

INTERVENTION

Production Notes
18 September 2006

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BILLING BLOCK

scion films presents
in association with **endgame entertainment**
and **alliance atlantis**

a **pembridge** picture

a **prospero pictures** production

a film by **mary mcguckian**

based on a script by **mary mcguckian**
and devised in collaboration with
charles dance, donna d'errico, gary farmer, colm feore, kerry fox,
rupert graves, ian hart, andie macdowell, russell means, bill paterson,
john sessions, sara stockbridge, jennifer tilly

composer **kim bingham**

original music by **nicky 'misschief' shaw**

costume designer **sally o'sullivan**

production designer **max gottlieb**

director of photography **mark wolf**

associate producer **faye villalba**

co-producers **steve harrow, robert how**

executive producers **julia blackman, gary hamilton, douglas e. hansen, patrice theroux**

producers **jeff abberley, martin katz, mary mcguckian**

directed by **mary mcguckian**

intervention

Dolby Digital Logo
Canada Wordmark Logo

INTERVENTION

Introduction

Set in a fictional rehab clinic in the desert, INTERVENTION offers a glimpse of what goes on behind closed doors, when an eclectic group of people drawn from all walks of life find themselves under one roof for twenty-eight days with one thing in common – addiction.

Shot over five weeks in Santa Fe, New Mexico and London, England, during December 2005 and January 2006, Mary McGuckian's INTERVENTION marks the second installment in the writer/director's amorality trilogy, which commenced with the controversial and darkly satirical tabloid exposé Rag Tale in 2005.

Where Rag Tale captured the coke and caffeine energy of the newspaper world, INTERVENTION captures the emotional highs and lows of family program at a rehabilitation clinic in one of the many fashionable treatment centers springing up like geysers in the desert.

London scenes were shot the week before Christmas in December 2005 around Soho and central London locations, including The Soho Hotel. In January 2006, cast and crew re-located to the State of New Mexico, where production was based for four weeks at the Vista Clara Ranch Resort and Spa in Galisteo near Santa Fe.

Post production was completed in Canada at the world-renowned Deluxe Studios' innovative new Digital Intermediate studio under the supervision of Steeple Post Production Services.

INTERVENTION

The Collaborators

Adopting the unique collaborative creative process and contemporary shooting style she pioneered with *Rag Tale*, McGuckian attracted some of the most exciting and acclaimed acting talent of Canada, the UK and US, including CHARLES DANCE, DONNA D'ERRICO, GARY FARMER, COLM FEORE, KERRY FOX, RUPERT GRAVES, IAN HART, ANDIE MACDOWELL, RUSSELL MEANS, BILL PATERSON, JOHN SESSIONS, SARA STOCKBRIDGE and JENNIFER TILLY.

McGuckian also reunites with some of the industry's top filmmaking talent with whom she collaborated on *Rag Tale*, including costume designer Sally O'Sullivan, production designer Max Gottlieb and cinematographer Mark Wolf.

Scion Films presents in association with Endgame Entertainment, a Pembridge Pictures/Prospero Pictures production. Based on a script by Mary McGuckian and devised in collaboration with Charles Dance, Donna D'Errico, Gary Farmer, Colm Feore, Kerry Fox, Rupert Graves, Ian Hart, Andie MacDowell, Russell Means, Bill Paterson, John Sessions, Sara Stockbridge and Jennifer Tilly.

Directed by Mary McGuckian, produced by Jeff Abberley, Martin Katz and Mary McGuckian, INTERVENTION is executive produced by Julia Blackman, Gary Hamilton, Douglas E. Hansen and Patrice Theroux, and co-produced by Steve Harrow and Rob How. Faye Villalba acts as Associate Producer. Original music by Nicky 'Misschief' Shaw.

A UK/Canadian co-production financed with the assistance of Bank of Ireland advised by Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld LLD and Royal Bank of Canada advised by Goodmans LLP.

Additional funding provided by New Mexico State Investment Council Film Investment Program.

Completion guarantee provided by International Film Guarantors.

Filmed on location in New Mexico, USA and London, England.

INTERVENTION

Synopsis

"Music, dance, story-telling and silence are the true universal healers"

Native American saying

Twenty-eight days is the recommended treatment period for a group of addicts who check into Vista Clara, one of the many fashionable rehab clinics springing up like geysers in the New Mexico desert.

INTERVENTION offers a fly-on-the-wall bitter-sweet glimpse of what goes on behind closed doors when an eclectic group of people drawn from all walks of life find themselves under one roof for twenty-eight days with one thing in common – addiction.

Mark (Rupert Graves), a former porn star-turned-producer, is addicted to alcohol, drugs, gambling and sex; Joe (John Sessions) is a Kiwi comedian with a drink problem; Sara (Sara Stockbridge) is a former model, muse and recovering heroin addict with anger and food issues; and Harry (Ian Hart) is a prescription drug addict from a privileged family.

For every addict, the sphere of influence is much greater than his or her sphere of concern and after a four week period of isolation and reformation, under the treatment of Counselors Bill (Colm Feore) and his wife Kelly (Andie MacDowell), their friends, family and significant others join them for the family program weekend, where reality and reconstruction begins.

Those who are affected or influenced rather than being "under the influence", suffer the consequences of addiction just as much as the addict being treated. INTERVENTION exposes the reality of that crazy world where disorders of dysfunction - the "3-Ds" (drink, drugs and depression) are dealt with.

When Jane (Jennifer Tilly) – Mark's wife, Pamela (Donna D'Errico) – Mark's lover and Kate (Kerry Fox) – Joe's best friend - arrive to join the family program weekend, the process of group therapy, rebuilding and resolving confused relationships is all-consuming and frequently results in a series of emotional and physical meltdowns.

The thesis behind INTERVENTION

After completing Rag Tale, Mary McGuckian started exploring the idea of making a trilogy of films as a set of amorality tales, looking at the role of personality dysfunction as it relates to perceived morality. Having examined the role of high esteem ego in a high-octane media environment, she chose to examine both high and low esteem ego in a world which witnesses both. The original outline for INTERVENTION chose a treatment centre family program setting to challenge perceptions about behavior.

"The story for Intervention evolved out of an awareness, rather than necessarily an insight, as to why more and more people were diagnosing themselves as suffering from an illness generally described as one or other type of addiction, personality or behavioral disorder for which they would seek treatment. In the more capitalist states in the world, where supply will eventually meet demand, there have emerged more treatment centers, rehabilitation clinics and psychological institutions than there are spiritual houses, churches and meeting halls."

"It would seem that people are increasingly turning to counselors and therapists for 'cures' and 'guidance' in much the same way as in times gone by we would have turned to friends, family or spiritual leaders. Psychology seems to have become a kind of new millennium culture of spirituality and the language used most commonly to define our moral and other world views makes increasing use of 'psychological vernacular'. At the same time, psychologists, therapists and counselors are finding themselves in an increasingly powerful position both in the wider world and also in the very private interior worlds of people's hearts and minds."

"Therapists, counselors and psychologists tend to be sought out by people at their most vulnerable. It takes phenomenal moral courage and professional etiquette in an age of opportunism not to take advantage of the power of such a position of authority and respect."

"All three films examine various aspects of the use and abuse of all facets of authority and challenge our perception of the moral right that an ego can assume. Where Rag Tale's tabloid 'information is power' philosophy attempted to seduce us with the addictive world of adrenalin, Intervention attempts to challenge our perception of 'moral authority' within the world of addiction itself."

The production history behind INTERVENTION

If 'therapy' is the new spirituality, nowhere is its practice more prevalent than in the South Western States of America. New Mexico, Arizona and California all promote a wide range of rehabilitation and treatment centers promising the 'cure' to all from down and outs to the rich and famous.

"When we found out about the rebate system being offered by the New Mexican State Commission to encourage filmmakers to come to New Mexico" explains Co-Producer Rob How, "we contacted the Film Commission and they suggested a location called Vista Clara, which is a health spa just outside of Santa Fe, near Galisteo in New Mexico. The spa was closed as it was about to undergo refurbishment, so Mary and I flew out on a recce in September 2005. Amazingly, it seemed to be exactly what we wanted and it was very warm. It seemed very idyllic at the time and very green."

"We planned to shoot in November 2005, but for a variety of reasons, we decided to push the shoot back into the New Year when it's the coldest time of year in New Mexico and all the leaves are off the trees! It's not the same as we originally anticipated, but even so, it has a certain beauty and look about and we've been very, very lucky with the weather – it's been very bright sunshine all day, every day despite being cold. It has a truly wonderful look."

One of the challenges for McGuckian, How and fellow co-producer Steve Harrow was to make the constraints of a financial co-production work when shooting in a territory outside the co-production treaty jurisdiction. As How explains, "Generally co-productions between the UK and Canada are set up on the basis that you have a share of the investment coming from the UK and from Canada and you either film in those countries or, if you go to a third country for location work, it's often somewhere that doesn't have an indigenous film culture. You then take your heads of department from the UK and Canada and your creative teams from both sides and go to film there on a basis that is commensurate with the terms of the treaty. In the case of Intervention, we required to shoot in the US as a location while still meeting the regulatory obligations of a treaty designed to defend those country's film production activities from the proclivity of US film production dominance."

"The difficulty with filming in the US as a foreign production, is that it has a strong indigenous cinematic film culture and has crews in abundance, therefore our need to fulfill the obligations of the Canadian/UK treaty was quite tricky because of the strength of the unions in the US and their ability to dictate who we could and couldn't use in terms of personnel for camera crews and art department etc", he continues. "You have to strike a balance between fulfilling the obligations of the co- production treaty and fulfilling the obligations to New Mexico as a participating financially contributing location as well as to the US unions and guilds."

Despite the juggling act that How had to perform, production eventually ran very smoothly and the vibe on set was very relaxed and congenial. "There are some slightly different methods of working for the American and Canadian crews compared to the UK methods, but generally it's gone very well and only took a few days to adapt to the working patterns."

Once principal photography was over, post-production was completed in London up to director's cut, then the whole production moved to Toronto to complete the music, sound editing, finesse the editing and produce the final cut of the film.

As Steve Harrow explains, "This project is extremely post production intensive on both creative and technical fronts given the amount of material to be collated, managed and edited and the fact that the shooting style is on the cutting-edge of contemporary HD film technology." Harrow has worked with McGuckian on four films to date and as co-producer on the project, has been responsible for the evolution of a post production process designed to access the latest in DI processes while still facilitating the creative needs of the material.

"With a shooting ratio of almost 100:1 on three cameras shooting simultaneously, the editing process can be arduous. Shooting in innovative styles with recently developed HD camera equipment test the simultaneously developing digital processes." Harrow allies his wealth of post production process experience to the unconventional and ground-breaking ideas of a young creative team.

"HD film is a form of film but not the same. Directors the world over are experimenting with the medium, creating new looks, pushing the potential of the stock and the processing systems and it is a credit to this team and a measure of the success of what they are trying to achieve that two of its greatest considerations pass without question:

Nobody seems to notice unless it is pointed out, that the script is improvised.

Nobody seems to notice unless it is pointed out, that the movie is filmed on HD."

The Process

In *Rag Tale*, Mary McGuckian's first film in the amorality trilogy, she adopted a pioneering, frenetic shooting style with three cameras. "Intervention uses less frantic camera movements" explains co-producer Rob How. "We're still shooting with three cameras, but with two steadicams that give it a less frenetic feel. We really tried to capture the look of the desert and surroundings in a widescreen format. Mary's reference point is the Sergio Leone westerns – lots of wides and big vistas of the scenery."

McGuckian has an innate talent and ability to attract some very strong and highly-regarded actors in her films. Like *Rag Tale*, *INTERVENTION* is an improvised drama and is by no means conventional in any way because the script consists only of a series of scene descriptions and the actors develop their own characters and play the characters off against each other within the scenes that have been described.

How is a regular collaborator with McGuckian, so has first-hand knowledge of her talent and what attracts actors and filmmakers to her and her methods of working: "Mary's a very strong, independently-minded woman but she does listen to other people. She has a great sense of humour and she's very, very good at collaborating with large numbers of people to get the best out of them. She's great with people and everyone enjoys working with her immensely – myself included."

"At its simplest, the scene-scape style script structures the narrative as a series of scenes which clarify the 'who, what and where'. Who is in the scene, where it takes place and what happens. Mary writes guide dialogue only occasionally. The expectation is that after an intensive character development workshop, with total knowledge of character, the actors improvise the dialogue on screen."

"In order to capture the spontaneity of the ever changing takes on each set up, Mary covers the action with at least two and often three cameras. For each film a shooting style convention is developed with the DP, (Mark Wolf) and designer, (Max Gottlieb) which best achieves both the best level of coverage and a look which interprets the material most meaningfully."

"The style choices are tested to ensure that the look can be achieved with the equipment chosen, bearing in mind the need for flexibility to capture the improvisation process. The integration of production and post production from the outset is critical to achieving the best results and this is why we have co-producers managing both production and post production."

The Performers

For the actors it is a challenging and interesting way to work and for that reason a number of the actors from Rag Tale were keen to collaborate with McGuckian again (Rupert Graves, John Sessions, Ian Hart, Kerry Fox, Sara Stockbridge and Bill Paterson). As the co-production treaty calls for Canadian talent, all of Jennifer Tilly, Colm Feore and Gary Farmer joined the US-based Andie MacDowell and Donna D'Errico.

"The really lovely thing about this shooting process is that you're mutually reliant", says actor Rupert Graves. "You can't just go on and be the star or be the most important person in a scene or just not do anything. You have to listen and respond to other people and that creates a great camaraderie because everybody wants to get on. I love it and the people are great."

Jennifer Tilly was immediately impressed by McGuckian's style and drive. "I happened to be in London and Mary came to my hotel and had a drink with me. I was just really impressed by her intelligence and her get-up-and-go. Her passion was immense as she was telling me about the whole idea for the film and about the other amazing actors who were already onboard. It was hard for me because I was committed to doing a television series called 'Out of Practice' and it didn't look like I was going to be able to do it. But Mary called up the producer and she was such a force of nature, she got the television people to re-arrange the schedule and allow me to fly out to New Mexico from LA every weekend and then fly back to work on the series."

Andie MacDowell's agent told her about INTERVENTION and the proposal which explained the process of how it was going to be shot, the format of what the story was going to be about, along with a list of names of actors that had signed on for it. "The whole package was just very interesting for me and the idea was extremely creative. I liked the way it was expressed which is down to Mary, the director."

"I've only worked on traditional movies before. I've done some small artsy films like Sex, Lies and Videotape but never anything like this", explains MacDowell, "I haven't taken acting classes in a long time. I've worked a lot - which is great - and I've worked with some wonderful actors and directors, but I thought this was almost an opportunity to go back to school - it's been a really interesting process. During rehearsal time in London, we explored and created the history of our characters. A lot of the stuff isn't formally used, but it's interior work which is great for an actor to do. It's a much more elaborate process in that we're inventing so much of it."

"As a director, Mary is very interesting and multi-layered. She's very bright, very articulate and can also be kind of tough - in a good way. It's important for me to like a director, then I feel like I'm in good hands."

"Everybody gets along great", comments MacDowell. "I could tell from rehearsals that we were going to have a great time. There are no egos involved, everybody's here to do the work. We all share a van to the location - I haven't shared a van with a group of actors since I worked on Sex, Lies and Videotape and it was actually really good fun - I liked it."

INTERVENTION marks the first time Canadian actor Colm Feore has collaborated with McGuckian, but his comments pay testimony to the experience. "The narrative was pretty tightly sketched out by Mary and the characters were defined, and we worked in rehearsals to further define them and explored facets of relationships that will never be seen in this film, but it all adds greater depth to the characters as a whole."

"The more layers of the onion skin there are to each of those characters, when you're improvising, the chances are you'll automatically be responding from a much deeper well of information that you draw on, as we all do in normal life. Without thinking about it, we bring our entire history to almost everything we say," notes Feore.

"With the traditional, non-improvisational acting process there's very little time or opportunity for rehearsal and sometimes people who are introduced to each other on the first day are expected to play husband and wife and be intimate and bring all of their shared experiences to bear. Nine times out of ten, even with the best actors, that's really hard to do and it doesn't result in the best kind of work," says Feore.

"With this process, we're guaranteed that everyone is going to start on the same page, because we all watch each other struggle through. Even scenes that are private we will do publicly for the benefit of and the purpose of the exercise and it's been enormously useful. Mary's shooting style has evolved and in a sense as actors we're completely absolved of responsibility. I don't care where she places the cameras because she's encouraged me to believe that the reality of the situation is me playing with these particular events, trying to accomplish these particular things. If there are cameras, well so be it, but it's not going to interfere with the truth that I've discovered. It's been an enormously liberating experience because your ego is suspended, you really break through to someplace else and consequently it's exhilarating."

"We're also in an isolated area – in the middle of the New Mexico desert. The rest of our lives, all our kids and significant others, are thousands of miles away, so in a sense we're bonding as a cast and we're prepared to talk about the work on the way home, talk about the work when we sit down and have dinner together and talk about the work in the van on the way in the morning," concludes Feore.

"We all get on really well," notes Donna D'Errico. "Colm is just a laugh a minute, he's got a wonderful sense of humour, so has Rupert. Sara's great too and we're just having the best time. I'm having a lot of fun and it's nice in between takes just to sort of joke with each other. It's a very light mood around here and that takes your mind off the scenes so you're not over-analyzing things. You get to go back in and it's all fresh."

Actor John Sessions is a big fan of McGuckian's style and is no stranger to the world of improvisation. However, he notes that collaborative improvisation differs from a one-man-show: "Most of my work is improvisational and I was known for it particularly in my first five years of my career. I did a lot of shows that were completely improvised lasting a couple of hours but it's a very different kettle of fish when you're working with other people."

"It does help enormously to know the other actors. Rupert, Ian, Sara, Kerry and I worked together on Mary's last film and we get on very well. You can throw stuff at people and they'll catch the ball. The trick is not to cook up little playlets for yourself in your head. As for Mary, she's probably the most optimistic, inspirational, 'up' person I have ever met in my life".

Kerry Fox is another member of the cast who enjoyed the Rag Tale experience so much, she returned to work with Mary McGuckian for a second time. "I worked with Mary on Rag Tale just over a year ago and really enjoy her work. I think she's an incredibly intelligent, articulate, interesting and inspiring woman. It's great to know that I can keep working with her."

"When the idea of improvising first came up, I thought it was a terrifying idea! I thought I'd never be able to do it. Rag Tale was set on a newspaper so there was a lot of jargon to understand and you had to present yourself as if you knew so much about immediate world events and news. But it's like with all acting – you have to make yourself appear as someone else, with the knowledge of someone else."

Fox found the Intervention experience an equally enjoyable one. "I've loved it in New Mexico. We have a great bunch of people here who are just wonderful - they're incredibly kind and also because some of the scenes are quite vicious and some of the things the characters say about each other are quite nasty, often we don't know whether we're playing our characters when we're just talking to each other or whether the other person's playing the character or just talking as themselves. People are very careful not to take things personally and to have fun and to be gentle with each other - it's been a great experience."

INTERVENTION also marks Sara Stockbridge's second collaboration with director McGuckian: "I enjoy working this way. I found it really terrifying the first day on Rag Tale, not knowing what we were going to say, but once I'd got over the first day I loved it."

"I love that moment when I hear 'turn over' and you don't know exactly what you're gonna say. It makes you have to wake up, engage and listen to everybody because you don't know what your next line is and you don't know what they're gonna say. It's an exciting way to work, I really like it," says Stockbridge. And as for working with Mary? "I like working with Mary - I think she's super human! She's from another planet secretly. She lives on Coca Cola and cigarettes and she looks about twelve years old and never loses her temper. She has a hundred things going on all the time and just copes so well with it - I think she must be an alien! I love her."

"It's also nice to be back with a lot of the team I've worked with before. I'm three thousand miles away from my kids so I could be really homesick, but the fact that we're all here and I know half the people is fun and it helps with not missing everyone at home too much. I really respect them and like the people here," continues Stockbridge.

Actor Ian Hart first met McGuckian when she directed *Best*, the biopic of iconic footballer George Best in which Hart played fellow footballer Nobby Stiles. He then reunited with McGuckian for *Rag Tale*. "I enjoy improvisation, which is quite handy since my memory packed in, so it's probably better for me to do this than to try and learn lines!"

"I've also worked with Ken Loach and there's no script with Ken either. I had a problem one day about a certain something that I'd said out of character. He said, 'have you never seen anybody act out of character before, what's your problem?' You have to realize that you do not have to be consistent. So many actors have this obsession with designing their character, laying out parameters and rules, 'this is what my character would do...' I've never met a single human being who did not...hour by hour, day by day, change who they are. We change in response to any given situation; when I meet you I'm the way I am right now, this may not be me or a reflection of me, it may be a complete mask so we don't know. So what's true, what's not true, it's all irrelevant."

"This is an exceptional company of actors," says McGuckian, "...and this entire extemporaneous experiment simply wouldn't work without the generous spirit of collaboration each and every one commits to the project and to each other."

"Not for the faint hearted, this is a tough process for performers, demanding egoless courage and renaissance talent. They really do make it up on the day!"

"While we workshop character development and the narrative is very set, there is NO rehearsal of 'script' per se. This is intentional. The basic premise is that if good dramatic story telling requires compellingly believable performance, it requires compellingly believable characters. In this process, each actor gets to invent and work on his or her character's history, truth, voice, rhythm, physicality, in a group environment - much as personalities are developed, inter-relationally."

"The result we strive for is total knowledge characterization, on the basis of which the actor can meaningfully, believably and compellingly play any situation without preparation."

Their characters

Jane played by Jennifer Tilly

Character description: Mark's wife and his "family member" on the program at Vista Clara.

Background: She's Mark's agent and manager as well as being his wife and she runs his entire porn empire. She's intelligent, successful, organized and seemingly together and powerful, but has endured life with a husband who physically and mentally abuses her and continues to cover it up and make excuses for him. She has a history of abusive relationships.

"I'm an ex-porn star-turned businesswoman. My husband Mark (played by Rupert Graves) and I run this empire of soft to hardcore porn films. He's got an addiction problem, so I'm kind of running the business by myself."

"I was really interested to do this because I've only done one other movie before which was an improvisational film (Dancing at the Blue Iguana) and I found it very challenging and very creatively fulfilling."

"As a director, Mary has an interesting process in which she asks you very specific questions about your character and their past history with the other characters; what she wants and where she wants to go; what Jane's frightened of, what her parents were like; so by the time you've come to the first day of shooting, you have such a full notion of your character, it's almost like you are the character. I found that really interesting."

"There are no lines as such, but when you come in and the cameras start rolling everything becomes very real and people are reacting in very real ways. Of course it helps that Mary has assembled just a stellar group of actors."

"I know a lot of the actors by reputation, and working through this process is rather like being a tennis player and playing against another fine tennis player. You never have to replicate, so things don't become stale – it's always fresh, you're always listening because you never know what the other actor is going to say. A lot of the time you'll be surprised because you'll be listening and will think you're going to react one way but instead you react another way. Suddenly you might laugh or be sarcastic or fly into a rage because of the back story that Mary has helped you create with your character. Everybody is very very excited about this film and this process."

"Jane's husband Mark is very flighty and tends to live this kind of a fantasy life. He thinks that he's a hundred percent involved in their business but he's not. As you see at the beginning of the film he's got a huge drug and alcohol problem and so that's where this film starts, with Jane tracking her husband down to London and having him incarcerated in this rehab facility in the New Mexico

desert. I think a lot of the drama and the comedy comes from all these disparate people from all walks of life and how they come together."

"Mary's really interested to see what the actors bring to a scene. For example, she might think somebody is going to get very soft and vulnerable in a scene, but instead they might turn into a rage and she'll just let us go with it. So we might end up filming a fight scene instead of a love scene. I do think everybody is a lot more emotionally invested in the characters because the typical process is to look at the script and look for clues of who the character is, but with this, because we've built it from the ground up, our characters are very close to us and very special to us and it's really fun to bring in elements to a character that aren't necessarily on the page. My character is a reformed smoker, but the stress of being at the facility and also being around her rival (Pamela) who smokes, causes an unconscious emulation gesture."

"In the beginning of the movie, you'll see I'm wearing a little Tiffany heart around my neck, but as the movie progresses - especially after Mark and I have our big fight - I stop wearing it because Jane's losing the love and also because Mark gave it to her and she wants him to remember and notice she's not wearing it."

"I think rehab can totally be beneficial to a lot of people and I've had psychiatrists myself in particularly harsh moments of my life. But I do think there can be a tendency to get addicted to psychotherapy or addicted to rehab facilities. I think American people especially, are really into opening up and sharing your feelings."

"Personally, I feel there are things that should be private, especially for a celebrity. I don't feel that everyone needs to know about your latest operation or how my boyfriend was unfaithful. I think sharing is important to people who are near and dear to you - it's not for the baker or for the tabloids to know your business and I think we're poking fun at that concept, but at the same time we have empathy for the characters that are going through a difficult process."

"I think you'll see a lot of satire on the whole world of psychotherapy. I think Mary is probably trying to show how everybody is struggling with their own humanity and sometimes the ways they try to approach that might look a little bit ridiculous to the outsider, but you know it's all part of the process; we're all human."

Mark played by Rupert Graves

Character description: An alcoholic with illegal substance abuse issues. His cross-addictions extend from alcohol abuse, through drugs, depression, gambling and sex addiction.

Background: Ex-porn star and more recently, producer mogul. Longs to be taken seriously in the legitimate movie business

"My character Mark Berry, is a former porn star-turned- producer who has various addictions like sex and cocaine. He's got a wife called Jane who he's left for a girl called Pamela and Jane has served an "intervention" on him, which means she's basically tracked him down and brought a couple of counselors from the rehab centre and they persuade him to leave with them and go straight into rehab. Extreme measures, but he's in a very bad way."

"Exploring the character has been a very interesting process. It made me very specific about what kind of addict Mark is. I only had a few guidelines – Mary sent me a couple of pages of character traits like narcissist. This is a great way of working for an actor, because one of the great worries is learning your lines and you don't have to do that. You have to create a character from scratch but you do get a lot more latitude and you just know if something doesn't work on one take you can create a whole new scene."

"Mary's written a kind of skeleton script which is maybe a hundred and ten scenes and you are told who's in the scene and roughly what happens. Then, you create the scene and bring the character in and everything changes because everybody's got their own ideas. It always starts off with a kind of big free-for-all, then you gradually boil it down and you get the essence of a scene that's really really exciting."

"Statistically, the twelve step programme of therapy works better than any other. You don't gain anything by castigating addicts - when you realize there's an addiction it has to be dealt with. You obviously get good rehab centres and you get bad rehab centres, but I think some people need to take time away from their life and just look at their behaviour and why they're addicts and I think good rehab places help them to do that."

Pamela played by Donna D'Errico

Character description: A "family member"... the "other woman" in Mark's life.

Background: She's a soap star/rock chick but wants to be taken seriously as an actress. She has very poor self-esteem and damaged boundary systems, which allows her to tolerate the love-triangle situation she's in with Mark, a self-confirmed addict. She's in deep denial of her predicament.

"Pamela is basically the other woman. Mark, played by Rupert Graves, is married, it's family week at a rehab centre and both myself and his wife have shown up for the family program. It's unconventional to let that happen but it does, and this results in some funny stuff and some angry stuff, as you can well imagine in that situation."

"It's a very interesting shooting process which I was a little worried about at first because the dialogue's unscripted. The scenes are laid out, it's broken down by scene and there's a light description of what's supposed to take place but then the dialogue is totally improvised. I really love the process because throughout rehearsal and on our own time, we as actors get complete creative control of our own character and having that much input is really nice. Also, with improvised dialogue, you get to say things in your own words and there are no specific lines that might be worded maybe differently to how you would say them. I've really fallen in love with this whole process."

"My husband was in rehab and I went to family week. We don't really cover the whole process before family week here - we just cover family week itself. There's a standard way that family week works and the film follows it pretty authentically. It's very true to life, but what's cool about this film is that there have been a lot of movies made about rehab centres, going into rehab and getting sober and things like that and it's all done from the point of view of the person trying to get sober. What's cool about this one is that it really shows you what happens to the family members and loved ones of people who are in rehab."

Kelly played by Andie MacDowell

Character description: A classic co-dependent.

Background: Relationship counsellor, writer, broadcaster. She runs the family programme at Vista Clara and is married to Bill.

From psychology as a student to counselor, her particular interest is in the relationship field. She went on to publish her thesis as a ground-breaking re-assessment of the communication system of relationships and was highly acclaimed for it. She met and went on to marry Bill when he came to work at Vista Clara. They both share an interest in adapting Native American Indian-inspired ritual healing processes

"I really wanted to play Kelly because it was something that I wanted to achieve for myself – it was a process I wanted to go through. I thought it would be really interesting to explore all of the psychology that went along with what this woman would know, in order to be in the position that she is in."

"I've had fun reading a lot of books and I think in a way it's almost like doing self-help. I really enjoyed working with and talking to Rokelle (Lerner) who is a counselor/consultant on the movie and a great friend of Mary's. Rokelle has written one of the books that I've been reading and having her on hand to work with one on one has been an amazing experience."

"There are certain issues in this film that I find very fascinating and true - things about boundaries, perception and women and I'm enjoying looking at all of those issues and actually thinking about them and digesting them and learning about them."

"Kelly's true personality is revealed when you see her in her private life. There's a persona that she has to have in order to do her job, in order to control, to help her patients and to help the co-dependents in her job. The scenes where you see how she behaves when she's with her husband are just like a whole other personality."

"There were some concerns that we would be making fun of something that is actually very valuable to a lot of people, but that's not really what the whole story is all about. I do believe that rehab can be very beneficial for many people. This is a movie trying to show a kind of a dark humorous perspective of what rehab is."

Bill played by Colm Feore

Character description: A life-long depressive with rage issues.

Background: Addiction counsellor, writer, national trauma advisor, he runs the treatment program at Vista Clara.

He specializes in addiction treatment and is particularly successful with multi-diagnosis cases – “the 3-Ds”, as he calls them. He works with abuse survivors and has developed his own particular diagnosis and treatment system for trauma cases and is internationally recognized in his field. He encourages “warrior-style” male-bonding to challenge the disenchanting, disaffected, middle-class, middle-American male going through a mid-life crisis. His specialist area is outdoor Native American Indian-inspired ritualistic re-birth and coming-of-age ceremonies.

“My character, Bill, is the co-owner of the rehabilitation clinic Vista Clara, with his wife Kelly. He’s a doctor, a psychotherapist and general all-round woman-friendly counselor-type guy, trying very hard to effect some helpful change with people when they come to his place.”

“I think he has his own issues, he’s a little messed up and discovers that he’s a bit more messed up as we go along, but initially I think he’s pretty confident - he thinks he’s pretty damn good at this, in fact those are the times when he’s most ridiculous.”

“I think Bill’s having a mid-life crisis of some kind. I realized that when I arrived here and Sally O’Sullivan our costume designer said I’d be wearing jeans and a cowboy hat, with great bull horns hanging! I asked her what would appear to be my problem? It was then that we decided that he was channeling his inner-cowboy, so that may tell a greater story about Bill.”

“My character may be slightly ridiculous in the scheme of things - he may betray the underbelly of rehabilitation in general, as humans helping humans is obviously a flawed process. I think obviously we’re going to show some of those flaws in great detail.”

“However, for my purposes I believe he’s absolutely committed to the process, that it is the right thing and that on balance he can really help these people. Occasionally he reaches a level of incompetence and stumbles and thinks he really should go and get more training, more help or more therapy because he’s really not much better off than the people he’s trying to counsel. But that’s actually something that happens for real to therapists who say, ‘can I allow my patient to go further than I have gone myself?’ or, ‘am I going to limit my patient because of my limitations?’ So, that journey of self-discovery is ever-evolving and I prefer to see it all in that light”.

Joe played by John Sessions

Character description: An alcoholic.

Background: A comedian with a bizarre world view. He'd rather be known as an actor who does comedy. The more he drank, the more morose he became, the funnier he seemed to be. He's a classic alcoholic with serious self-esteem issues. He's a brilliant impressionist and is happy to play anybody else, but has a hard time working out who he is himself. A classic co-dependent, from a co-dependent family.

"I play Joe McLaughlin. He's a New Zealand guy - I thought I'd make him New Zealander because Kerry Fox, my partner in crime (she plays Joe's 'family member' though the exact relationship is never defined), is obviously from New Zealand and in Mary McGuckian's last movie, Rag Tale, Kerry did an English accent, so this time I thought it would be nice for Kerry to, you know, flex her Kiwi muscles!"

"The famous line, 'desperate measures require desperate remedies' is true, and Joe needs that remedy. I know of people like Joe, who have or had terrible drink problems and have had to go through this process - it was the only way."

"In our business, we've all had friends who have been casualties of alcohol. People have died way before their time, like the wonderful Robert Stephens who I knew and worked with and who Rupert worked with. He was a brilliant, brilliant actor but he wasn't as lucky as someone like Anthony Hopkins. Alcoholism is an illness. I think it's interpreted by some people as being a chronic loss of willpower or chronic lack of willpower - 'pull yourself together, I've only had three drinks, why do you have to have three bottles?' A huge element of discipline is involved, I suppose, when one embarks upon the AA process and does not have a drink and has to drink water or lemonade or whatever when everyone else is getting drunk."

Kate played by Kerry Fox

Character description: A "family member" – Joe's sister, cousin, lover, friend...?

Background: She's a singer who is famous for one landmark performance and that's undermined anything else she's ever tried to do. Self-esteem is clearly a family issue and where co-dependency destroys Joe's sense of self, it destroys Kate's sense of reality. She has a tendency to over-empathise and responds teary-eyed to life's most inconsequential events.

"Joe, with whom she has a co-dependent relationship, is a drunk and he is in the rehab centre and she unknowingly has paid for his rehabilitation. She herself is quite sharp, I suppose, and she doesn't buy into psycho babble. She's quite cynical of it. I guess, as Jennifer (Tilly) was saying, you take in bits of yourself, so I'm all for it being my own attitude, even though I know that some people have recovered because of modern, American-style psychotherapy in these sorts of facilities."

"I think rehabilitation is essential and people who are ill, alcohol dependent or addicted and suffering, they obviously need help and they obviously need to find different ways that suit different people to make them well. I think the specific sort of rehab centre that we're talking about - the modern, contemporary recovery movement and the growth of that has been astounding. I think that's something that needs to be examined, because people buy into it so wholeheartedly and they lose all sense of perspective and judgement in themselves, so it's good that a film like this is trying to expose it in some way."

Sara played by Sara Stockbridge

Character description: An ex-heroin addict with anger and food issues.

Background: Model and muse. The addiction was a way of life – everyone in her environment did it. Whatever it took not to eat and stay thin was paramount. Weed gave her the munchies, smack set off cravings, coke kept her up all night and booze was full of calories – her life spiralled out of control.

"My character is a recovering crack addict. She was a super model years ago and she had anger issues and ended up in prison after stabbing her assistant with a pair of scissors where she spent several years and developed the crack habit, although she had a cocaine habit before that. She came out of prison in rather a mess and ended up here at Vista Clara. She's quite happy to be here, because she feels she has nowhere else to go. Sara has horrible anger tantrums all the time. I seem to spend everyday shouting and blowing up at people which is fun but kind of exhausting!"

"I've spent time with people with problems in my personal life so to be honest I didn't have to do too much research", says Stockbridge candidly. "I've never been through it myself, but I think therapy's a sort of double-edged sword. I'm sure it's really helpful for a lot of people and has saved a lot of lives, but then there is this element of psycho babble about it and therapy-speak. I'm sure there are probably a lot of people who think they need therapy, who would probably be better off without it and probably end up more mixed up after it. I'm sure as with all things, there are good and bad therapists. I'm sure there are some really twisted ones out there too!"

Harry III Jr played by Ian Hart

Character description: A prescription drugs addict.

Background: The only child of wealthy, over-caring professional parents who succumbed to every fashion and fad of educational and psychological development. He was brought up with tutors, special carers, special doctors and child psychologists – all of whom responded to his expression of individuality as if it were a behavioral syndrome. He's addicted to treatment and fundamentally there's probably nothing wrong with him.

"To research the role, I did a week and a half in a rehab place in Liverpool, England. I went to a few AA meetings and a few CA meetings and a few NA meetings. I did some reading, and after that I just figured out what it was all about. A lot of preparation is irrelevant - it's not wasted, it's never wasted - but it's just not pertinent to what you might do each day. When you reach a point of saturation you figure it's time to stop the preparation."

"There was a brief description of my character in the script outline with the significant indicators, but I decided to take a slightly different direction with him."

"We're not poking fun at therapy and rehab as such, but we're taking a certain light-hearted look at the whole thing. I think it's incredibly valuable for those who feel they need to do it, but by the same token there's an industry behind that which generates an insecurity in the mindset of certain people. If those who feel the need didn't think somebody could go out and fix their problems, then we wouldn't have such a huge industry based upon it. It's not for me to carry a message, I'm merely a participant in the chuckles!"

"My character goes into Vista Clara feeling a little down – kind of like going away for a rest but he may have gained as much just from going on a two week vacation ... but maybe not."

"I think he's in a very good state towards the end of the treatment - he's quite healthy and in good shape and frame of mind and he's buoyant and probably better armed to deal with the day-to-day slings and arrows. Did John Sessions write that or is that somebody else's?!"

The Director's Cut...

Mary McGuckian on bringing *Intervention* to the screen.

"*Intervention* is the second part of a trilogy of films, the first of which was *Rag Tale*, released in 2005. The three are loosely described as an amorality trilogy in that each of the very different stories and settings examine some aspect of the influence of egotism on our perception of morality."

"Each film queries its own notion of amorality within a world. *Rag Tale* looked at tabloid culture, the power of information and the use or the misuse of power and set itself in the world of media to do that. *Intervention* looks at a different kind of egotism, a kind of a spiritual manipulation and psychological boundary manipulation easily explored in the world of family program work, (often involving relationship counseling), now a regular feature of treatment programs for addicts."

"The three films have three phenomena in common, which are in a constant state of evolution throughout the experiment that is this trilogy project. Those are the overall theme of amorality, the development of performance and production styles which prioritise pushing performance styles using improvisational techniques which are facilitated by taking advantage of the latest developments in digital technology both during production and post production, and the core group of collaborators committed to the first two challenges."

"The main common denominator is the combination of these elements as they support the improvisation process on the basis of a very structured narrative script, where the cast collaborate on the material, collaborate on the characters and effectively improvise all dialogue directly on set. To make this work, we have designed a shooting process that requires the co-operation of all departments to make the sets live and real and three-sixty degree operational. Thereby creating egoless, level playing fields in the form of real environments for free form collaboration on content."

"The way Mike Leigh works has the same name, but I suspect it's a very different process. From the little that I know about what Mike does, and from speaking to people who work with him, I believe that his process is to work with actors over a long period of time in order to develop a script."

"What we're doing is almost the opposite. In that the narrative already exists, but the characters have yet to lift that narrative to the level of dramatic story-telling. The idea is to create a world within which the actors can be at their most creative, (rather than interpretive)."

McGuckian believes that in order to play their parts while fully inhabiting their roles, they cannot also carry narrative responsibility which would require them to effectively edit their own material at the same time as performing. The basic safety net is provided, and going into the scene the actors know what is supposed to happen, who is in the scene with them and where it takes place. After

that, how it happens and what is said or not said in order to advance the narrative is entirely in the playing.

“Where there’s a total knowledge of the character following the intense rehearsal workshop process prior to shooting, we have discovered that the scenes are easily then driven by the inter-play between the actors in a compelling and convincing performance style.”

“Because the cast and crew developed the process, it has evolved somewhat from the first film. In Rag Tale we had a very structured narrative. As our first experiment, we were working in theory and along with the Heads of Department, the process was developed.”

“It was the first time round and we were experimenting. We didn’t know what would and wouldn’t work as the thesis had never been tried before. We made some mistakes and we made some discoveries and we’ve brought those and the Heads of Departments who developed the process into this film with that experience. The thesis has given way to honed instinct and enhanced the process which has been a fantastic experience on this picture.”

“Likewise with the core members of the cast from Rag Tale also participating in this film, the process really has moved on. We’re all better at it, more collaborative, more courageous, more critical and probably much less aware of how different the process is to traditional linear film-making.”

“An anecdotal difference is that I was able to let go a little more of the narrative on this picture and I think particularly for the cast, they had much more input into their characters original description and development this time.”

“But while the actor has total control of how the narrative plays out and some control over characterization on this film, more so than probably they did in the previous project, there is still a need for the character to develop in a direction which supports the narrative. Interestingly, in some cases, where character choices and ideas may be fantastic in isolation, when incorporated into the final film, they might not integrate and advance narrative in a way that merits including them. A real lesson of this process is that the group rehearsal work is essential. An actor cannot rehearse and develop a character in isolation and be confident that the character will work in the context of the overall narrative. It is intended and required to be a collaborative process!”

“The look and the style of the shooting certainly also evolved over the projects as well. Rag Tale had a fairly radical look and that was dictated by our interpretation of the kind of potent world we perceive tabloid culture to be. Intervention is a world that is about revealing, so it’s a very revelatory style of shooting.”

“Where Rag Tale was shot hand-held through a great deal of fore-ground, using fast moves, quick zooms and whip-pans to capture the pace of the world, Intervention was shot using steady-cam rigs

to get a rolling sense of the revelatory nature of emotional self-discovery on long-lenses in order to create digital depth of field on both extreme wide shots and extreme close ups."

"Where Rag Tale used black and white interjected extreme close up shots to punctuate the 'reactionary' moments and keep us 'in the emotional moment', Intervention does an overall color development from almost black and white during the opening sequence, becoming more and more gradually saturated as our challenged perceptions are rationalized until the final surreal moments are played out in glorious full saturation color."

"All aspects of the style of each film are integrated choices which combine creative and technical innovation to make it possible to prioritise the improvised performance styles and push the boundaries of what is possible with the latest technology in order to facilitate that while still responding to the world of the material with production values which are in themselves testing the boundaries of the technology used."

"For example, Intervention is set in the South Western states of the US and has a sensibility that almost borrows from the westerns, but the essential shooting process is still the same as it was on Rag Tale. Three cameras generally cover at least two main setups per scene. Obscured wide shots to cover the action, in order to allow rehearsals on set, but unlike Rag Tale where we had a lot of hand-held action, Intervention uses steady-cam and over-riders to create a gentle rolling movement."

"The 'third eye' camera, which was black and white on Rag Tale, is color but high speed on Intervention. And where Rag Tale used foreground to create depth of field, Intervention uses long lenses to mirage the back grounds."

"This suited shooting in New Mexico, where we had such an amazing landscape. The wides can be phenomenally wide and we've borrowed a sort of evolved Sergio Leone look, where we get this kind of very immediate foreground and deep long lens wides, which we deepen just by virtue of sheer distance, (ie just going further away), as and against the tight coverage which was also shot untraditionally on long lenses to create a deeper field."

"I do like to experiment and what we are attempting to achieve here is the best environment/process that can bring about a level of performance that makes a narrative compelling and I still believe that what best achieves this is performance improvisation. The combination of the spontaneity of immediate improvisation and the depth of work that's done on character development in advance makes each performance much more compelling with level of distilled detail, rhythm and voice that no one writer could pen."

"Before making these films, I'd felt that the filmmaking process had lost its magic. It had turned into such a linear process. From the word on the page to the point at which the camera turns over involves so many activities that for an actor, any depth of feeling or immediate emotional response to the material is lost."

"Because the film is set in the South West of The United States and we were looking to explore the thesis of contemporary spirituality as borrowing from other cultures, we combined contemporary Native American design elements with an interpretation of the traditional 'western' genre."

"In terms of content, it made sense to understand that beyond the predominant western American culture, there is a native culture from which certain people do try to borrow, in the same way that in an Anglo culture some people borrow from Buddhism, yoga or meditation. So we're throwing up for consideration the notional lip service paid to the spiritual heart of another culture. By paying lip service to it, are we using it or abusing it? Are we making good use of it or are we misrepresenting it?"

"I grew up in Ireland when few people were making films over twenty years ago, when we were still caught up in finding a voice for political, social and religious investigation because the country was emerging from a form of theocracy. There was a debate to be had about the role of the Catholic Church in modern Irish culture, for example. In a more global sense, at least in western culture, I do believe there's a debate to be had about the influence of therapy and psychoanalysis as it pertains to addiction and recovery."

"Most of us have some experience of addicts and addiction and if we apply the more that there are six degrees of separation for every addict then there are at least six people to every six people who are six people who are affected by the behaviour of an addict. The self-help literature and video industry is massive, few of us go to church anymore and there are many aspects of our compartmentalized lives which take priority over our spiritual lives other than perhaps to indulge occasionally in the perusal of self help books, attendance of personal motivation courses or visiting our analyst. Even traditional church-goers participate by television! The authority that these therapists, gurus and self-help experts have is extraordinary."

"Just post-World War II there was more of a propensity to define oneself by ones nationhood, one's country or government. Political leaders were respected and expected to provide leadership. That dissipated through the 1960s and 1970s in western culture into what Bertrand Russell defined as the cult of the individual."

"The cult of the individual hasn't fulfilled the dream. Where does anyone find that sense of fulfillment? How does anyone achieve a fulfilled life? There doesn't seem to be a prescription for moral courage anymore, for ethical assuredness and there's not much by way of a respected institution to guide it. Neither would it seem that there exists a government or national authority that is providing it or prescribing it to the satisfaction of the majority."

"In a world where the majority of people recognize that the media misinforms and governments and political leaders are less than perfect, we no longer look to a particular church or religion or political leader to prescribe a way of life. It does seem that western culture has adopted the vernacular of pop psychology to define itself."

"In the context of family and relationships, there has been a perceived breakdown of contemporary social order and traditional values in western civilization. Everyone seems to be looking for a prescription to improve their relationship values. Most of the prescriptions seem to be therapeutically based. Many people will absorb a whole host of prescriptive psychologically based advice from agony aunt columns, to television personality analysts from Trish to Jerry Springer and then read Cosmopolitan magazine or watch a feature on This Morning to find out how to respond to basic family and relationship dilemma. I wanted to examine that phenomenon. The application of generalized psychological relationship prescription, for example, to specific relationship issues in a hot spot. Family program at a treatment center seemed to provide the right setting."

Cast Biographies

Charles Dance

Private Investigator

One of Britain's most accomplished acting talents, Charles Dance long and distinguished career has spanned film, TV and theatre.

Major feature film credits include Fred Schepisi's *Plenty* with Meryl Streep, *For Your Eyes Only*, *The Golden Child*, *White Mischief*, *Pascal's Island*, *Alien 3*, John McTiernan's *Last Action Hero*, Neil Jordan's *Michael Collins*, *Century* for Stephen Poliakoff, *Hilary and Jackie*, *Nicholas Nickleby*, *Gosford Park* for Robert Altman, Francois Ozon's *Swimming Pool* and more recently *Starter for Ten* for director Tom Vaughan.

Notable TV drama credits include *The Jewel in the Crown*, *Edward VII*, *First Born*, *Rebecca*, *Foyle's War*, *Trial & Retribution VII*, *Henry VIII*, *To The Ends of the Earth*, *Marple* and *Bleak House* for which he was nominated in the Best Actor Category at the 2006 RTS Awards.

Dance joined The Royal Shakespeare Company in 1975 and appeared in *Hamlet*, *Perkin Warbeck*, *Richard III*, *Henry IV (parts I & II)*, *As you Like It*, *Henry V*, *Henry VI Part II*, *The Jail Diary of Albie Sachs*, *Coriolanus*. Other notable theatre credits include *Irma la Douce*, *The Heiress*, *Turning Over*, at the Bush Theatre, Chekhov's *Three Sisters*, and *Good* at the Donmar Warehouse. In 2000 he starred opposite Jessica Lange in *Long Days Journey Into Night*. In 2002 & 2003 Dance appeared in *The Play What I Wrote* at the Wyndhams Theatre, London and in a national tour.

In 2003 Dance made his feature film debut as a director with *Ladies in Lavender*, which he also wrote. The film starred Dame Judi Dench and Dame Maggie Smith and has enjoyed critical acclaim internationally.

Donna D'Errico

Pamela

Donna D'Errico was born in Columbus, Georgia, USA and after starting out as a model and being the Playboy Playmate for September 1995, various TV appearances followed for D'Errico, including *Unhappily Ever After*, *Married With Children*, until she was cast in *Baywatch*, which she became a popular face on between 1996 and 1998.

Further roles followed in *Sabrina the Teenage Witch*, *Nick Freno Licensed Teacher*, *Men in White*, *Holding the Baby* and *Reno 911*.

Feature films include *Austin Powers Goldmember*, *Candyman: Day of the Dead*, *Kiss the Bride* and *Comic Book The Movie*.

In addition to her acting career, D'Errico is also a keen artist and philanthropist and in 2005, in a quest to discover real life in the villages of Cambodia during a photography assignment, she experienced the poverty and desperation of the local children, which touched her heart and spurred her to help educate the underprivileged.

Gary Farmer

Bob

Actor, cultural activist, musician and filmmaker, Gary Farmer (Cayuga) is widely recognized as a pioneer in the development of First Nations media. Farmer has been featured in groundbreaking leading roles including Philbert Bono in Jonathan Wacks' *Powwow Highway* and Arnold Joseph in Chris Eyre's *Smoke Signals*. For his role as Nobody in Jim Jarmusch's *Dead Man*, Farmer won the Best Actor awards in 1997 from both the American Indian Film Festival in San Francisco and First Americans in the Arts in Los Angeles. Farmer also won the Best Actor award at the 1989 American Indian Film Festival for his role in *Powwow Highway*.

Farmer is the founding director of a highly original urban Indian radio network, a major cultural publication, and a cultural festival. Aboriginal Voices Radio (AVR), currently broadcasts from 106.5 FM Toronto and streams at www.aboriginalradio.com. The network holds licenses to broadcast in eight Canadian cities, currently establishing the stations in Ottawa and Vancouver. AVR webcasts have included live coverage of numerous Native events, including film festivals and the recent opening of the National Museum of the American Indian in Washington, DC. Prior to developing AVR, Farmer led the Aboriginal Voices Festival, an annual film and art event in Toronto from 1998-2000, and was the founding editor-in-chief of Aboriginal Voices, a magazine about indigenous arts published from 1993-1999. The magazine won First Place for General Excellence from the Native American Journalist Association in 1995 and 1998.

Gary Farmer has completed a short fiction, *Scratch and Win* (2004). He directed three films that have screened at the Sundance Film Festival, *What the Eagle Hears* (2000), *The Gift* (1999), and *The Hero* (1995), and was the executive producer and a director for the APTN series *Buffalo Tracks*.

Recently Gary Farmer has been busy filming a new series for Showcase called *Moose TV*. He plays the lead role of Gerry, the mayor of Moose, Quebec, a town where strange things seem to happen everyday.

Outside of his performance career Farmer opened a gallery; a joint venture between him and his partner Deborah Lamal. The Gary Farmer Gallery of Contemporary Art celebrated its emergence on June 10, 2006. It is located in downtown Santa Fe, New Mexico.

Farmer performs on the harmonica, and has composed music for independent films. He was born in Ohsweken, Ontario, on the Six Nations Reserve.

Colm Feore
Counselor Bill

Colm Feore is a veteran talent with a distinguished catalog of work. He will next be seen in the comedy *Bon Cop, Bad Cop*, currently in post-production. Feore was also recently attached to star in the sci-fi story *Harvest Moon*, about the rise of a new species of man, due out next year. He was last seen starring as Julius Ceasar in ABC's 6-part mini-series *Empire*. He was also seen in *Slings & Arrows II*, the second six-pack of episodes of the Canadian mini-series that looks behind the scenes at the chaotic world of theatre.

Feore recently returned to Canada's exciting Stratford Festival to star in three new plays for the 2006 season. He starred as Fagin in *Oliver!* and played the title roles in both *Coriolanus* and *Don Juan*, he was also featured in *South Pacific*. He first gained prominence as one of Canada's premiere stage actors through thirteen seasons with the prestigious Stratford Festival, playing virtually all of Shakespeare's leading men, from Richard III and Iago to Romeo and Hamlet. Feore was also recently on stage as Claudius in *Hamlet* in New York and returned to Stratford for its 50th Anniversary season playing Professors Higgins in *My Fair Lady*.

Last summer, Feore starred with Denzel Washington and received rave reviews from critics everywhere for his portrayal of Cassius in the Broadway performance of Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*. The power of his performance has earned him this year's St. Clair Bayfield Award, denoting the best performance by an actor in a Shakespearean play in the New York metropolitan area.

Feore's credits on the big screen include the Academy Award winner for Best Picture *Chicago*, which also won the 2003 SAG Award for Outstanding Performance by the Cast of a Theatrical Motion Picture, *The Chronicles of Riddick*, *The Exorcism of Emily Rose*, *Paycheck*, *The Sum of All Fears*, *Thirty Two Short Films About Glenn Gould* which won the Genie Award for Best Picture and earned him a nomination for his performance, *The Caveman's Valentine*, *City of Angels*, and *Face/Off*.

His list of small screen movie credentials is long as it is varied, ranging from historical roles in *Benjamin Franklin*, *Napoleon*, *Nuremburg*, *The Day Reagan was Shot*, *And Starring Pancho Villa as Himself*, and *Trudeau* for which he won the 2002 Monte Carlo Television Festival Award for Best Actor and the 2002 Gemini Award for Best Actor in a Mini Series, to classic dramas including *Romeo and Juliet*, and *Taming of the Shrew*. He has also had many roles in such successful contemporary shows as *The West Wing*, and *Boston Public*.

Feore makes his home in Ontario with his wife, director/choreographer Donna Feore and their three children.

Kerry Fox

Kate

New Zealand-born actress Kerry Fox first came to prominence in Jane Campion's acclaimed *An Angel at My Table*, followed by Gillian Armstrong's *The Last Days of Chez Nous*, Danny Boyle's hugely successful *Shallow Grave*, Michael Winterbottom's *Welcome to Sarajevo*, Kay Mellor's *Fanny and Elvis* and Patrice Chereau's highly controversial *Intimacy*.

Other notable film and TV drama credits include, *The Gathering*, *Point Men*, *The Darkest Light*, *Wisdom of Crocodiles*, *The Last Tattoo*, *Murder Room*, *Forty*, *Déjà Vu*, *The Affair* for HBO, *Saigon Baby*, *A Village Affair* and Danny Boyle's *Mr Wroe's Virgins* for the BBC.

Rupert Graves

Mark

Born in Somerset, England in 1963, Rupert Graves made his stage debut in *The Killing of Mr Toad* in 1983 and went on to co-star with Harvey Fierstein in the London production of *Torch Song Trilogy*.

Roles quickly followed in Merchant Ivory's *A Room With A View* and *Maurice* for which he received wide acclaim and attention, leading to a host of feature films including, *A Handful of Dust* and *Where Angels Fear to Tread* for director Charles Sturridge, Louis Malle's *Damage*, Nick Hytner's *The Madness of King George* and Philip Goodhew's *Intimate Relations* for which he received the Best Actor accolade at the 1996 Montreal Film Festival and *Different For Girls* which received Best Film at Montreal in 1996.

An accomplished stage actor, Graves was nominated for an Olivier Award, Best Actor in 1997 for *Hurlyburly* and appeared in Broadway productions of Patrick Marber's *Closer* and Sean Mathias' *The Elephant Man*, as well as Mathias' West End production of *Design for Living* at the Gielgud Theatre, Marber's *The Caretaker* at London's Comedy Theatre and more recently in Terry Johnson's *Dumb Show* at the Royal Court Theatre.

Major television drama credits include, *The Forsyte Saga*, *Charles II*, *Take A Girl Like You*, Franc Roddam's *Cleopatra* for Hallmark, Mike Barker's *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall*, Paul Greengrass' *Open Fire* and Ferdinand Fairfax's *Royal Celebration*.

Ian Hart
Harry III Jr

Ian Hart's portrayal of John Lennon in Iain Softley's *Backbeat* brought him international recognition and in 1994/5 he received Most Promising Newcomer at The Evening Standard Awards, as well as Best Supporting Actor at the Venice Film Festival in 1995.

Recent credits include Neil Jordan's *Breakfast on Pluto*, Roger Spottiswoode's *White on White* and Michael Winterbottom's *Tristram Shandy*. In 2004 he was awarded Best Actor at the Tribeca Film Festival for his portrayal of Brian Keenan in *Blind Flight* as well as receiving a BIFA nomination for Best Actor. In 2000 Hart was awarded Best Actor for Aberdeen at the Karlovy Vary Film Festival.

Other major feature film credits include, Miramax's *Finding Neverland*, *Cheeky* directed by David Thewlis, *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone*, *Killing Me Softly*, *Liam*, *Born Romantic*, *Strictly Sinatra*, *Longitude*, *The End of the Affair*, *Best*, *Wonderland*, *This Year's Love*, Tony Scott's *Enemy of the State*, *Mojo*, Neil Jordan's *Michael Collins* and *The Butcher Boy*, *The Hollow Reed*, *Nothing Personal* and Ken Loach's *Land and Freedom*.

Major television drama credits include, *The Return of Sherlock Holmes*, *The Hound of the Baskervilles* and *Eroica*.

Andie MacDowell

Kelly

Andie MacDowell has established herself as an accomplished actress in a career that shows no signs of slowing down—her undeniable charm and talent have resulted in worldwide recognition. Busy as ever, MacDowell recently starred in the MGM feature “Beauty Shop” with Queen Latifah and in the CBS telepic “Riding the Bus with My Sister” directed by Anjelica Huston. She also wrapped production on the independent feature “Tara Road” directed by Gillies MacKinnon and will be heard as the voice of “Etta the hen” in the Nickelodeon/Paramount Pictures release of “Barnyard.”

Previous film credits include “Crush,” which made its American debut at the 2002 Sundance Film Festival and the poignant drama “Harrison’s Flowers” with Adrien Brody. MacDowell earned praise for her performance in the Emmy-nominated, HBO original film, “Dinner with Friends.” Daily Variety called her portrayal “arguably MacDowell’s best work yet” and USA Today says the film was “blessed by an on-the-mark performance by MacDowell.”

She first received critical acclaim and accolades for her performance as a repressed young wife in Steven Soderbergh’s “sex, lies and videotape.” The film won the Palme d’or at Cannes and garnered MacDowell the Los Angeles Film Critics Award for Best Actress as well as a Golden Globe nomination. Additionally, she was presented with the coveted Cesar D’Honneur for her body of work and the Golden Kamera Award from Germany’s Horzu Publications.

MacDowell earned the title of #1 female box-office draw worldwide with her performances in the smash hit romantic comedy “Four Weddings and a Funeral” and the western “Bad Girls” with Drew Barrymore. She also starred in the holiday classic “Groundhog Day” with Bill Murray.

In other comedies, MacDowell continued to partner with top leading men, including Gerard Depardieu in “Green Card,” for which she earned another Golden Globe nomination, Michael Keaton in “Multiplicity,” and John Travolta in “Michael.”

Her dramatic performances include “End of Violence,” directed by Wim Wenders, which was selected to screen at the opening of the 50th Anniversary of the Cannes Film Festival in 1998. In addition, she appeared in “The Player” and “Short Cuts,” both directed by Robert Altman, “Unstrung Heroes,” direct by Diane Keaton, and the ever popular “St. Elmo’s Fire.”

Bill Paterson

Dr Martin

A highly respected acting talent, Bill Paterson has worked with some of the industry's most acclaimed directors during the course of his long and distinguished career, including Ridley Scott, Nic Roeg, Anthony Minghella, Terry Gilliam, Richard Loncraine and Richard Eyre.

Major feature film credits include, *Kingdom of Heaven, Bright Young Things, Sunshine, Hilary and Jackie, Richard III, Truly Madly Deeply, Chaplin, The Object of Beauty, Baron Munchausen, The Rachel Papers, The Witches, Defence of the Realm, A Private Function, Comfort and Joy, The Killing Fields and The Ploughman's Lunch.*

Theatre works includes a host of West End productions for Richard Eyre, Lindsay Posner, Deborah Warner and Michael Lindsay Hogg.

John Sessions

Joe

Born in Scotland in 1953 and trained at RADA, John Sessions is an acclaimed actor and comedian.

After making his debut in 1982 in *The Sender* he went on to take roles in *The Bounty* with Mel Gibson and Anthony Hopkins and *Henry V* and *In the Bleak Midwinter* – both of which were directed by his friend and frequent collaborator Kenneth Branagh.

Other notable feature film credits include, *Gangs of New York*, *The Merchant of Venice*, *Pinnocchio*, *Cousin Bette*, *The Scarlet Tunic*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *Castaway*.

In addition to appearing in a wealth of top TV dramas including *The New Statesman*, *My Night with Reg*, *Tom Jones*, *Gormenghast*, *Murder Rooms*, *The Lost Prince*, *Midsomer Murders*, *Dalziel and Pascoe*, *Judge John Deed*, *Porterhouse Blue*, *Tender is the Night* and *Absolute Power*, Sessions' TV, variety and original solo work is extensive and has included shows for Comedy Central, NBC, BBC, Channel 4, LWT and Tiger Aspect.

Notable theatre credits include *My Night With Reg* at the Royal Court, *Die Fledermaus* at the Royal Opera House, *The Orton Diaries* at the Cottesloe, *The Alchemist* at the Lyric Hammersmith and *Waiting for Godot* at the Young Vic.

Sara Stockbridge

Sara

British-born actress Sara Stockbridge lived in Trinidad, Bahrain and Peru before finally settling in London, when she became fashion designer Vivienne Westwood's muse, sharing the catwalk with the likes of Naomi Campbell and Cindy Crawford.

Realising acting was her real passion, at twenty-five she swapped the catwalk for the screen, making her debut in The Comic Strip's *Space Virgins From Planet Sex* directed by Peter Richardson. Roles soon followed in *Rik Mayall Presents, Detectives* (which she co-wrote and starred in), *Eastenders*, *The Bill*, *A Young Person's Guide to Being a Rock Star*, *Lucy Sullivan Is Getting Married*, *Days Like These*, *2000 Acres of Sky* and *Tipping the Velvet*.

Feature film credits include, *Bridget Jones' Diary*, *Interview With a Vampire*, *Fierce Creatures*, *24 Hours in London*, *Best*, *Spider* and *Rag Tale*.

Jennifer Tilly

Jane

An actress who always attracts attention, Jennifer Tilly is funny, sexy, compassionate, and compelling - often all at once.

Her breakthrough movie role tapped into all of those qualities as she portrayed failing singer Blanche "Monica" Moran in Steve Kloves' *The Fabulous Baker Boys*, opposite Jeff and Beau Bridges.

A few years later, Jennifer earned an Academy Award nomination for her portrayal as the aspiring, but hopelessly untalented, actress Olive Neal in Woody Allen's *Bullets Over Broadway*.

She has become well-known to filmgoers for both major studio and independent films. In Tom Shadyac's blockbuster *Liar Liar*, she kept pace with star Jim Carrey. Her steamy performance opposite Gina Gershon helped make the Wachowski Brothers' *Bound* a breakout indie success at the Sundance Film Festival and then in theatrical release. The latter film also expanded Jennifer's already significant gay and lesbian following.

Her many films over a two-decade span include *High Spirits*, *The Doors*, *Made in America*, *The Getaway*, *Let It Ride*, *Relax, It's Just Sex*, *The Crew*, *Dancing at the Blue Iguana*, *The Cat's Meow*, *The Magnificent Ambersons*, *Hide and Seek*, *The Haunted Mansion*, *The Muse*, *St Ralph*, *Tideland* and the infamous *Bride of Chucky* and *Seed of Chucky*.

Jennifer is also well known for her vocal work and has voiced Celia in *Monster's Inc*, Grace in *Home on the Range*, and is a regular on the Fox series *Family Guy*.

Over the years, Jennifer has made memorable appearances on some of television's best series, including *Cheers*, *Moonlighting*, *It's Gary Shandling's Show* and *Frasier*. She had a recurring role on *Hill Street Blues*, and was a series regular on *Shaping Up* and *Key West*.

Jennifer has also continued to act on the stage. She won a Theater World Award for her performance in off-Broadway's *One Shoe Off* and appeared on Broadway in the 2001 revival of *The Women*.

Currently she is starring on the CBS sitcom *Out of Practice* opposite Henry Winkler and Stockard Channing.

In April 2005, Jennifer stunned the poker world when she beat out over 600 competitors to become the first celebrity ever in the history of the World Series of Poker to win a coveted gold bracelet, followed a few months later by a first place win at the WPT's Ladies Night Invitational.

Filmmaker Biographies

Mary McGuckian (Writer, Director, Producer)

Mary McGuckian trained and worked in theatre as an actor and playwright in Ireland before she set up her own company, Pembridge Productions, to develop and produce feature film projects. The company was active as a co-producer on many Irish feature films and also produced three pictures which she wrote and directed.

In 2001, along with her brother Garrett McGuckian, she established Pembridge Pictures in the UK to develop and finance a slate of pictures for a long-term production strategy by accessing UK tax-incentive based funding. The first of these to commence principal photography was her adaptation of *The Bridge Of San Luis Rey*, delivered in May 2004.

More recently, she has turned her interest and attention to the exploration of innovative film-making techniques aimed at integrating a more collaborative style of production in order to prioritize performance values with the aim of making contemporary drama more compelling to audiences.

Using a combination of modern script styles and extended character development work with collaborating actors who then improvise their own dialogue directly on set, the first film of her 'amorality' trilogy, *Rag Tale*, was conceived. Allied to the latest in digital photographic and post production technology, her process continues to redefine the conventional linear process into a much more integrated and collaborative style of film-making as many of the cast and crew of *Rag Tale* joined her on *Intervention*.

Filmography (Writer/Director/Producer)

Words Upon the Window Pane / 1994

Adapted from the one-act play by WB Yeats
With Geraldine Chaplin, Geraldine James, Ian Richardson, John Lynch & Jim Sheridan
Selected for Venice, Sundance, London, Tokyo
Handled by J&M Entertainment, now In-Motion

This is the Sea / 1996

Adapted from her own play, *Hazel*
With Richard Harris, Gabriel Byrne, Samantha Morton & John Lynch
Released UK by Alliance/Electric and US by First Look Pictures and Paramount
Handled by Overseas Film Group now First Look Pictures

Best / 1999

Co-written with husband and actor, John Lynch

With John Lynch , Ian Bannen, Jerome Flynn, Ian Hart, Patsy Kensit, Stephen Fry & Rodger Daltry

Released in the UK by Optimum Releasing and Sky Pictures

Handled by IAC Film now Indigo

The Bridge Of San Luis Rey / 2004

Adapted from the Pulitzer Prize winning novel by Thornton Wilder

With F Murray Abraham, Kathy Bates, Gabriel Byrne, Geraldine Chaplin, Robert De Niro, Harvey Keitel, John Lynch and Jim Sheridan

Handled by Senator International now Mandate Pictures

AMORALITY TRILOGY

Rag Tale / 2005

Story by Mary McGuckian and devised in collaboration with

Simon Callow, Lucy Davis, Kerry Fox, Rupert Graves, Ian Hart, David Hayman, Jennifer Jason Leigh, Cal MacAninch, Malcolm McDowell, Bill Patterson, John Sessions, Sara Stockbridge

Premiered at the Locarno Film Festival and in the UK at The Edinburgh Film Festival –

Handled by Arclight Films and distributed in the UK by Metrodome

Intervention / 2006

Story by Mary McGuckian and devised in collaboration with

Charles Dance, Donna D'Errico, Colm Feore, Rupert Graves, Gary Farmer, Kerry Fox, Ian Hart, Andie McDowell, Russell Means, Bill Patterson, John Sessions, Sara Stockbridge, Jennifer Tilly

Just completed

ART / 2007

In development

Jeff Abberley
Producer

Jeff Abberley is a Co-Founder of Scion Films, a company that has produced, co-produced and/or provided financial backing for some of the most creatively rewarding, critically acclaimed and commercially successful feature films of recent years.

As well as producing Rag Tale with Mary McGuckian, his recent credits include The Constant Gardener, Tristram Shandy – A Cock and Bull Story, Wah-Wah, The Bridge of San Luis Rey, and The Phantom of the Opera.

Martin Katz
Producer

Martin Katz is President and founder of Prospero Pictures, a Toronto-based film production and finance company specializing in international co-productions.

Martin has a twenty-year history in all aspects of media production and finance. His feature film credits include the Academy Award nominated *Hotel Rwanda*, David Cronenberg's award-winning *Spider* and Bronwen Hughes' *Stander*, which the London Observer called "the greatest heist film since *Reservoir Dogs*." Martin is currently in post-production on the new feature comedy, *It's a Boy-Girl Thing*, a co-production with Elton John's London-based Rocket Pictures.

An internet pioneer, Martin was employee number 3 at Microsoft's MSN Canada where, as Executive Producer, he created the first episodic "web-umentary." The web-based documentary entitled *Splice* examined the work of Marshall McLuhan in the context of a society in transition from an analogue to a digital world. He developed and produced innovative interactive programming in collaboration with Pulitzer Prize-winning author Carol Shields, celebrated director David Cronenberg and comedians Jean-Guy Moreau and Rick Mercer. He also created the first 3-D internet experience, a Halloween special based on the successful YTV kids' series, *Freaky Stories*.

Prior to founding Prospero Pictures, Martin was President and Chief Operating Officer of Grosvenor Park Film Financing Corporation, a structured finance company based in Toronto that raised nearly \$1 billion for film and television financing through tax-advantaged structures. Previously, Martin served as a Producer and Executive Producer at Alliance Atlantis. He has also served as Head of Business Affairs at CBC Television.

Martin has extensive experience in producing international treaty co-productions involving Canada, the United Kingdom, France, Luxembourg, Germany, Spain, New Zealand, Australia and South Africa and has produced movies, series and mini-series for numerous television networks, including CBC, CTV, Global, WIC, CityTv, CBS, Showtime, Nickelodeon, Comedy Central, M-Net and TVNZ.

Martin holds degrees in law from the Universities of Toronto and Paris. Fluently bilingual in English and French, Martin has served as professor of law at the University of Moncton and as Special Lecturer in Intellectual Property Law at the University of Toronto.

Steve Harrow
Co-Producer

Having worked in the film industry for over 30 years, for companies including Rank, United International Pictures, Walt Disney Film & Video Distribution and Polygram, Steve Harrow is now Managing Director of Steeple Post Production Services, a post-production consultancy which he founded in June 1998.

As well as handling post-production for Mary McGuckian's last three films - Best, The Bridge Of San Luis Rey and Rag Tale – his recent credits include The Dark, Separate Lies, I Love Huckabees, Vera Drake, 28 Days Later, 24 Hour Party People, Love Actually and Notting Hill. He is currently working on Danny Boyle's Sunshine.

Robert How
Co-Producer

Robert How's most recent credits as a line producer include Mary McGuckian's Rag Tale, Paul WS Anderson's The Dark, Dead Fish, John Henderson's Cabbages & Queens, Nicholas Nickleby, Danny Boyle's 28 Days Later, Michael Winterbottom's 24 Hour Party People, John Duigan's The Parole Officer, The Cup and Dockers.

As a location manager, How's credits include, Trainspotting, The Full Monty, Carla's Song, Ladybird, Ladybird and The Debt Collector.

Mark Wolf

Director of Photography

A BAFTA and Emmy Award-winning cinematographer, Mark Wolf received the Outstanding Cinematography for Non-Fiction Programming accolade and the BAFTA Best Photography Factual for his work on Blue Planet: Seas of Life and was Emmy-nominated in the News and Documentary category for his cinematography on Congo: Footprints in the Forest.

Wolf has traveled the globe and shot twenty-seven major documentaries spanning natural history, current affairs and history including Walking With Dinosaurs, Timewatch, Planet Earth, Blue Planet and How Do They Do That?

In addition to shooting music videos for Keane, Graham Coxon and The Charlatans, Wolf has also a host of feature film and TV drama credits to his name including, The Dark, Victims, On A Clear Day, Beneath the Skin, Distant Shores and Rag Tale.

Max Gottlieb

Production Designer

An accomplished production designer, Max Gottlieb's major feature film credits include Rag Tale, The Fully Monty, Still Crazy, Octane, Lucky Break, Martha Meet Frank, Daniel and Laurence, Shooting Fish, i-D, Shopping, The Turn of the Screw, Dear Rosie and Hardware, as well as the TV movies Bad Boyz for the BBC and Rules of Engagement for YTV.

Selected commercials credits in his extensive list include work for Carling, Olay, T-Mobile, Vodaphone, 02, Tango, McVities, Bacardi, McDonalds, as well as BBC i-dents, pop promos for Madonna and Garbage as well as numerous commissions from Propaganda, A&M, Fugitive and Wicked Films.

Sally O'Sullivan
Costume Designer

Fashion stylist Sally O'Sullivan began her career as assistant to the marketing director of Burlington Industries and she followed this by styling for a variety of internationally renowned companies including Comme des Garcons, Tatler, Elle, Image Magazine and Lund Lund.

She has worked with photographers Henrik Halversson, Peter Gehrke, Rankin, Kevin Mackintosh, Anti Wendell and Felix Laher amongst others. She has styled commercial campaigns including C & A, Volvo, Smirnoff, Moloko Iceberg and Ericsson.

Sally O'Sullivan was part of the team behind Rag Tale, and returns as Head of Department on INTERVENTION.

Nicky 'Misschief' Shaw
Original Music

An experienced musician and songwriter, Nicky Shaw has worked with artists including Eric Clapton, BB King and Nelly Furtado, and has written songs for Thunderbugs and Louise.

She has recently begun working in TV and Film, writing songs for the US TV show The Bold and the Beautiful, and writing her first feature film score for Mary McGuckian's Rag Tale in 2005. INTERVENTION is her second collaboration with Mary McGuckian.