEO, she’s guiding her successful cable network, OWN: Oprah Winfrey Network, is the founder of *O, The Oprah Magazine* and oversees Harpo Films.

Winfrey is an Academy Award®-nominated actress for her role in *The Color Purple*, earned critical acclaim in *Lee Daniels’ The Butler* and produced and acted in the Academy Award®-winning film *Selma*. Winfrey starred in the Emmy nominated HBO Films “The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks” and will portray Mrs. Which in Disney’s *A Wrinkle in Time* film adaptation from director Ava DuVernay releasing March 2018.

In 2015, Winfrey joined the Weight Watchers board of directors. On January 3, 2017, her first cookbook, Food, Health and Happiness: 115 On Point Recipes for Great Meals and a Better Life, debuted as #1 on the New York Times Bestsellers List. Winfrey recently released her newest coffee table book Wisdom of Sundays, offering a collection of the most memorable “aha!” moments from her four-time Emmy-award winning talk series “Super Soul Sunday,” featuring the world’s leading thought leaders.

This fall, in collaboration with Kraft Heinz, Winfrey recently launched a new refrigerated food line “O, That’s Good,” featuring soups and sides that bring a nutritious twist on comfort food classics using real ingredients and no artificial flavors or dyes. Ten percent of the profits will be equally split between charitable organizations Rise Against Hunger and Feeding America to support the fight against hunger.

In September, Winfrey debuted her first segment as a CBS 60 Minutes Special Correspondent.

This year marks the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of The Oprah Winfrey Leadership Academy for Girls in South Africa as they celebrate the school’s seventh graduating class. Winfrey established the school in 2007 to provide education for academically gifted girls from disadvantaged backgrounds. Graduates of the school have continued on to higher education both in South Africa and at colleges and universities around the world.

In 2013, Winfrey was awarded the Medal of Freedom, the nation’s highest civilian honor.

## **ABOUT THE FILMMAKERS**

*“DeVon Franklin...is a bonafide dynamo...a different kind of spiritual teacher for our times” – Oprah Winfrey*

*The Star* executive producer **DEVON FRANKLIN** is an award-winning Hollywood producer, best-selling author and spiritual life coach. His commitment to uplift the masses through entertainment has made Franklin a leading spokesperson on faith, spiritual wellness and personal development. Beliefnet named him one of the “Most Influential Christians Under 40.” Franklin produced the hit film *Miracles from Heaven* and wrote the No. 2 New York Times bestselling self-help book The Wait with his wife, actress Meagan Good.

Academy Award® nominee **TIMOTHY RECKART** is currently making his feature directing debut on *The Star*. Timothy first drew attention with his thesis film at the National Film & Television School in the U.K., *Head Over Heels*, about a long-married couple who have literally grown apart, with the wife living on the ceiling of their house and her husband living on the floor. *Head Over Heels* had a very successful run in festivals, which ultimately brought the film an Oscar® nomination and an Annie Award win for Best Student Film. Timothy is a graduate of Harvard University with a degree in History & Literature. He has also obtained a Master’s Degree in Directing Animation from the National Film and Television School.

**JENNIFER MAGEE-COOK**’s (Producer) recent work includes executive producing Disney’s 2015 animated series “Descendants: Wicked World.” Her

other Disney credits include *Prep & Landing* as associate producer, *The Pirate Fairy* as producer, and *Meet the Robinsons* as product manager. Magee-Cook began her career at Walt Disney Animation Studios, where she was as an Assistant Production Manager for films such as *Mulan*, *The Emperor's New Groove* and *Brother Bear*. She received her Bachelor's Degree in English Language and Literature from Marquette University.

## **ABOUT SONY PICTURES ANIMATION**

Sony Pictures Animation produces a variety of animated and family entertainment for audiences around the world. The studio is following its worldwide comedy hits—the record-breaking monster comedies *Hotel Transylvania* and *Hotel Transylvania 2*, the hybrid live action/animated blockbusters *The Smurfs* and *The Smurfs 2*, and the mouth-watering *Cloudy with a Chance of Meatballs* movies—with the fully animated reboot *Smurfs: The Lost Village* available on digital and Blu-ray now; a surprising and comic take at the secret world inside our phones with *The Emoji Movie* now on Digital HD, Blu-ray, DVD, and 4K Ultra HD; the inspirational *The Star* in theaters November 17, 2017; *Hotel Transylvania 3* in July 2018; and an animated *Spider-Man* feature from the minds of directors Chris Miller and Phil Lord in December 2018. The studio, in conjunction with Aardman Animations, has produced two critically acclaimed feature films: the CG-animated family comedy *Arthur Christmas*; and the Academy Award® nominated stop-frame animated high-seas adventure, *The Pirates! Band of Misfits*. In 2007, *Surf's Up* also received an Academy Award® nomination for Best Animated Feature Film; a sequel entitled *Surf's Up 2: WaveMania* is now available on digital and DVD. The division, whose first feature film *Open Season* led to a very successful movie franchise including the

brand new *Open Season: Scared Silly* now available on digital, DVD and Blu-ray, was founded in 2002. Sony Pictures Animation is a division of the Sony Pictures Motion Pictures Group.

- Website: <http://www.sonypicturesanimation.com/>
- Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/SONYPicturesAnimation>
- Twitter: <http://twitter.com/#!/sonyanimation>
- Tumblr: <http://sonyanimation.tumblr.com/>
- YouTube: <http://www.youtube.com/user/SonyAnimation>

### **ABOUT SONY PICTURES ENTERTAINMENT**

Sony Pictures Entertainment (SPE) is a subsidiary of Sony Entertainment Inc., a subsidiary of Tokyo-based Sony Corporation. SPE's global operations encompass motion picture production, acquisition and distribution; television production, acquisition and distribution; television networks; digital content creation and distribution; operation of studio facilities; and development of new entertainment products, services and technologies. For additional information, go to <http://www.sonypictures.com>.

### **ABOUT AFFIRM FILMS**

AFFIRM Films produces, acquires and markets films that inspire, uplift and entertain audiences around the world. Since releasing its first theatrical film-The Kendrick Brothers' drama, *Facing the Giants* in 2007, AFFIRM Films has released numerous quality faith-based films including *Soul Surfer*, based on the inspirational true story of surfer Bethany Hamilton; *When the Game Stands Tall*, the sports drama inspired by the story of the De La Salle Spartans; *War Room*, which hit #1 on the domestic box office chart; *Risen*, which followed the epic

Biblical story of the Resurrection, as told through the eyes of a non-believer; and was the faith-based marketing partner with Columbia Pictures and TriStar Pictures for their films *Miracles from Heaven* and the #2 faith-based film of all time, *Heaven Is for Real*. AFFIRM Films also released *All Saints* in August of 2017. In partnership with Sony Pictures Animation and Columbia Pictures comes the animated film *The Star* on November 17, 2017, the story of the first Christmas from the perspective of the animals in the stable. AFFIRM will next release *Paul, Apostle of Christ* on March 28, 2018. AFFIRM Films is a division of Sony Pictures Worldwide Acquisitions (SPWA), a Sony Pictures Entertainment (SPE) company. [AFFIRMFilms.com](http://AFFIRMFilms.com)