



“300” is a ferocious retelling of the ancient Battle of Thermopylae in which King Leonidas (Gerard Butler) and 300 Spartans fought to the death against Xerxes and his massive Persian army. Facing insurmountable odds, their valor and sacrifice inspire all of Greece to unite against their Persian enemy, drawing a line in the sand for democracy.

Inspired by the work of graphic novelist Frank Miller, creator of “Sin City,” “300” is an epic adventure about passion, courage, freedom and sacrifice embodied by the Spartan warriors who fought one of the greatest battles in history. Co-written and directed by Zack Snyder (“Dawn of the Dead”), the film brings Miller’s acclaimed graphic novel to life by combining live action with virtual backgrounds that capture his distinct vision of this ancient historic tale.

Warner Bros. Pictures presents in association with Legendary Pictures and Virtual Studios, a Mark Canton / Gianni Nunnari Production, “300.” The film stars Gerard Butler (“Phantom of the Opera”), Lena Headey (“The Brothers Grimm”), David Wenham (“The Lord of the Rings” trilogy) and Dominic West (“The Forgotten”). The screenplay is written by Zack Snyder & Kurt Johnstad and Michael B. Gordon, based on the graphic novel by Frank Miller and Lynn Varley.

“300” is produced by Gianni Nunnari (“The Departed”), Mark Canton (“Land of the Dead”), Bernie Goldmann (“Land of the Dead”) and Jeffrey Silver (“Training Day”) with Deborah Snyder, Frank Miller, Craig J. Flores, Thomas Tull, William Fay and Benjamin Waisbren serving as executive producers.

Joining Snyder behind the scenes were director of photography Larry Fong, production designer James Bissell, editor William Hoy, costume designer Michael Wilkinson, and visual effects supervisor Chris Watts. The music is by Tyler Bates. Warner Bros Records is distributing the score soundtrack album, comprised entirely of Bates' music, with the film's March 9th theatrical release.

Concurrently with the film's debut in conventional theaters, "300: The IMAX Experience" will be released in IMAX® theatres worldwide. This film has been digitally re-mastered into The IMAX Experience® with proprietary IMAX DMR® (Digital Re-mastering) technology. *300: The IMAX Experience* marks the thirteenth IMAX film with Warner Bros. Pictures to date. IMAX theatres will allow audiences to experience the Spartans' fight for freedom and glory on some of the world's largest screens, surrounded by state-of-the-art digital surround sound. IMAX®, IMAX® 3D, IMAX DMR®, IMAX MPX®, and The IMAX Experience® are trademarks of IMAX Corporation. More information on the Company can be found at [www.imax.com](http://www.imax.com).

"300" is distributed worldwide by Warner Bros. Pictures, a Warner Bros. Entertainment Company. This film has been rated "R" for "graphic battle sequences throughout, some sexuality and nudity."

[www.300themovie.com](http://www.300themovie.com)

### **HERE WE FIGHT: BRINGING THE GRAPHIC NOVEL TO LIFE**

Mysterious. Fierce. Formidable. Spartans are among the most enigmatic cultures in history. Taught never to retreat, never to surrender, they are the perfect warriors. "The Spartans remain a mystery to everybody," says Frank Miller, who wrote the graphic novel *300* which inspired the film. "They are arguably unique in that they are completely a battle culture, absolutely dedicated to warfare. They have a code of honor on what it means to be Spartan, and out of that arises a heroic class like the world has never seen before."

Co-writer/director Zack Snyder adds, "Spartans live for battle. They love it," he says. "They fight as one, creating a phalanx in which each warrior's shield protects the man beside him. It's an awesome and intimidating sight, even for the masses of Persians. Though the Spartans face insurmountable odds in terms of numbers, a true Spartan warrior is always willing to die for freedom—they consider it a 'beautiful death.' They define themselves by sacrifice and freedom."

Frank Miller first encountered the Spartans when he saw the film "The 300 Spartans" as a kid. He remembers, "I was quite shaken and inspired by it because it taught me that heroes

aren't the people who necessarily get a medal at the end of the story, that heroes are people who do what is right because it *is* right, even making the ultimate sacrifice to do it. All my life I wanted to tell this story because it's the best story I've ever encountered. And, eventually, I gained the skills as a cartoonist, such that I thought I could finally handle it."

To illustrate *300*, Miller synthesized his substantial research—which took him to the cliffs of Thermopylae itself—with the trademark style he brought to such legendary graphic works as *Sin City* and *The Dark Knight Returns*. He pared down the Spartans' uniform (roughly half his body weight in uniform and weapons) down to its most essential and symbolic features and peppered the story of the historic 480 B.C. battle of Thermopylae with elements of prior and subsequent clashes between Xerxes and the Greeks.

"Frank took an actual event and turned it into mythology, as opposed to taking a mythological event and turning it into reality," says Snyder, who blended Miller's bold vision with his own to make the feature film. "That's the refreshing thing about it. He wanted to get at the essence, as opposed to the reality, of what a Spartan is. If you go to Thermopylae, the statue of Leonidas is a nude; he's got a shield and spear and a helmet and that's it. Frank went to Thermopylae and I'm sure he saw that and went, 'Okay, this is how we have to do it.'"

Walking through the underbrush of Thermopylae had a profound effect on Miller. "It's a place where great and glorious things happened," he describes. "We are talking about the crucible, the epicenter of the battle for everything that we have, for everything that is Western civilization. There's a reason why we are as free as we are, and a lot of it begins with the story of 300 young men holding a very narrow pass long enough to inspire the rest of Greece."

*300* became a best seller and won Miller numerous industry awards. "The story sold itself," he comments. "I just did my best to do justice to a great moment in history. It was very important to streamline the appearance of characters to make them more dynamic and to lose the sense of this being an old story. It's not an old story; it's an *eternal* story."

The book gained a legion of fans, counting among them the co-writer/director and producers of the feature film. "The beautiful thing about Frank's book, and about any of Frank's work, is the prose that goes along with his drawings," notes Snyder. "It is not just an illustration; there is this poetry. The way that he structures the prose is as important as the drawings to me. I wanted to think of a way to preserve and honor his prose, as well as his imagery in the film."

Five years ago, producer Gianni Nunnari and Snyder were discussing future projects on which to collaborate when Snyder noticed Nunnari's copy of the graphic novel on his desk. Nunnari championed the project solo for several years. He was able to reach out to convince producer Mark Canton to get involved with him and develop the project in earnest with Snyder as director and co-writer.

"*300* is an incredible work and Zack came to this project with such love for the material itself," Canton enthuses. "He also brought such an extraordinary vision for what it could be as a film that we became tremendously excited about the possibilities."

Nunnari adds, "The property itself just opened his imagination. He saw every ingredient clearly – from the visualization of the fighting to the characters themselves. We knew that what he wanted to make would be a seminal film."

"Gianni's persistence and Mark's dedication to this project convinced me," recalls Miller. "First Gianni, then Mark, were so determined and so believed in the story that they won me over. Zack really wanted to make this movie. He's really charming and was so completely focused on this project that it was very difficult to say no...so I didn't."

Snyder found his process in conceiving the feature film similar to what Miller had experienced. He wanted to eschew the precepts of realistic filmmaking and instead find a way to "make it live on screen," he explains. "I didn't want to make a film that looks like a photograph but, rather, to put you inside the world Frank created in the graphic novel. This is not an historical drama. It's not a linear story. Nor is it meant to be entirely historically accurate. Our goal was to create a true experience unlike anything you've ever seen before."

A core team of filmmakers coalesced around "*300*" from the moment it crystallized. Producers Canton, Nunnari and Bernie Goldmann were all captivated by the story. "Zack was so specific about how he wanted this film to look and feel," comments Goldmann, "and as the project began to take shape, there was great satisfaction in knowing that Zack would be bringing this story to life in a way that audiences have never seen before."

Snyder, in the interim, made his directorial debut with "*Dawn of the Dead*" and then immediately returned to the project, working on the adaptation with his writing partner Kurt Johnstad, infusing the story with additions that sprang naturally from the clarity of Miller's original vision (Michael B. Gordon had written a previous draft of the screenplay). Producer

Jeffrey Silver joined the team to work closely with the physical production and visual effects aspects of the production.

“From the start, everyone on this film, from the studio to the producers, executive producers, the cast and production team, was incredibly supportive of what I wanted to do with ‘300,’” says Snyder. “They all grasped the vision so well and were such tremendous collaborators that it has been a truly extraordinary experience.”

Snyder’s decision to make the graphic novel had groundbreaking implications for the film’s look. “The look development was a big part of the process,” Snyder continues. “You go to the movies because you want an experience that’s different. That’s what we tried to do with ‘300.’ Whether it was landscapes or battles or action or architecture, every frame in the movie is like a visual effect.”

Snyder initially storyboarded the film himself, and ultimately, he and his producing partner and wife, executive producer Deborah Snyder, and associate producer Wesley Collier put together a development package to express the director’s vision for the film.

The presence of Frank Miller, who also served as an executive producer on the movie, might have proved intimidating to the director, but Goldmann counters, “Frank was so nice and so helpful. Whenever Zack sought his input or approval, he would say, ‘Keep going, it’s great. I love what you’re doing.’ He embraced the movie and all the people involved in making it.”

A series of tests was conducted on every aspect of the film, from lighting and costumes to the texture of the sets. One of the elements that the filmmakers wanted to explore was the photographic look of the film. Snyder had the idea of manipulating the color balance to create a process that was ultimately nicknamed “the crush.” “Zack developed a recipe where you’d crush the black content of the image and enhance the color saturation to change the contrast ratio of the film,” Jeffrey Silver explains. “Every image in this film went through a post-image processing. The crush is what gives this film its distinct look and feel.”

“I don’t want anyone to say, ‘Oh, that looks like Greece or that looks like Canada,’” explains Snyder. “I want them to be, from beginning to end, inside of this experience.”

“We were all in awe of the scope of what Zack wanted to do with this multi-layered effects process,” Canton adds.

“The evolution of what was filmed, from the set to the final product, brings this story into another realm,” says Nunnari.

Gerard Butler, who stars as King Leonidas, states, “It’s almost like somebody who was there and witnessed the battle went to sleep and dreamed the whole thing again because a lot of it is very representational...a lot of it exists in the imagination, so it allows us to take it so much further. It’s an incredible story, which has been an inspiration to so many people throughout history, but it’s not a documentary. It is a fantastic story full of passion and politics and brutality and so many more things, existing in this hyper-real, beautiful, emotional world.”

### **...HERE BY SPARTAN LAW WE LIE: THE STORY OF “300”**

Gerard Butler became aware of the project during a meeting with Warner Bros. executives. “They said the word ‘300’ and I knew that there was something fresh and different about it,” he recalls, adding, “When I met with Zack Snyder, I knew this is a guy who understands the things you can’t explain about this story and what it would require. I could write six volumes about him and his talent, his intelligence, his passion, and his goodness as a person.”

Jeffrey Silver notes that Butler had qualities that made him perfect for the role of the Spartan king: “His charisma as a person and leadership qualities set a tone of camaraderie among the actors. He brought this team of Spartan actors together.”

Butler relished the opportunity to dive into research on this formidable culture. “Spartans are shown nothing but pain their whole lives to teach them endurance, to teach them fearlessness and to teach them to have no mercy against their opponents,” he says. “Everything about it requires a steeliness and a strength of character, from the way the men are trained to the way the women must surrender their children in the name of warfare.”

Screenwriter Kurt Johnstad adds, “There is fierce competition. This code of honor and duty and loyalty is beaten into them, and then it just evolves into what they do every day. It’s how they breathe...how they act and interact.”

A feared and revered military king of the Greek city-state of Sparta, Leonidas rules with the guidance and support of his queen, Gorgo. “Gorgo is, by all accounts, brilliant,” says Miller. “She and Leonidas watch each other’s backs and she is a great contributor to his strategic thinking. There is a great depth of emotion and intellectual partnership between them. Spartan

women are Spartan warriors just like the men. They send the men out first, but you'll see in the movie that the women can play pretty tough, too."

Born in the rugged north of England, Lena Headey possessed an innate strength and grace that proved essential to the role of Gorgo. "Lena is so tough and down to earth and strong. And she's beautiful, with such wisdom in her eyes," says Butler. "Lena brought incredible charisma, intelligence and fire to Gorgo."

Calling the film "a story of honor, fearlessness, passion, blood and faith," Headey was ready to portray the Spartan Queen. Gorgo is not a prominent figure in Miller's tale, so Headey had freedom in crafting the character, guided by her conversations with Snyder. "She's a really strong character in the movie, just because of everything she goes through and is prepared to sacrifice," Headey remarks. "She has already lost her husband, but to admit that would be too much, so she fights, with her heart, in the political arena. I see Gorgo as the heart and instinct of Sparta, and instinct usually guides us through to the right decision."

All that Leonidas is, as a king and as a man, is brought to bear when a messenger rides into town with a warning that the army of a thousand conquered nations is, even then, marching towards Sparta. Xerxes, played by Rodrigo Santoro, has brought the ancient world to its knees mostly through sheer audacity. "He's rich, he's arrogant, he's a very unstable megalomaniac," describes the Brazilian actor who portrays the self-proclaimed God-King. "He just wants to conquer the world. His ambition is unlimited. He wants glory; he wants victory; he wants eternal fame. Underneath all that wanting, though, he's ultimately weak and very insecure."

Santoro first met with the director as a potential Spartan, but after he left, "I said 'I think Rodrigo could be Xerxes,'" recalls Snyder.

A towering, enigmatic figure covered with exotic jewels, Xerxes is carried on a golden throne by crouching slaves. "He has a voice that is smooth and seductive and everything that a God-King should be," says Bernie Goldmann. "You see that people would follow him...that he would seduce as well as conquer."

Leonidas shows the Persians what he thinks of their threat by literally killing the messengers. But the politicians of Sparta do not want to fight. Theron, played by Dominic West, represents a new kind of Spartan, more interested in negotiating for power than fighting for freedom. "Theron is not an honest politician by any means, and his duality first manifests

itself in his being a treacherous appeaser of the Persians,” says West. “He’s the politician, not the warrior. It’s always good to play a villain; they usually get the best lines,” the actor smiles.

The Spartan Council sends Leonidas to consult the Oracle—a young woman corralled by Ephors, ancient men who interpret her signs. “Leonidas, through a gigantic leap of imagination, understands exactly what Persia is up to and knows how to stop them,” says Frank Miller. “But he has all the odds against him. The council doesn’t want to have the battle for their own reasons, so they use the Carneia celebration of the moon as an excuse not to go to war.”

Leonidas would sooner die fighting than kneel before any conqueror, but if he is to take Xerxes on, it will have to be without the Spartan army behind him. “Leonidas is probably the most decisive character I have ever played, but when he has a moment of indecision, when he needs assurance that he’s right, he looks each time to his wife,” says Butler. “And she explains so eloquently why he has to go to war, which is, ‘Go and die. I’ll never see you again, but you’ll do this as a free man. Don’t answer this question as a king or as a Spartan citizen but as a free man.’ That really is the essence of the Spartan woman.”

Though she is not at the Hot Gates with Leonidas, Queen Gorgo must also face a battle on their home ground. Gorgo’s sacrifice for Sparta and its future king, her son, is equal to that of Leonidas. “Gorgo is as much a warrior as Leonidas. She must rally her city and her country to her King’s aid,” affirms Johnstad, “while also fending off the political maneuverings of Theron.”

Deborah Snyder adds, “She gives herself, but, to her, it is nothing compared to what’s at risk. It means nothing because the stakes are so high.”

Gorgo’s words are the perfect challenge to a Spartan warrior. “His nation has been asked to do the one thing they don’t do, which is to submit to another ruler,” Butler avows. “There’s a time to stand back and resist, and then there’s a time to take action. He understands like nobody else the relevance of this mission. It isn’t just a mission to save Sparta—this is his moment to show the world, not just Xerxes, for all the centuries yet to be, just what Spartans are made of.”

An all-volunteer personal guard, made up of 300 of the most skilled and courageous Spartan warriors, coalesces around Leonidas. He cannot declare war, but he can give Xerxes a shock. When Sparta decides to fight, there’s no holding back. “These are insurmountable odds he’s facing, but perfect for a Spartan king,” states Butler. “So he takes his elite force to Thermopylae to make a stand.”



Dilios, a Spartan warrior and storyteller in the graphic novel, is played by David Wenham, an Australian actor whose popularity increased dramatically in North America when audiences were introduced to him in “The Lord of the Rings” trilogy.

The character of Dilios solved for Snyder the puzzle of how to bring Miller’s unique voice as a storyteller into the film. “We hit on the idea of having a narrator tell the story, which allows Frank’s fantastic world to come to life,” Snyder offers. “That was really important when it came to weaving Dilios’s story through the movie—how awesome it is to have this storyteller that can render Frank’s prose in the picture.”

“I love telling stories, so to have the opportunity to be a storyteller is a gift,” comments Wenham. “Dilios spends a lot of time entertaining the troops when there’s down time, telling stories about the first Olympics or other tales. He is also probably one of Leonidas’s best friends, and a great warrior who is highly respected among the men.”

The film unfolds with Dilios as a guide; his version of events thus becomes the narrative that future generations will pass along. “Dilios is a guy who knows how not to ruin a good story with the truth, necessarily,” says Snyder. “He’s going to make it bigger where it needs to be bigger, and do whatever it takes to motivate and excite the Spartans. His voice provides the poetic flux of the movie.”

The core trio leading the 300 Spartans is Leonidas, Dilios and an enigmatic warrior called the Captain, played by Vincent Regan. “The Captain is probably one of the most intense of the all the 300 Spartans, along with Leonidas,” says Regan. “Historically, he would have been one of the three captains of the bodyguards of the king.”

The Captain brings with him to battle his eldest son, Astinos, played by Tom Wisdom. “In a way, The Captain makes a great sacrifice in bringing his eldest son with him on the expedition because it’s seen as a suicide mission,” Regan asserts. “After all, there are only 300 Spartans against a million soldiers of the Persian Empire. But he is extremely faithful to his king and his city, and he’s prepared to sacrifice all that he has—his own life and also his son’s life—for the ideal of freedom for his city and king, who is also a close friend.”

The role of Astinos marks Wisdom’s feature film debut, a detail that might have played in his favor. “I suppose one reason I was cast is because I share similar characteristics with Astinos, who is a novice in battle,” he says.

Astinos and another soldier, Stelios, played by Michael Fassbender, represent the enthusiasm of the young Spartan warriors. “Stelios is very spontaneous and very passionate,” says Fassbender. “He sees this as his chance to prove himself on the battlefield and die the glorious death that he craves in order to fulfill his destiny as a Spartan warrior.”

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In Xerxes’s army, the Spartans have finally come up against a worthy adversary. Xerxes has willed into being an exotic and extraordinary force comprised of physical oddities, brute strength, wild African animals, magic practitioners, and his elite guard, called the Immortals. “The Immortals are his special force,” says Santoro. “They are very skilled, scary, fierce-looking masked warriors. They are his finest men.”

“Leonidas is the opposite of Xerxes, who sits up in his high tower, who bribes, who seduces, who kills his men to achieve victory,” Butler remarks. “There’s a great line when Xerxes says, ‘How can you ever stand against me when I would gladly kill any one of my men for victory?’ And Leonidas says, ‘And I would die for any one of mine.’ That, to me, is the essence of Leonidas.”

Leonidas’s plan is to use the geography of Greece itself against the Persians, leading his 300 to the Hot Gates of Thermopylae—a narrow corridor between towering cliffs of the Aegean, which the Persians will have to pass. This natural structure provides the 300 Spartans with a much-needed strategic advantage. But it is not invulnerable, as Leonidas learns from a terribly deformed onlooker, Ephialtes, who tells him of a hidden goat path behind the rocks. Played by Andrew Tiernan, Ephialtes is described by Deborah Snyder as “a sad character. He was outcast from Sparta at birth but all he wants is to be a Spartan.”

As soon as the horizon darkens with the awesome sight of Xerxes’s forces, the battle is on. “The story of the 300 Spartans is about more than just a battle,” says Miller. “Leonidas knows these 300 men can’t defeat the Persian army. ‘300’ is about fighting, knowing you can’t win. The act itself holds more power than the sum of the 300 warriors’ spears. These people, these men at the Hot Gates, are ready to die. In fact, Leonidas intends for them to die. He knows there’s no chance of survival. He clearly doesn’t care, because he knows something will be achieved. I regard the Spartans as the victors of Hot Gates. You can win by losing.”

## **...THEN WE SHALL FIGHT IN THE SHADE: BECOMING SPARTANS**

The entire core cast plunged into research on Spartan history and culture to intellectually prepare for their roles. But Snyder wanted them also to look believable and to mesh together as the kind of fighting machine the Spartan guard represents. To physically prepare them for the rigors of the demanding fight sequences, Snyder enlisted the expertise of two people with whom he had trained over the years: Mark Twight, a former world record-holding professional mountain climber, to train the actors and stuntmen in physical fitness conditioning; and veteran stunt coordinator Damon Caro, to prepare them for the fight sequences.

With a background training special operations military personnel, cage fighters, firemen, paramedics, and mountain climbers, Twight's approach included a strict dietary plan combined with a punishing regimen of physical activity. "It's the equivalent of a sprint—it's short duration, super high intensity with a nutritional program to support that effort," outlines Twight.

For eight weeks prior to the start of production, Twight challenged the men to go beyond their normal limits. To support fight preparation the training emphasized athleticism by combining compound movements, lifting, and throwing. Primitive tools – medicine balls, Kettlebells, rings – were used instead of machines. Each session was competitive, with a penalty-reward system tied to performance and results posted daily for all to see. "By sharing hardship together over a period of time, with team interplay where they compete against each other, they come out as a fighting force that is believable on the screen. It changes the way they move and how they behave as a unit," Twight offers.

Some of the men needed to lose weight, and some needed to put weight on, so everyone was put on a specific diet. Fassbender was one of the lucky ones. "I was lucky enough not to have to knuckle down to the cottage cheese and grape diet," he says, "in that it was in the interests of my character that I added a few pounds."

Vincent Regan underwent perhaps the most startling transformation. "Mark sent me a training DVD and I thought, 'I can't do that; I just cannot do that.'" Nevertheless, with the help of a trainer, soon he was running up steep hills and boxing, among other activities. Having everyone train together helped considerably. "Because all the actors were in it together, there was a sense that we were trying to reach one goal," Regan remembers.

With a group of ten actors, as well as stuntmen from Los Angeles, Vancouver, Toronto and Montreal, Damon Caro and assistant coordinator Chad Stahelski began a parallel regime, coordinated with Twilight's physical fitness sessions. "It was a tremendous help as far as injury prevention, stamina, and overall focus," says Caro. "With fight choreography, you only have a certain amount of time for physical training because it sometimes doesn't mesh with the functional application. What Mark brought to the project was functional strength, not just sculpted biceps or ripped abs."

Caro and Stahelski choreographed the impressive sword and formation fight sequences. Jeffrey Silver notes that Snyder wanted the fight sequences to have a very distinctive style. "When Zack talked initially about the concept for the fighting, he said, 'Look, I don't want all that long lens mayhem. I want it to be like ballet.' He wanted every action in the fight to be carefully choreographed employing aspects of martial arts."

In keeping with the director's vision, Caro, who is a martial arts expert, was able to integrate moves from various martial arts disciplines into his fight choreography.

Caro and Stahelski's attention to detail made it easy for the actors to achieve the desired goal. "Damon and Chad are so incredibly talented," says Butler. "Everybody learned and improved together until we became one single impenetrable unit. The action in the film is mind-blowing, and that is largely due to the two of them."

"They basically trained us from scratch," adds David Wenham. "They taught us how to fight and they drilled us every day. So it wasn't a matter of just learning moves; it became instinctual."

There were eight weeks of fight training preceding production, and the training then continued throughout filming up to the days when each sequence would be shot. The constant training and rehearsing paid off. "When we actually got to the action, the guys performed brilliantly," Caro affirms. "There are many fight scenes involving complex choreography, and after all those weeks working and training together, there was just a telepathic vibe among the actors and stuntmen."

In fact, the total commitment from both the trainers and the actors resulted in the action sequences being the most efficiently shot. "You might think the fight scenes would take longer, but every move was so purposely and precisely laid out that those were the days we wrapped early," Silver attests.

## **THIS IS SPARTA: ROLLING CAMERAS AND TELECINES**

To help realize his epic action drama on the screen, Zack Snyder assembled a diverse team of collaborators, including cinematographer Larry Fong, Oscar-nominated production designer James Bissell (“Good Night, and Good Luck”), editor William Hoy, costume designer Michael Wilkinson, visual effects supervisor Chris Watts, and make-up and creature effects supervisors Shaun Smith and Mark Rappaport. For Bissell, “300” required a bold new approach to the design of the production because of the virtual nature of the sets and his faithful adherence to the visual style established by Miller’s graphic novel. “It was more operatic than realistic,” he acknowledges.

Using Zack Snyder’s thumbnail storyboards as a departure point, Bissell and his team created 3-D environments and concept illustrations of Sparta, the Greek terrain and Thermopylae, site of the epic battle. Snyder, Bissell and Watts then reviewed the illustrations Bissell recalls: “We asked: ‘Are the actors walking uphill? Downhill? Where do they cast shadows? How little of this do we have to build?’”

Terrain sets were abstracted so that they could be used for different scenes by changing camera angles or adding elements. In this way, Leonidas and his army of 300 marched across Greece using only three constructed sets. Sets for Sparta, the Hot Gates, and Xerxes’s tent were also built on stage. “The Persian messengers galloping toward camera is the only scene that we shot outdoors,” says Bissell.

“The awesome thing about Jim is that he was never daunted by any of it,” marvels Snyder. “In a lot of ways I think he was excited by the prospect of not being limited to what you could build, but just what you could imagine.”

Each scene was conceived with a fully designed 3D environment, then rendered in color with key frame illustrations. When that was complete, Bissell was able to better assess what he had to build and adjust accordingly.

Chris Watts worked closely with Bissell and Snyder to ensure that the creative and technical details were supportive of the overall vision. “With 1300 visual effects shots, there is no shortage of technical issues,” Watts explains. “But the primary challenge of ‘300’ was creative: All of those visual effects shots need to be constructed to reflect the style and aesthetic

of the graphic novel, while accommodating Zack's vision for the parts of the film that don't appear in the book.”

Because nearly every set and location was enhanced with visual effects, the art and visual effects departments also had to ensure that the design and technical elements worked well together. Watts gives a simplified description of the process: “Jim designed all the sets with the visual effects in mind. All through prep, VFX artists would digitally augment Jim’s set designs to give Zack an accurate picture of what he could expect as a final result. If there was a problem that we couldn’t solve with the existing sets, then they designed or tweaked something else to make it work.”

As part of the visual development of the film, Watts and his team tested virtually everything that would be seen in the film: the look of fire, the Spartan capes, wounds, weapons, CG blood versus real blood. “Just about everything, even details that one might take for granted, were painstakingly developed over the course of many months,” Watts continues. “When we agreed on a something that worked, the details would be published in a ‘style guide’ that was distributed to the film's vendors. We had ten visual effects vendors on four countries, so continuity of style was always an issue”

The visual effects department also collaborated with cinematographer Larry Fong. “The graphic novel definitely influenced our look but that was only one of my challenges,” he says. “My goal was to maximize mood and drama but I still needed to keep the VFX department happy with clean mattes and good exposure detail to allow 'the crush' later on down the line.”

In photographing the film, Fong had to decide how to interpret Frank Miller’s book in three dimensions. “Translating that through lighting and composition was sometimes tricky but great fun,” he describes. “There were times when we went for a very close match to specific frames in the book, which Zack called 'Frank frames'. But obviously not every shot in the film matches a drawing, so we did have room to experiment and develop a visual style of our own. Very often I'd say it was a visceral thing more than a technical exercise.”

Costume designer Michael Wilkinson also wanted to remain true to the graphic nature of Miller’s drawings. In creating the costumes for the film, he maintained “the strength of line, bold silhouettes and strong drapery of the graphic novel, and used fabrics that had great texture, that the camera would love, and had a sense of life to them,” Wilkinson expounds.

Wilkinson and his team scoured the world to find inspiration and the fabric to bring the designs to life. The linen for the Spartan capes they found in Russia, chosen for its beautiful texture and the dynamic way that it flowed in the action sequences. The fabric then underwent extensive testing with various dyes until the exact Spartan red was achieved. The team then put the capes through a process of “distressing” to convey the wear and tear as the soldiers go through the battles. “We looked at the book and discovered that towards the end of the novel, Frank had drawn the capes bleached and shredded,” he recalls. “So, we distressed our capes by creeping bleach, dye and paint onto them to make them look like they had gone through heavy warfare.”

His choice also helped illustrate the psychological toll that the battles had taken on the Spartans. “Their spirits are broken and worn down by the pummeling they get in each different battle,” he offers. “So, the worn look of the costumes is also a metaphor for the life starting to bleed out of the characters.”

To differentiate between the Spartan and Persian armies, the Spartan army was dressed in rich, warm earth tones, while the Persian army flashes peacock colors, exotic greens, blues and purples with gold. Wilkinson explains, “The costumes of the Greek warriors accentuate their highly refined physiques – as though their bodies are their armor – while, contrary to that, the Persian army is covered in exotic cloths, and the silhouettes are exaggerated to give the impression, to Greek eyes, of a mysterious, unknown monster approaching.”

The costumes for the Persian army drew inspiration from a variety of sources. “We figured that by the time Xerxes marched from his home to Greece, he would have come in contact with lots of different races,” says Wilkinson. “So, for each of the different Persian tribes, we had different influences, ranging from Africa to Egypt to Russia to Armenia to Japan to China, and everything in between.”

Xerxes’s elaborate costume—made almost entirely of metal rather than cloth—is based on Miller’s frame from the book. “Frank’s drawing of Xerxes is one of my favorite images from the graphic novel,” the costume designer says. “I loved its audacity, and was inspired by Frank’s preference for visual impact over historical authenticity.”

Wilkinson’s design for Xerxes is definitely the most complex costume in the film. “The costume consists of 18 different jewelry pieces, each using dozens of African and Middle-Eastern beads and jewelry motifs, plus 12 piercings that we created especially for the character.”

Utilizing heavy leathers, bronze materials, feathers, horsehair, fiberglass and plastic resins, Wilkinson and his team of 60 costumers created all of the armor, jewelry and helmets to outfit the Spartans and the Persians. Many of the costume pieces also had to be done in multiples. For example, there were five Spartan capes for each of the main actors and 17 duplicates of the distinctive plumed helmets worn by King Leonidas.

The appearance of the characters—human and otherwise—also involved the make-up effects team, headed by Shaun Smith and Mark Rappaport. They were responsible for creating the look for Ephialtes, the Immortals, the Executioner and varied characters in Xerxes’s tent, as well as the wolf young Leonidas faces and even some horses. They were also charged with creating the dramatic “Wall of the Dead,” which the Spartans build using the bodies of vanquished Persians as mortar. The make-up and effects teams utilized a rig with hydraulics to allow the Spartans to turn the wall into an effective weapon. The make-up team also had the responsibility of creating characters that do not appear in Miller’s work.

Nevertheless, Snyder, the producers and everyone involved in the production were passionate about staying true to the vision expressed in Miller’s work. Nunnari states, “Working together, everyone became part of this fantastic team and we all enjoyed the process of making this movie on every level.”

Canton agrees. “From the inception of the storyboards from Frank’s book to the shooting of the film and post-production, ‘300’ has been a tremendously exciting journey for all of us.”



## **PREPARE FOR GLORY: THE MUSIC OF “300”**

Co-writer/Director Snyder engaged Tyler Bates, his collaborator on “Dawn of the Dead,” to write and produce the score.

Snyder asked Bates to develop a compelling overall sound that would heighten the audience's emotional reaction to the Spartans’ heroism and sacrifice. To do that, Bates created a sweeping orchestral and choral soundscape, recorded at the Beatles’ famed Abbey Road Studios, that embraced a tonal palette unusual for studio films. Iranian-born singer Azam Ali - whose haunting, exotic vocals have also graced various television and film soundtracks, including, most recently, “The Nativity Story” - supplies the voice of Sparta and the Persian threat.

“My intent was to stay true to the inspiration of the film and that of the Spartans’ freedom and will,” Bates says. “The greatest challenge was to bead a musical thread throughout the film’s ever-changing landscape of visual art, while sustaining its epic and emotional qualities. I had to approach it in a style as inventive as the film itself.”

Snyder has nothing but praise for Tyler’s score. “It moves the film into mythology,” he says, “cauterizing the images as you view them, making them something they could never be alone.”

Snyder concludes, “There were a lot of challenges in bringing this work to the screen, but no one involved even once blinked at anything that was asked of them. From the cast to the producers and everyone working behind the scenes—they were always there for me and for the film, physically, emotionally and creatively. The movie wouldn’t look like it does without them. They were all amazing.”

# # #

## **ABOUT THE CAST**

**GERARD BUTLER** (Leonidas) has distinguished himself as a leading man on the stage and screen in both the United States and Great Britain.

He next stars in the dramatic thriller “Butterfly on a Wheel,” about a kidnapping that destroys a once-happy family. Due out in late summer 2007, the film also stars Pierce Brosnan and Maria Bello under the direction of Mike Barker. Butler recently wrapped production on the romantic drama “P.S. I Love You,” directed by Richard LaGravenese and starring Hilary Swank as a young widow whose late husband left behind a series of letters to help her cope with his loss and get on with her life.

In 2004, Butler won the coveted title role in the film version of Andrew Lloyd Webber’s “The Phantom of the Opera.” He also earned critical acclaim for his work opposite Emily Mortimer in the independent feature “Dear Frankie,” which screened at the 2004 Cannes Film Festival. Butler’s other recent film credits include “Beowulf & Grendel,” “The Game of Their Lives,” “Timeline,” “Lara Croft Tomb Raider: The Cradle of Life” and “Reign of Fire.”

Born in Scotland, Butler made his stage debut at the age of 12 in the musical “Oliver,” at Glasgow’s famous Kings Theatre. As a young man, his dreams of acting were deterred and he went on to study law for seven years before returning to the stage in London. In 1996, he landed the lead role in the acclaimed stage production of “Trainspotting.” He later starred on the London stage in such plays as “Snatch” and the Donmar Warehouse production of Tennessee Williams’ “Suddenly Last Summer,” opposite Rachel Weisz.

In 1997, Butler made his feature film debut in John Madden’s award-winning drama “Her Majesty, Mrs. Brown,” starring Judi Dench. His early film work also includes “Fast Food,” “One More Kiss,” the 1999 screen adaptation of Chekhov’s “The Cherry Orchard,” and “Harrison’s Flowers.”

**LENA HEADEY** (Queen Gorgo) will next play the title role in the Fox Network television pilot “The Sarah Connor Chronicles,” which continues the saga of “The Terminator” movies, with Headey taking over the part made famous by Linda Hamilton.

Headey has also just wrapped production on the psychological horror film “The Brøken,” directed by Sean Ellis, in which she stars as a woman whose life is thrown into turmoil when she sees her exact double on the streets of London. Her upcoming films also include “The Red Baron,” in which she stars as the love interest of Germany’s famed World War I flying ace, Baron Von Richthofen, played by Matthias Schweighöfer, with Joseph Fiennes also starring. She also stars in the action drama “The Shooter,” with Wesley Snipes, and she is attached to the biopic “Vivaldi,” which will reunite her with Joseph Fiennes, who is set to play the title role of the legendary composer.

In 2006, Headey showcased her talents in three different features: the horror thriller “The Cave”; the fantasy adventure “The Brothers Grimm,” in which she starred with Matt Damon and Heath Ledger; and the British romantic comedy “Imagine Me & You,” with Piper Perabo and Matthew Goode.

Headey made her feature film debut in 1992’s “Waterland,” playing the younger version of Jeremy Irons’ wife. She was also seen that year in the BBC television movie “The Summer House.” In 1993, Headey appeared in the period drama “Century” and the award-winning Merchant-Ivory film “The Remains of the Day.”

Her first leading role came in the live-action version of Rudyard Kipling’s “The Jungle Book,” and she continued to star in such independent films as “Mrs. Dalloway,” “Face,” “Onegin,” “Gossip,” “Possession,” “Ripley’s Game” and “The Actors.”

On television, Headey has starred in a wide range of longform projects all over the world. Her credits include the BAFTA-nominated “The Long Firm,” HBO’s “The Gathering Storm,” “Merlin,” “Loved Up” and “Band of Gold.”

**DAVID WENHAM** (Dilios) was already an award-winning star in his native Australia when he garnered international attention for his work in such acclaimed features as Baz Luhrmann’s “Moulin Rouge!,” with Nicole Kidman, and the last two installments in Peter Jackson’s blockbuster “The Lord of the Rings” trilogy, “The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers” and “The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King.” For his work in the latter, Wenham shared in the Screen Actors Guild Award, Broadcast Film Critics Award and National Board of Review Award in the category of Best Ensemble. He more recently co-starred with Hugh Jackman in the horror thriller “Van Helsing.” Wenham next begins production on the epic

drama “Australia,” which reunites him with director Baz Luhrmann and co-stars Nicole Kidman and Hugh Jackman.

Wenham attended the University of Western Australia before starting his career with small roles on television. He first gained attention for his memorable turn as an embittered ex-convict in the stage play “The Boys,” and for his role as a pyromaniac in both the stage and screen versions of “Cosi.”

In 1997, Wenham starred in the miniseries “Babies,” for which he won his first Australian Film Institute (AFI) Award. The following year, he earned dual AFI Award nominations, one for his recurring role in the series “SeaChange,” for which he also won a Logie Award, and another for his performance in the screen adaptation of “The Boys,” for which he also received a Film Critics Circle of Australia (FCCA) Award nomination. Wenham has since won AFI, FCCA and Australian Comedy Awards for his role in the film “Gettin’ Square”; garnered AFI Award and FCCA Award nominations for the films “Better than Sex” and “The Bank”; and received an AFI Award nomination for “Molokai: The Story of Father Damien.” He more recently earned an AFI Award nomination for the telefilm “The Brush-Off,” and won an AFI Award for his performance in the miniseries “Answered by Fire.”

Wenham’s other film credits include “The Proposition,” “Pure,” “The Crocodile Hunter: Collision Course,” “Dust,” “Russian Doll,” “No Escape” and “Greenkeeping.”

**DOMINIC WEST** (Theron) has been building a successful career with leading roles on stage, screen and television. He can currently be seen in Peter Webber’s “Hannibal Rising,” about the formative years of Hannibal Lecter, based on the book by Thomas Harris and produced by Dino De Laurentiis.

West recently starred opposite Julianne Moore in the sci-fi thriller “The Forgotten,” and with Julia Roberts in Mike Newell’s drama “Mona Lisa Smile.” In 2002, he played murder victim Fred Casely in Rob Marshall’s Oscar-winning musical “Chicago.” His other film credits include “Rock Star,” with Jennifer Aniston and Mark Wahlberg; “28 Days,” opposite Sandra Bullock; “A Midsummer Night’s Dream,” with an all-star ensemble cast; “Diana & Me,” opposite Toni Collette; “True Blue”; Merchant-Ivory’s “Surviving Picasso,” with Anthony Hopkins; and “Richard III,” starring Ian McKellen.

Television audiences also know West for his starring role in the Peabody Award-winning HBO series "The Wire." He also appeared in the telefilms "The Life and Adventures of Nicholas Nickleby," "A Christmas Carol" and "Out of Hours."

Born in England, West graduated from Trinity College in Dublin and then from the Guildhall School of Music and Drama. Starting his career on the stage, he won the Ian Charleson award for Best Newcomer for his performance in Peter Hall's production of "The Seagull." He has since been seen in a number of plays in London's West End, recently including Peter Gill's production of Harley Granville Barker's "The Voysey Inheritance" at The National Theatre and David Lan's production of "As You Like It," with Helen McCrory and Sienna Miller. West is currently starring in Trevor Nunn's production of Tom Stoppard's latest play, "Rock 'n' Roll," which just won the London Evening Standard Award for Best Play. The show runs until February 25, 2007.

**VINCENT REGAN** (Captain) has previously been seen in such films as Wolfgang Petersen's epic "Troy," the Jet-Li actioner "Unleashed," the comedy "Black Knight," and Luc Besson's "The Messenger: The Story of Joan of Arc."

Regan has also worked extensively on television, recently starring as Duncan in the BBC's "Macbeth" and as Mark Antony in the ABC miniseries "Empire." His television credits also include the BBC's "Eureka Street," for which he was nominated for Best Leading Performance by the Irish Film and Television Academy; the Sci-Fi Channel's miniseries "Invasion: Earth"; the BBC miniseries "Rebel Heart"; and the telefilms "Low Winter Sun" and "40."

**MICHAEL FASSBENDER** (Stelios) makes his major feature film debut in "300." He next co-stars in director François Ozon's fantasy drama "Angel," due out in 2007. He is currently preparing to play the physically demanding role of Bobby Sands, a member of both the IRA and British Parliament who gained even greater fame for his stand as a hunger striker, in the British film "Hunger."

A graduate of London's prestigious Drama Centre, Fassbender was first seen by American audiences in HBO's award-winning World War II miniseries "Band of Brothers," executive produced by Steven Spielberg and Tom Hanks. He has since appeared in such

television productions as “Gunpowder, Treason & Plot,” directed by Gillies Mackinnon; “A Most Mysterious Murder: the Case of Charles Bravo”; the award-winning Canadian telefilm “A Bear Named Winnie”; “Sherlock Holmes and the Case of the Silk Stocking,” with Rupert Everett; the BBC’s “Our Hidden Lives”; and “Trial and Retribution: Sins of the Father.” In addition, he has had recurring and guest roles on a number of series in the U.K., including “Poirot,” “Hex,” “Murphy’s Law” and “William and Mary.”

On the stage, Fassbender most recently earned rave reviews for his portrayal of Michael Collins in the play “Allegiance,” which was one of the smash hits at the 2006 Edinburgh Festival.

**TOM WISDOM** (Astinos) makes his American feature film debut in “300.” He previously starred in the British independent features “Hey Mr. DJ” and “Escape to Somerset.”

On television in the U.K., Wisdom has had leading roles in such movies as “Suspicion,” “Sword of Honour” and “Children of the New Forest” and, in the U.S., in the Family Channel Christmas movie “Good King Wenceslas.” He also had leading roles on the British series “Mile High,” “Brand Spanking New Show” and “Blackhearts in Battersea,” and guest starred on such series as “Coronation Street” and “Wycliffe.”

A native of England, Wisdom trained at the Academy Drama School, where he was a Stage Scholarship winner. His subsequent theatre work includes lead roles in the West End productions of “Journey’s End” and “Another Country.” He has also been seen in productions of such plays as “What’s Wrong with Angry,” “Borders of Paradise,” “The Importance of Being Earnest,” “The Rose & The Ring,” “Sleeping Beauty,” “Twelfth Night” and “Escape to Somerset.”

**ANDREW PLEAVIN** (Daxos) was born in the U.K. but spent much of his youth in South Africa. He later graduated from the Drama Centre London in 1996, before starting his acting career.

His film credits include “Batman Begins,” directed by Christopher Nolan; “Unstoppable,” directed by David Carson; and the independent films “Playground Logic” and “Re-inventing Eddie.” He next co-stars in “Return to House on Haunted Hill,” for producer Joel Silver, and he will also be seen in Ion Ionescu’s apocalyptic vision of the future, “Last Chance.”

On television, Pleavin stars in the upcoming Sci-Fi Channel movie "Gryphon." He previously co-starred with Gerard Butler in the USA Network's cable movie "Attila." His British television credits include the movies "The Bombmaker" and "A Good Murder," as well as appearances on such series as "The Bill," "Holby City," "Down to Earth" and "Doctors."

On the London stage, Pleavin won critical praise for his performance in the 2003 production of Anthony Neilson's play "Penetrator."

**ANDREW TIERNAN** (Ephialtes) hails from England and studied at the Drama Centre London, where he earned his diploma in Acting. He has since has worked consistently in both film and television, collaborating with a number of noted directors.

Early in his career, he appeared with Helen Mirren in the television movie "Prime Suspect." He followed with major roles in Derek Jarman's contemporized film version of Christopher Marlowe's "Edward II," and the 1992 film adaptation of Shakespeare's "As You Like It," in which Tiernan played the dual role of Orlando/Oliver.

He more recently co-starred with Adrien Brody in Roman Polanski's Oscar-winning drama "The Pianist," playing Szalas, the treacherous Polish Underground contact who was supposed to care for Brody's Szpilman but instead abandons him. Among his other film credits are Bill Forsyth's "Being Human," Neil Jordan's "Interview with the Vampire," Nicolas Roeg's "Two Deaths," Antonia Bird's "Face" and Guy Ritchie's "Lock, Stock & Two Smoking Barrels."

British television audiences know Tiernan for his work in a broad range of projects, including the Antonia Bird-directed movies "Rehab" and "Safe." His other credits include such telefilms as "The Quatermass Experiment," "Whose Baby?" and "Horatio Hornblower," and the miniseries "Hawk." He has also been seen on numerous series, including "Life on Mars," "William and Mary" and the award-winning "Cracker."

On the stage, Tiernan has worked at the Royal Court Theatre, and has also collaborated with award-winning director Wilson Milam in critically acclaimed productions of the Sam Shepard plays "A Lie of the Mind" and "True West."

**RODRIGO SANTORO** (Xerxes) is already one of Brazil's most sought-after young actors and is quickly building an impressive career in the U.S. He was introduced to American

audiences in 2003, first in the acclaimed Showtime movie “The Roman Spring of Mrs. Stone,” with Helen Mirren and Anne Bancroft. He then co-starred with Drew Barrymore, Cameron Diaz, Lucy Liu and Demi Moore in the summer actioner “Charlie’s Angels: Full Throttle.” Later that year, he joined the ensemble cast of the hit romantic comedy/drama “Love Actually,” in which Santoro played Karl, the handsome office love interest of Laura Linney’s character. On the heels of those projects, Santoro won the Chopard Trophy as the “Male Revelation” at the 2004 Cannes Film Festival.

His upcoming films include “Out of Tune,” “Not by Chance” and “Party Crashers.” On the small screen, he recently joined the cast of ABC’s hit series “Lost,” playing the part of Paulo.

Santoro was previously honored in his native Brazil for his work in “Bicho de Sete Cabeças (aka “Brainstorm”). Santoro’s portrayal of a young man forced into a mental institution by his parents brought him a number of Best Actor Awards, including the first-ever Best Actor Award from the Brazilian Academy of Arts and Film, and the Cinema Brazil Grand Prize, also for Best Actor. He later earned another Cinema Brazil Grand Prize nomination for his work in 2003’s “Carandiru,” which broke all Brazilian box office records at the time of its release and was Brazil’s entry for the Foreign Film category at the Academy Awards.

Santoro’s film work in Brazil also includes “Os Desafinados,” “A Dona da Historia” and “Behind the Sun,” the last of which earned a Golden Globe nomination for Best Foreign Language Film in 2002. In addition, he has a broad range of television credits, encompassing miniseries, movies and series. He has also been seen for the past several years as the seductive mystery man romancing Nicole Kidman in the Baz Luhrmann-directed Chanel commercial.

### **ABOUT THE FILMMAKERS**

**ZACK SNYDER** (Director/Screenwriter) had established himself as one of the most creative and sought-after directors in the commercial and music video arenas before segueing to feature films. He made his feature film directorial debut with the hit horror thriller “Dawn of the Dead.” Released in March 2004, the film opened at the top of the weekend box office and brought Snyder widespread critical acclaim for his inspired re-imagining of George Romero’s



cult classic. Snyder was also nominated for the prestigious Camera d'Or Prize at the 2004 Cannes Film Festival for his work on the film.

Together with his producing partner and Co-President Deborah Snyder, he recently formed Cruel and Unusual Films, which announced a two-year overall production deal with Warner Bros. Snyder is currently in development on "Watchmen," based on the graphic novel by Alan Moore and Dave Gibbons. The producers are Larry Gordon, Lloyd Levin and Deborah Snyder.

Snyder's feature film success follows years of directing award-winning commercials and music videos. *British Communication Arts Magazine* featured Snyder as one of the most talented commercial directors in the country. Snyder's commercial work has garnered him numerous awards, including two Clios. He also won a Gold Lion award at Cannes for his Jeep "Frisbee" spot. His wickedly funny and irreverent spot, "Russian Generals," attracted the attention of the London advertising community, which presented him with an award for his impressive body of work. His commercial work took him around the world and includes such memorable and filmic spots as a Land Rover commercial filmed in Tunisia; a Subaru spot featuring Lance Armstrong; and a Budweiser commercial filmed in China.

Snyder attributes his distinctive style, in part, to his early artistic training in London, where he studied painting at the Heatherlies School. He later refined his artistic sensibilities at the prestigious Art Center College of Design in Pasadena, California, where he developed the bold cinematic style of filmmaking that he has become known for today.

**KURT JOHNSTAD** (Screenwriter) counts "300" as his first major studio feature film screenplay credit. He recently completed a screenplay adaptation of Tom Clancy's novel "Rainbow Six," also in collaboration with Zack Snyder. Currently, Johnstad is working with producer Gianni Nunnari on "The Last Photograph," a story set in modern-day, war-torn Afghanistan.

In 1995, Johnstad sold his first screenplay, the action drama "True Vengeance." He is an alumnus of the California Institute of Arts (CalArts) BFA film program, and has also worked as a Directors Guild of America first assistant director while refining his craft as a screenwriter.

**MICHAEL B. GORDON** (Screenwriter) spent three years working for producer Mark Canton at Warner Bros. Pictures. Gordon then went on to pen “300” and ink a multi-script deal with the studio. He most recently completed a revision of producer Sam Raimi’s horror movie “The Messengers,” and is currently scripting the adventure film “Zooport,” for director Steve Sommers.

Gordon began his career in entertainment as an intern at ICM, and graduated magna cum laude with a B.A. in English from the University of Pennsylvania.

**FRANK MILLER** (Novel / Executive Producer) made his feature film directorial debut in 2005 with the adaptation of his graphic novel “Sin City,” which he co-directed with Robert Rodriguez. The critically acclaimed film was nominated for a Palme d’Or at the 2005 Cannes Film Festival, won the Austin Film Critics Award and garnered a Czech Lion nomination.

Miller became a professional comic book artist while in his teens, working on a variety of assignments for major publishers, including Gold Key, DC and Marvel. He first drew attention to his work on two issues of Marvel’s “Spectacular Spider-Man,” in a story that teamed the ever-popular arachnid with another popular character Daredevil.

Shortly thereafter, Miller was offered the regular penciling slot on Daredevil’s own book. Soon after, Miller took over the writing chores on the title and, during a run of several years, in collaboration with inker Klaus Janson, he created the ninja assassin-for-hire, Elektra.

In the early 1980s, Miller attracted further attention as one of the first comic freelancers who braved the field outside the comfortable world of company-owned characters with the creation of “Ronin,” a futuristic high-tech samurai pop adventure. It was the first of many collaborations with Lynn Varley.

Since then, Miller has added a number of notable projects to his repertoire, including “Batman: The Dark Knight Returns,” with Janson and Varley; “Batman: Year One,” illustrated by David Mazzuchelli and colored by Richmond Lewis; “Elektra: Assassin,” illustrated by Bill Sienkiewicz; “Elektra Lives Again,” again with Varley; the award-winning Martha Washington miniseries “Give Me Liberty,” illustrated by Dave Gibbons; and “Hard Boiled,” illustrated by Geof Darrow.

The “Sin City” books have garnered numerous awards, including two Harvey awards for Best Graphic Album of Original Work in 1998 and Best Continuing Series in 1996; and six

Eisner Awards, including those for Best Writer/Artist, Best Graphic Novel Reprint, Best Cartoonist, Best Cover Artist, Best Limited Series and Best Short Story.

Currently, Miller is set to write, direct and produce parts two and three of his feature “Sin City.”

**LYNN VARLEY** (Novel) has been privileged to work with Neal Adams, Sergio Aragones, Geof Darrow, Jean Giraud and Frank Miller.

She was named favorite colorist in 1986, 1999, and 2000 by Comics Buyer’s Guide magazine. In 1999 she received an Eisner Award, Harvey Award and Comics Buyer’s Guide award for her work on “300.”

**GIANNI NUNNARI** (Producer) has been the President and Principal Producer of Hollywood Gang Productions since 1997. His producing credits include such films as Robert Rodriguez’s “From Dusk Till Dawn” and David Fincher’s classic thriller “Se7en.” In 2006, Nunnari served as producer on Martin Scorsese’s award-winning crime drama “The Departed.”

Prior to Hollywood Gang, Nunnari served as President of Cecchi Gori USA for over 15 years during which time he greenlit such Academy Award-winning features as “Il Postino,” “Life is Beautiful” and “Mediterraneo,” as well as Robert De Niro’s directorial debut “A Bronx Tale.” He also oversaw the building of the company’s 2,000-title film library.

Upcoming projects for Hollywood Gang Productions include “Eleven Minutes,” the film adaptation of Paulo Coelho’s bestselling novel by the same title; “Everybody’s Fine,” a remake of the Italian classic to be directed by Kirk Jones; “Ronin,” an adaptation of Frank Miller’s critically acclaimed graphic novel with DC Comics; and “Silence,” a film adaptation of Shusaku Endo’s novel “Chinmoku” to be helmed by Martin Scorsese.

**MARK CANTON** (Producer) is Chairman and CEO of Atmosphere Entertainment MM, LLC. He has been a preeminent force in the entertainment industry for over two decades, and is responsible for bringing more than 300 pictures to the screen, including such hits as “Batman,” “Lethal Weapon,” “National Lampoon’s Vacation” film franchise series, “Men in Black,” “Bad Boys,” “Jerry Maguire” and “As Good As It Gets” as a studio executive and producer.

After holding posts as President of Worldwide Theatrical Production at Warner Bros. and Chairman of the Columbia TriStar Motion Picture Companies, Canton returned to Warner Bros. in 1997 to create his own production entity, The Canton Company. In early 2002, Canton joined Artists Production Group as a partner, Chairman and CEO and, in December 2003, he and Daedalus Media Partners launched a new entrepreneurial venture, Atmosphere Entertainment MM, to develop, produce and finance theatrical motion pictures and television programming.

Through Atmosphere Entertainment MM, Canton controls a large number of high profile projects that are in various stages of development and pre-production. "George A. Romero's Land of the Dead" was the first new film to be produced under the Atmosphere MM banner. The company's first release was "Taking Lives," starring Angelina Jolie, Ethan Hawke, Kiefer Sutherland and Oliver Martinez. Canton is currently producing "The Spiderwick Chronicles," a big-budget adaptation based on the best-selling children's books by Holly Black and Tony DiTerlizzi, set for a 2008 release.

A native of New York, Canton is a 1971 UCLA graduate (magna cum laude) and a member of UCLA's National Honor Society for American Studies. In addition to serving on the UCLA Board of Councilors and the Dean's Advisory Board for the School of Theatre, Film, and Television, he is Vice Chairman of the Board of Directors of the American Film Institute and Founder and Chairman Emeritus of AFI's Third Decade Council.

**BERNIE GOLDMANN** (Producer) most recently co-directed the comedy "Bill" with his wife, Melisa Wallack. The movie stars Jessica Alba, Elizabeth Banks, Aaron Eckhart and Tim Olyphant. He is also currently producing the Kate Hudson and Matthew McConaughey action romance "Fool's Gold," set for release in 2008.

Goldmann's other recent producing credits include "George Romero's Land of the Dead," "Taking Lives," and "Looney Tunes: Back In Action."

In his three years as President of Production for Village Roadshow Pictures, the company co-financed and produced "The Matrix," "Training Day," "Ocean's Eleven," "Space Cowboys," "Analyze This," "Miss Congeniality," "Three Kings," "Cats and Dogs," "Deep Blue Sea," and "Saving Silverman."

As Senior Vice President of Production for Walt Disney Pictures from 1993 to 1998, Goldmann oversaw such projects as "My Favorite Martian," "Mystery, Alaska," "Blank Check,"

“Tom and Huck,” “Homeward Bound II,” “Rocket Man,” “I’ll Be Home for Christmas” and “Bicentennial Man.”

Goldmann entered the industry as a production assistant at the Steve Tisch Company, leaving eight years later as its President. During this time, he executive produced or co-produced “Corrina, Corrina,” “Bad Influence,” “Heart Condition,” “Soul Man” and “Victim of Love.”

**JEFFREY SILVER** (Producer) has produced over two dozen feature films, through his new solo-venture production company, Biscayne Pictures, and through his partnership with Outlaw Productions.

Upcoming in February 2007 is the spy thriller “Breach,” directed by Billy Ray, starring Chris Cooper, Ryan Phillippe and Laura Linney. Silver will also serve as an executive producer on the George Clooney and Renee Zellweger sports comedy “Leatherheads.” Directed by Clooney, the film is about the early days of pro football, and begins production in February 2007.

Silver’s other recent credits include “The Santa Clause 3,” directed by Michael Lembeck and starring Tim Allen; the supernatural thriller “The Return,” starring Sarah Michelle Gellar under the direction of Asif Kapadia; and the John Carpenter remake of “Assault on Precinct 13,” with Ethan Hawke and Laurence Fishburne, directed by Jean-Francois Richet.

Currently in active development for Silver are the Sudanese refugee saga “The Lost Boys”; the cold-war romance “Sadness at Leaving”; and, in partnership with The Hollywood Gang, “Conquistador” the story of the conquest of Mexico, directed by Andrucha Waddington, starring Antonio Banderas; the war epic “Hannibal,” starring Vin Diesel; and the remake of Giuseppe Tornatore’s “Everybody’s Fine,” to be directed by Kirk Jones.

Additionally, Silver has produced such films as “Training Day,” for which Denzel Washington won an Oscar for Best Actor; “The Santa Clause” films, starring Tim Allen; the romantic comedy “Addicted To Love,” with Meg Ryan and Matthew Broderick; the comic love fable “Don Juan De Marco,” with Johnny Depp and Marlon Brando; and the cult teen comedy “Don’t Tell Mom The Babysitter’s Dead,” starring Christina Applegate.

Silver also produced the hit television series “The Wonder Years,” for which he received an Emmy for Best Comedy Series in 1988.

In 1999, Silver co-founded FilmAid ([www.filmaid.org](http://www.filmaid.org)), a non-profit organization, dedicated to bringing projected movies to refugee camps around the world. FilmAid has shown hundreds of movies to over a million refugees at outdoor mobile cinemas set up in Macedonia, Afghanistan, Tanzania, and Kenya, drawing nightly crowds numbering in the thousands. FilmAid addresses the problems of refugee despair and psychological trauma, and raises awareness of the global refugee crisis.

Silver grew up in Miami, and graduated with a degree in Theater from Brandeis University, near Boston. His career began in New York City, working for Otto Preminger.

**DEBORAH SNYDER** (Executive Producer) is Co-President of Cruel and Unusual Films, which she formed with her producing partner, Zack Snyder. The company recently announced a two-year overall production deal with Warner Bros. She is presently in development on the film “Watchmen,” based on the graphic novel by Alan Moore and Dave Gibbons. The film will be produced by Snyder, Larry Gordon and Lloyd Levin.

Snyder graduated from Ithaca College in 1991 with a Bachelor of Science degree in Video & Film Production. She began her producing career in advertising as an assistant producer and video editor at Backer Spielvogel Bates. Promoted to producer in 1992, Snyder produced commercials for such clients as M&M/Mars, Miller Brewing Company and Estee Lauder.

In 1998, Snyder took a senior producer position at Kirshenbaum Bond and Partners. Producing ads for clients, including Tommy Hilfiger, Target and 1-800-Flowers, she shot all over the globe, from Amsterdam, London, Zimbabwe and New Zealand to Kansas City. Continuing her ascent through the advertising ranks in 2000, she joined BBDO NY as a Vice President/executive producer and produced spots for such clients as AOL, Visa, Gillette, Frito-Lay and Pizza Hut.

“300” marks Snyder’s first feature film producing credit.

**CRAIG J. FLORES** (Executive Producer) is the head of business and corporate operations for Hollywood Gang Productions, LLC and Cecchi Gori USA, Inc. He joined the companies in 2004 to oversee international distribution/sales, motion picture business and legal affairs, and business development. Just prior, Flores spent three years as a transactional

entertainment attorney at Alexander, Nau, Lawrence and Frumes, where he was involved in the representation of television and motion picture production companies, producers, writers and directors.

Flores graduated magna cum laude from UCLA in 1996 with a Bachelors degree in Psychology and, in 1999, earned his Juris Doctorate at the UCLA School of Law, where he was a published editor of the UCLA Law Review.

Flores is currently serving as executive producer on “Eleven Minutes,” based on the international best-selling novel by Paulo Coelho; DC Comic’s “Ronin,” based on the graphic novel by Frank Miller; and “Everybody’s Fine,” written and directed by Kirk Jones.

**THOMAS TULL** (Executive Producer) is the Chairman and CEO of Legendary Pictures, which recently entered into a five-year, 25-picture deal with Warner Bros. Pictures. Legendary Pictures was awarded the prestigious Deal of the Year in the entertainment industry in 2005 by IDD Magazine. Legendary’s first release was “Batman Begins,” followed by Bryan Singer’s “Superman Returns,” M. Night Shyamalan’s “Lady in the Water,” and, most recently, “We Are Marshall,” directed by McG, starring Matthew McConaughey.

Among Legendary’s upcoming projects are: “Trick ‘r Treat,” written and directed by “Superman Returns” co-writer Michael Dougherty and produced by Bryan Singer; Roland Emmerich’s “10,000 B.C.”; “Where the Wild Things Are,” directed by Spike Jonze; and Christopher Nolan’s “The Dark Knight,” the highly anticipated follow-up to “Batman Begins.”

Tull was previously President and a director of The Convex Group, a media and entertainment holding company in Atlanta that invests in new media networks, launched by WebMD founder Jeff Arnold. He executed M&A activity, including the acquisitions of content company How Stuff Works and content distribution platforms LidRock and FlexPlay, and developed the company’s relationships and partnerships with motion picture, music and videogame companies. Prior to Convex, Tull was a principal at Southeast Interactive Technology Funds, the largest venture-capital IT fund in the Southeast.

**WILLIAM FAY** (Executive Producer) has been a successful producer and executive producer for nearly 20 years. Among his film credits are “The Patriot,” starring Mel Gibson, and the blockbuster “Independence Day,” which at that point was the second highest-grossing motion

picture of all time, taking in more than \$800 million worldwide at the box office.

For six years, Fay was President of Centropolis Entertainment, one of the most successful production companies in Hollywood. During that time, Centropolis produced films totaling nearly \$1.5 billion in worldwide box office receipts, and successfully developed digital entertainment ventures such as Centropolis Effects (a top-tier visual effects house merged with Das Werk in April 2001) and mothership.com (a leading sci-fi Online vertical sold to USA Networks in June 2000).

Fay is a founding partner and President of Production at Legendary Pictures, which, in 2005, closed a five-year, 25-picture producing and co-financing deal with Warner Bros. Pictures. Legendary's first film was the worldwide hit "Batman Begins." More recently, Fay served as an executive producer on "Superman Returns," "The Ant Bully" and "We Are Marshall." Following the release of "300," Fay will executive produce Roland Emmerich's "10,000 B.C."

**SCOTT MEDNICK** (Executive Producer) is a member of the management team of Legendary Pictures, the production company which, in 2005, entered into a five-year, 25-picture deal with Warner Bros. He most recently served as an executive producer of Bryan Singer's "Superman Returns" and McG's "We Are Marshall." Currently, Mednick is working on such upcoming films as Roland Emmerich's "10,000 B.C." and "Where the Wild Things Are," directed by Spike Jonze.

Mednick has been a leader in the entertainment, marketing and technology sectors for the last 26 years. He has been involved in the marketing of almost 200 films, including "Jerry Maguire," "Coal Miner's Daughter," "This Is Spinal Tap," "X-Men" and "Dirty Dancing." His individual entertainment clients have included Tom Cruise, Arnold Schwarzenegger and Denzel Washington. Additionally, Mednick has created the logos for such Hollywood entities as Sony Pictures, Columbia Pictures, TriStar Pictures and Legendary Pictures.

He is also the former President and CEO of Peter Guber's Mandalay Branded Entertainment. Prior to Mandalay, Mednick founded THINK New Ideas, Inc., a marketing and communications company for the Information Age, which serviced the communications and interactive needs of major corporations, including Oracle, Coca-Cola, Reebok, Sega, Time Warner, Sony, Pioneer Electronics, Disney, Chrysler and many others. As Chairman and CEO, Mednick oversaw the quintupling of THINK's billing and market cap within 18 months of its



initial public offering. In addition, the company was named as one of the top ten interactive agencies of the year by both Adweek magazine and the Advertising Club of New York in its first year of operations.

In addition to his corporate responsibilities, Mednick was invited to be a part of the President's Committee on the Arts and Humanities Task Force for Children and Youth at Risk under President Clinton, chaired by the First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton. He served for 10 years on the National Board of Arnold Schwarzenegger's Inner City Games Foundation and now sits on the Board of Directors of After-School All-Stars, founded by Governor Schwarzenegger. Mednick served on the Board of Directors of Earth Day 1990, for which he also created the logo and communications materials. He is a founding member of the Board of ECO (Earth Communications Office), which mobilizes the entertainment industry on behalf of the environment. He also serves as a trustee of the University of Santa Monica.

Mednick, a Boston native, has an M.A. in Applied Psychology and a B.F.A. in Graphic Design, and was named Print Art Director of the Year/West by Adweek. Mednick has had four pieces of his work selected for inclusion in the permanent collection of the Library of Congress.

**BENJAMIN WAISBREN** (Executive Producer) recently served as an executive producer on Edward Zwick's "Blood Diamond," starring Leonardo DiCaprio, Jennifer Connelly and Djimon Hounsou; Steven Soderbergh's "The Good German," with George Clooney, Cate Blanchett and Tobey Maguire; Wolfgang Petersen's "Poseidon"; and "V for Vendetta," starring Natalie Portman and Hugo Weaving.

Waisbren is a financier involved in the production and distribution of motion pictures, both in the U.S and in Europe, and has a background including law, investment banking and private equity investing.

His upcoming executive producer credits include "The Assassination of Jesse James by the Coward Robert Ford," "First Born," "Gardener of Eden," "Nancy Drew" and "Duane Hopwood."

**LARRY FONG** (Director of Photography) reunites with director Zack Snyder on "300." The two met in film school at Art Center College of Design, and went on to shoot various music videos and TV commercials together.

In 2005, Fong was nominated by the American Society of Cinematographers for his work on the pilot episode of the hit TV drama “Lost,” directed by the show’s creator, J.J. Abrams. Fong’s camerawork has also garnered numerous advertising industry accolades, including the Golden Lion, the Clio and the Belding. Additionally, three music videos lensed by Fong have received MTV’s “Best Video of the Year” awards.

His other film credits include the independent features “Cost of Living” and “Cape of Good Hope.”

On television, in addition to “Lost,” Fong has shot the telefilm “The Catch,” also for J.J. Abrams; the pilot “Sleepwalkers”; and ABC’s drama pilot “Secrets of a Small Town.”

**JAMES BISSELL** (Production Designer) was nominated for an Academy Award for his work on George Clooney’s “Good Night, and Good Luck.” He had previously collaborated with Clooney on “Confessions of a Dangerous Mind,” and is currently working on Clooney’s upcoming film “Leatherheads.” Bissell recently completed work on “The Spiderwick Chronicles,” for director Mark Waters.

For more than 25 years, Bissell has designed a diverse number of films. In more recent years, he has designed such films as “The Ring Two,” for director Hideo Nakata; Ron Shelton’s “Hollywood Homicide”; the family action adventure “Cats & Dogs”; and Roger Spottiswoode’s action sci-fi “The 6th Day,” starring Arnold Schwarzenegger.

Bissell’s other feature film credits include “My Fellow Americans,” “Tin Cup,” “Jumanji,” “Blue Chips,” “Dennis the Menace,” “The Pickle,” “The Rocketeer,” “Arachnophobia,” “Always,” “Twins” and “Someone To Watch Over Me.” His work can also be seen in the classic films “The Falcon and the Snowman,” directed by John Schlesinger, and Steven Spielberg’s “E.T. the Extra-Terrestrial.”

**WILLIAM HOY** (Editor) first worked with director Zack Snyder as an additional editor on “Dawn of the Dead.” Hoy also recently edited such films as Tim Story’s “Fantastic Four,” Alex Proyas’ “I, Robot,” F. Gary Gray’s “A Man Apart,” and Randall Wallace’s “We Were Soldiers” and “The Man in the Iron Mask.” He also has worked on three Phillip Noyce films: “The Bone Collector,” “Sliver” and “The Patriot Games.”

Hoy's other credits include work on "Se7en," "Outbreak," "Star Trek VI: The Undiscovered Country" and "Dances with Wolves."

For television, he has edited "Houdini" for TNT, "Shattered Mind," and the series "Star Trek: The Next Generation."

**CHRIS WATTS** (Visual Effects Supervisor) has worked in visual effects since the early 1990s. He most recently served as visual effects supervisor on the remake of John Carpenter's classic horror film "The Fog," and Tim Burton's stop-motion animated feature "Corpse Bride."

Watts' other credits as visual effects supervisor include Joe Dante's "Looney Tunes: Back in Action" and Andrew Niccol's "Gattaca." On Gary Ross' "Pleasantville," Watts pioneered the process now known as Digital Intermediate. He has also worked on such films as Alfonso Cuarón's "Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban," Roland Emmerich's "The Day After Tomorrow," the animated feature "The SpongeBob SquarePants Movie," Kevin Reynolds's "Waterworld," and "Mary Shelley's Frankenstein," for director Kenneth Branagh.

In 2004, Watts won a Visual Effects Society Award for his work on the music video for Britney Spears' hit song "Toxic." He was also nominated in 2001 for an MTV Music Video Award for U2's "Elevation."

**TYLER BATES** (Composer) has previously worked with director Zack Snyder on the 2004 hit thriller "Dawn of the Dead." Since then, he has scored such films as "Slither" and Rob Zombie's "The Devil's Rejects."

Bates' other recent film work includes "You Got Served," Mario Van Peebles' "Baadasssss!," Matt Dillon's "City of Ghosts" and the 2001 comedy "Kingdom Come." For director Stephen Kay, Bates has scored such films as "Get Carter," "Wasted," "The Last Time I Committed Suicide" and "The Dead Will Tell."

His upcoming projects include the heist film "Six Bullets," also helmed by Stephen Kay; Steve Miner's horror flick "Day of the Dead"; the 2007 version of "Halloween," directed by Rob Zombie; and the action sci-fi thriller "Resident Evil: Extinction," starring Milla Jovovich.

Beyond composing music for the screen, Bates is currently mixing an ambient rock album with "300" score vocalist Azam Ali. Their album is expected to release this spring.

**MICHAEL WILKINSON** (Costume Designer) was recently nominated by the Costume Designers Guild for his work on the award-winning drama “Babel.” His other recent film credits include “Friends with Money,” “Sky High,” “Dark Water,” “Imaginary Heroes,” “Party Monster,” “American Splendor,” “Garden State” and “Milwaukee, Minnesota.”

Wilkinson’s upcoming releases include “The Nanny Diaries,” starring Scarlett Johansson, Laura Linney and Paul Giamatti; and “Rendition” for director Gavin Hood, starring Reese Witherspoon, Jake Gyllenhaal, Meryl Streep and Alan Arkin.

Earlier in his career, Wilkinson served as design assistant for such films as Baz Luhrmann’s “Moulin Rouge!” and “Romeo + Juliet,” and The Wachowski Brothers’ “The Matrix.”

Beyond film, Wilkinson’s theater work includes award-winning costume designs for the Sydney Theater Company, Opera Australia, The Australian Dance Theater, Radio City Hall and the Ensemble Theater. He also works in special events, having created hundreds of designs for the Opening and Closing Ceremonies of the 2000 Olympic Games in Sydney.

Wilkinson is a graduate of the design course at National Institute of the Dramatic Arts in his hometown of Sydney, Australia.

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