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Hustvedt, Siri

Burt, Donald Graham

Wang, Wayne (1949), Hong Kong, Hong Kong

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THE CENTER OF THE WORLD

ARTISAN
ENTERTAINMENT

THE CENTER OF THE WORLD

Presents

THE CENTER OF THE WORLD

A film by Wayne Wang

www.center-of-the-world.com

Running Time: 86 minutes
Unrated

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CAST
(in order of appearance)

Porter.....	Shane Edelman
Richard Longman.....	Peter Sarsgaard
Florence.....	Molly Parker
Lap Dancer.....	Karry Brown
Pandora Stripper.....	Alisha Klass
Roxanne.....	Mel Gorham
Porn Site Woman.....	Lisa Newlan
Pete.....	Jason McCabe Calacanis
Dog Owner.....	Travis Miljan
Old Man.....	Jerry Sherman
Jerri.....	Carla Gugino
Taxi Driver.....	Pat Morita
Brian Pivano.....	Balthazar Getty
Motel Manager.....	Robert Lefkowitz
Gondolier.....	John Lombardo
Maid.....	Kathy Florez
Flo's Band.....	Barbara Ann
Delivery Man.....	Ian Gomez
Stand-In for Peter Sarsgaard.....	Steve Maines
Stand-In for Molly Parker.....	Lauren Moore

FILMMAKERS

Director..... Wayne Wang
Screenplay by..... Ellen Benjamin Wong
Story by..... Wayne Wang, Miranda July, Paul Auster, Siri Hustvedt
Producers..... Peter Newman
Wayne Wang
Executive Producers..... Greg Johnson
Ira Deutchman
Co-Producers..... Francey Grace
Heidi Levitt
Andrew Loo
Director of Photography..... Mauro Fiore
Editor..... Lee Percy, A.C.E.
Production Designer..... Donald Graham Burt
Costume Designer..... Sophie de Rakoff Carbonell
Music Supervisor..... Deva Anderson
Casting..... Heidi Levitt
Kris Nicolau
Unit Production Manager..... Andrew Loo
1st Assistant Director..... Jonathan McGarry
2nd Second Assistant Director..... Paul Schmitz
Color Design..... Patrick Lindenmaier
Post Production Supervisor..... Yael Melamede
Production Coordinator..... M. Michelle Nishikawa
Asst. Production Coordinator..... Ryan Tyler
Accountant..... Gordon K. Kee
1st Assistant Accountant..... Bill Rodenbaugh
Script Supervisor..... Gabi Endicott
Art Director..... Diana Kuncce
Set Decorator..... Lydia Simon
Swing Gang..... James Leland Parker
Property Master..... Javier Torres
Camera Operator..... B. Sean Fairburn, S.O.C.
1st Assistant Camera..... Monica Carey Persons
Still Photographer..... John P. Johnson
Hair Stylists..... Lesley Anderson
Paul Le Blanc
Makeup Artist..... Lydia Milars

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Computer Graphics.....DNA Studios
Bryan Cotton
Michael Moore
Taj Tedrow
Ryan Hunt
John Gheur
Eli Shamszadeh
Michael Ryan
Wayne Fujita

Catering.....Rick Brainin Catering
Chef Ignatius Evans
Craft Service.....Joseph Augustine

Studio Teachers.....Adria Later
Pia Mehr

Animals.....Birds & Animals
Janeane Barry
Susan Chipperton

Post Production

1st Assistant Film Editor.....Misako Shimizu
Associate Editor.....Martin Levenstein

Post Production Sound.....C5 Inc.
Supervising Sound Editor.....Sean Garnhart
Supervising Dialogue Editor.....Albert Gasser
Foley Editors.....Frank Kern
Kam Chan

Assistant Sound Editor.....Billy Orrico
Foley Mixer.....George A. Lara
Foley Artist.....Marko Costanzo
Music Editor.....Sean Garnhart
Re-Recording Mixers.....Skip Lievsay
Sean Garnhart

Additional Re-Recording Mixer.....Curtis Drake
Re-Recording Facilities.....C5 Inc.
Digital Cinema

Electronic Post Production.....Swiss Effects
On-Line Edit.....Heinz Rohrer
Color Correction.....Patrick Lindenmaier
Tape to Film Transfer.....Thomas Krempke
Graphic Designer.....Brigitte Haelg

Main Titles.....Designed and Produced by Balsmeyer & Everett, Inc.

Designer.....	Randall Balsmeyer
VFX Producer.....	Kathy Kelehen
Typist.....	Dan Schwarz
Digital Compositing.....	Gray Miller
Graphic Animation.....	Amit Sethi
Visual Effects.....	First Unit Inc.
Visual Effects Supervisor.....	Dan Schmit
Digital Compositing.....	Eric Heavens
Post Production Accounting.....	Trevanna Post, Inc.
Post Production Accountant.....	Michelle Gebert
Post Production Interns.....	Gustavo Marcus Randal Vegter Nicolas Roussiau Jolie Tong Rory Brosnan
Post Production Facilities.....	Goldcrest Post
Film Lab.....	Schwarz Film AG
Color Timer.....	Ruedi Tresch
Dolby Sound Consultant.....	Geof Lipman

Music

<p style="text-align: center;">“Black Cat Bone” Performed by Laika Written by Margaret Fiedler and Guy Fixen Publisher: Chrysalis Music (ASCAP) Courtesy of Too Pure, Ltd.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">“The Kisses, 2nd Movement” Performed and Written by Erik Ian Walker, Cameron Ember Publisher: Wakoworld Music (BMI) Courtesy of Six Degrees Records</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">“Millennium” Performed and Written by DJ Cam Publisher: Laurent Daumail Productions (SACEM) Courtesy of Six Degrees Records Under License from Sony Music Entertainment (France)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">“(Is This) Heaven” Performed by Euphoria Written by Ken Ramm, Byron Wong Publisher: Kramm Publishing, EMI Blackwood Music (Canada) Ltd/STN Publishing/EMI Blackwood Music (Canada) Ltd. (BMI)</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">“Temoine” Performed and Written by Ekova Publisher: Atmospheriques (SACEM) Courtesy of Six Degrees Records Under License from Sony Music Entertainment (France)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">“Currents” Performed and Written by Kingsuk Biswas Publisher: Copyright Control (PRS) Courtesy of Six Degrees Records</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">“Rattlebone” Performed by Robbie Robertson Written by Robbie Robertson and Marius De Vries Publisher: WB Music Corp. O/B/O itself and Medicine Hat Music (ASCAP) and Chrysalis Music (ASCAP) Courtesy of Capitol Records under license from EMI-Capitol Music Special Products</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">“Alguém” Performed by Bebel Gilberto Written by Suba, Bebel Gilberto and Béco Dranoff Publisher: Les Editions De La Bascule/Confidence (BMI) Courtesy of Ziriguiboom/Six Degrees Records under license from Crammed Discs</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">“Callejero” Performed by Los Mocosos Written by Piero Ornelas, Jose Manuel Martinez and Steven Carter Publisher: Peer Music Ltd. (BMI) and José Manuel Martinez (BMI) Courtesy of Los Mocosos</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">“Sinhala” Performed by Banco De Gaia Written by Toby Marks Publisher: Kaleidoscope Music and Notting Hill Music (BMI) Courtesy of Gecko Records and Six Degrees Records</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">“Mean Flower” Performed and Written by Joe Henry Publisher: WB Music Corp. O/B/O itself and True North Music (ASCAP) Courtesy of Mammoth Records</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">“The Sheer Weight of Memory” Performed and Written by Bob Holroyd Publisher 2.0 Music (ASCAP) Courtesy of Six Degrees Records</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">“Daylight Tripping” Performed by Nicky Love</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">“Domino” Performed and Written by Barbara Ann</p>

Written by Tim Gordine and Nicole Love Publisher: Copyright Control (PRS) and Dreamworks Songs (ASCAP) Courtesy of Dreamworks Records under license from Universal Music Enterprises	Publisher: Pretty Face Music (ASCAP) Courtesy of Pretty Face Records
“Kese Kese (Where’s The Sarangi Mix)” Performed and Written by dj Cheb i Sabbah Remixed by Transglobal Underground Publisher: 100% Puja Music (BMI) Courtesy of Six Degrees Records	“So Many Desires” Performed by Suba Written by Suba and Taciana Publisher: Les Editions de la Bascule/Confidence (BMI) Courtesy of Ziriguiboom/Six Degrees Records Under license from Crammed Discs

Barbara Ann Band Members.....Barbara Ann
Mike Nine
Scott Trotsky
Jim Beam
Drum TeacherPamela Flowers

Synopsis

Desire carries two young people into deep, uncharted emotional waters in Wayne Wang's candid drama *The Center of the World*. A story of a straightforward sexual arrangement that disintegrates into emotional chaos, the film explores what happens when our fantasies of pleasure, power and love collide with the messy, unpredictable reality of human feelings. The first digital video feature by the award-winning filmmaker, *The Center of the World* harnesses the medium's potential for intimacy to create a provocative experience that invokes the cultural fascination with strip clubs, pornographic websites and other forms of erotic voyeurism: pursuits that promise satisfaction without the complications of an actual relationship.

Richard Longman (Peter Sarsgaard) is a brilliant computer engineer in his early 20s whose immersion in the world of computers has left him unaccustomed to the world outside his door. With the recent loss of his father and his growing disinterest in the all-consuming pursuit of IPO glory, Richard has retreated further into his technological cocoon. Able to summon virtually anything he wants with a click of his mouse, he lets the world come to him through his trio of computer monitors. But his computer cannot bring him what he hungers for most: the warmth of sustained human connection.

Florence (Molly Parker) is a drummer in a loud, thrashy rock band, but to pay her bills she works as a stripper at an upscale club called Pandora's Box. By day, Florence is the epitome of the smart, cool rock chick in her 20s; at night, she transforms herself into "Flo," a leggy, purring fantasy of uninhibited sexuality. In her own mind, the line between her real self, including her real sensuality, and her professional persona is crystal clear; however, that division has not yet been put to the test.

When Richard and Florence meet at a local coffee shop, there is an immediate attraction. Already drawn by the drummer's flirtatious edge, Richard is intrigued to learn that she is a stripper and tantalized by a glimpse of leopard-skin fabric in her bag. At Pandora's Box, a steamy lap dance from Flo leaves Richard wanting more. He asks Florence to come with him to Las Vegas, insisting he simply wants to get to know her better and promising to compensate her for lost wages. Busily putting up fliers for her band, Florence bluntly declares that she doesn't have sex for money, but Richard and his offer have piqued her interest. After he ups the ante to \$10,000, Florence sets forth her conditions: no kissing on the mouth, no talk of feelings, no penetration, her own room and predetermined hours: 10 p.m. to 2 a.m.

Arriving in Las Vegas, Florence and Peter enter a world in which the artificial and the real blend in ways that are exciting, dangerous and profound. Richard, behaving as if no money has changed hands, sets about wooing Florence, making no distinction between her and the seductive, languorous woman, Flo, who slips into his room precisely at 10 o'clock that first night. Florence is turned on by the sense of sexual power she wields over Richard; at the same time, she finds herself increasingly responding to him from an authentic part of herself.

One by one, Florence's rules are broken as human feelings are engaged and a connection is made, however briefly, between two isolated young people. But in the end, the very desires – for sex, money, power, control – that have brought Richard and Florence together will keep them apart.

Artisan Entertainment is proud to present *The Center of the World*, directed by Wayne Wang, from a story by Wang, Miranda July, Paul Auster and Siri Hustvedt. The screenplay is credited to Ellen Benjamin Wong, a pseudonym representing the contributions of Wang, Auster and Hustvedt. Produced by Wang and Peter Newman, and executive produced by Greg Johnson and Ira Deutchman. The film's director of photography is Mauro Fiore, the editor Lee Percy, A.C.E., the production designer Donald Graham Burt, the costume designer Sophie de Rakoff Carbonell, with casting by Heidi Levitt and Kris Nicolau. It stars Molly Parker, Peter Sarsgaard and Carla Gugino.

About the Production

Acclaimed filmmaker Wayne Wang explores the dark underpinnings of erotic fantasy and desire in his first digital video feature, *The Center of the World*. Aesthetically and thematically daring, *The Center of the World* places us inside a Las Vegas hotel room, where a young man and woman are unexpectedly brought face to face with their sexual and emotional limits. Raw and candid, the film is powered by the fearless performances of Molly Parker (*Sunshine, Wonderland*) and Peter Sarsgaard (*Boys Don't Cry*), two highly regarded young talents whose work here confirms them as actors of uncommon acuity and intelligence.

In making *The Center of the World*, Wang, the award-winning director of such benchmark independent features as *Smoke*, *Blue in the Face* and *Chan Is Missing*, fulfilled a long-standing desire of his own. "I've always wanted to make a film about sex," Wang remarked. "In college, in the 1970s, I loved movies like *I Was Curious Yellow* and *Last Tango in Paris*." After obtaining his film degree, Wang returned to his native Hong Kong where he sought work at Golden Harvest, the colony's largest studio. "They wanted me to make soft porn movies for the Japanese and Korean market; that was the way for me to start. I saw some very interesting, very artistic films made by young Asian directors. I was really intrigued. I didn't end up doing it because I got another job, but it's always been in the back of my head."

But it was contemporary American culture that crystallized the idea behind *The Center of the World*. Wang, who lives in the San Francisco Bay Area, was doing some research with a local journalist and started meeting various young dot-commers. He discovered a surprising connection between the high-tech community and the Bay Area's many strip clubs. "I learned there was a whole subculture within the business that hangs out at strip clubs and spends a lot of money there, especially when venture capitalists take them out; a lot of business gets done there. I talked to a lot of dot-commers and a lot of dancers from the different clubs. And from there I built this story."

He noted that America's fascination with strippers, as manifested in television shows like HBO's "G-String Divas" and VH1's "Porn to Rock" continues to grow. "What interests me," the filmmaker explained, "is the idea of buying a fantasy; that's what the whole strip world is all about. The clubs project a certain image of sexual availability and the customers buy into it and spend a lot of money, but ultimately it's all

a front. When you get to the back room, there's no touching and it's all about money. And when it comes down to it, there's no fucking. In a way, it's very clean and very moral; at the same time, they're selling the fantasy of the bad girl."

The Center of the World explores the collision between fantasy and flesh as it plays out in the adjoining hotel rooms occupied by its two main characters, Richard, a computer engineer, and Florence, a stripper. Said Wang, "It's about his fantasy of her and her fantasy of selling."

Richard, a millionaire computer engineer who has recently lost his father, has withdrawn into himself and his computers. He has also lost interest in the intensely driven business of technology start-ups and IPOs, and has done little to help facilitate the upcoming IPO that could well make him a multi-millionaire. "He's sort of dropped out of that world," observed actor Peter Sarsgaard, who portrays Richard. "He's not as ambitious."

With his connection to the outside world largely confined to his computer screen, Richard's perceptions of the real and the artificial have become skewed. According to Wang, "Richard lives in a kind of fantasy world because of his relationship with computers. If you're on your computer all the time, everything becomes somewhat unreal. You feel you can summon anything you want at will."

What Richard wants is Florence, or his idea of her, and he's willing and able to pay \$10,000 to obtain it. For Florence, a struggling musician played by Molly Parker, the combination of money and sexual power has its own allure. The actress remarked, "Florence works as a stripper to make money, but she also likes the kind of attention that she receives from men in the club. So it's not just one thing." She detected a similar mix of self-interest and natural attraction in Florence's response to Richard. "I think Florence is very driven. She wants to spend her time playing music, and the money he offers is a means to that end. At the same time, there's something about Richard that is compelling to her."

In Las Vegas, away from the restrictions of the strip club, the lines between public and private personas start to blur. For Richard, the distinction between "Flo" and Florence barely exists, if it exists at all. Smitten, he tries to court her as if they were on an extended date. Said Sarsgaard, "He keeps telling himself the money isn't the reason Florence came with him: 'It's me! I'm fun.' He's trying to skip directly to the emotional connection."

The computer engineer pursues that goal from the very afternoon they arrive in Las Vegas, when he invites Florence to take a walk with him; this, despite Florence's insistence on nighttime hours. It's as if Florence's rules are problematic computer code that he can eventually rewrite. "He's constantly pushing his way across the line," Wang noted. Sarsgaard agreed, noting that Richard's perseverance is part of his professional identity, too. "As a computer engineer, Richard's a problem-solver. And those guys never give up."

For Florence, maintaining the boundary between her personal feelings and her professional persona proves to be much more difficult than anticipated, in part because of her unanticipated emotional response to Richard. She discovers that the young millionaire is unpretentious, kind and easygoing, and starts to truly enjoy his company. If Richard's understanding of Florence is based on fantasy, Florence's picture of Richard is also incomplete. Said Parker, "She thinks she knows who he is and what he's about, and then finds out that it's not that simple. He's not that simple."

She finds, too, a tantalizing pleasure in her sexual power over Richard. The first night, "Flo" performs a sinuously erotic striptease for Richard, but Florence is also excited by the dance. Back in her room, Florence looks at herself in the mirror, her eyes shining, a small smile of relief, awe and possibility playing on her features. Later, snuggling into her persona as seductress, she asks Richard if he has any secret erotic fantasies; after some demurrals, he whispers his response. And gets his desire.

Their fantasies mesh that first night, but the growing attraction between the pair is seeded just as profoundly, if not more so, in the mundane activities they share inside and outside the hotel room. Observed Wang, "The moments when Richard and Florence aren't having sex – when they're eating room service, playing video games, and just talking – are extremely important. They become real people."

Moreover, they are people who are starved for emotional intimacy. And while Richard and Florence come from very different worlds, they contend with a perverse kind of loneliness in their work, and hence, their lives. As Parker put it, "One person sits at a computer all day, at home, by himself. And one person works alone on a stage, taking her clothes off for money. I would assume that both those experiences could be incredibly isolating. In bringing these two people together, the conflict is how to find a way to connect. The surprise is that they do."

Wang agreed. "I think there are moments when Florence and Richard try to get real and try to get past the fantasy, but it's very difficult," he observed. On the couple's second day, encounters with two old friends further confuse the line between public and private. Florence allows Richard to come with her to see her old friend Jerri (Carla Gugino), a sexy, vivacious brunette who works at a casino. Partying at Jerri's apartment, Florence plays at jealousy while Richard enjoys the game. Back at the hotel bar, Florence and Richard run into his college classmate, Brian (Balthazar Getty), and Florence transforms herself into a provocative Southern belle. Both episodes fuel a conspiratorial sense of intimacy and the couple ends up back in Richard's room, tipsy and wildly turned on.

But for Florence the stakes are much too high to allow sexual nature to continue on course. She dashes back to the safety of her room, and calls a friend to help her figure a way out of the mess she's gotten into. Aware of her growing feelings for Richard, Florence also recognizes that Richard is infatuated not so much with her, but with his fantasy of her. Explained Wang, "Florence is a realist, and she also has a very clear moral sense. She has a definite line to not cross because if she does, she becomes a whore."

By the third and final night, the chaotic tangle of emotions, desires and fantasies will lead them into a place they have never gone. Wang pointed out that both Florence and Richard are only in their early 20s, and lack the emotional maturity to handle the complicated situation they've created for themselves. "They don't really know what this money means, or what sex means, or love. Florence thinks she's very sophisticated emotionally but she has a tough time unlocking herself. And Richard doesn't stop to consider the moral implications of what he's set in motion. He falls for her and thinks he can just win her over, that this relationship can magically become real. He's a bit like a naïve child."

In the end, Florence and Richard retreat from the powerful tide of their emotions. Parker remarked, "These people are so terrified of letting go of whatever control they think they have. I think they want to escape their isolation, but don't know how to do it."

Wang concurred. "I think ultimately the film is about their inability to allow themselves to be human and to love, each in their different ways. In all my films, I try to understand and care about my characters. So what's important for me is to look at these two people, Florence and Richard. To see the way they are and the way they act and try not to judge them."

He credited his stars, Parker and Sarsgaard, with helping him develop the intense, rich characterizations he sought. "It was very interesting to deal with characters in their 20s. I spent a lot of time talking with Peter and Molly about their characters because they understood them extremely well. I relied a lot on their perceptions."

Producer Peter Newman was glowing in his assessment of the stars, who have earned reputations as two of the most incisive and intelligent young talents working today. "We always knew that they were great, but Molly and Peter exceeded our expectations. They truly went beyond what would have been expected of them, in every way — in terms of their interaction with each other, and how much of their own insights and experiences they brought to their roles. They're both so smart and so fearless."

Added Wang, "They went to places that I think many actors wouldn't attempt to reach. A lot of the scenes are incredibly intense, emotionally, sexually and physically. And they were very brave; they really took it out there. So it's a big credit to them."

Wang noted that the stars are accessible as well as attractive, so that viewers feel as if they're witnessing the intimate moments of two complex individuals. "Molly's sexy, but she looks like a real person," Wang remarked. "She reminded me of an actual stripper that I met who's a little bit like Florence — approachable, but able to project this intense sexuality and at the same time remain absolutely in control. A lot of those qualities went into Florence's character."

He continues, "Peter reminds me of a young Nicholson — he has a devilish kind of handsomeness that's also a little bit boyish. And very unpredictable." That quality was essential for suggesting the volatility beneath Richard's cheerful, accommodating demeanor. "You feel this is someone whose emotions could run quite dark if you hit the wrong button."

Discussing his involvement in the film, Sarsgaard cited his admiration for Wang's work as well as the themes tackled in the film. "I love Wayne's movies and he seemed like the perfect person to do a film like this because he's not after sensationalism," the actor stated. He found the film's treatment of sexual and emotional power plays to have

a universal resonance. “Most people have not hired a stripper and taken her to Vegas for three days, but most people have been in a relationship where the power was not equal or was being fought over, or a lot of games were being played. I think the film looks at these issues honestly.”

Parker responded strongly to the film’s conception of Florence. “Florence was an interesting character to play because she is making choices for herself that she thinks are sound, but that end up placing her in a very difficult position,” she explained. “Both Wayne and I were determined to represent this woman as realistically as possible.”

To ensure a well-rounded portrait, Wang and Parker met with a number of strip club dancers. Wang also sought the advice of professional sex worker and U.C. Berkeley instructor Annalise Ophelian, who sat in on several meetings. Recalled the filmmaker, “We talked about what would be realistic for the character of Florence, because I didn’t want to glamorize her in any way, I also didn’t want to exploit her in any way. I wanted to have a very authentic stripper character in the context of this story. We discussed what kind of rules Florence would have for a trip like this, the fact that she would have a specific person to call if she got into trouble – concrete details.”

Other consultants on the film included adult film star Alisha Klass and entrepreneur Jason McCabe Calacanis, the founder and editor of the influential Internet journal *The Silicon Valley Reporter*. Calacanis is featured in the film as Richard’s hard-driving colleague, Pete, while Klass appears as one of the Pandora’s Box dancers.

Details were also important when it came to designing the high-priced Las Vegas hotel rooms that are the film’s primary setting. Production designer Donald Graham Burt went straight to the source, visiting several Las Vegas hotels and bringing back a wealth of ideas about furnishings, artwork and ambiance. He then went about recreating what he saw on a Los Angeles soundstage, outfitting the hotel set with bountiful beds overhung by giant, mildly titillating paintings of pillowy female nudes. Wang was delighted. “Walking onto that set was just like walking into a room at one of these new, upscale Las Vegas hotels. Donald completely captured that unique ‘Vegas style,’ which combines sexual come-on with middle-class respectability. From the bathroom fixtures to the table lamps and the sheets on the bed, it was all there.”

After coming up with the initial story idea for *The Center of the World*, Wang got in touch with novelist Paul Auster, his collaborator on the award-winning *Smoke* and its follow-up *Blue in the Face*. Auster and his wife, author Siri Hustvedt, quickly turned in a

draft of the screenplay. Recalled Wang, "I wanted the script written very quickly because I just wanted to jump in there and shoot it and also be free to improvise from it. I feel like the film's a cross between *Smoke* and *Blue in the Face*: it started from a specific and then we took it and we worked with it organically." At Auster's recommendation, Wang also got in touch with acclaimed performance artist and filmmaker Miranda July, who shares story credit.

Wang's first feature in digital video, *The Center of the World* uses the medium's naturalistic properties and immediacy to inject a powerful suggestion of surveillance. Said Wang, "I always wanted it to look real and explicit and voyeuristic. It's as though you're standing right there watching them. In screenings, people have been genuinely disturbed by that. The contradiction of that response – that you can no longer be a comfortable voyeur, that you're an uncomfortable voyeur – I find great!"

The filmmaker was equally bold with the film's formal aesthetics, using DV technology to highlight the story's emotional trajectory and underscore its themes. The film's opening sequences in Las Vegas are reminiscent of traditional film in their elegantly composed dolly shots, but as the characters' relationship descends into emotional chaos, the quality of the digital image deteriorates along with it: the color drains and grows cold and unnatural.

Director of photography Mauro Fiore reported that he and Wang quickly discovered that DV's color quality varied dramatically depending on the specific cameras used; digi-Beta offered clean, accurate color while mini-DV cameras produced muddier hues, but compellingly organic images. "We focused on the inefficiencies, so to speak, of the digital technology and tried to make dramatic use of them. I think that's where we found a really interesting aesthetic approach," Fiore remarked. "Digital offered a whole new set of tools, as far as degrading the image and making it as rough-looking as we could."

Explained the filmmaker, "I didn't want to make a normal-looking movie that simply imitated what film could do. The idea was not to be showy with using digital video, but use it nonetheless," Wang explained. They used digi-Beta cameras for the early sequences, then switched to hand-held mini DVs as the characters' relationship began its descent into turmoil and disintegration. At the same time, they de-saturated color in the film's flashbacks, while heightening color in the strip club scenes.

The Center of the World returns to color as Florence and Richard return to their lives. Lying under his beloved CPU's, Richard curls up with the knowledge that the world will do what he wants. And so *The Center of the World* ends inside Pandora's Box, where the eternally available and seductive Flo places her stilettoed heel on Richard's nice suit jacket. Earlier in the film, the scene plays in black and white as part of a flashback; now, it is in color, rich and ultimately lurid. Said Wang, "I wanted to end the film with Richard's obsession. In his fantasy he can walk back in there and, within the confines of that situation, he can still have a relationship with Florence, or even start over."

About the Cast

Molly Parker (Florence)

Acclaimed for her adventurous choices and incisive performances, Molly Parker has become a major presence in the world of independent film. In 2000 alone, she earned critical accolades for her work in István Szabó's historical epic *Sunshine*, opposite Ralph Fiennes, and in Michael Winterbottom's gritty contemporary drama *Wonderland*. Other recent films include Jeremy Podeswa's *The Five Senses* and Keith Gordon's *Waking the Dead*. Parker will next be seen opposite Academy Award®-winner Brenda Fricker in *The War Bride* and recently completed work on Bruce Sweeney's *Last Wedding*. She has also recently stepped behind the camera to executive produce *Looking for Leonard*.

Parker first attracted notice for her portrayal of a young necrophiliac in Lynn Stopkewich's 1996 drama *Kissed*, a performance that ultimately garnered her Canada's Genie Award for Best Actress. Parker re-teamed with Stopkewich for the director's dark mystery *Suspicious River*, which screened at the 2000 Venice and Toronto film festivals.

Born and raised just outside Vancouver, B.C., Parker honed her craft in Canadian television. She starred with actor/writer Don McKeller in the cult favorite "Twitch City," a darkly satiric series about an agoraphobic addicted to daytime television. Her other television credits include the Fox miniseries "Intensity" and the telefilms "Serving in Silence" with Glenn Close, and "The Ranger, the Cook and the Hole in the Sky," with Jerry O'Connell.

Trained in ballet since the age of 3, Parker began studying drama in high school. She went on to study for four years with Mel Tuck at Vancouver's Gastown Actor's Studio.

Peter Sarsgaard (Richard Longman)

An actor with a talent for taking a candid look into the souls of his characters, Peter Sarsgaard is quickly becoming one of the acting community's most sought-after young talents. He stars back-to-back in several major upcoming films, including P.J. Hogan's black comedy *Unconditional Love*, with Rupert Everett and Kathy Bates. He is currently filming *The Salton Sea* starring opposite Val Kilmer for producer Frank Darabont and director DJ Caruso.

Sarsgaard was recently seen starring in *Boys Don't Cry* opposite Hilary Swank and Chloe Sevigny for director Kimberly Peirce. Peter received critical acclaim for his portrayal of John Lotter, the tightly wound young man who first accepts Brandon Teena into his small-town circle, then begins to suspect her true identity concluding with the troubling violent results.

Sarsgaard starred opposite Samantha Mathis in Showtime's acclaimed feature, *Freak City*, produced by Michael Stipe and Sandy Stern's Single Cell Pictures and directed by Lynne Litman. The actor first gained notice as Leonardo di Caprio's rival and John Malkovich's son in *The Man in the Iron Mask*. Other films include Larry Clark's *Another Day in Paradise* and Tim Robbins' *Dead Man Walking* with Sean Penn and Susan Sarandon.

A member of Douglas Carter Beane's New York-based theater company, The Drama Department, Sarsgaard appeared in the company's off-Broadway production, *Kingdom of Earth*, directed by John Cameron Mitchell. He attended the Actors' Studio Program at Washington University in St. Louis, Missouri, after which he was cast in Horton Foote's *Laura Dennis* at the Signature Theatre Company off-Broadway.

Carla Gugino (Jerri)

Versatile as well as talented, Carla Gugino has essayed a wide variety of comedic and dramatic roles in both film and television. She recently wrapped production on Robert Rodriguez's action comedy *Spy Kids*, starring Antonio Banderas, Alan Cumming, Teri Hatcher, Robert Patrick and Tony Shaloub.

Gugino's film credits include the Sebastian Gutierrez's *Judas Kiss*, which she also co-produced Brian DePalma's *Snake Eyes* opposite Nicolas Cage; Nora Ephron's *Michael*; Emilio Estevez's *The War at Home*; David Frankel's *Miami Rhapsody*; Michael Caton-Jones' *This Boy's Life*; *Jaded*; Jon Harmon Feldman's *Lovelife* and Jeff Kanew and Jon Kricfalusi's *Troop Beverly Hills*.

On television, Gugino starred in the 1999-2000 season of David E. Kelley's acclaimed hospital drama "Chicago Hope," and was featured in a recurring role opposite Michael J. Fox on the ABC television series "Spin City." Other television credits include the Hallmark Hall of Fame movie *A Season for Miracles* with Kathy Baker, Laura Dern and Lynn Redgrave; the BBC miniseries "The Buccaneers," based on the Edith Wharton novel; the HBO film *A Private Matter* and Showtime's "The Motorcycle Gang," which aired as part of the cable network's "Drive-In Classics" series.

About the Filmmakers

Wayne Wang (Director/Producer/Story)

Wayne Wang is one of America's most versatile filmmakers, acclaimed for his ability to move between aesthetically adventurous independent work and beautifully crafted studio films. Wang's films have delighted art-house and mainstream audiences alike with their engaging, intelligent stories, vividly realized settings and compelling characters.

Born in Hong Kong and college educated in America, Wang is widely acknowledged as a pioneer among Asian-American filmmakers, and has frequently examined themes of immigration and assimilation in his films. He is partnered with Francis Ford Coppola and Tom Luddy in the production company Chrome Dragon, which is dedicated to supporting independent filmmakers working in Asia.

Most recently, Wang directed Susan Sarandon and Natalie Portman in *Anywhere but Here*, adapted from Mona Simpson's novel about an unconventional mother and her disapproving daughter. In 1997, Wang returned to his native Hong Kong to make the romantic drama *Chinese Box*. Filmed just as the colony was transitioning from British to Chinese rule, *Chinese Box* examined the impact of the change on the lives of an English journalist, his Chinese lover and a streetwise young woman; it starred Jeremy Irons, Gong Li and Maggie Cheung.

Working with renowned novelist Paul Auster, Wang created two of the most distinctive and charming independent films of 1995, *Smoke* and *Blue in the Face*. Set in and around a Brooklyn cigar shop, *Smoke* offered a relaxed, humanistic look at friendship, family and love; the exceptional ensemble cast included Harvey Keitel, Forest Whitaker, William Hurt and Stockard Channing. The film won the Silver Bear at the Berlin International Film Festival and was nominated for the French César for Best Foreign Film. Wang and Auster co-directed the follow-up feature, *Blue in the Face*, a largely improvised work that kept the cigar store setting and introduced an intriguing new cast of characters, played by Michael J. Fox, Madonna, Roseanne and Lily Tomlin.

Prior to *Smoke* and *Blue in the Face*, Wang had scored enormous critical and commercial success with his 1993 adaptation of Amy Tan's best-selling novel, *The Joy Luck Club*. Grandly entertaining and emotionally powerful, the film depicted the relationships between four Chinese women and their assimilated American-born daughters. *The Joy Luck Club* represented another chapter in Wang's multifaceted exploration of the Chinese experience in America, which began with his groundbreaking 1982 solo directorial debut *Chan Is Missing* and continued with *Dim Sum: A Little Bit of Heart* (1984) and *Eat a Bowl of Tea* (1989).

A quirky mystery set in San Francisco's Chinatown, *Chan Is Missing* offered an insider's perspective on Chinese-American culture while slyly deconstructing the stereotyped images of Chinese found in Hollywood movies. Co-written, directed, produced and edited by Wang on a micro-budget, the film became a word-of-mouth success and helped usher in the modern era of American independent filmmaking. *Chan Is Missing* received the Los Angeles Film Critics Association Award for Best Independent/Experimental Film, as well as the Special Jury Prize at the 1983 United States Film Festival.

Dim Sum: A Little Bit of Heart took a warm and funny look at a Chinese mother and her American-born daughter, and earned a British Academy Award nomination for Best Foreign Film. The critically lauded *Eat a Bowl of Tea* told the story of an arranged marriage in New York's Chinatown circa 1940. Wang then went on to look at a very different aspect of his Hong Kong roots with the wild gangster comedy *Life Is Cheap ... But Toilet Paper Is Expensive* (1990). He had previously ventured into the crime genre with the neo-noir mystery *Slamdance* (1987).

Wang came to the United States from Hong Kong at the age of 17 and studied painting, filmmaking and TV production at California College of Arts and Crafts in Oakland, CA. After receiving his Masters degree, Wang returned to Hong Kong where he honed his skills directing for film and television. He served as assistant director on the Chinese sequences in Robert Clouse's thriller *Golden Needles* and directed several episodes of the television series "Below the Lion Rock." Returning to the U.S., he settled in San Francisco and co-directed his first film *A Man, a Woman and a Killer* (1975) with Rick Schmidt. He also began doing social work in the city's Chinatown, an experience that helped inspire *Chan Is Missing*.

Miranda July (Story)

Miranda July is a 26-year-old multi-media performer and video artist based in Portland, Oregon. In 1995 she founded Joanie 4 Jackie (formerly Big Miss Moviola), a movie distribution network for independent women moviemakers. Last year she completed her fourth short movie, *Nest of Tens*, which made its world premiere at the Rotterdam International Film Festival. Her previous video, *The Amateurist*, has been screened at sites around the world, including "The American Century" exhibit at the Whitney Museum. July's previous multi-media performance, *Love Diamond*, was commissioned by the Portland Institute for Contemporary Art and has been performed at sites around the country, closing at The Kitchen in New York. July has recorded several performance albums for the Kill Rock Stars and K record labels. She has also directed a video for the all-girl rock band Sleater-Kinney and in 2000 made her feature film acting debut in Alison Maclean's *Jesus' Son*. July is currently touring with *The Swan Tool*, which premiered at the Rotterdam International Film Festival 2001, and creating a new video commissioned by The Lux Centre in London.

Paul Auster (Story)

Writer Paul Auster has been hailed as one of the most original and adventurous voices in contemporary American letters. His work has been translated into 27 languages and he is the recipient of several prestigious awards, including France's Chevalier de L'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres and the Morton Dauwen Sabel Award from the American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters.

Auster was born in Newark, New Jersey, and received his M.A. in comparative literature from Columbia University. Following college, he spent several months aboard ship as a merchant marine before he moved to Paris in 1971. He spent the next three years in France, where he wrote poems and worked various odd jobs to pay the bills. He

published four volumes of poetry between 1974 and 1980, and a memoir, *The Invention of Solitude*, in 1982.

Auster then embarked on the work that would earn him international recognition and acclaim, the innovative series of novels known as "The New York Trilogy": *City of Glass* (1986), *Ghosts* (1986) and *The Locked Room* (1987). Subsequent novels include *In the Country of Last Things* (1987); *Moon Palace* (1989); *The Music of Chance* (1990), which was nominated for the Pen-Faulkner Award and adapted for the screen in 1992 by Philip Haas; *Leviathan* (1992), winner of France's Prix Medicis Etranger (for best novel by a foreign author); *Mr. Vertigo* (1994) and *Timbuktu* (1999). In 1997, Auster published a second memoir, *Hand to Mouth: A Chronicle of Early Failure*, which recounts his years as a struggling writer and also includes three early plays and his first novel, *Squeeze Play* (1982). Among his other works are *The Art of Hunger* (1992), a collection of critical essays; *Disappearances: Selected Poems* (1988), which offers a large sampling from the various collections published in the 1970s; *The Random House Book of Twentieth Century French Poetry* (1982), which he edited; and numerous translations of eminent French writers and poets, including Jacques Dupin, André de Bouchet, Joseph Joubert, Stéphane Mallarmé, Philippe Petit, Maurice Blanchot and Pierre Clastres. In 1996, some of this work was gathered in a collection entitled *Translations*.

In 1998, Auster wrote and directed the intriguing romantic drama *Lulu on the Bridge*, starring Harvey Keitel, Mira Sorvino and Willem Dafoe. Previously, Auster had collaborated with Wayne Wang on two of 1995's most acclaimed independent features, *Smoke* and *Blue in the Face*. *Smoke*, a relaxed character study set in and around a Brooklyn cigar store, marked Auster's screenwriting debut and was based on his short piece "Auggie Wren's Christmas Story." The film starred Harvey Keitel, William Hurt, Forest Whitaker and Stockard Channing; it was awarded the Silver Bear at the Berlin International Film Festival and was nominated for the French César for Best Foreign Film. Auster and Wang co-directed the follow-up feature, *Blue in the Face*, which reprised *Smoke*'s cigar store setting while introducing an intriguing new cast of characters, played by Michael J. Fox, Madonna, Roseanne and Lily Tomlin.

Siri Hustvedt (Story)

An accomplished and versatile writer, Siri Hustvedt has brought her lucid style and keen sense of aesthetics to poetry, novels, short stories, criticism, essays and translation. She is the author of two highly acclaimed and original novels, *The Blindfold* (1992) and *The Enchantment of Lily Dahl* (1996), as well as a volume of poetry, *Reading to You* (1983) and book of essays, *Yonder* (1998). Hustvedt's work has also appeared in several prestigious anthologies, including *Best American Short Stories 1990*, edited by Richard Ford; *Best American Short Stories 1991*, edited by Alice Adams and *The Paris Review Anthology*, edited by George Plimpton. In 1987, Hustvedt translated, with David McDuff, Geir Kjetsaa's *Fyodor Dostoyevsky: A Writer's Life* from the Norwegian. Of Norwegian extraction, Hustvedt was born in Minnesota and earned her M.A. and Ph.D. from Columbia University in New York City.

Peter Newman (Producer)

Peter Newman has established himself as one of the motion picture industry's leading independent producers of quality entertainment. New York-based Peter Newman Productions has worked with some of the world's most important filmmakers, including Wayne Wang, Paul Auster, Robert Altman, John Sayles, Nancy Savoca, Jonathan Demme and Oliver Stone, on 25 feature films. Newman is currently producing Bob Gale's (*Back to the Future*) *Interstate 60*, featuring James Marsden, Gary Oldman and Michael J. Fox for 7 Arts.

The Center of the World marks Newman's third collaboration with Wayne Wang. With future partner Greg Johnson, Newman produced Wang's film of Paul Auster's *Smoke*, which won three major awards at the 1995 Berlin Film Festival and was voted best film at the 1995 Locarno International Film Festival. Newman and Johnson also collaborated on Wang and Auster's *Blue in the Face*, the extemporaneously created companion piece to *Smoke*, as well as the independent sci-fi comedy *Space Truckers*, which premiered at the 1997 Sundance Film Festival.

Newman has produced three features by acclaimed filmmaker Nancy Savoca, beginning with 1989's *Dogfight*, a Warner Bros. release starring River Phoenix and Lili Taylor. He then went on to produce *Household Saints* for Fine Line Features, starring Taylor and Tracy Ullman, and *The 24 Hour Woman*, starring Rosie Perez.

Among Newman's recent producing credits are Sarah Kernochan's *All I Wanna Do* (Miramax) and Paul Auster's solo directorial debut *Lulu on the Bridge*, which premiered at the 1998 Cannes Film Festival. He has served either as producer or executive producer on a wide range of films, including two-time Academy Award®-winner Horton Foote's *1918* and *On Valentines Day*; Jonathan Demme's film of Spalding Gray's *Swimming to Cambodia*; Harry Hook's remake of *The Lord of the Flies*; Altman's *O.C. & Stiggs*; Jay Russell's *End of the Line*; John Sayles' *The Secret of Roan Inish* and Anthony Drazin's *Zebrahead*, which won the Filmmakers Trophy at the 1992 Sundance Film Festival and was co-executive produced with Oliver Stone.

A former sportscaster, Newman began his producing career when he served as executive producer and host of the PBS special "Muhammad Ali: One More Miracle." He went on to produce documentary profiles of ballet dancers Gelsey Kirkland and Natalia Makarova before turning to feature filmmaking in 1982 with Robert Altman's *Come Back to the Five and Dime, Jimmy Dean, Jimmy Dean*. The film, which starred Cher, Sandy Dennis, Karen Black and Kathy Bates, was the grand prize winner at the Chicago International Film Festival.

Newman lives in New York City with his wife, Antonia and their three children. He is a graduate of Northwestern University.

Greg Johnson (Executive Producer)

Together with Peter Newman and Ira Deutchman, Greg Johnson is a partner in New York-based Redeemable Features. Since 1997, Redeemable has completed six motion pictures including Nancy Savoca's *24 Hour Woman*, which was released by Artisan Entertainment and Mark Christopher's *Studio 54* for Miramax. He co-produced Paul Auster's *Lulu on the Bridge*, starring Harvey Keitel, which opened the Certain Regard section of the 1998 Cannes Film Festival.

Prior to forming Redeemable, Johnson had an eclectic career that ranged from investment banking and corporate finance to international film distribution and independent production.

From 1984 to 1991, he served in various capacities at Vestron Inc., the largest independent video distributor at that time. In particular, Johnson helped plan and implement Vestron's move into feature film production in 1986 and managed all of its film financing operations thereafter. In that capacity, he assembled financing packages for such projects as *Dirty Dancing* one of the most profitable independent releases of all time.

After Vestron, Johnson went on to partner an international distribution venture that specialized in the sale of U.S. films in Asia. At the same time, he joined forces with New York producer Peter Newman to produce motion pictures that could be financed on a reduced-risk basis by forging unique partnerships between the producers, financiers, and the creative talent.

The first such production was *Smoke*. The picture went on to win numerous awards including the Silver Bear at the 1995 Berlin International Film Festival and the German Filmpries as the Best Foreign Language Film of 1995. The same team collaborated on *Blue in the Face* the world's first "instant" movie. Budgeted on a shoestring and shot spontaneously without a script, the picture was an artistic and financial success earning nearly \$10 million worldwide in theatres.

His last picture prior to Redeemable was *Space Truckers*, a raucous outer-space comedy starring Dennis Hopper, Stephen Dorff and Charles Dance, that premiered at the 1998 Sundance Film Festival.

Johnson is a graduate of Bowdoin College and has an MBA from the Yale School of Management. He teaches the business of film at Yale where he also has been appointed a College Fellow. He lives in New Haven, Connecticut, with his family.

Ira Deutchman (Executive Producer)

Ira Deutchman has been making, marketing and distributing films for 25 years, having worked on more than 130 films, including some of the most successful independent films of all time. He was one of the founders of Cinecom and later created Fine Line Features, two companies that helped define the modern independent film business.

For the past five years, Deutchman has been a partner in Redeemable Features, a New York-based independent production company that he founded to develop and produce a

wide range of theatrical and television programming. During this time, he has produced a range of noteworthy features, including Tony Vitale's *Kiss Me, Guido*, Sarah Kernochan's *All I Wanna Do*, Mark Christopher's *54* and two upcoming films: Adam Davidson's *Way Past Cool* and Bob Gale's *Interstate 60*.

Additional screen credits include executive producer of Jonathan Demme's *Swimming to Cambodia*, Gary Sinise's *Miles From Home*, Paul Bartel's *Scenes from the Class Struggle in Beverly Hills*, Matty Rich's *Straight Out of Brooklyn*, Stephen Gyllenhaal's *Waterland*, Maggie Greenwald's *The Ballad of Little Jo*, Alan Rudolph's *Mrs. Parker & the Vicious Circle* and Paul Auster's *Lulu On the Bridge*; and associate producer of John Sayles' *Matewan*.

As founder and president of Fine Line Features and senior vice president of parent-company New Line Cinema, Deutchman acquired and released more than 60 films, including Jane Campion's *An Angel at My Table*, Gus van Sant's *My Own Private Idaho*, Jim Jarmusch's *Night on Earth*, Robert Altman's *The Player* and *Short Cuts*, Roman Polanski's *Bitter Moon* and *Death and the Maiden*, Mike Leigh's *Naked*, and the award-winning documentary *Hoop Dreams*. Prior to Fine Line, he was president of The Deutchman Company, which provided marketing consulting services for such films as Steven Soderbergh's *sex, lies, and videotape*, Charles Burnett's *To Sleep With Anger* and Whit Stillman's *Metropolitan*.

Deutchman was one of the founding partners and president of marketing and distribution for Cinecom Entertainment Group, the film distribution company known for such diverse releases as Merchant/Ivory's *A Room with a View*, Jonathan Demme's *Stop Making Sense*, Gregory Nava's *El Norte* and John Sayles' *The Brother From Another Planet*. His early career included positions at United Artists Classics, Films Incorporated and Cinema 5 Ltd., where he worked on films including Lina Wertmuller's *Seven Beauties* and *Swept Away*, Barbara Koppel's *Harlan County, USA*, Jean-Jacques Beineix's *Diva* and Francois Truffaut's *The Last Metro*.

Deutchman is an associate professor in the Graduate Film Division at Columbia University, and serves on the advisory boards of the Sundance Film Festival and the Los Angeles Independent Film Festival.

Mauro Fiore (Director of Photography)

Mauro Fiore has served as director of photography on a number of mainstream and independent feature films, including the upcoming films *Driven*, directed by Renny Harlin and *Highway* (also known as *A Leonard Cohen Afterworld*), directed by James Cox. Among his other credits are *Lost Souls*, the directorial debut of Academy Award®-winning cinematographer Janusz Kaminski; Stephen Kay's *Get Carter*; Stephen Grynberg's *Love From Ground Zero*; Salome Brezner's *An Occasional Hell*; Robert Greenwald's *Breaking Up*; Louis Morneau's *Soldier Boyz*, and Michael Kehoe's *Dominion*. Fiore was second unit DP on Steven Spielberg's *The Lost World: Jurassic Park* and *Amistad*; Michael Bay's *Armageddon* and *The Rock*; Jeremiah Chechik's *Tall Tale*; Steven Sommers' *The Adventures of Huck Finn* and Jeff Reiner's *Trouble Bound*. A graduate of Chicago's Columbia College, Fiore earned his first feature film credit when he contributed additional photography to Spielberg's *Schindler's List*.

Fiore's television credits include the acclaimed HBO sketch "Tracey Takes On." He has shot several television commercials, including ads for Pepsi and AT&T.

Lee Percy, A.C.E. (Editor)

The Center of the World marks Lee Percy's second film with director Wayne Wang, following *Slamdance*. Percy originally trained as an actor at the Juilliard School under John Houseman, and made the move into editing after receiving a degree in film from the University of California. His theatrical background has shaped his creative approach as an editor, and he has worked on projects featuring some of the most accomplished actors of contemporary cinema. Percy's credits include three films which garnered top acting Oscars: Hector Babenco's *Kiss of the Spider Woman* with William Hurt; Barbet Schroeder's *Reversal of Fortune* with Jeremy Irons; and Kimberly Peirce's *Boys Don't Cry* with Hillary Swank.

Percy was himself honored by his peers when he won the A.C.E.'s Eddie Award for John Frankenheimer's HBO film *Against the Wall*. Among his other credits are six films with Barbet Schroeder, including *Kiss of Death* and *Single White Female*; Kathryn Bigelow's *Blue Steel* and Jessie Nelson's *Corinna*, *Corinna* starring Whoopi Goldberg.

Donald Graham Burt (Production Designer)

The Center of the World is production designer Donald Graham Burt's third film with director Wayne Wang, following *Anywhere But Here* and *The Joy Luck Club*. Burt's other film credits include Mike Newell's *Donnie Brasco* and John Smith's *A Cool Dry Place* and *Dangerous Minds*.

Sophie de Rakoff Carbonell (Costume Designer)

Sophie de Rakoff Carbonell's varied experience includes designing costumes for feature films, music videos and commercials. Her film credits include two upcoming films: Robert Luketic's *Legally Blonde*, starring Reese Witherspoon and Paul Rachman's *Four Dogs Playing Poker*. Additional credits include Rob Schmidt's recent *Crime and Punishment in Suburbia*, as well as the director's feature debut, *Saturn*.

Carbonell has worked extensively in music videos, handling the wardrobe design and costuming for such artists as Alanis Morissette, Depeche Mode, Enrique Iglesias, the Jon Spencer Blues Explosion, REM, Paula Cole and Wyclef Jean. Her commercial work includes ads for Macy's, Radio Disney and the Partnership for a Drug Free America.

Heidi Levitt (Casting)

Heidi Levitt has cast a wide range of mainstream and independent features, along with short films, television and stage productions. Among the upcoming films she has cast are Reginald Hudlin's *Servicing Sara*, George Hickenlooper's *The Man From Elysian Fields*, Bob Gale's *Interstate 60*, Renny Harlin's *Driven* and Wim Wenders' *Million Dollar Hotel*.

The Center of the World marks Levitt's fifth collaboration with Wayne Wang, and the second on which she has served as a co-producer, following *Chinese Box*. Levitt also cast Wang's *Blue in the Face*, *Smoke* and *The Joy Luck Club*.

Levitt's recent credits include Neil LaBute's *Nurse Betty*, Gary Fleder's *The Imposter*, Paul Auster's *Lulu on the Bridge* and Vincent Ward's *What Dreams May Come*. She has shared casting duties on a number of high profile mainstream films, including: Oliver Stone's *Nixon*, *Heaven & Earth*, *Natural Born Killers* and *JFK*; Wim Wenders' *The End of Violence*; Michael Bay's *The Rock*; Adrian Lyne's *Jacob's Ladder* and Jeremiah Chechik's *Benny and Joon* and *Christmas Vacation*. Among her many independent film credits are Colleen Murphy's *Desire*, Jerry Ciccoritti's *The Life Before This* and Stuart Gordon's *Space Truckers*.

For television, Levitt's credits include the recent WB series pilot "Sullivan Street," the HBO telefilm *Excellent Cadavers* and the ABC mini series *The Wedding*, directed by Charles Burnett. She also helmed L.A. casting for the 1996, 1999 and 2000 seasons of the La Jolla Playhouse, and served a similar function for ACT Seattle's 1998 and 1999 seasons. Levitt began her career as a casting associate to Risa Bramon Garcia and Billy Hopkins, working on such films as *Born on the Fourth of July*, *Something Wild* and *Wall Street*.

Kris Nicolau (Casting)

A native of New Zealand, Kris Nicolau is a well-traveled veteran of the casting world who has worked in film, theatre and advertising. Her feature credits include location and additional casting for director Oliver Stone's *Born on the Fourth of July*, *JFK* and *Heaven & Earth*. Her stage credits include the critically acclaimed New York production of *Killer Joe*.

Nicolau has worked extensively in television commercials, casting both professional talent and eye-catching non-professionals for such clients as Levi's and IBM. She began her career in Dallas in 1985 and has worked as a colleague of casting directors Risa Bramon Garcia, Billy Hopkins and Heidi Levitt.

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