Stunt Performers
VINCENT AVES SEBASTIAN BAKER
DARREN BLANCHARD FRED BROWN
MICHAEL CHASE DAVID COLLOM
WILLIAM DENT MARIA DENT
DAVID GRANT OLIVIA JACKSON
MAURICE LEE MAX LENTHALL
LUIS MORENO GAMERO ANDREJ RIKHOKEN
OLLY ROWLAND SHANE STEYN
RYAN STUART RICHARD REEVE YOUNG
Stunt Safety .............................................. NICK HOBS
............................................................ STEEN YOUNG
Fencers
RAIN DE RYE BARRETT LUDVIG BONIN
ALEX BRITTON DANIEL BURMAN
LAWRENCE CARMICHAEL ANDREW CARTER
DANIEL CRUTE TIM DAVENPORT
THOMAS FACKRELL ANDREW FITCH
TÉO GHIL JOSHUA KENNEDY
DOMINIC KINNAIRD DANIEL KOBINA
RIAD LAARACHI GREGORY LOCKETT
LIONEL LUSTRIA MARCELLO MARASCALCHI
MATHEW MCKAY{EIFION MELNYK-JONES
LOCKHART OGILVIE PHILIP PELLEW
JEAN-MARC PERRET ALEX POULTER
MICHAEL REDMOND CORIN RHYS JONES
DICKON SAVAGE ADAM SCHUCH-DES FORGES
DAN STYLES GORDON SUMMERS
RONIN TRAYNOR JAMES UNSWORTH
Dialect Coach to Ms. Blanchett ................. JOAN WASHINGTON
Dialect Coach ........................................... BARBARA BERKERY
Associate Choreographer .......................... CHRIS BAILEY
UK Associate to Mr. Ashford ........................ PIP JORDAN
Dancers
SIMON ADKINS KATE ALEXANDER
HELEN ANKER LUCY BANFIELD
DAVID BEEKS CHARLOTTE BULL
JAMES BUTCHER ARIELLE CAMPBELL
DARREN CARNALL LUCY CASSON
FRANCIS CHRISTELLER BEN CLARE
JON-SCOTT CLARK ELLIOT COLLINS
ELIZABETH COOPER-GEE SIMON COULTHARD
STUART DAWS LUKE FIELD-WRIGHT
MATTHEW FLINT JANE FOWLER
EDWARD FRENCH REBECCA GIACOZZI
ASHLEY HALE BETHANY ROSE HARRISON
YASMIN HARRISON REISS HINDS
JAMIE HUGHES WARD PAUL ISLES
CHRISTOPHER JARVIS JAMES LACEY
THIERRY LAURION REBECCA LEUNG
BRENDA JANE NEWHOUSE HAYLEY NEWTON
NATASHA O'BRIEN PIPPA RAINIE
ZOE RAINIE KIMMI RICHARDS
PAUL ROBINSON RICHARD ROE
BRANDON SEARS AARON SILLIS
JONATHAN STEWART LORRAINE STEWART
ZIZI STRALLEN FLICK SWAN
JEANETTE TAYLOR TRISTAN TEMPLE

KATE TYDMAN CHARLOTTE WALCOTT
GARY WATSON JENNIFER WILKINS
LEE WILLIAM-DAVIS EMMA WOODS
Production Supervisor ......................... KATHERINE TIBBETTS
Post Production Supervisor .................. KATIE REYNOLDS
Production Controller ........................ DONNA GLASSER HANCOCK
Supervising Art Directors ...................... LES TOMKINS
Senior Art Director ............................ STUART ROSE
Art Director ................................ ANTHONY CARON-DELION
Assistant Art Director ....................... HELEN XENOPoulos
Main Unit Standby Art Director .......... PAUL LAUGIER
Draughtsmen ................................ ELIZABETH LOACH
Junior Draughtsmen ....................... HUGH MCCLELLAND
Concept Artist ........................ ADAM BROCKBANK
Character Concept Artist ................ HOWARD SWINDELL
Junior Concept Artist ................... THOMAS WINGROVE
Storyboard Artists .......................... TONY CHANCE
Art Department Coordinator ............. HEATHER NOBLE
Art Department Assistants ............. ISONA RIGAU
Draughtsmen ................................. WILL COBURGH
Set Decorator ................................... FRANCESCA LOSCHIAVO-FERRETTI
Assistant Set Decorators .................. ALISON HARVEY
Production Buyer ............................. ALISON CARDY
Assistant Buyers .......................... RACHEL CUTLER
Graphic Designer .......................... GEOGINA MILLETT
Draughtsmen ............................... WILL COBURGH
Costume Supervisor ....................... KAY MANASSEH
Assistant Costume Designer ................. OLIVER GARCIA
Chief Textile Artist ............................ JOHN COWELL
Chief Cutter ................................ MELANIE CARTER
Crowd Supervisor ......................... KAREN BEALE
Costume Buyer ........................ KAY MANASSEH
2nd Assistant Costume Designer ........ OLLIVER GARCIA
Crowd Fitter ............................... DEBORAH SCOTT
Magistrate Mistress ....................... HARRIET KENDALL
Costume Coordinator .................. CAROLINE FALLON
Principal Costume Standbys .......... SHEARA ABRAHAMS
Tailor ................................ WEIQIANG LIANG
Assistant Tailor ........................... LIANG LENG
Best Boy Electrician ................................. PAUL BREWSTER
Electricians
KIERAN WAITES ................................. PAUL HELM
MIKE SHERNO ................................. MATT WILSON
JULIAN PERRIN ................................. NICK MITCHELL
CHRIS KNOLL
Lighting Desk Operator ................................. CHRIS CRAIG
Rigging Gaffer ................................ TC THOMAS
Chargehand Rigging Electricians .............. JAMES SMITH-PRYOR
Rigging Electricians
DENNIS BROWN ................................ JAMIE CANTWELL
RICKY GLOVER ................................ GRAHAM HULM
SAMUEL MADDEN ............................... MARK PACKMAN
JACK POWELL ................................. THOMAS ROYAL
PAUL SHEPPARD ............................... JAMIE WRIGHT
Rigging Desk Operator ............................ ANDY MUNDAY
HOD Electrical Rigger ............................ RICKY WETHERALL-STELLING
Rigging Supervisor ............................... GERRY HIGGINS
Chargehand Electrical Rigger ................. STEVE SULLIVAN
Standby Electrical Riggers ................. JAMES HANDSCOMB
SEAN MCCABE
Electrical Riggers ............................... ZAC CROCKETT
RUSSELL HALL
SIMON MAHONEY
Motors Electrical Riggers ..................... DAMON GRAHAM
CRAIG RATTRAY
Key Grip ................................ MALCOLM HUSE
Best Boy Grip ................................ KEITH MEAD
Camera Grips ................................ SAM PHILLIPS
JOHN DUNNE
Crank Grip ................................ NEIL TOMLIN
Remote Head Technician ...................... STEVE HIDE
Assistant Grip ............................... ELLIOTT POLLEY
Property Master ............................... DAVID BALFOUR
Additional Property Master ............... JOHN WELLS
Prop Supervisor ............................... ROBERT HILL
Prop Storemen ............................... RICHARD MAGENNIS
MARLON COLE
Action Prop Buyer ........................... AOIFE MCKIM
Prop Coordinator/Researcher ............ CHARLOTTE BUSHNELL
Chargehand Propmen .................... LAURENCE WELLS
MARK GEESON
Chargehand Standby Propman .......... BRADLEY TORBETT
Standby Propman ........................... JOE BOVINGTON
Prophands
JANIS VITOLINS .............................. DEAN MARSH
GARY ROBINSON .............................. JACK SALKELD
RYAN SAWARD ............................... GREGOR TELFER
ALEXANDER WOOD
Prop Assistant ............................... ALEXANDRA KEMP
Prop Trainees ................................. ELEOT MAIDMENT
SOPHIA NAGAR
KERRY GISSING
CASEY BANWELL
HOD Modeler ............................... DUNCAN MCDEVITT
Sculptors ............................... HARRY FRANCHETTI
CODY SPATARU
Prop Modelers ............................... CHRISTINE OVERS
EDDIE TYCER
CHARLES TYCER
CLINT WHELAN
DAN WRIGHT
Prop Maker ............................... ALASDAIR MCKAY
Mould Maker ............................... KEVIN WALKER
Prop Finisher ............................... JENI DAVIS
Painters ............................... MARTIN GEORGE
BEN LOBB
EMMA STEVENS
Drapes Master ............................... COLIN FOX
Lead Drape Supervisor .................... LES WARD
Drapesman ............................... MATTHEW ASKEY
Drapers ............................... MATT SARGENT
MARIA VAZAIOS
Craftsman ............................... ALAN BROOKER
Action Vehicles Workshop Supervisor .... STEVE COLE
Action Vehicles Specialist ................ LEE SUTTON
Action Vehicles Carpenter ............... ROGER TYRRELL
Action Vehicles Coach Builder .......... TYRONE MARLOW
Production Coordinator ............. RICHARD DALDRY
Key Assistant Production Coordinator .... KELLY TAYLOR-DIAS
Assistant Production Coordinator ........ ELLA DAINES-SMITH
Assistant to Mr. Barron .................... JULIE WICKS
Assistant to Mr. Kinberg ................. KIRA THOMPSON
Production Associate to Ms. Shearmur .... STEPHEN MEINEN
Assistants to Ms. Shearmur .......... RYAN BUSSE (US)
ROBYN JOHNSON (UK)
Assistant to Mr. Branagh .............. TAMAR THOMAS
Assistant to Ms. Blanchett .............. GEORGINA PYM
Production Secretary .................... REBECCA COLLIS
Production Assistants ................. FAYE GREEN
CRAIG LUCK
ANTONIA VICKERS
Producer’s Assistant ....................... FRED BONHAM CARTER
Production Assistant to Mr. Branagh ...... DANIEL COX
Digital Archivist ......................... BENJY RIEHL
Unit Production Manager .............. BARRY WALDMAN
First Assistant Director ............. RICHARD WHELAN
Crowd 2nd Assistant Director .......... NANW ROWLANDS
Floor 2nd Assistant Directors ........ STEWART HAMILTON
DAN CHANNING WILLIAMS
2nd 2nd Assistant Director ............ SAM SMITH
3rd Assistant Director ................... SAM ROOK
Base 3rd Assistant Director ........... SANDRINE LOISY
Additional 3rd Assistant Director ...... PHOEBE VALE MARKHAM
Crowd PAs .............................. MARY BOULDING
EMMA GUNNERY
Set PAs ............................... LAURA JACKSON
LAURA MOLONEY
PEREGRINE KITCHENER-FELLOWS
GRANT MCFADDEN
<table>
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<tr>
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<td>JON HARRIS</td>
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<tr>
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<td>DANNY MADDEN</td>
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<td>MARK WILLIAMSON</td>
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<td>JUSTIN PEER</td>
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<td>NEIL CULLEY</td>
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<tr>
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<td>INIGO MINNS</td>
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<td>JEROME DEWHURST</td>
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<td>JAY GEORGE</td>
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<td>USHA CHAMAN</td>
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<td>MARK RUSSELL</td>
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<td>ROB PARK</td>
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<td>STEVE MALIN</td>
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<tr>
<td>Casting Associate</td>
<td>RUTH KEY</td>
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<tr>
<td>Casting Assistant</td>
<td>ELIZABETH BICHARD</td>
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Animal Handlers ........................................... BIRDS & ANIMALS
Horses Supplied by ...................................... STEVE DENT STUNTS
Vet ............................................................... NICK SNOOKES
Unit Nurse .................................................. NICOLA GREGORY
Health and Safety Advisor ............................... MICK HURRELL
Health and Safety Officers ............................... MALCOLM PEARCE
ANDY CLARK

Catering/Craft Service ................................. FIRST UNIT CATERING
Manager/Chef ............................................. ALAN SPRINGFIELD
Supervisors/Chefs ........................................ PETER BARTON
KEVIN CHAMBERLIN
Chefs .......................................................... BEN OPOKU
SCOTT TUNNICLIFFE
Caterer ........................................................ CHERIDEN LORD
Craft Service Supervisor ................................ KIRSTY SAVORY

Music Producer ........................................... MAGGIE RODFORD
Assistant to Music Producer ............................ LAURA NAHKLA
Orchestrators .............................................. PATRICK DOYLE
JAMES SHEARMAN
Conductor ..................................................... JAMES SHEARMAN
Music Programmer ........................................ RUPERT CROSS
On Set Vocal Coach and Assistant Music Programmer .......................... PATRICK NEIL DOYLE
Track Lay Assistant ........................................ BRADLEY FARMER
Midi Preparation .......................................... MARTIN HIGGINS
ALEX REDFERN

Supervising Music Editor ............................... CHRISTOPHER BENSTEAD
Music Editor ............................................... PETER CLARKE
Score Recorded and Mixed by ....................... JAKE JACKSON
Score Recorded and Mixed at ................. AIR LYNDHURST RECORDING STUDIOS
Assistant Engineers ....................................... FIONA CRUICKSHANK
LAWRENCE ANSLOW

Music Copyist .............................................. COLIN RAE
Vocal Contractor ........................................... ROB FARDELL FOR DOUBLEVOICES
Orchestra .................................................. THE LONDON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
Piano ......................................................... PATRICK DOYLE
JOHN ALLEY
Adult Choir Vocal Contractor ........................ ROB FARDELL
Children’s Choir ........................................... NEW LONDON CHILDREN’S CHOIR
CONDUCTED BY RONALD CORP OBE

Main Title Sequence by ................................. NORDBECK CREATIVE
Main Title Sequence Animator ....................... ANDREW DAFFY
Digital Intermediate provided by ............... COMPANY 3
Supervising Colourist ...................................... ROB PIZZEY
DI Producer ................................................ JONATHAN COLLARD
Digital Conform .......................................... HERBERT BUTLER
DI Technologist ............................................ JOHN QUARTEL
Additional Colourist ....................................... TREVOR BROWN
Head of Production Daily Tel ....................... JON BROWN
Head of Operations ...................................... CLAIRE MCGRANE
CO3 Executive Producer .............................. STEFAN SONNENFELD
Film Dailies Service by ................................. CO3 AND I-DAILIES LONDON

SECOND UNIT

1st Assistant Director .................................. CORDELIA HARDY
2nd Assistant Director ................................ BRYN LAWRENCE
3rd Assistant Director .................................. MARK COCKRAN
Set PAs ..................................................... SHIVA TALWAR
ADAM FOSTER
THOMAS IVENS
RICHARD OXFD

2nd Assistant Camera ................................... LOUISE BEN NATHAN
Central Loader ............................................ MAIYA ROSE
Camera Trainee ............................................ BRUNO WITT
Script Supervisor ......................................... CATHY DOUBLEDAY
Assistant Script Supervisor .......................... ROXANNE CUENCA
2nd Unit Costume Supervisor ....................... LINDA O’REILLY
2nd Unit Principal Standby ......................... LUCILLA SIMBARI
Costume Assistant ........................................ DAN SUMMERVILLE
Costume Trainee .......................................... ALICE BUCKINGHAM
2nd Unit Chief Lighting Technician .............. ALAN MARTIN
Best Boy Electrician ..................................... LEE MARTIN
Electricians ............................................... LEE BAKER
ROB COLLINS
STEPHEN MCGRAIL
DAVE MOORE

Shooting Dimmer Op ................................. PETER GILMOUR
Lighting Technician ...................................... GARY MOORE
2nd Unit Rigging Gaffer ............................... JASON MARTIN
2nd Unit Rigging Electricians ........................ DARREN BAKER
JOSEPH WEEKS

2nd Unit Electrical Riggers ............................ GARY DONOGHE
CHRISTOPHER DOWLING
JOHN FENNELLY
MATTHEW MARTIN
PAUL WELSTEAD

2nd Unit SFX Floor Supervisor ........................ JAMIE MURRELL
2nd Unit Key Grip ......................................... DAVID CADWALLADER
Grips ......................................................... EMMET CAHILL
DAVID DRAPER
EDWARD LANCASTER
SIMON MEEHAN

Crane Technician .......................................... CLIVE TOCHER
Crane Grip .................................................. STACEY HANCOX
Hair Artist ................................................. FRANCESCA CROWDER
Unit Manager ............................................. JOANNA WARNE
Makeup Supervisor ....................................... ANDREA FINCH
Makeup Artist ............................................. CHARLOTTE HOUNSLOW
Makeup Trainee .......................................... NADINE SENNAUSER
Unit Nurse ................................................ NICKI JARVIS
Sound Mixer ............................................... TIM WHITE
Boom Operator ........................................... NICK GILLET
2nd Unit Catering Company ......................... SET BREAKS
2nd Unit Catering Company ......................... SILVERSCREEN CATERERS

VI
American Humane Association monitored some of the animal action. No animals were harmed in those scenes.™

(AHAD 04522)

AMERICAN HUMANE ASSOCIATION
I WANT TO TELL YOU A SECRET THAT WILL SEE YOU THROUGH ALL THE TRIALS THAT LIFE CAN OFFER: HAVE COURAGE AND BE KIND.
—ELLA’S MOTHER

THE LEGACY OF A CLASSIC

For years, Walt Disney Studios has been interested in bringing “Cinderella” back to the big screen, to reintroduce the timeless tale to a 21st-century audience and build on the nostalgia and memories cherished by millions around the world. Of utmost importance, the film needed to be entertaining and bring as much fun and humanity to the fairy-tale characters as possible, while preserving the unforgettable elements from the animated classic.

Director Kenneth Branagh (“Hamlet,” “Thor”) had never toyed with the idea of directing a fairy tale before, but after reading the script by screenwriter Chris Weitz (“About a Boy”), found that the story spoke to him in ways he never imagined.

“I was captivated by the power of the story and felt I was in sync with the visual artistry that was being developed,” Branagh says. “It’s a classic piece of storytelling where the central character goes on a journey that we can really identify with, so the texture and landscape of a great story was wonderful to play with as a director.”

Branagh’s long-term producing partner, David Barron (“Jack Ryan: Shadow Recruit”), knew Branagh was the right director for the job. “I’ve worked with Ken for over 20 years, and he is the perfect choice to direct ‘Cinderella,’” Barron says. “He has a passion for storytelling and a rare gift for finding the humanity of every situation, even fairy tales.”

In order to make the film relevant to modern audiences, it was this core of kindness and compassion that would be fundamentally important. And the filmmakers were convinced that the powerful story, combined with an exceptionally-talented cast and a strong script with more complex and realistic characters, would make for a truly entertaining cinematic experience.
“The thing for us was not to try too hard to reimagine things, but to go by the lights of the story as we saw it—a world of hidden wonder and beauty, with the animating force of kindness and faith at the heart of it,” says Weitz.

Producer Allison Shearmur (“Pride and Prejudice and Zombies”) says, “‘Cinderella’ is one of the greatest treasures, cinematically, of all time. It’s a spectacular film, so the responsibility to approach it again, and for this company, was a daunting proposition for everyone involved. But we loved the original film and intended to honor it.”

Disney’s animated fairy tale “Cinderella,” the magical love story of an ill-treated heroine whose dreams come true, was a colossal moment in Disney’s rich cinematic history. With a production budget of close to $3 million, “Cinderella” was a huge financial risk for the studio at the time, but the film opened on February 15, 1950 to universal acclaim and was a big hit commercially, grossing more than $34 million and firmly solidifying the studio as a major force in the industry.

Today, 65 years later, “Cinderella” has become one of the studio’s most treasured titles. The film is included on the American Film Institute’s list of the “10 Greatest Animated Films of All Time” and is an enduring fixture on America’s pop cultural landscape.

Shearmur remembers seeing “Cinderella” as a child at her local movie theater in Long Island, New York, thinking it was the most magical experience ever. “Not because it was about a young girl with nothing going for her whose dreams all of a sudden come true,” she says. “It was the scope of that world, and the fact that her world could turn around, which really stuck with me.”

The significance and popularity of fairy tales are still prevalent today, their storylines and illustrations captivating children and fostering imaginations, their morals and resolutions helping children to develop emotionally and psychologically. And the tale of “Cinderella” is a simple story that has touched people around the world.

According to producer Simon Kinberg (“X-Men: Days of Future Past”), the simplest stories are the ones that tend to stick with us. “There’s just something fundamental about them,” he says. “No matter how many times they are repeated or reinterpreted, stories like ‘Cinderella’ last for hundreds, and sometimes thousands, of years.”

For most, the enduring story came to life with the beloved animated film in 1950, but its origins date back to the 1st century and the Egyptian tale “Rhodopis” by the Greek historian Strabo, which is considered the earliest-known version of the story on record. In 1697, Charles Perrault’s French interpretation of the tale entitled “Cendrillon, or the History of the Little Glass Slipper” was published, which introduced the fairy godmother, the pumpkin carriage and the glass slippers.

The Grimm Brothers’ take on the story, “Aschenputtel,” which came out in Germany in 1812, featured a wishing tree that grows on her mother’s grave in place of a fairy godmother and set forth a much darker tone, but it is Perrault’s adaptation that is most similar to Disney’s. Since then there have been countless incarnations of the story across all forms of media, from print, film and television to stage, music and art.
Cate Blanchett (“Blue Jasmine,” “The Aviator”) has always loved fairy tales, and this one in particular, because they deal with complex issues facing children. “So many stories that children are told now make them feel that they are heroes who can overcome anything and that the world is a perfect place,” she says. “But the classic tales, like ‘Cinderella,’ remind us that the world can be a nasty place and require a good deal of courage and resilience to survive.”

**WHERE THERE IS KINDNESS, THERE IS GOODNESS, AND WHERE THERE IS GOODNESS, THERE IS MAGIC.**

—ELLA’S MOTHER

**THE TIMELESS STORY**

Ella (Lily James) is a beautiful young woman whose idyllic life comes crashing down when her merchant Father (Ben Chaplin) remarries following the tragic death of her Mother (Golden Globe® nominee Hayley Atwell). Eager to support her loving father, Ella welcomes her new Stepmother (two-time Academy Award® winner Cate Blanchett) and her daughters, Anastasia (Holliday Grainger) and Drisella (Sophie McShera), into the family home. But when Ella’s father unexpectedly passes away, she finds herself at the mercy of a jealous and cruel new family.

Soon, she is forced to become their servant, disrespected, covered in ashes and spitefully renamed Cinderella. Yet, despite the cruelty inflicted upon her, Ella will not give in to despair nor despise those who mistreat her, and she continues to remain positive, determined to honor her mother’s dying words to “have courage and be kind.”

When Ella meets a dashing stranger in the woods, unaware that he is really the Prince (Richard Madden) and not merely Kit, an apprentice at the palace, she believes she has finally found a kindred soul. It appears her fortunes may be about to change when the King (BAFTA® and Emmy® Award winner Derek Jacobi) summons all maidens in the kingdom to attend a royal ball at the palace, raising Ella’s hopes of once again encountering the charming Kit. Alas, her Stepmother forbids her to attend and callously destroys her dress.

Meanwhile, the calculating Grand Duke (Stellan Skarsgård) devises a plan to thwart the Prince’s hopes of reuniting with Ella and enlists the support of the devious Stepmother. But, as in all good fairy tales, help is at hand. Soon, a kindly beggar woman (two-time Academy Award® nominee Helena Bonham Carter) steps forward and, armed with a pumpkin, a few mice and a magic wand, changes Cinderella’s life forever.

A live-action feature inspired by the classic fairy tale, Disney’s “Cinderella” brings to life the beloved characters and timeless images from the studio’s 1950 animated masterpiece in a visually-dazzling spectacle for a whole new generation.

Directed by five-time Academy Award® nominee Kenneth Branagh, the film is produced by Simon Kinberg, p.g.a.,
Allison Shearmur, p.g.a., and David Barron, p.g.a., with Tim Lewis serving as executive producer. The screenplay is by Academy Award nominee Chris Weitz.

The stellar production team behind the camera includes: director of photography Haris Zambarloukos, BSC; three-time Academy Award®-winning production designer Dante Ferretti; three-time Academy Award-winning costume designer Sandy Powell; Academy Award-winning editor Martin Walsh, ACE; and two-time Academy Award-nominated composer Patrick Doyle.

**YOU MUST NOT MARRY FOR ADVANTAGE. YOU MUST MARRY FOR LOVE. FIND THAT GIRL THEY ARE TALKING ABOUT…THE FORGETFUL ONE WHO LOSES HER SHOES.**

—THE KING

**BRINGING THE FAIRY TALE TO LIFE**

Kenneth Branagh is one of the most talented and respected filmmakers working today, equally adept with the works of William Shakespeare as he is with Tom Clancy or a superhero from a Marvel comic book.

In addition to his acclaimed skills as a director, he is an award-winning actor, writer and producer, and in 2011, his performance as Sir Laurence Olivier in “My Week With Marilyn,” earned Branagh his fifth career Academy Award® nomination, making him one of the first actors to receive five nominations in five separate categories (Actor, Supporting Actor, Director, Screenplay, and Short Film).

Producer Allison Shearmur says, “Kenneth Branagh is one of the world’s greatest actors as well as one of the world’s greatest directors, so we knew from the beginning that he would bring a complexity to the relationships, the characters and the themes of the story. But the epic vision that he brought to ‘Thor’ was so absolutely amazing and singular, and finding the combination of those elements in one director was almost too good to be true.”

Branagh first gravitated to the material because of the power of the story, as well as the strength and fortitude of the title character.

“With ‘Cinderella,’ you can assume that the vast majority of your audience already knows the story, no matter what their age,” Branagh says. “So what you bring to it as a director, the way you embody the classic iconic moments of the story, was really a wonderful challenge for me.”

He continues, “Being able to direct Disney’s ‘Cinderella’ in the 21st century means that you are in the driving seat for presenting a myth that has endured across the ages because it connects with human beings on such a profound level.”

When Branagh and Shearmur first sat down to discuss the project, the director said he was interested in doing the film so as to develop a complex psychology and a more fleshed-out understanding of who these characters were. In addition, he was looking to make a movie where kindness was a super power. Shearmur explains, “While I certainly felt that kindness is a quality that defines Cinderella, this notion that her strength and her ability to
change people and to overcome difficulty and have good triumph over evil through kindness, was tremendously appealing."

She continues, “It’s a level of inner strength and clarity which allows her to put up with as much as she does, and she does it cold, and she does it with little food, with no human company and no conversation, and she does this because she is absolutely clearheaded about what she believes. And while she is tested, and tested, and there are times when she loses faith and doesn’t believe, she ultimately sticks to her beliefs, and is able to not only transform her own life, but the lives of those around her as well.”

The task of writing a screenplay that would deftly balance the essence of the animated film while making the characters more appealing and relevant was placed in the skilled hands of screenwriter Chris Weitz. Like Branagh, Weitz is also an accomplished actor (“Chuck & Buck”), producer (“A Single Man”) and director (“A Better Life, “The Golden Compass”), and was intrigued with the prospect of expanding the story to give audiences a glimpse into the backgrounds and motivations of each character.

The filmmakers wanted to deliver something akin to the classic family entertainment that Disney is known for, while being mindful of the fact that families are different today than they were in the golden age of the studio. Shearmur explains, “This is more about telling the story from the inner journeys and the inner worlds of each character, rather than just the visual aspect of it all. But it was also important that the screenplay remain faithful to the original animated film.”

“We’re not doing a revisionist version of ‘Cinderella,’” says Weitz. “She does what the character did in the fairy tale, but in order to modernize her for today’s audience we decided to have the same heroine whose virtue is really in her ability to maintain her good nature and her character in spite of a lot of suffering, which is what she goes through.”

The screenplay was written with scenes showing Ella as a child with her Mother and Father, focusing on the picturesque life she shared with her loving parents in beautiful surroundings before her Mother died. It is in these scenes where we see how Ella comes to understand the concept of having courage and being kind, as witnessed from her parents, which she takes with her throughout the film.

“This is her mother’s legacy,” explains producer David Barron. “These are very simple words, but for Ella they are everything, as it gives her the strength and resolve to deal with all that lies ahead, unknowing of course, just how much this resolve would be tested.”

“In the animated ‘Cinderella’ we don’t see her Mother; she’s gone after the first sentence or two of voiceover,” says Weitz. “I thought it was important that the audience see her, and experience not only Ella’s loss of her but what she gained from her. We also wanted a touchstone by which to remember those intangible gifts.”
Branagh says, “Cinderella has a strong sense of humor and maturity. She assumes people don’t necessarily mean to be cruel and aren’t necessarily evil. She is not a helpless or self-pitying victim. She can find things funny. These things are presented as expressions of strength, not weakness.”

Adds Barron, “In a way, Cinderella’s journey mirrors that of the Stepmother, in that both endure loss and heartbreak, but it’s the choices they make which differentiates them. She could easily have become bitter and angry like her Stepmother, for which she has ample cause, but she chooses goodness, which further infuriates her Stepmother all the more.”

Another new concept addressed in the screenplay is the notion of choosing who we spend the rest of our lives with, and in the original classic the characters didn’t have much of an opportunity to do so. As a result, Weitz came up with the idea of having Ella and the Prince meet earlier on in the story and not realize who the other person is so as to experience the views about life that they share.

Branagh explains, “We’ve given our Prince the sense of a man who has been at war, who knows in a very personal and meaningful way the cost of war. He’s less shingly innocent than film princes have been in the past. We give him philosophical and political positions about how a country is ruled. He’s surrounded by people who suggest that countries are ruled effectively by having wars.”

At the same time, the filmmakers felt it was important that Cinderella had a kindred spirit...someone mature to interact with and relate to spiritually and emotionally. Too many times the male characters in fairy tales are peripheral to the females, so the Prince was written to be thoughtful and passionate, in addition to good-looking and intelligent.

Branagh continues, “The Prince finds in Cinderella a kindred spirit who believes that the important thing is not to go to war with your fellow man, but to have courage, to be kind and generous, and, where possible, to turn the other cheek. We wanted him to be a thinking man and a sensitive man, but a funny man as well. We make him a pragmatic realist in a messily political world. He has to prove himself the moral equal of Cinderella, with her depth of feeling and understanding.”

Another addition to the film are the glimpses of information provided in the story that offer clues as to why the Stepmother is the way that she is. She’s not just a villain, and she’s not just cruel...it actually goes much deeper than that.

Explains Shearmur, “In the film, audiences will see that the Stepmother has experienced her own loss, her own grief and her own broken heart, but she reacts with anger and proceeds to do whatever it takes to find a level of comfort for herself and her daughters.”

She continues, “Our story takes place in a different time and in a different society, when women could not go out and necessarily find jobs and take care of their families. It was only through marriage where they found any
sense of security, and that’s what makes her character so complex: the fact that her reasons are legitimate.”

The Stepmother prides herself on maintaining a respectable appearance, home and well-bred daughters, putting a great deal of importance on what others think of her. But her emotional pain deepens when she realizes that her new husband will always think of Ella’s Mother—not her—as the love of his life, and intensifies when her second chance at love is lost. At the same time, she comes to realize the vast differences between Cinderella and her girls, which infuriates her even more.

Adds Weitz, “It was really important from the get-go that the Stepmother have something to say for herself. Not only does she have her own share of pain and suffering in her past, but she is quite charming and seductive as well.”

The Stepmother also schemes with the Grand Duke, the cunning and pragmatic ally of the royal family, which was another element of the screenplay that was nurtured from the original classic. The Grand Duke believes marriage is nothing more than a business arrangement and that the Prince should marry someone politically valuable to the royal family. He feels it is his duty to prevent the Prince from finding and marrying Cinderella, and teams up with the Stepmother to make sure it does not happen.

YOU HAVE MORE KINDNESS IN YOUR LITTLE FINGER THAN MOST PEOPLE POSSESS IN THEIR WHOLE BODY, AND IT HAS POWER. MORE THAN YOU KNOW.
—ELLA’S MOTHER

THE STORYBOOK CHARACTERS

Bringing a fairy-tale character like Cinderella to cinemas in today’s unpredictable marketplace was a formidable challenge, but the filmmakers were determined not to compromise or make any substantial changes to the heart of the story. Like any cherished classic, “Cinderella” has a loyal and adoring audience, and one that is all-too familiar with the signature moments from Disney’s landmark film.

First and foremost, the filmmakers needed to find the perfect actress to embody Ella, someone who radiated goodness and innocence, and who could make audiences see past her good looks and focus on the story beneath her exterior, instead. Lily James, best known to audiences as the defiant Lady Rose on “Downton Abbey,” was cast as the loving and kindhearted Ella, the young woman whose spirit can’t be broken.

Says Kenneth Branagh, “It was extremely difficult to find someone who could be witty and smart, sharp but not cruel, has a twinkle in her eye and who has an inner beauty as well as a physical beauty, but Lily James’ Cinderella encapsulates all of those qualities. You have to root for Cinderella, you have to like her, you have to be on her side, and so an innate likeability was important.”

He continues, “Lily brought all that the first time she came in to read for the part. She’s a very beautiful girl, and her warmth also allows it to be a very approachable beauty, and somehow we feel that she could be our friend as dazzling as she is.”
Adds Allison Shearmur, “Lily James is Cinderella. She is kind. She’s interested in the quietest person in the room, she has great interest in all people from all walks of life. She’s got a great big heart. She’s a good person, and she’s spectacularly beautiful, but she’s not a cartoon.”

Producer David Barron agrees, and says, “On the surface Lily has this wonderful wide-eyed innocence and a joy in just being alive and discovering the world around her, but she’s incredibly smart and has a directness and an emotional intelligence that allowed us to embrace this very multi-layered Cinderella.”

For James, the opportunity to play one of the world’s most celebrated and best-loved characters was a dream come true. She explains, “I liked the fact that Ken wanted to keep it light and magical, much like a fairy tale. And in addition to the fact that Cinderella is so special and kind and unique, we also had a great opportunity to create a whole life beyond the fairy tale, making it richer and giving each character their own specific back-stories.”

She continues, “The heart of the story is Ella’s strength and how, even under the cruelest of circumstances, she manages to maintain goodness, purity and positivity.”

To prepare for the film, James tried to live healthily, implementing a daily yoga routine to get the kind of posture and grace and elegance that Ella would have had. She also took horseback riding lessons for six weeks, and did a great deal of research on spirituality, reading up on great leaders and pacifists like Gandhi.

“I wanted to make Ella seem as real as possible, but didn’t want her to appear as if she had no faults because I was afraid the audience wouldn’t relate to her if she was too perfect,” James says.

For the role of the Prince, Richard Madden responded enthusiastically to the material. He was eager to take on the dashing and thoughtful Kit, the bright young man who initially conceals his true identity from Ella. The actor, who starred as Robb Stark, King of the North, on HBO’s hugely-popular “Game of Thrones,” was thrilled to find that the Prince was not the shallow, one-dimensional character people remember from the animated film, but someone who audiences could actually believe Ella would fall in love with.

Madden says, “Ken and I had numerous discussions about young rulers and how they would relate to more traditional views of their elders. The Prince wants to do what is best for the kingdom, but he has his own fresh ideas and philosophies as to how things should work.”

According to Shearmur, “Ken has a real interest in other peoples’ ideas. He’s the dream director and collaborator for anyone on this movie. He works with the actors giving them as much time as they need to get the scene right for the performances. He has a great understanding of how the actor’s mind works.”

The relationship between the King and the Prince grows over the course of the film and the audience actually
sees a man becoming whom he needs to be in order to move the royal family forward. Madden explains, “His Father is an older, more traditional King who wants the best for his son and for the kingdom, but they have very different ways of looking at what those things are. The end goal is the same, but how they get there is very different.”

He continues, “This was something that I felt was very important for younger generations to understand: that a great deal can be accomplished when someone comes in and re-evaluates the situation and actually challenges what the previous generation’s thoughts and actions were.”

In discussing his character’s relationship with Ella, Madden says, “There’s a great deal of humor in their relationship, even though it’s a period film. It feels so much more modern in terms of how they connect with each other.”

In the film, the Prince and Ella don’t know anything about one another when they first meet, so it has nothing to do with him being a Prince or her being a peasant girl, but rather them connecting as human beings.

James says, “The Prince actually learns a lot from Cinderella, in fact. And the character has been written very cleverly in the sense that you see that she’s challenged the way he thinks so that he is willing to question the King.”

Adds Branagh, “The performances of both Lily James and Richard Madden have intelligence, depth and complexity in the way they react to things, in the way they carry themselves, in the way they present a weight of thought. These are people who we sense feel deeply, but they also have enormous capacity for fun and kindness.”

For the role of the feared—yet misunderstood—Stepmother, the filmmakers were certain that Cate Blanchett was an actor who could embrace the role without making it a caricature. The actress, who has been nominated for an Academy Award® six times (four of which were for playing real people: Elizabeth I in “Elizabeth” and “Elizabeth: the Golden Age,” Katharine Hepburn in “The Aviator,” Bob Dylan in “I’m Not Here” and Sheba Hart in “Notes of a Scandal”), brings to life the role of the elegant widow who has been battered by life and resents Ella for her youth, beauty and charm.

“This is a story where kindness is a super power, which is something Ken and I talked about early on that I found really exciting,” says Blanchett. “Plus, I have three boys, so I’m aware of all the films out there that have male superheroes at the fore, so I was thrilled to be part of the telling of a female-centric story.”

Not wanting the Stepmother to be totally unsympathetic, Blanchett embodied the role with wit and emotion, giving a performance that was full-blooded in its execution, while still offering little nuances that alluded to her pain within.

“We wanted to show audiences that this character did have genuine and reasonable goals,” says Branagh. “For instance, wanting to have a life that was taken care of from a financial point of view and a happy future for her
daughters are understandable goals, although the way she goes about securing it is unusual and excessive.”

Adds Shearmur, “What’s incredible about Cate’s performance is that even in those tiny moments of repose and contemplation, she allows the Stepmother to give the impression that she is carrying a whole life with a series of broken dreams of her own.”

“With a truly great actress like Cate, we get to see dimension in the Stepmother, a complex and detailed humanity,” says Branagh. “She carries herself with such aplomb and she’s so beautiful and there’s so much going on behind her eyes. Cate’s Stepmother is scary, passionate and intelligent, and she’s dangerous.”

He continues, “Being able to provide her character with these kind of back-stories and to have it played with such lightness and effortless ease by someone like Cate, is one of the ways this film distinguishes itself from other versions of similar fairy tales, and I think modern audiences will appreciate that.”

Blanchett knew it would be fun to inhabit such a colorful character, but did not want to go for high camp, which is easy to do in fairy tales. Branagh wanted her to find the core of truth in the character instead, which turned out to be quite a balancing act.

“No one is purely evil...everyone’s got a motivation,” Blanchett says. “The Stepmother is what happens when good is perverted: It often turns wicked. I was interested in exploring what makes someone wicked.”

She continues, “Through little vignettes in the film, you get a glimpse that this is a woman who has tried to start her life again, and becomes intensely jealous of the deep affection that her new husband has for his daughter. She’s not as beautiful and not as kind and as good as her. And when Ella’s father dies, the financial pressures, the panic and the jealousy grow...that is what makes her wicked.”

The Fairy Godmother is a delightfully eccentric woman, and one of the animated film’s most beloved characters. Says Shearmur, “The character in the animated classic is fantastic and iconic, but to try and re-create that, especially without song, would have definitely been a challenge, so we focused on the qualities that audiences loved about the Fairy Godmother.”

The filmmakers were looking to cast an actor who could bring an air of levity to the role, while at the same time be maternal and funny and able to convince audiences she was indeed magical. Helena Bonham Carter was someone they knew would have her own take on the character, and would be able to keep her from becoming too perfect or sweet.

Bonham Carter, whose film roles have ranged from sweet, demure characters in period dramas like Lucy Honeychurch in “A Room With a View” and Lady Jane Grey in “Lady Jane” to dark, quirky characters like Bellatrix Lestrange in the “Harry Potter” films, the Red Queen in “Alice in Wonderland” and Mrs. Lovett in “Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street,” has traditionally been drawn to characters who give her the creative freedom to analyze and find out what makes them tick.

“This was a fantastic opportunity to get to reinvent the wheel, because there really isn’t a consistent image of who the Fairy Godmother is,” Bonham Carter says. “It was great fun to think about things like how she got to
where she is. I’m supposed to be a designer in a way because I’m creating things to help prepare Cinderella for the ball, so I make her dress, I design her shoes, I design the footmen and I get the transport ready.”

She continues, “As for why she chose a pumpkin for the carriage, I started thinking that maybe the pumpkin was an accident and she had actually intended for the carriage to come from something else, like a watermelon. The possibilities are endless, and as an actor I love thinking up back-stories for my characters.”

Chris Weitz welcomed the chance to expand the scope of her part in the script, which meant the addition of a new character, a beggar woman (also played by Bonham Carter), who first approaches Ella and is treated with kindness before transforming into the Fairy Godmother. He tried to come up with lines and moments that would fit into her particular cadence, and says, “Helena wanted to pursue a version of the character that was very much in sync with the Fairy Godmother that people remember from the animated film, but also had a particular spin from the way she performs comedy.”

“I thought it would be interesting if she wasn’t always the best at everything, that perhaps she was highly-stressed because of the time restraints placed upon her so she would occasionally make mistakes,” says Bonham Carter. “They are late for the ball and she’s incredibly old and not quite with it mentally, and that just makes her all the more likable.”

Adds Branagh, “I read something interesting about the original Fairy Godmother in which the phrase ‘benign befuddlement’ was used. There is a befuddled quality about the Fairy Godmother in the original film, and what Helena brings is an extension, or an elaboration, of that.”

He continues, “She’s very passionate, very witty, but not always in complete control of her magic. She’s utterly devoted to Cinderella. Clearly, there’s a maternal feeling for her. She is indeed her godmother or albeit, Fairy Godmother, so you feel that sort of familial care and concern.”

“There’s no question that the Fairy Godmother loves Cinderella” adds producer Barron, “But she’s robust with her and has fun with her, and by not being an expert in everything she does—almost a Fairy Godmother, in training, if you like—this adds great humor.”

Two memorable characters from the animated film are Cinderella’s boorish and ill-mannered stepsisters, Anastasia and Drisella, played this time out by Holliday Grainger (“Bonnie and Clyde”) and Sophie McShera (“Downton Abbey”). Both roles have been given more depth than in previous incarnations, but are still a source of comic relief.

“The stepsisters are two very small-minded, petty creatures,” explains Shearmur. “They have no inner life, no gratitude and no ability to see the beauty in anything around them. All they can see is what they want and what they don’t have.”

She continues, “Both characters have an ugliness within. They are pretty, but there’s a lack of self-awareness about just how far they are pushing their hairstyle, their makeup, the garishness of their dresses. Their appearance reflects the singular attention on their own needs without any consideration for anyone else...that defines their ugliness within.”
Grainger elaborates, saying, “Anastasia is the younger of the stepsisters. She and Drisella are a pair, almost as if they’re joined at the hip. They are both so needy and look up to their Mother so much that they have no self-esteem, which manifests itself through jealousy and selfishness directed toward Cinderella. But it’s not their fault that they’re not that attractive or talented and that no one fancies them or wants to marry them.”

“We are pretty vile, but we look ridiculous, so you can’t help but feel a bit sorry for us sometimes,” adds McShera.

Cinderella doesn’t actually dislike the stepsisters, because she’s not capable of hate, but she doesn’t understand them. “I think she pitied them a little bit,” says James. “She sees that they’re clearly very unhappy, very selfish human beings, but I think she finds them very funny at times, too.”

It was important to the filmmakers that audiences perceive the sisters as mean-spirited and obnoxious, but that their characters were believable, too. On set, Branagh encouraged Grainger and McShera to improvise, as a means of helping to develop the kind of natural rapport real sisters would have.

Says Blanchett, “Sophie has exquisite natural comic timing, and both she and Holliday are so unaffected that you genuinely believe that they felt they were both the brightest button, as well as the most beautiful girls, in the room. And despite how they were dressed, they didn’t overplay it. They found the balance immediately.”

For the role of the King, the Prince’s father, Branagh reached out to his frequent collaborator, the esteemed British stage and screen actor Derek Jacobi, who directed and mentored him as a young actor when he made his stage debut in “Hamlet.” Years later the tables were turned when Branagh directed Jacobi in the film version of “Henry V.”

Says Jacobi, “I’ve known Ken since 1979 when I was playing Hamlet at the Old Vic and he was a student at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Arts and was interviewing me for the Academy’s magazine. He went on to graduate and became an overnight sensation as an actor, but we retained a friendship over the years.”

In describing his role, Jacobi says, “The King is very traditional in that he wants his son to inherit a safe and secure kingdom, which means he needs to enter into a mutually-advantageous marriage. We get to see what a strong relationship he has with his son, because the Prince wants to marry an ordinary country girl that he’s met in the forest, and eventually we see that the King loves his son enough to say, ‘Well, on this occasion, I trust you. I think you have courage, and I think you must go where your heart leads you.’”

Jacobi continues, “The King comes to realize that love and kindness and courage are qualities that are just as valuable as land and soldiers and nobility. And there’s a touching scene where Cinderella is fleeing from the ballroom as it approaches midnight, and she collides with the King, and before she excuses herself she tells him what a wonderful son he has and how much his son loves him, which I think is probably the trigger that makes the King realize for the first time that maybe it’s not the worst thing in the world for them to get married.”
Stellan Skarsgärd (“The Girl With the Dragon Tattoo”) plays the Grand Duke, whose job it is to make the kingdom and all its foreign policies work properly, which includes facilitating business arrangements that could benefit the country. Skarsgärd explains, “He runs the show, is very pragmatic, and doesn’t approve of the absolutely silly idea that anyone should marry out of love, the Prince included.”

Barron elaborates, saying, “There is a complicated relationship between the Grand Duke, the Prince and the King, and ultimately they all want to do what is best, but they have very different views as to what that is and how to go about it.”

He continues, “The Grand Duke isn’t just there to manipulate the Prince, he genuinely believes that he is doing what is best for the nation and will do whatever that takes to protect that belief.”

Rounding out the cast are: Nonso Anozie (“Jack Ryan: Shadow Recruit”) as the Captain, the Prince’s advisor and best friend; Ben Chaplin (“Murder by Numbers”) as Ella’s Father; and Hayley Atwell (“Captain America: The Winter Soldier”) as Ella’s Mother.

I THINK HEAVEN IS LIKE THE PALACE BALL. EVERYONE IS INVITED.
—CINDERELLA

CREATING THE MAGIC ON SCREEN

A FARAWAY KINGDOM
Principal photography on “Cinderella” commenced in summer of 2013 on soundstages at England’s Pinewood Studios and on locations in and around London. As this is a timeless fairy tale that takes place in a make-believe location, the filmmakers decided early on that the story need not remain faithful to one specific time period, which allowed the production team the freedom to think outside the box and let their imaginations run wild, creating their own unique vision of a magical time and place.

“Cinderella has set piece moments,” says Kenneth Branagh, “So we were faced with the challenge of wanting to meet the audiences’ expectations so they weren’t disappointed, but at the same time we needed to exceed them and allow our own vision of it to shine through and bring some originality to it.”

Celebrated production designer Dante Ferretti, who has worked with such acclaimed filmmakers as Federico Fellini, Martin Scorsese, Franco Zeffirelli and Francis Ford Coppola, did an enormous amount of research to prepare, drawing the bulk of his inspiration from architecture in Northern Europe in the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries.

Ferretti says, “Ken wanted the look to be sort of 19th century, which gave us the opportunity to incorporate earlier styles of architecture into our designs. The characters live amid locations that were built centuries before the setting in which the film takes place, and I was particularly drawn to the magical, opulent feel of the Baroque period. I set out to create a world that is based in historical realism but mixed with fantasy, as I wanted the atmosphere to be both believable and fantastic at the same time.”
He continues, “I remember my parents taking me to see the animated ‘Cinderella’ as a child growing up in Macerata, Italy, and when I was first approached about my involvement, I went back to re-watch the film and was immediately struck by its grandeur. It was a film that transported you into another world with castles and ballrooms and vast staircases.”

Branagh wanted the film to evoke a majestic opulence befitting a fairy-tale kingdom, and one that had the possibility of magic and the intervention of a Fairy Godmother. At the same time, he wanted to ensure that all the settings looked as believable as possible.

Sets that Ferretti designed and created included the exterior of the King’s palace, an enormous structure complete with a vast staircase, magnificent gardens and ornate fountains, Ella’s childhood home, and, most significantly, the palace’s grand ballroom, where Ella makes her unforgettable entrance and dances with the Prince. According to Simon Kinberg, most films would have created the ballroom with computer-generated effects, but not this one. “It was really important to Dante and to Ken that this space, the most iconic space in the Cinderella story, and one of the most iconic scenes of all time, feel real,” he says.

“In my mind, I wanted to evoke a feeling of Old-World Europe that I knew would work well with the magic of the story and its colorful characters,” says Ferretti. “Realism was my focus, and I always prefer creating sets that I can touch, and I think the actors prefer it over green screens as well…it helps them to get in character.”

Branagh and Ferretti had numerous discussions and were both in agreement that they should indeed focus on practical sets, so everything was built on either soundstages or the back lots. Ferretti’s design process involved longtime collaborator, set decorator Francesca Loschiavo-Ferretti, with whom he’s worked for 30 years.

He explains, “I do all the sketches, and then Francesca reviews everything to make sure all the details are accurate. But we didn’t want anything to look too perfect, so we intentionally left small and very deliberate errors on all our designs to make it feel more real.”

Richard Madden says, “The sets on this film have as much personality as the characters do, which helps tell the story of who these characters truly are. They give the audience lots of things to visually feast upon, as well as provide inspiration for the actors.”

He continues, “Having vivid, realistic touches like these make everything feel all the more real and that much more special.”

**THE ENCHANTING ROYAL BALL**

For the palace ball, Kenneth Branagh wanted to see the most spectacular ballroom imaginable. The set was constructed at Pinewood Studios on the famous 007 soundstage, the largest in Europe, which has housed hundreds of massive productions over the years.

Recalling the first time she walked onto the set, Allison Shearmur says, “I was amazed to see what a vast cavern of a place it was. It’s basically a great, big cement cavern as big as several football fields, and Dante Ferretti actually designed and built a three-story ballroom that filled the entire stage and transformed it into the most
beau

ful room you could ever imagine.”

She continues, “Walking onto that set was like stepping into a place that only belongs in storybooks and fairy tales.”

“The palace had to be magical, so I looked at a lot of French architecture, like the Louvre, the Palais Opéra and the Hôtel de Soubise, which all had these great long staircases,” says Ferretti. “So we started with the stairs and then created everything from there, including the main entrance with its big arch and the fountains inside.”

Ferretti and his team created a ballroom that was vast and sumptuous, measuring a staggering 50 yards long, 35 yards wide and 30 feet high. It featured an enormous staircase that led down into the ballroom, marble floors and walls, golden statues, thousands of flowers, decorative frescoes and sconces, and curtains made from more than 2,000 yards of material.

The ballroom also included 17 enormous custom-made chandeliers from Italy, which had close to 5,000 oil candles, each of which had to be lit by hand. For the chandeliers that adorned the corridor leading into the ballroom and the ballroom itself, Francesca Loschiavo-Ferretti wanted them to be over the top. In the end, the chandeliers were custom-made in Venice, and are works of art themselves.

“There needed to be a grandeur, a breathtaking moment when Ella first enters the room, but it needed to have a lightness and not be too intimidating,” Branagh says. “When Lily entered the ballroom for the first time in the middle of that sequence, it was one of the most exciting, moving and beautiful days of my entire career. Even the most hardened of riggers and the most cynical of makeup artists had a tear in their eye.”

Lily James agrees, and says, “Coming in the first time was amazing. The ballroom was the most magical thing I’ve ever seen, and when I came in and everyone looked at me, I was terrified, but it was the highlight of the film for me as well.”

Cate Blanchett adds, “When I walked onto the set of the ballroom, I had to pick my jaw up off the floor…it was like an MGM Technicolor moment, and in terms of cinema I felt like I was transported back in time. When Cinderella and the Prince took to the floor to dance, it was profoundly moving.”

“Dante has a sense of wit and a sense of style that’s not overbearing, not too sickly, not too ornate, not too fancy and yet very glamorous,” says Branagh. “The ballroom offers everything you might expect, and while it evokes images of many other famous ballrooms from Vienna or Paris or London, it is distinctly its own.”

HOME SWEET HOME

In addition to the palace and ballroom sets, Dante Ferretti and his crew built an exterior of Ella’s family’s home on location at Black Park, a sprawling country park in Wexham, Buckinghamshire (not far from Pinewood Studios), that included stables, the fountain and the greenhouse in the garden.
Lily James says, “The exterior locations, like the meadows with their long, wild colorful flowers where there was pollen flying through the air and sheep, geese and horses running around, were truly spectacular.”

The interiors of the home, including all the bedrooms, the Father’s study and the attic where Ella sleeps, were all built on soundstages, as was an identical replica of the exterior of the home. Says Ferretti, “We designed the interiors of the home to be full of color, so as to look more like a fairy tale. The wallpaper throughout most of the home, which we designed and printed, is bourgeois in its style, while the wallpaper in her Father’s study is Oriental and more ornate. And because he’s a merchant by trade, we filled the study with objects he’s acquired from his travels around the world.”

Says Kenneth Branagh, “We needed Ella’s home to have a warmth to it, to be a real working symbol for the audience of what a happy family might be lucky enough to have, and how a house can become a home when tended with the loving care that Dante gives it visually.”

Helena Bonham Carter adds, “This is a huge film with massive sets, which, as an actor, really helped me out. I’ve done my share of films with green screens where you literally have to imagine everything that’s supposed to be around you, so I found it tremendously helpful shooting my scenes in the garden with the conservatory and Ella’s house there for inspiration.”

**COSTUMES BEFITTING ROYALTY**

Equally significant to the production was the need for elaborate costumes, for which renowned costume designer Sandy Powell was obviously more than qualified to create. In addition to her impressive credits ranging from independent films like “The Crying Game,” “Far From Heaven” and “Orlando” to her Oscar®-winning work in “The Young Victoria,” “Shakespeare in Love” and “The Aviator,” Powell had spent many years designing costumes for men in men’s films, so she was excited about the prospect of doing a film with so many strong, female lead characters.

It was essential that there be a cohesive look and feel between the costuming and set design, so Powell worked closely with production designer Dante Ferretti. Fortunately, they both worked in the same studio during pre-production and could visit each other on a daily basis to make sure everything was coordinated.

Powell, who started working on concepts for the characters’ looks almost two years before the start of principal photography began, thought it would be interesting if the costumes weren’t strictly 19th century, but more of a 1940s version of the era instead. She approached the film as one would approach a storybook or a picture book for children: very vivid and colorful with fairly-easy references as to who is good and who is evil.

“When you are designing for a film you have so many considerations, so you really need to understand the script,” Powell says. “It’s not good designing a costume that can’t be seen or clashes with others. I really wanted
the film to have that ‘once upon a time’ feel to it, and since this is a fairy tale, we didn’t have to adhere to any rules.”

She continues, “The story takes place approximately in the 1830s, but it’s really great to have artistic license to actually do what’s best for each character. There are different styles and different influences for each character, or each group of characters.”

Powell watched the animated film before starting her own design process, but just out of curiosity and not necessarily as a source of inspiration. However, once she started designing she noticed there were definite similarities, which means she must have been influenced and inspired subconsciously without even realizing it. “The images from the animation are so iconic they are ingrained in our memory,” she says.

For Ella’s daily attire, Powell was opposed to dressing her in the rags and patchwork dress that most people remember from the animated film. Instead, she wears a dress that looks like something Ella would have worn back in happier times before the death of her Father. Made of aqua cotton voile, the dress was influenced by a 1920s floral print with large pale pink flowers, which are almost hidden in the material, but instead of having it reduced to shreds as it is in the earlier film, it is just shown deteriorating and fading over time.

The gown in which Cinderella makes her dramatic entrance to the palace ball required months and months of preparation for Powell and her team, due to the number of different prototypes, fittings and trials, which involved moving and dancing. “Not only does she need to dance, but she needs to run away from the ball down a massive staircase,” Powell explains. “The gown is very cleverly engineered so that even though it’s voluminous, it’s actually very well balanced.”

She continues, “It’s not even heavy because of where it sits on the body, and the supports underneath the multiple petticoats make it incredibly easy to move in. It’s not the most ornate or the richest-looking gown in the ball, but it had to make her stand out from the crowd while at the same time, being the simplest.”

What Powell hoped to convey in the dress was a lightness and simplicity, and even though it was huge, wanted it to appear weightless. To achieve this she used several layers of the finest fabric, all different colors of blue, which, when put together, made up the watery lilac blue it becomes. “The fine layers of fabric worked well here as they floated around her when she moved, and it made Lily look petite at the same time so as to provide an even bigger contrast from her appearance earlier in the film. I wanted it to look like a watercolor painting,” Powell says.

The addition of a corset helped accentuate James’ already petite frame and created even more of a difference between her 22-inch waist and the gown’s voluminous skirt. But Powell decided not to give her jewels or a tiara in order to make her stand out from the crowd in her simplicity. “Cinderella wins the Prince’s heart through her honesty and goodness so I wanted to portray this through her clothes,” she says.

She then came up with the idea of having little butterflies land on the dress after the Fairy Godmother creates it, which would then be incorporated into the dress’s adornment. In the end, nine different versions of Cinderella’s ball gown were created, each featuring more than 270 yards of fabric, numerous petticoats, more than 10,000
Swarovski crystals and more than 3 miles of hems.

“The first time I saw Cinderella’s blue dress in Sandy Powell’s offices, it took my breath away,” Allison Shearmur says. “She suggested I touch it and I was terrified, but when I did, it felt like air, it felt like what a cloud must feel like. And yet there’s an enormous amount of fabric in that skirt.”

But for Powell, it was the costumes for the notorious evil Stepmother that were the most fun to design. Cate Blanchett was the first person cast in the film, so Powell had her in mind when designing the original looks for the Stepmother. Powell had previously dressed the actress for Martin Scorsese’s “The Aviator,” and for Todd Haynes’ upcoming “Carol,” as well.

Blanchett’s character was written as being a great beauty (or having been one in her day), and Powell wanted to dress the Stepmother so as to give her a reason for the way she was. Along with her daughters, Powell wanted the audience to see that they were spending all of Cinderella’s Father’s money on clothes, hence the extraordinary gowns and the multiple changes.

Powell says, “I wanted to make her look intimidating more than anything, and Cate has such incredible poise. She wears every outfit beautifully. It’s a designer’s dream really, because she is one of the greatest people there is to dress. There are only a handful of actors that you can throw anything on and they look fabulous, and she is one of them.”

“Sandy and I drew inspiration from images taken in the 1940s of screen legends like Marlene Dietrich and Joan Crawford—who we still admire today—who had a tremendous sense of danger and mystery about them, especially the dramatic way they were lit,” says Blanchett.

Powell adds, “Cate’s silhouette is very graphic, and I used a strong jewel-tone color palette and a lot of black. She looked beautiful, yet there was something sharp and edgy about her.”

Powell also designed the footwear worn by the Stepmother, all of which were made by Salvatore Ferragamo.

For the stepsisters, the costumes were over the top (and not in a positive way), which was Powell’s intention all along. She explains, “They were very bright and colorful and had too much stuff piled on...very gauche and unsophisticated.”

The whole idea behind the characters is that they were beautiful, but vain and ugly inside, so for Powell to succeed in making them appear ugly, she knew they had to look silly. She explains, “I decided to dress them identically, as Disney did in the animated film, a bit like friends who go out shopping and get the same thing but in different colors, or twins who have always been dressed in the same thing, but again in different colors.”
She continues, “Basically I over-dressed them, using the cheapest fabrics that we could find, and went one step too far with what they were wearing, without it becoming a visual mess. This also helped to keep the focus on the Stepmother.”

According to Powell, the Prince looks more like the animated character than anyone else in the film. He had to be dashing and handsome, of course, and there was never any doubt that he should be in uniform and in white for the ball (the only one in the ballroom, actually). She used various shades of blue to accentuate his blue eyes, but as opposed to somber, masculine colors, put him in light blues and greens and whites, and since he had been in the military, put him in a beautifully-fitting uniform, even though it was historically inaccurate. Tight white breeches with baggy knees would have been more realistic, but Powell felt that fitted trousers would be more flattering.

Helena Bonham Carter’s costumes turned out to be quite difficult to design, as there are the two sides to her character and could be absolutely anything. Powell ended up designing the costume for the beggar woman, who approaches Cinderella after her Stepmother rips her Mother’s gown, first.

“I was opposed to doing the traditional beggar woman in a raggedy, woolen cloak and hood,” she says, “And thought it would be far more interesting instead if she looked like the woods from which she appears.”

As for the Fairy Godmother, Powell wanted to fulfill every young girl’s dream and bring the treasured character to life in a luminous and magical way. To accomplish this, she created a white gown with silver wings made up of 131 yards of fabric, 10,000 Swarovski crystals and 400 little LED lights, which were stitched throughout the material and lit up when she cast a spell.

Bonham Carter says, “The costume was almost 4 feet wide, and not the most practical, I must say. There was no position I could actually rest in, and it was next to impossible to breathe in because of the corset, so most of the time I was exhausted and quite delirious.”

She continues, “The gown was of course fabulous once it was on, but when I was called upon to move I was like a walking disaster because I tended to gather stools and all sorts of things in my wake.”

Getting the actress dressed and camera-ready was not a quick process, either. “The sad thing is that I start off as an old beggar woman, but it took them longer to make me look like a Fairy Godmother than it did to make me look like an old woman,” says Bonham Carter.

“As brilliant and detailed and prepared as she is, Sandy is also open to what the actors—or people like me—might have to say,” adds Kenneth Branagh. “And with the Fairy Godmother’s costume, Helena definitely wanted it to have wings. In the end, it is a combination of their work and what we do in post-production that makes the Fairy Godmother glow and be regal, witty and eccentric, but still very beautiful, very attractive and very motherly.”

For the guests attending the ball at the palace, Powell’s designs were inspired by some of the ballroom dances from classic films like Luchino Visconti’s “The Leopard” and Alexander Hall’s “Once Upon a Time,” which resulted in a broad mix of different looks and styles from different centuries and helped play up the fact that this was a ball for everyone.
More than 200 extras were featured in the ballroom scenes, which included 25 guards, 20 servants, 54 professional dancers and 30 orchestra members, all of whom wore costumes designed and created by Powell and her team. The entire ballroom sequence required more than three months of planning and preparations, which included casting, wardrobe fittings and rehearsals and more than 35 assistant directors to help oversee.

“We wanted everything to be as colorful as possible,” Powell says. “So the whole ballroom is an explosion of color—sumptuous, rich, and in some cases, really over the top, as many of the guests are there to impress, and hopefully marry, the Prince.” This included a diverse mix of characters from various social and economic classes, and princesses from the Middle East, China, Japan, Wales, India, Africa, Spain and Russia as well.

THE UNFORGETTABLE GLASS SLIPPER
The quintessential glass slippers Cinderella wears to the ball, one of which she subsequently, yet memorably, loses, is one of the most cherished elements in Charles Perrault’s original story.

For Sandy Powell, the design process was exciting, but very daunting as well. “I looked at lots of different possibilities of how to do a glass shoe, and realized the most important thing was that it had to sparkle, which meant that it had to be made of crystal because glass would not sparkle,” she says. “I knew the shape of the shoe that I wanted, which was in fact based on an original shoe from the 1890s that I found in a Northampton shoe museum...the shoe was impossibly tiny with a 5-inch heel and was simply elegant.”

Powell soon realized the only way she could even attempt to make a crystal shoe was with the help of the Austrian crystal company Swarovski, and when approached, the company was more than up to the challenge. Thus began a collaboration featuring Powell’s designs and Swarovski’s execution, which took place over months and months and resulted in numerous tests and trials, but which ultimately yielded great success.

She explains, “We scanned the shoe and made several different versions of it in resin, but it was a challenge to get the actual shape of the shoe just right and to figure out how to physically create it with as few joints as possible. There were numerous technical problems along the way, as they had to develop a piece of machinery especially to create it, but eventually we ended up with a shoe that looked like it was one crystal, which had always been our goal. The day they showed us the shoe was incredible actually...it was a huge relief and very exciting.”

Eight copies of the slipper were eventually created, none of which could actually be worn due to the fact that crystal has no movement, but were used as props instead, either for the scenes where all the maidens in the kingdom see if it will fit, or as different models to be broken on camera.

Adds Kenneth Branagh, “Sandy produced a really fascinating 3D shoe that was shaped and faceted so it had this crystal glass look that meant at any given angle, shards of light and refracted, colored reflections would shine off it, and you could feel this richness, this magic, this dynamism, in the shoe.”

CAPTURING THE MOMENTS ON FILM
Equally as formidable were the challenges facing director of photography Haris Zambarloukos (“Locke,” “Thor”),
which required a great deal of planning and preparation... as well as passion. Fortunately Zambarloukos felt right at home on the enormous 007 stage, as it was there that he shot the Greek fishing village scenes in “Mamma Mia!” and the flooded tunnel scenes in “Jack Ryan: Shadow Recruit.”

In discussing his approach to shooting the ballroom scenes, Zambarloukos says, “Conceptually we wanted to create the elegant ambience of an exquisite candlelit ball, but we also wanted to make sure we could see all the spectacular detail in Dante Ferretti’s design and Sandy Powell’s gorgeous ball gowns and costumes. We also knew that really great performances are so special they can rarely be repeated.”

Zambarloukos and his team were hoping to capture each and every moment in the dance sequences from as many vantage points as possible, using five cameras and two cranes to achieve a sweeping effect and help show the grand scale of the set and the choreography. The camera team also built dozens of large, custom-designed lighting devices to help establish the right ambience for these scenes, which were attached to the “reds” (the beams on the ceiling of the soundstage) and could be remotely positioned and controlled from a computer.

The entire film was shot on film, not digital, using 200 ASA and 50 ASA film, something rarely seen in the industry today, and Zambarloukos used Panavision anamorphic lenses to create a wide-screen CinemaScope effect. He explains, “Kenneth and I really wanted to make a classic, timeless film...a motion picture inspired by dazzling musicals and epic film tales, and we used some of the tools employed in those early masterpieces as a result.”

Most digital cameras are highly sensitive to light, meaning whatever the eye sees, the camera sees as well. Employing a more traditional style of filmmaking meant the filmmakers had to imagine, and hence create, the desired effect, which is similar to the way films were shot during the golden age of Hollywood.

“The results are truly magical, and much more opulent than anything modern cameras can achieve,” says Zambarloukos. “The great Walt Disney classics were all hand drawn, inspiring a love of art and an appreciation of the human imagination, so we went back in time to create a look that is our tribute to that legacy.”

FASHIONING THE LOVELIEST OF MAIDENS

When audiences first glimpse Lily James on screen as Ella, the filmmakers wanted her to appear as simple and natural as possible, a charge which lay in the accomplished hands of makeup designer Naomi Donne (“Skyfall,” “Chocolat”) and Oscar®-nominated hair designer Carol Hemming (“Mary Shelley’s Frankenstein”). This was accomplished by applying only a small amount of makeup, which made her stand out because she wasn’t heavily made up.

Donne explains, “The fact that Ella wasn’t made up gave her this illusion of being pure, clean and vibrant-looking, and even magical in a way, because it was all about her and not any artifice that we had created.”
She continues, “It was all about making her skin look flawless, and since her skin is pretty flawless already, we focused on her blusher as a way of expressing the emotion she was going through. So if she was sad or downbeat, she’d be a bit pale, and if she was flushed with excitement or falling in love, we would build up her cheeks more.” For the ball, Donne gave James a bit more sparkle, as she wanted her to glow and look as if she was truly magical and part of a spell, which she accomplished by creating a concoction of light-reflecting lotion mixed with white glitter which was applied to her skin. Then glitter was applied to her eyelids and Hemming and her team added crystals to her hair to give her a sparkling effect.

“It was quite subtle, but it reflected a lot of light, so her skin looked reflective and illuminated somehow,” she explains.

For the wedding scene, Donne and Hemming wanted more of a glamorous and sophisticated look for Cinderella, to play up the fact that she was becoming a woman, which meant applying a subtle amount of makeup, lipstick and eyeliner. “A little bit of makeup actually made a huge difference because she hadn’t been wearing any before,” Donne says. “And once we put her hair up, she suddenly looked all grown up.”

In addition to the principal and supporting characters, Donne and Hemming were also responsible for hair and makeup on all the extras in the ballroom scenes, which, on those shoot days, required an additional 50 makeup artists and hairdressers. Working closely with Powell and her team, it took five hours of time to get each extra ready, as each one needed to be dressed, made up, photographed and charted.

A JEWEL OF A CARRIAGE
For the iconic carriage, production designer Dante Ferretti wanted to do something fresh and truly special, but designing and creating the centerpiece for one of the most famous transformation sequences in history was not an easy task.

The memorable sequence begins when the Fairy Godmother, searching for a means of transportation to get Cinderella to the ball at the palace, transforms a nearby pumpkin into a beautiful carriage, complete with its own coachmen and footmen. Cinderella must return home before the final strike of the clock at midnight, which is when the carriage will turn back into a pumpkin.

Says Lily James, “Ken wanted the ride to the palace to make every girl in the world want to be on that carriage, and I hope that everyone will indeed think it is just the most beautiful thing ever. It really was the most surreal moment when I climbed into the carriage for the first time…it was totally breathtaking.”

“We didn’t particularly want to re-create the scene specifically, but knew the story demanded that there would be a pumpkin and there would be a coach. And in a sense the inspiration from the 1950 animated film was just not what they did but how they did it,” says Kenneth Branagh. “They did it with great joie de vivre...there is wonderful passion, joy and lightness in that movie, and that’s what we tried to bring to this one.”

He continues, “This involved working out what kind of stunt work could happen around what we thought would be a very exciting chase from the palace as she fights the advance of the midnight bell, which involved meticulous story boarding and then pre-visualization where we put it all together like an animated sequence.”
In the end, the scene was shot with a fully-functioning, beautiful gold carriage resembling a pumpkin, which was pulled by four white horses. It was 10 feet high, 17 feet long and weighed close to 2 tons.

When it came to the design, Ferretti opted to begin with a piece of jewelry instead of a fruit or vegetable so that the carriage would be a beautiful jewel that enfolds Cinderella—who is, in fact, the real jewel in the story. He explains, “I became an actor, so to speak, and transformed into a fairy, or in this case a wizard, and let my own fantasy and imagination transform the pumpkin into the carriage that we see in the film. I looked at jewels and jewel cases, among other things, and after many, many sketches and a lot of planning, we arrived at the final result.”

He continues, “We decided to have the actual transformation take place in the glass greenhouse in Cinderella’s backyard where she had grown the original pumpkin, so we incorporated architectural elements of the greenhouse into our design of the carriage.”

Stuart Heath ("Maleficent") from BGI Supplies designed a chassis to hold the pumpkin carriage, which was made by a Polish carriage maker out of cast iron and steel. The chassis was then painted and decorated to make it appear as mystical and magical as possible.

“The design of the pumpkin really had to tie in with the greenhouse,” says Heath. “The pumpkin obviously grows large and bursts out the top, but we had to take elements from the greenhouse and actually add them onto the pumpkin. So the band that goes around the top, you will notice, is actually around the greenhouse, and the seat that Cinderella sits on is a seat that is in the greenhouse as well.”

Special effects supervisor David Watkins ("World War Z") and his team then took over. Their job was to help bring to life the scene where the carriage bolts from the palace, and as a result, embarks on a very bumpy ride. Watkins and his team took the chassis BGI had created and mounted pneumatic rams, pulleys and wires onto it so they could control each bump on the ride while actually steering the carriage itself.

From there, the electrical department added their generators and the camera department, their cameras.

**How happy her mother would have been, to see Ella ride off in such splendor, and with her courage and her kindness intact.**

—The Fairy Godmother

**Happily Ever After**

From day one, everyone associated with “Cinderella” shared the same passion and enthusiasm to retell the story in a way that upheld the animated film’s classic elements and appeal, while creating a beautiful, warm, human film with a contemporary sensibility that would last for generations to come. The stunning costumes and the opulent set designs helped create the story’s magical setting, and the honesty and depth given to the characters brought them to life in a fantastical, yet believable, way.

When “Cinderella” hits theaters in March 2015, audiences will feel as if they’re being told the story for the first
time. “We all know the story of ‘Cinderella.’ We all know the story of ‘Hamlet.’ But we go and see ‘Hamlet’ over and over because the best productions make us think maybe this time he will kill Claudius,” says Cate Blanchett.

She continues, “With this ‘Cinderella,’ people are going to feel the same way, and they will be surprised by a lot of scenes because they are so true, and therefore, truly funny, yet truly tragic, as well.”

Most fairy tales are told in animated form, which hinders the audiences from being able to truly relate or bond with any of the characters, but with this “Cinderella” the effect is immediate and palpable. “When you see Cinderella brought to life, it brings you back to the actual human cost, which is often personified in fairy tales via fictitious characters like the big, bad wolf or the wicked stepmother,” Blanchett says. “But audiences will genuinely be rooting for this Cinderella.”

Timeless in the best possible sense, the combination of humor, romance and adventure will captivate and entertain boys, girls, men and women from all over the world. “This is a story that never grows old,” says Allison Shearmur. “We all want to believe that goodness and kindness will triumph at the end of the day.”

“We set out to provide a satisfying and unironic version of ‘Cinderella,’ but within that context there are all sorts of bells and whistles and interesting questions we addressed,” says Chris Weitz.

Adds Kenneth Branagh, “It all goes back to this idea of Cinderella’s basic humanity informing the whole piece. It has the fun, but it also has the heart.”

**ABOUT THE CAST**

**CATE BLANCHETT (Stepmother)** is a graduate of the National Institute of Dramatic Art and holds Honorary Doctorates of Letters from the University of New South Wales and the University of Sydney. From 2008-2012 she was the co-Artistic Director and co-CEO of Sydney Theatre Company (STC), alongside Andrew Upton.

As a celebrated stage performer, Blanchett’s recent theater roles include: “Hedda Gabler,” for which she won the Ibsen Centennial Award, Helpmann Award and the MO Award for Best Actress; Richard II in the celebrated STC production of “The War of the Roses”; Blanche DuBois in Tennessee Williams’ “A Streetcar Named Desire,” which travelled to much acclaim from Sydney to Washington and New York (her performance was considered the “performance of the year” by The New York Times), and for which she received the Helen Hayes Award for Outstanding Actress in a non-resident production; Yelena in Anton Chekhov’s “Uncle Vanya,” a new adaptation by Upton which toured to Washington in 2011 and New York in 2012 to great acclaim and for which she received the Helpmann Award for Best Female Actor in a Play and the Helen Hayes Award for Outstanding Actress in a non-resident production; Lotte in Botho Strauss’ “Gross und Klein,” which toured extensively throughout Europe in 2012 and was part of the London Cultural Olympiad, for which she received the Helpmann Award for Best Female Actor in a Play; and Claire in Jean Genet’s “The Maids,” directed by Benedict Andrews and co-adapted by Upton and Andrews, which opened in New York last August as part of the Lincoln Center Festival.
Her film work includes: Queen Elizabeth in “Elizabeth” and “Elizabeth: The Golden Age”; Daisy in David Fincher’s “The Curious Case of Benjamin Button”; Katharine Hepburn in Martin Scorsese’s “The Aviator”; Bob Dylan in Todd Haynes’ “I’m Not There”; Jane in Wes Anderson’s “The Life Aquatic With Steve Zissou”; and Sheba in “Notes on a Scandal,” alongside Judi Dench. She was also featured in Peter Jackson’s “Lord of the Rings” and “The Hobbit” trilogies, and most recently in George Clooney’s “The Monuments Men” and Woody Allen’s “Blue Jasmine.”

Blanchett is a six-time Academy Award® nominee, and was recently awarded the Academy Award for Best Actress for her role in “Blue Jasmine.” She also won an Academy Award for Best Supporting Actress for her role in “The Aviator.” Other awards include three BAFTA’s (“Elizabeth,” “The Aviator,” “Blue Jasmine”), four AFI Awards (“Thank God He Met Lizzie,” “Little Fish,” “Elizabeth: The Golden Age,” “Blue Jasmine”), three SAG Awards® (“The Aviator,” “The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King,” “Blue Jasmine”), three Golden Globe® Awards (“Elizabeth,” “I’m Not There,” “Blue Jasmine”) and the Venice Film Festival’s Volpi Cup for Best Actress (“I’m Not There”). She has also been awarded the Centenary Medal for Service to Australian Society Through Acting, and in 2007 was named one of Time magazine’s 100 Most Influential People. In 2012, Blanchett was awarded the Chevalier de l’Ordre des Arts et des Lettres by the French Minister for Culture, in recognition of her significant contributions to the arts. She has also received a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame.

In 2008, Blanchett co-chaired the creative stream of the Prime Minister of Australia’s National 2020 Summit. She is currently ambassador for the Australian Conservation Foundation and the Australian Academy of Cinema and Television Arts. She is married, has three children and lives in Sydney.

LILY JAMES (Ella), who graduated from London’s Guildhall School of Music and Drama in 2010, is best known for her role as Lady Rose in the hit television series “Downton Abbey.” Film credits include Regan Hall’s “Fast Girls” and “Wrath of the Titans,” in which she starred alongside Sam Worthington, Liam Neeson and Rosamund Pike. Other television credits include “The Secret Diary of a Call Girl” and “Just William.”

In 2011, James starred as Desdemona in the Sheffield Crucible’s production of “Othello” alongside Dominic West as Iago and Clarke Peters as Othello. Her performance garnered rave reviews across the board. In the Daily Mail, Quentin Davies wrote, “We may have a new star actress on our hands. Her name is Lily James and she left drama school only last year, yet she practically sweeps all before her as Desdemona in this ‘Othello.’” Other stage credits include: “Vernon God Little” at the Young Vic; Martin Crimp’s “Definitely the Bahamas” and “Play House” at the Orange Tree Theatre, Richmond; and Chekhov’s “The Seagull” at the Southwark Playhouse.

Scottish actor RICHARD MADDEN (Prince) is best known for his compelling performance as Robb Stark in HBO’s acclaimed series “Game of Thrones.” Other television credits include the Discovery Channel’s original miniseries “Klondike,” the BBC series “Hope Springs” and “Birdsong,” and the Channel 4 series “Sirens.”

His London stage credits include: Romeo in the Globe Theatre’s production of “Romeo and Juliet”; Callum McGregor in Malorie Blackman’s “Noughts & Crosses”; and Mark McNulty in the National Theatre of Scotland’s production of “Be Near Me.”

Upcoming projects include the BBC television movie “Lady Chatterley’s Lover,” which also stars Holliday Grainger, and Focus Features’ “Bastille Day.”
A graduate of the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama, Madden currently resides in London.

A native of Sweden, STELLAN SKARSGARD (Grand Duke) is considered one of the country's top stage and film actors. He began his career with the Royal Dramatic Theatre in Stockholm, where he spent 16 years working with such leading directors as Alf Sjöberg and Ingmar Bergman. His breakthrough role came in the 1982 Swedish film, “The Simple-Minded Murderer,” for which he received the Best Actor award at the Berlin Film Festival.

In addition to the more than 30 films in which he starred in Sweden, Skarsgård’s additional credits include: “The Unbearable Lightness of Being,” “Amistad,” “The Hunt for Red October,” “Good Will Hunting,” “The Ox” (Oscar®-nominated for Best Foreign Film), “Breaking the Waves” (which won the Grand Prix at the 1996 Cannes Film Festival) and the Norwegian film “Insomnia.”

Skarsgård has been honored with awards from the Berlin Film Festival, the Swedish motion-picture industry, the Rouen Film Festival, the Chicago Film Festival, the St. Sebastian Film Festival and the Telluride Film Festival.

His most recent credits include: “The Avengers,” “Thor,” David Fincher’s “The Girl With the Dragon Tattoo,” “Rouge Brésil” and Lars von Trier’s “Melancholia.” He can also be seen in other hits such as “Angels & Demons,” “Mamma Mia!” and the second and third installments in the “Pirates of the Caribbean” franchise.

Over the past few years, HOLLIDAY GRAINGER (Anastasia) has completed a number of varied projects in the U.K. and the U.S. Most recently audiences saw Grainger in one of the titular roles, that of Bonnie Parker, in the miniseries “Bonnie and Clyde,” opposite Emile Hirsch. The show aired simultaneously in December 2013 on three U.S. networks (Lifetime, History and A&E) to great critical acclaim, and in the U.K. in February 2014.

In 2014, Grainger starred in Lone Scherfig’s film “The Riot Club,” based on the London stage play “Posh,” alongside Sam Claflin, Max Irons and Douglas Booth. The film, which opened in the U.K. this past September, follows students at Oxford University’s infamous Riot Club. She recently wrapped production on The Weinstein Company’s “Tulip Fever,” opposite Dane DeHaan, Alicia Vikander and Jack O’Connell. Next up for the actress is the thriller “The Finest Hours,” in which she co-stars with Chris Pine and Casey Affleck, and “Lady Chatterley’s Lover,” with Richard Madden, for the BBC.

Past film credits have seen Grainger in the pivotal role of Estella in the critically-acclaimed feature adaptation of the Charles Dickens classic, “Great Expectations,” directed by Mike Newell. Prior to this, Holliday was seen alongside a stellar cast including Jude Law and Keira Knightley in “Anna Karenina.” She also played the role of Suzanne Rousset in “Bel Ami,” a film drama in which she starred alongside Robert Pattinson.

Last year television audiences saw Grainger in the third season of Sky Atlantic’s hugely-successful series “The Borgias,” where she returned to the lead role of Lucrezia Borgia, alongside Jeremy Irons.

Grainger first garnered attention playing Emily in “The Scouting Book for Boys,” a film that screened to much acclaim at the London Film Festival. In the same year, she played the role of Mollie in Pat Holden’s feature “Awaydays.” She was also seen in a much-lauded adaptation of Charlotte Brontë’s “Jane Eyre,” alongside Judi Dench and Michael Fassbender.

Her extensive television portfolio includes the BBC’s drama “Five Daughters,” as well as her role as Sharon Bilkin in “Above Suspicion.” She also starred as Dirty Debbie in the BBC Three pilot “Stanley Park” and has also taken on
roles in “Demons” (ITV), “Merlin” (BBC), “Robin Hood” (BBC), “Any Human Heart” (Channel 4) and “Blue Murder” (ITV). Grainger was also recognized for her character of Charlie Cooper in a one-off television adaptation of Kate Long’s novel “The Bad Mother’s Handbook.” She starred opposite Catherine Tate and Robert Pattinson in this popular comedy drama.

Grainger made her stage debut in the play “Dimetos,” alongside Jonathan Pryce, Anne Reid and Alex Lanipekun, playing the role of Lydia in Athol Fugard’s 1975 tale of a reclusive engineer harboring a destructive passion for his niece. Most recently on stage, Grainger starred in “The Three Sisters” at the Southwark Playhouse.

SOPHIE MCSHERA (Drisella) is a brilliant, young, British actress who is perhaps best known for her scene-stealing portrayal of Daisy Mason in the global hit series “Downton Abbey.” McShera is currently working on the American television series “Galavant” for ABC. She plays Queen Madalena’s handmaiden, a very common “commoner” with romantic inclinations toward the King’s chef. “Galavant” is a fairy-tale-themed musical comedy created by Dan Fogelman with the award-winning musical duo of composer Alan Menken and lyricist Glenn Slater.

McShera can also be seen as Bryony in the second season of the comedy series “The Job Lot” on ITV2. Starring opposite Russell Tovey and Sarah Hadland, the program is set in a West Midlands job centre and is comprised of six, 30-minute episodes focusing on life, love and long-term unemployment. The second season began airing on September 25, 2014.

She is also currently starring in the fifth and final season of “Downton Abbey” on PBS. McShera has played kitchen maid Daisy Mason in the Golden Globe®-winning period drama from 2010-2014, and in 2013 she won a SAG Award® in the category of Best Ensemble for the role. Created by Julian Fellows, the series, set in the fictional Yorkshire country estate of Downton Abbey, depicts the lives of the aristocratic Crawley family and their servants in the post-Edwardian era. The program has received international recognition from critics and won numerous accolades, including a Golden Globe Award for Best Miniseries or Television Film and a primetime Emmy® Award for Outstanding Miniseries or Movie. It first aired on ITV1 in the U.K. in September 2010, and on PBS in the U.S. in January 2011, as part of the “Masterpiece Classics” anthology. The fifth season began airing in the U.S. on January 4, 2015.

In 2009, McShera appeared in the fifth season of the popular BBC drama “Waterloo Road,” playing Ros McCain. She has proven herself on stage as well, starring as Pea in Jez Butterworth’s much-heralded “Jerusalem” at the Apollo Theatre in 2011. “Jerusalem” is set in Wiltshire on St. George’s Day, and the story revolves around the lead character Johnny “Rooster” Byron (Mark Rylance). The play was first seen at the Royal Court Theatre in London in 2009, before going on to Broadway. She also played Cinderella in the West Yorkshire Playhouse’s pantomime production in 2009 and Annie in the 1998 West End production with Paul O’Grady.

One of the world’s most respected and beloved theater and film actors, DEREK JACOBI (King) is one of only two actors ever to receive two Knighthoods (along with Sir Laurence Olivier). He has starred in over 50 feature films, including: “The King’s Speech”; “Hamlet”; “Henry V”; “Dead Again”; “Ironclad”; “Hereafter”; “Anonymous”; “There Be Dragons”; “A Bunch of Amateurs”; “Hippie Hippie Shake”; “The Golden Compass”; “Nanny McPhee”; “Gosford Park”; “Gladiator”; “Morris: A Life With Bells On”; “Underworld: Evolution”; “Bye Bye Blackbird”; “Joan of Arc: The Virgin Warrior”; “Aladdin”; “Enigma”; “The Secret of NIMH”; “The Odessa File”; “The Day of the Jackal” and “Othello.”
His extensive television work has garnered him Emmys®, BAFTA and Golden Globe® nominations. Jacobi received an Emmy Award for NBC’s “Frasier” and for CBS’ “The Tenth Man,” and BAFTA nominations for both the BBC’s “Last Tango in Halifax” and “Breaking the Code.”


When it comes to the stage, Jacobi’s career is without parallel. A master of Shakespeare, he has performed in nearly 80 notable theatrical productions including the role of Malvolio in “Twelfth Night” at the Wyndham’s Theatre, which in 2009 garnered him an Olivier Award as Best Actor. Other award-winning productions include: “Much Ado About Nothing,” which garnered him both a Tony Award® and London Critics Circle Theatre Award as Best Actor; “Breaking the Code,” for which he was nominated for a Tony Award; and “Cyrano de Bergerac,” which garnered him a London Critics Circle Award as Best Actor.


HELENA BONHAM CARTER (Fairy Godmother) has starred in a wide variety of film, television and stage projects both in the United States and in her native England. Recent credits include: “Les Misérables,” “The Lone Ranger,” “Great Expectations,” “Dark Shadows,” “Alice in Wonderland” and “Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows: Part 2,” reprising the role of the evil Bellatrix Lestrange, which she first played in “Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix” and again in “Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince” and “Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows: Part 1.” She will next be seen in “Alice in Wonderland: Through the Looking Glass,” reprising her role as the Red Queen.

Bonham Carter earned Academy Award®, Golden Globe® and BAFTA Award nominations for her role in “The King’s Speech” opposite Colin Firth. She was previously honored with Golden Globe and BAFTA Award nominations and won an Evening Standard British Film Award for Best Actress for her performance as Mrs. Lovett in Tim Burton’s screen adaptation of the Stephen Sondheim musical “Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street,” starring Johnny Depp in the title role. She also received Oscar®, Golden Globe, BAFTA and SAG Award® nominations for her work in the 1997 romantic period drama “The Wings of the Dove,” based on the novel by Henry James. That performance also brought her Best Actress awards from a number of critics’ organizations, including the Los Angeles Film Critics, Broadcast Film Critics, National Board of Review and London Film Critics Circle.

Bonham Carter made her feature film debut in 1986 in the title role of Trevor Nunn’s historical biopic “Lady Jane.” She had barely wrapped production on that film when director James Ivory offered her the lead in “A Room With a View,” based on the book by E.M. Forster. She went on to receive acclaim in two more screen adaptations of Forster novels: Charles Sturridge’s “Where Angels Fear to Tread” and James Ivory’s “Howards End,” for which she earned her first BAFTA Award nomination.

Bonham Carter’s early film work includes: Franco Zeffirelli’s “Hamlet,” opposite Mel Gibson; “Mary Shelley’s
Frankenstein,” directed by and starring Kenneth Branagh; Woody Allen’s “Mighty Aphrodite”; and “Twelfth Night,” which reunited her with Trevor Nunn. She went on to star in David Fincher’s “Fight Club,” with Brad Pitt and Edward Norton, as well as the Tim Burton-directed films “Big Fish,” “Planet of the Apes” and “Charlie and the Chocolate Factory.”

In addition, she has starred in such independent features as “Carnivale,” “Novocaine,” “The Heart of Me,” “Till Human Voices Wake Us” and “Conversations With Other Women.”

In 2005, Bonham Carter lent her voice to two animated features: Tim Burton’s “Corpse Bride,” in which she played the title role, and the Oscar®-winning “Wallace & Gromit: The Curse of the Were-Rabbit.”

On the small screen, she earned Emmy® and Golden Globe® Award nominations for her performances in the telefilm “Live From Baghdad” and the miniseries “Merlin” and a Golden Globe nomination for her portrayal of Marina Oswald in the miniseries “Fatal Deception: Mrs. Lee Harvey Oswald.” She also starred as Anne Boleyn in the British miniseries “Henry VIII” and as the mother of seven children, including four autistic sons, in the BBC telefilm “Magnificent 7.” She starred as best-selling children's author Enid Blyton in the BBC telefilm “Enid.”

Her stage credits include productions of “The Woman in White,” “The Chalk Garden,” “The House of Bernarda Alba” and “Trelawny of the Wells.”

NONSO ANOZIE (Captain), a London-born and raised actor, has built up an enviable resume as a thespian, having appeared in respected projects on British television (“Stolen,” “Occupation” and “Prime Suspect”), film (“Cass,” “RocknRolla” and “Atonement”) and theatre (“King Lear,” “Othello,” “Death and the King’s Horseman”).

He will next be seen on screen in Joe Wright’s “Pan,” opposite Rooney Mara and Hugh Jackman. Other film credits include roles in the sci-fi thriller “Ender’s Game,” “Boxing Day” and “Jack Ryan: Shadow Recruit.”

Additional U.K. television credits include his role as Samson in the Channel 5 mini-series “The Bible.” His U.S. television credits include HBO’s “Game of Thrones” in 2012, where he played Qartheen merchant prince Xaro Xhoan Daxos, and NBC’s “Dracula,” on which he played R.M. Renfield.

Anozie was born in Nigeria. His acting journey began at the age of 9 when he was asked to take part in a school assembly improvisation. His first role out of drama school at the age of 23 was Shakespeare’s “King Lear,” a role usually reserved for highly-experienced, much older Caucasian actors. He holds the record as the youngest person ever to take on the role, and picked up an award for his performance, the 2005 Charleston Award.

His most acclaimed stage role to date, certainly in industry terms, is “Othello,” and once again Anozie was cast in the lead role in Declan Donnellan’s Cheek by Jowl production of the play. He was also the lead in the Wole Soyinka production of “The King and His Horseman,” the first time a black play had ever been performed on the main stage at the National Theatre, and the first time Noble Prize winner Soyinka’s play had been performed on a London stage.
British actor **BEN CHAPLIN (Ella’s Father)** has amassed an impressive list of film and TV credits both in the U.S. and overseas. He appeared on the British TV show “Bye Bye Baby,” in the Merchant Ivory period drama “The Remains of the Day” and on the BBC series “Game On,” before making his big-screen Hollywood debut in the comedy “The Truth About Cats & Dogs.”

Additional film credits include “Washington Square,” “The Thin Red Line,” “Lost Souls,” “Birthday Girl,” “Murder by Numbers,” “Stage Beauty,” “The New World” and “Me and Orson Welles.”

On the London stage he has appeared in “The Neighbour,” “Peaches” and “The Glass Menagerie.” On Broadway he starred in “The Retreat From Moscow,” for which he received a Tony Award® nomination.

**Chaplin will next be seen in David Yates’ “Tarzan” and the miniseries “The Book of Negroes.”**

**HAYLEY ATWELL (Ella’s Mother)** most recently starred as Peggy Carter in the box-office hit “Captain America: The Winter Soldier,” originally making her mark as the secret agent in “Captain America: The First Avenger.” She currently reprises the role for Marvel on ABC’s “Agent Carter.” She can next be seen in “Avengers: Age of Ultron” and on screen in “All Is by My Side,” directed by John Ridley.

Atwell has starred in a number of television projects, including the ITV remake of the 1960s cult classic “The Prisoner,” where she played Lucy alongside Ian McKellen, Jim Caviezel and Ruth Wilson. Atwell received a Golden Globe® nomination in the Best Performance by an Actress category for her work in the Channel 4 drama “The Pillars of the Earth,” based on Ken Follett’s novel. She went on to star again on Channel 4 in “Any Human Heart.” In this highly-acclaimed adaptation of William Boyd’s novel, Atwell played Freya, Logan’s mistress, alongside Kim Cattrall, Gillian Anderson and Tom Hollander.

Atwell starred alongside Ben Whishaw in “Love/Hate,” a short film that was a runner-up in the 2009 Palm Springs International Festival of Short Films. She also trod the boards in the West End in Arthur Miller’s modern classic “A View From the Bridge,” alongside Ken Stott and Mary Elizabeth Mastrantonio. Atwell’s outstanding performance in the role of Catherine earned her rave reviews and a nomination in the Best Supporting Actress category at the Olivier Awards.

Atwell starred alongside Keira Knightley in “The Duchess,” directed by Saul Dibb and based on the best-selling biography “Georgiana: Duchess of Devonshire” by Amanda Foreman. In this film she played lead character Bess Foster, the Duchess’ best friend. The same year audiences saw Atwell in “Brideshead Revisited,” directed by Julian Jarrold, playing the lead female role of Julia Flyte alongside Matthew Goode.


On television, Atwell won critical acclaim for her performance in the BBC’s “The Line of Beauty,” an adaptation of Alan Hollinghurst’s Booker Prize-winning novel. Written by Andrew Davies and directed by Saul Dibb, Atwell played the role of Cat Fedden and starred alongside Dan Stevens and Tim McInnerny. Her other television credits include “Mansfield Park,” in which she played the role of Mary and co-starred with Billie Piper; “Ruby in the
Smoke,” directed by Brian Percival; and “Fear of Fanny,” directed by Coky Giedroyc.

Alongside television and film, Atwell has appeared in many theatrical roles. At the National Theatre, she played Barbara Undershaft in “Major Barbara.” Her other stage roles include “Man of Mode” (National Theatre), directed by Nicholas Hytner and written by George Etherege, for which she won critical acclaim; “Women Beware Women” (RSC), directed by Laurence Boswell; and “Prometheus Bound” (Sound Theatre), directed by James Kerr.

ABOUT THE FILMMAKERS

KENNETH BRANAGH (Director) is one of the world’s most consistently-acclaimed filmmakers and actors. As an actor and director, Branagh’s work is trademarked by quality, truth and passion.

He most recently directed the newest installment of Tom Clancy’s “Jack Ryan” franchise for Paramount, which he also starred in alongside Chris Pine and Keira Knightley, in January 2014. Additionally, he recently starred in and co-directed “Macbeth” for the Manchester International Festival in the summer of 2013. In June, 2014, Branagh reprised the same role and made his New York stage debut in the production of “Macbeth” at the Park Avenue Armory, which premiered to rave reviews and was a critical and commercial success. He was also recently knighted for services to drama and the community in Northern Ireland by Queen Elizabeth II.

In 2011, Branagh starred as Sir Laurence Olivier in “My Week With Marilyn,” opposite Michelle Williams and directed by Simon Curtis. The role earned Branagh an Academy Award® nomination for Best Supporting Actor, as well as Golden Globe® and Screen Actors Guild® nominations. This marked Branagh’s fifth career Academy Award nomination, making him one of the first actors to receive five nominations in five separate categories (Actor, Supporting Actor, Director, Screenplay, and Short Film). That same year Branagh directed the highly-anticipated Marvel action adventure, “Thor,” starring Natalie Portman, Sir Anthony Hopkins and Chris Hemsworth. The film grossed more than $448 million worldwide.

Branagh’s first venture into filmmaking was met with instant success. His 1989 production of “Henry V,” which he adapted from the Shakespeare play and both starred in and directed, won a score of international awards including Academy Award® nominations for Best Actor and Best Director. He was subsequently invited to Hollywood to direct and star in “Dead Again,” which was a huge international hit, and next directed himself in the ensemble film “Peter’s Friends,” which won the Evening Standard Peter Sellers Award for Comedy. Branagh’s second Shakespearean film success as actor, director, writer and producer, was “Much Ado About Nothing,” which was invited to screen at the Cannes Film Festival, and in the same year his short film of the Chekhov play “Swan Song” received an Academy Award nomination as well.

Branagh went on to direct Robert De Niro in the commercial hit “Mary Shelley’s Frankenstein,” and his black-and-white film, “A Midwinter’s Tale,” opened the 1996 Sundance Film Festival and won the prestigious Osella d’Oro at the Venice Film Festival. Branagh’s critically-acclaimed full-length version of “Hamlet” in 70mm, received four Academy Award® nominations. His fourth Shakespearean film adaptation was a 1930s musical version of “Love’s Labour’s Lost.” More recently, Branagh directed HBO Films’ “As You Like It”; a film of Mozart’s opera “The Magic Flute”; and “Sleuth,” written by Harold Pinter and starring Jude Law and Michael Caine.

Branagh has appeared in several outstanding television dramas as well, including a recent turn as Detective Kurt Wallander in the BAFTA-winning series “Wallander,” which earned him Emmy® and Golden Globe® nominations. He has also starred in the title role of “Shackleton” for Channel 4; A&E’s “Conspiracy,” for which he won an Emmy for Best Actor and earned a Golden Globe nomination; and “Warm Springs,” in which he played FDR and was nominated for an Emmy, Golden Globe and SAG® Award.

Branagh’s stage work began when he made his West End acting debut in “Another Country,” which earned him the Society of West End Theater’s Award for “Most Promising Newcomer.” He founded the Renaissance Theatre Company for whom he either starred in or directed the following works: “Twelfth Night,” “Much Ado About Nothing,” “As You Like It,” “Hamlet,” “Look Back in Anger,” “Uncle Vanya,” “King Lear,” “A Midsummer Night’s Dream,” “Coriolanus” and “The Life of Napoleon.” He also wrote the plays “Public Enemy” and “Tell Me Honestly.”

His numerous stage appearances include the RSC’s “Henry V,” “Love’s Labour’s Lost” and “Hamlet.” His more recent theatrical endeavors include: directing the hit stage comedy “The Play What I Wrote,” which transferred from London’s West End to Broadway where it received a Tony® nomination; “Richard III”; Mamet’s “Edmond”; “Ivanov”; and the new comedy, “Painkiller,” in the opening season at the Lyric Theatre, Belfast, Branagh’s hometown.

Branagh is a graduate of the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art where he won the Bancroft Gold Medal. He received the prestigious Michael Balcon Award from the British Academy of Film and Television Arts (BAFTA), for outstanding contribution to cinema.

CHRIS WEITZ (Screenplay by) was born in New York City, the son of actress Susan Kohner and Berlin-born novelist/fashion designer John Weitz (born Hans Werner Weitz). His brother is filmmaker Paul Weitz. He is the grandson of agent Paul Kohner and Mexican actress Lupita Tovar on his maternal side. His grandmother, Lupita, starred in “Santa,” Mexico’s first talkie, in 1932.

Weitz was educated at St. Paul’s School in London and went on to graduate with an English degree from Trinity College, Cambridge.

He began his film career as a co-writer, along with his brother Paul, of the 1998 animated film “Antz.” In 1999, he and Paul directed and produced “American Pie,” which became a major box office success. In 2002, the brothers co-wrote and directed “About a Boy,” which earned them an Academy Award® nomination for Best Adapted Screenplay.

Weitz went on to direct several other feature films, including the 2007 adaptation of Philip Pullman’s best-selling fantasy novel, “The Golden Compass,” and the second film installment in the Twilight series, “New Moon.” His last feature was the 2011 film “A Better Life,” which garnered an Academy Award® nomination for its lead actor, Demián Bichir.

He has produced a number of films through his and Paul’s company, Depth of Field, including Tom Ford’s “A Single Man” and Peter Sollett’s “Nick and Nora’s Infinite Playlist.” He is also an actor, having starred in the independent film “Chuck & Buck.” His first novel, “The Young World,” was published this summer by Little Brown.

Weitz lives in Los Angeles with his wife and two children.
SIMON KINBERG, p.g.a. (Producer) has established himself as one of Hollywood’s most prolific filmmakers, having written and/or produced projects for some of the most successful franchises in the modern film era. He graduated from Brown University and received his MFA from Columbia University Film School, where his final thesis project was the original script “Mr. and Mrs. Smith.” The film was released in 2005 starring Brad Pitt and Angelina Jolie. It became an international blockbuster, garnered an MTV Movie Award and several People’s Choice Awards.

In 2006, he wrote “X-Men: The Last Stand,” which opened on Memorial Day to box-office records, and began his ongoing relationship with the franchise, to which he has returned multiple times as both writer and producer. In 2008, Kinberg wrote and produced Doug Liman’s film “Jumper” for New Regency and 20th Century Fox. The film opened number one at the box office.

In 2009, Kinberg co-wrote the film “Sherlock Holmes” starring Robert Downey Jr. and directed by Guy Ritchie. The film set the box-office record for the biggest Christmas opening day in history. It received a Golden Globe® Award for Best Actor, and was nominated for two Academy Awards®. In 2010, Kinberg established his production company, Genre Films, with a first-look deal at 20th Century Fox. Under this banner, he produced 2011’s “X-Men: First Class,” executive produced 2012’s “Abraham Lincoln: Vampire Hunter,” and wrote and produced 2012’s “This Means War.”

In 2013, Kinberg produced “Elysium,” which starred Matt Damon and Jodie Foster. The film also paired him with director Neill Blomkamp, with whom Kinberg has reteamed for “Chappie” starring Hugh Jackman. Most recently he wrote and produced “X-Men: Days of Future Past,” which united the casts of all the “X-Men” films, and produced Fox’s “Let’s Be Cops.”

Up next for Kinberg, he is writing and producing the highly-anticipated reboot of “Fantastic Four,” starring Kate Mara, Miles Teller, Michael B. Jordan and Jamie Bell. Fox plans to release the film in June 2015. He is also writing and producing the next “X-Men” movie, “X-Men: Apocalypse,” which will be released Memorial Day, 2016. He is also writing and producing one of the upcoming “Star Wars” films and serves as consultant on “Star Wars: Episode VII.” He is also the creator and executive producer of the animated series “Star Wars: Rebels,” which debuted on all Disney networks in Fall 2014.

ALLISON SHEARMUR, p.g.a. (Producer) is a Los Angeles-based film and television producer. She is currently producing: “Pride and Prejudice and Zombies,” based on Seth Grahame-Smith’s best-selling novel, written and directed by Burr Steers and starring Lily James and Sam Riley; “A Tale of Love and Darkness,” written, directed by and starring Natalie Portman; “Nerve,” written by Jessica Sharzer and directed by Ariel Schulman and Henry Joost, which will star Emma Roberts and Dave Franco; and “Power Rangers,” with Haim Saban and his company.


Shearmur was the president of production and development at Lionsgate Films from September, 2008 – January, 2012. She oversaw the day-to-day development and production of the studio’s film slate and literary acquisitions, including production of the hit book and box-office blockbuster, “The Hunger Games,” directed by multiple Academy Award® nominee Gary Ross and starring Jennifer Lawrence, Josh Hutcherson, Liam Hemsworth, Woody Harrelson, Elizabeth Banks, Lenny Kravitz and Stanley Tucci. Also while at Lionsgate, Shearmur was an executive producer of “What to Expect When You’re Expecting.”
Before Lionsgate, she was co-president of production at Paramount Pictures. While at Paramount she oversaw such productions as “The Curious Case of Benjamin Button,” “Beowulf,” “The Spiderwick Chronicles,” “Zodiac,” “Dreamgirls,” “Charlotte’s Web,” “Nacho Libre” and “Failure to Launch.” Prior to Paramount, she served as executive vice president of production for Universal Pictures, where she oversaw the development and production of such hits as the “The Bourne Supremacy,” “The Bourne Identity,” the “American Pie” trilogy, “Along Came Polly” and “Erin Brockovich.” Prior to that, Shearmur was vice president of production for Walt Disney Pictures from 1994 through 1997. While at Walt Disney Pictures, she developed and supervised “George of the Jungle,” starring Brendan Fraser and directed by Sam Weisman. The “Hunger Games,” “Bourne,” and “American Pie” franchises have each grossed more than $1 billion.

Shearmur has been an avid supporter of the Los Angeles contemporary art community since the early 90’s. She has also served as a board member for 8 years at Pacific Oaks School and for 4 years at Laurence School.

A graduate of the University of Pennsylvania, Shearmur received a JD degree from USC Law Center and is a member of the California bar and Producers Guild of America.

DAVID BARRON, p.g.a. (Producer) recently served as producer on David Yates’ “Tarzan,” starring Christophe Waltz, Alexander Skarsgård and Samuel L. Jackson. Previous producing credits include “Frank,” starring Michael Fassbender, and the blockbusters “Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix,” “Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince” and “Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows – Part 1 and Part 2.” He was also an executive producer on both “Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets” and “Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire.”

Barron is presently producing the thriller “Page Eight,” written and directed by David Hare and starring Ralph Fiennes, Rachel Weisz, Bill Nighy and Michael Gambon.

Barron has worked in the entertainment industry for more than 25 years, beginning his career in commercials before moving into television and film production. In addition to his work as a producer, he has held a wide range of posts, including location manager, assistant director, production manager and production supervisor, working on such films as “The French Lieutenant’s Woman,” “The Killing Fields,” “Revolution,” “Legend,” “The Princess Bride,” “The Lonely Passion of Judith Hearne,” “Hellbound,” “Night Breed” and Franco Zefferelli’s “Hamlet.”

In 1991, Barron was appointed executive in charge of production on George Lucas’ ambitious television project “The Young Indiana Jones Chronicles.” The following year, he served as the line producer on the feature “The Muppet Christmas Carol.”

In 1993, Barron joined Kenneth Branagh’s production team as associate producer and unit production manager on “Mary Shelley’s Frankenstein.” That film began an association with Branagh, with Barron going on to produce the director’s films “Jack Ryan: Shadow Recruit,” “A Midwinter’s Tale,” “Hamlet” and “Love’s Labour’s Lost.” Barron also produced Oliver Parker’s “Othello,” in which Branagh starred with Laurence Fishburne.

In spring 1999, he formed his own company, Contagious Films, with British director Paul Weiland. Barron more recently launched a second company, Runaway Fridge Films.

TIM LEWIS (Executive Producer) has amassed an impressive list of credits as a producer, including: “Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows: Part 1” and “Part 2,” “Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince,” “Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix” and “Edge of Tomorrow.”

Upcoming projects include “Pan” for director Joe Wright, starring Hugh Jackman, Rooney Mara and Garrett Hedlund.
Recent credits for HARIS ZAMBARLOUKOS, BSC (Director of Photography) include “Locke” and two films for director Kenneth Branagh, “Jack Ryan: Shadow Recruit” and “Thor,” as well as the box-office hit “Mamma Mia!” He also shot “Sleuth” for Branagh, as well as Richard Eyre’s latest film, “The Other Man,” starring Liam Neeson, Laura Linney and Antonio Banderas.

Previous credits include Gillian Armstrong’s “Death Defying Acts” and Roger Michell’s “Venus,” starring Peter O’Toole, which earned him the honor as one of Variety’s 10 Cinematographer’s to Watch in 2006. He also worked on “Enduring Love,” starring Daniel Craig and Samantha Morton, for which he received a nomination for Best Technical Achievement at the British Independent Film Awards, and for which the film was LA Weekly’s film editor’s choice for Best Cinematography in 2004.

Other feature film credits as director of photography include: “Opa!,” “The Best Man,” “Spivs,” “Oh Marbella!,” “Mr In-Between” and “Camera Obscura.” He also served as second unit director of photography on Christopher Nolan’s “Batman Begins.”

DANTE FERRETTI (Production Designer) is considered one of the most visually-audacious and expressionistic production designers working today, bridging the gap between great European cinema and Hollywood like no other. He received the Oscar® for Best Achievement in Art Direction in 2004 for Martin Scorsese’s “The Aviator”; in 2008 for “Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street,” directed by Tim Burton; and again in 2012 when he reteamed with Scorsese for “Hugo.” He has been nominated for the Academy Award® on six other films as well (“The Adventures of Baron Munchausen,” “Hamlet,” “The Age of Innocence,” “Interview with the Vampire: The Vampire Chronicles,” “Kundun” and “Gangs of New York”).

FerreTTI has been honored with four BAFTA Awards (for “Hugo,” “The Aviator,” “Interview With the Vampire: The Vampire Chronicles” and “The Adventures of Baron Munchausen”) and received nominations for “Cold Mountain,” “Gangs of New York” and “The Age of Innocence.” He received the Art Directors Guild Award for Excellence in Production Design on “Hugo,” and was nominated five additional times (for “Shutter Island,” “Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street,” “The Aviator,” “Gangs of New York” and “Titus”).

In his home country of Italy, FerreTTI designed five films for Federico Fellini, including “La Voce Della Luna” and “City of Women,” and five films, including “The Decameron” and “Madea,” for director Pier Paolo Pasolini. His recent work includes Sergey Bodrov’s epic, “The Seventh Son,” and Martin Scorsese’s latest film, “Silence.”

In addition to his film work, FerreTTI has designed stages at some of the world’s largest opera houses, including La Scala in Milan, Opéra Bastille in Paris and the Teatro Colón in Buenos Aires, as well as opera houses in Rome, Turin and Florence. He created stage designs for Verdi’s “La Traviata” and Puccini’s “Tosca” and “La Bohème,” among many others.

In 2003, MARTIN WALSH, ACE (Film Editor) received Academy Award® and ACE Awards for his work on Rob Marshall’s “Chicago,” starring Renée Zellwegger, Catherine Zeta-Jones and Richard Gere.

His extensive and varied feature credits include Mike Newell’s “Prince of Persia: The Sands of Time,” James McTeigue’s “V for Vendetta,” Richard Eyre’s “Iris,” Sharon Maguire’s “Bridget Jones’s Diary” and Anand Tucker’s “Hilary and Jackie.”

Walsh has collaborated with director Iain Softley on several features, including “Backbeat,” “Hackers” and “Inkheart.” More recently he worked with Kenneth Branagh on “Jack Ryan: Shadow Recruit.”
SANDY POWELL (Costume Designer) has won three Academy Awards® for her work on “The Young Victoria” for Jean-Marc Vallée, “The Aviator” for Martin Scorsese and “Shakespeare in Love” for John Madden. She has been nominated for an Oscar® seven additional times for her work on “Orlando,” “The Wings of the Dove,” “Velvet Goldmine,” “Gangs of New York,” “Mrs. Henderson Presents,” “The Tempest” and “Hugo.”

She has received two BAFTA Awards, for “The Young Victoria” and “Velvet Goldmine,” and has also been nominated nine times. In 2011, Powell was appointed an Officer of the Order of the British Empire for services to the film industry.

Powell’s work on Martin Scorsese’s “The Wolf of Wall Street” marked her sixth collaboration with the director, having previously worked on “Shutter Island,” “The Departed,” “The Aviator,” “Gangs of New York” and “Hugo.” She has also collaborated numerous times with director Neil Jordan (“The Crying Game,” “Interview With the Vampire: The Vampire Chronicles,” “Michael Collins,” “The Butcher Boy” and “The End of the Affair”) and with director Derek Jarman (“Caravaggio,” “The Last of England,” “Edward II” and “Wittgenstein”).

Her work can also be seen in “The Other Boleyn Girl,” “Sylvia,” “Far From Heaven,” “Miss Julie” and “Hilary and Jackie.” Powell recently completed “Carol,” her third feature with director Todd Haynes.

PATRICK DOYLE (Composer) is a classically-trained composer. He graduated from the Royal Scottish Academy of Music in 1975 and was made a Fellow of the Royal Scottish Academy of Music in 2001.

After many years composing for theater, radio and television, Doyle joined the Renaissance Theatre Company as composer and musical director in 1987. In 1989, director Kenneth Branagh commissioned Doyle to compose the score for “Henry V,” conducted by Simon Rattle, and they have subsequently collaborated on numerous pictures, including “Much Ado About Nothing,” “Hamlet,” “As You Like It” and “Thor.”

Doyle has been commissioned to score over 50 international feature films, including “Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire,” “Gosford Park,” “Sense and Sensibility,” “Indochine,” “Carlito’s Way” and “A Little Princess.” His work has led to collaborations with some of the most acclaimed directors in the world, including Regis Wargnier, Brian De Palma, Alfonso Cuarón, Ang Lee, Chen Kaige, Mike Newell and Robert Altman.

In October, 2007, Doyle’s “Music From the Movies” concert on behalf of the Leukemia Research Fund was staged at Royal Albert Hall. It was directed by Branagh and starred a host of international talent, including Emma Thompson, Derek Jacobi, Judi Dench and Alan Rickman, among many others. In December 2013, the London Symphony Orchestra performed a program of Doyle’s work in a special celebratory concert at the Barbican for his 60th birthday, at which Jacobi, Thompson and soprano Janis Kelly performed.

Doyle has received two Oscar®, two Golden Globe® and two César nominations and has won the 1989 Ivor Novello Award for Best Film Theme for “Henry V.” He has also been honored with a Lifetime Achievement Award from Scottish BAFTA. He has composed several concert pieces, including “Tam O’ Shanter,” commissioned by the Scottish Schools Orchestra Trust; “Corarsik,” composed for Emma Thompson’s birthday; and “The Thistle and the Rose,” commissioned by Prince Charles in honor of the Queen Mother’s 90th birthday. His concert suite, “Impressions of America,” received its world premiere in July 2012 with the National Schools Symphony Orchestra, of which he is a patron.

Doyle scored “Rise of the Planet of the Apes” for Fox and “Brave” for Disney Pixar, which was awarded Best Original Composition for Film at the International Music and Sound Awards.
He composed the score to the feature film “Jack Ryan: Shadow Recruit,” directed by Branagh, and completed a score for the silent movie “It” starring Clara Bow, commissioned by the Syracuse Film Festival, which received its world premiere at the Syracuse historic Landmark Theatre in October 2013.