

ELVIS

"This story is about Elvis and Colonel Parker's relationship...a true story told brilliantly and creatively that only Baz [Luhrmann], in his unique, artistic way, could have delivered...a director who put his heart and soul...into this film. Austin Butler is outstanding. Tom Hanks was Col Parker."

~Priscilla Presley, 4.29.22

"Elvis" is an epic, big-screen spectacle from Warner Bros. Pictures and visionary, Oscar-nominated filmmaker Baz Luhrmann that explores the life and music of Elvis Presley, starring Austin Butler and Oscar winner Tom Hanks.

A thoroughly cinematic drama, Elvis's (Butler) story is seen through the lens of his complicated relationship with his enigmatic manager, Colonel Tom Parker (Hanks). As told by Parker, the film delves into the complex dynamic between the two spanning over 20 years, from Presley's rise to fame to his unprecedented stardom, against the backdrop of the evolving cultural landscape and loss of innocence in America. Central to that journey is one of the significant and influential people in Elvis's life, Priscilla Presley (Olivia DeJonge).

Starring alongside Butler and Hanks, award-winning theater actress Helen Thomson ("Top of the Lake: China Girl," "Rake") plays Elvis's mother, Gladys, Richard Roxburgh ("Moulin Rouge!" "Breath," "Hacksaw Ridge") portrays Elvis's father, Vernon, and DeJonge ("The Visit," "Stray Dolls") plays Priscilla. Luke Bracey ("Hacksaw Ridge," "Point Break") plays Jerry Schilling, Natasha Bassett ("Hail, Caesar!") plays Dixie Locke, David Wenham ("The Lord of the Rings" Trilogy, "Lion," "300") plays Hank Snow, Kelvin Harrison Jr. ("The Trial of the Chicago 7," "The High Note") plays B.B. King, Xavier Samuel ("Adore," "Love & Friendship," "The Twilight Saga:

Eclipse”) plays Scotty Moore, and Kodi Smit-McPhee (“The Power of the Dog”) plays Jimmie Rodgers Snow.

Also in the cast, Dacre Montgomery (“Stranger Things,” “The Broken Heart Gallery”) plays TV director Steve Binder, alongside Australian actors Leon Ford (“Gallipoli,” “The Pacific”) as Tom Diskin, Kate Mulvany (“The Great Gatsby,” “Hunters”) as Marion Keisker, Gareth Davies (“Peter Rabbit,” “Hunters”) as Bones Howe, Charles Grounds (“Crazy Rich Asians,” “Camp”) as Billy Smith, Josh McConville (“Fantasy Island”) as Sam Phillips, and Adam Dunn (“Home and Away”) as Bill Black.

To play additional iconic musical artists in the film, Luhrmann cast singer/songwriter Yola as Sister Rosetta Tharpe, model Alton Mason as Little Richard, Austin, Texas native Gary Clark Jr. as Arthur Crudup, and artist Shonka Dukureh as Willie Mae “Big Mama” Thornton.

Oscar nominee Luhrmann (“The Great Gatsby,” “Moulin Rouge!”) directed from a screenplay by Baz Luhrmann & Sam Bromell and Baz Luhrmann & Craig Pearce and Jeremy Doner, story by Baz Luhrmann and Jeremy Doner. The film’s producers are Luhrmann, Oscar winner Catherine Martin (“The Great Gatsby,” “Moulin Rouge!”), Gail Berman, Patrick McCormick and Schuyler Weiss. Toby Emmerich, Courtenay Valenti and Kevin McCormick executive produced.


The director’s behind-the-scenes creative team includes director of photography Mandy Walker (“Mulan,” “Australia”), Oscar-winning production designer and costume designer Catherine Martin (“The Great Gatsby,” “Moulin Rouge!”), production designer Karen Murphy (“A Star Is Born”), editors Matt Villa (“The Great Gatsby,” “Australia”) and Jonathan Redmond (“The Great Gatsby”), Oscar-nominated visual effects supervisor Thomas Wood (“Mad Max: Fury Road”), music supervisor Anton Monsted (“Australia,” “Moulin Rouge!”) and composer/executive music producer Elliott Wheeler (“The Get Down”).

Principal photography on “Elvis” took place in Queensland, Australia with the support of the Queensland Government, Screen Queensland and the Australian Government’s Producer Offset program.

A Warner Bros. Pictures Presentation, A Bazmark Production, A Jackal Group Production, A Baz Luhrmann Film, “Elvis” will be distributed worldwide by Warner Bros. Pictures. It is set to release in theaters in North America on June 24, 2022, and internationally beginning on June 22, 2022.

“Elvis is rated PG-13 for substance abuse, strong language, suggestive material and smoking.

ABOUT THE PRODUCTION

 *There must be lights burning brighter somewhere
Got to be birds flying higher in a sky more blue
If I can dream of a better land
Where all my brothers walk hand in hand
Tell me why, oh why, oh why can't my dream come true
Oh why...*

“While this story is called ‘Elvis,’ it’s also Colonel Tom Parker’s story—the telling of it at least; he’s our way in, our narrator, and an unreliable one at that,” states writer/director/producer Baz Luhrmann, whose extensive research into the music icon Elvis aided in his discovery of the strange partnership behind the artist’s public success and personal struggles. “As I like to say, Colonel Tom Parker was never a colonel, never a Tom, never a Parker, but a fascinating character all the same. He was a carnival barker dedicated to finding that one great act.

“Nineteen-year-old Elvis Presley had lived for a period of time in one of the few white-designated houses in a Black section of Tupelo, Mississippi,” the filmmaker continues, “where, along with a group of neighborhood friends, he absorbed the music of both the local juke joints and the Pentecostal revival tents. As he grew up, he fused this with his love of country music. Parker had no ear for music whatsoever, but he was absolutely struck by the effect Elvis’s whole package had on young audiences. As the Colonel says in the film, ‘It was the greatest carnival act I had ever seen.’”

Luhrmann further adds that, “In the mid-1950s in parts of America, carnivals were transitioning into music, mainly country and western. But Parker was always looking for the extraordinary—the one that made the most money, had a great costume, excited the audience, had a strange twist... Just something special, like Elvis.”

Luhrmann recruited Oscar winner Tom Hanks to play the role of Parker, stating, “I’d never worked with Tom previously, but I just told him the story and before I even got to the video I’d brought along to show him what I had in mind, he said, ‘Well, if you want me I’m your guy.’ What a gift!”

Hanks has said of the real-life Parker, “He was both a genius and a scoundrel. He was a very disciplined man, a wicked smart businessman and a dime-squeezing skinflint, but also a pioneer in a big type of show business that did not exist until Elvis Presley came along. He knew instantaneously that Elvis was a unique artist, he saw his grand potential and knew that if he didn’t make a ton of money off him, somebody else would.”

As Luhrmann reveals in the film, money was a key motivator and, as such, Parker was also possibly the first person to see the financial potential beyond the music: merchandising. “He sees how this boy, Elvis, has an effect on an audience, an effect like he’s never seen before and certainly beyond anything he’s seen on the carnival circuit,” the filmmaker notes. “To Tom Parker, it’s the greatest carnival act he’s ever witnessed, and he must have it.”

To bring to life the man whose electrifying art and image have permeated the four corners of the world for more than six decades, the filmmakers conducted an extensive search before coming across Austin Butler. Says Luhrmann, “I knew I couldn’t make this film if the casting wasn’t absolutely right, and we searched thoroughly for an actor with the ability to evoke the singular natural movement and vocal qualities of this peerless star, but also the inner vulnerability of the artist. I had heard about Austin Butler from his stand-out role opposite Denzel Washington in ‘The Iceman Cometh’ on Broadway, and then I got a call from Denzel, whom I do not know, going out of his way to state that this young actor had a work ethic like no one else he had seen before. Through a journey of extensive screen testing and music and performance workshops, I knew unequivocally that I had found someone who could embody the spirit of one of the world’s most iconic musical figures.”

Butler offers, “What always fascinates me about any icon is the fact that they’re first and foremost human. Elvis was the first of his kind, in a way—a kid who comes from absolutely nothing and then becomes the most famous man on the planet. It’s the American dream. He also embodied so many eras that it feels like he lived 100 years; it’s amazing that he was only here for 42.”

Luhrmann’s producing team on “Elvis” consisted of his longtime collaborator Catherine Martin who, as she has since they teamed up for the director’s inaugural feature “Strictly Ballroom,” also headed up the production and costume designs, as well as veteran producer Gail Berman of the Jackal Group, Patrick McCormick, and Schuyler Weiss.

Martin relates, “Baz has always been interested in Elvis so this had been kind of percolating in the background before really coming into focus for us a few years ago. I think I always admired the way that Elvis brought meaning to songs through the quality of his voice. I understood his cultural importance but once Baz related his vision for the film to me, I realized that Elvis’s rise to fame was like Icarus flying towards the sun, an extremely poignant and operatic cautionary tale showing the exploitation of fame at all costs.”

Berman states, “This film is much more than a biopic; we owe that to Baz’s deep understanding and appreciation of Elvis not just as a human, but also as a captivating, epic figure through which to tell the story of America. Baz himself is uniquely capable of telling a story that

is gripping on its surface while exploring deeper, resonant truths. Elvis' story is packed with so much more than many people know, and Baz, with his unmistakable style and mastery of both film and music, is really the only artist I know who could bring this life to the screen."

McCormick found Luhrmann distinctly suited to the subject, observing, "To tell this story involved a certain amount of showmanship—not just Parker's showmanship or Elvis's; Baz as a director has those exceptional gifts as well, especially regarding the music element. Baz is deeply involved in the recording industry and aware of performing artists, and always has fresh ideas about how to recreate and rediscover the music of any period and to infuse his films with it in a way people have never heard before. He finds a way to interlace all of these things into a cinematic flow that is uniquely Baz."

Weiss, who has worked closely with the director for many years and on numerous projects, offers additional insight: "Baz always says that Elvis is like wallpaper, he's become so ubiquitous that everybody knows something about him or his music. But I don't think I really did understand Elvis's journey and the different phases of Elvis's career, and how much he has served as kind of a prism for music and culture in that he drew in so many influences and then radiated out and influenced so many people in turn. Those were the things I started to discover once we delved into this project and those discoveries made me excited and want to learn more."

Filming entirely in Luhrmann's native Australia, the filmmakers dipped into the region's wealth of talent to round out primary roles in the cast. "We brought in the brilliant Helen Thomson, a mainstay of theater in Sydney and Melbourne, to play Elvis's mom, Gladys, plus actors who I've worked with for years, like Richard Roxburgh who plays Elvis's dad, Vernon, and David Wenham, who plays Hank Snow. That's one thing I love about this work, continuing those long-term collaborations," Luhrmann says.


To portray one of the most important people in Elvis's life, the filmmakers cast Olivia DeJonge, who was born in Melbourne and lived much of her young life in Perth.

"With Elvis and Priscilla, I think that there was a kind of delicate, innocent romance in the beginning," Luhrmann surmises. "By the time they met, Elvis had found it near-impossible to meet anyone who didn't have some kind of ulterior agenda, so he and Priscilla quickly formed a protective cocoon. She was also there in the end as a friend, a true friend, and I believe that connection and support was there all the way through his life. So, I had to find someone who, like Austin, is mature beyond their years and could play this character for a long span of time. Olivia is just that; she's very smart and has great self-possession."

DeJonge tells, "My initial discussions with Baz were about the collaborative nature of the project, the overall vision for the story, and how the character of Priscilla fit into that. In the movie,

and I think very much in real life, she was kind of what felt like home for Elvis, sort of that collective breath that you take to balance a life that can be so crazy.”

Of course, no Baz Luhrmann film would be complete without the singular *auditory* experience audiences anticipate: a blending of period and modern music and artists in a manner only he can envision. With composer/executive music producer Elliott Wheeler and music supervisor Anton Monsted—the latter a partnership that began even prior to “Romeo + Juliet”—the film not only features the voices of Butler (vocalizing the live performances of young Elvis), Elvis’s own iconic vocals in the latter part of the movie, and occasionally a blend of the two voices, but also several of today’s hitmakers, including Yola, Shonka Dukureh and Gary Clark, Jr. as Beale Street legends Sister Rosetta Tharpe, Big Mama Thornton and Arthur Crudup. A range of such powerhouse performers as Doja Cat, Kacey Musgraves, Jazmine Sullivan, Jack White, Måneskin and more are showcased on the soundtrack as well.

 *There must be peace and understanding sometime
Strong winds of promise that will blow away all the doubt and fear
If I can dream of a warmer sun
Where hope keeps shining on everyone
Tell me why, oh why, oh why won't that sun appear...*

CAST & CHARACTERS

It was a Christmas in Los Angeles when Austin Butler found himself singing along to Elvis Presley’s “Blue Christmas.” A prescient choice for the actor, who recalls, “A couple of weeks later I was playing the piano at home and started to sing some more Elvis songs. A good friend of mine who was with me grabbed my arm and said, ‘You really have to play Elvis.’”

Two days later, Butler’s agent called him to tell him that Baz Luhrmann was going to make a film about the icon. “It felt like a sign,” he continues, “and I felt like I had to drop everything to get that role. I let myself obsess; I started reading and watching everything I could about Elvis’s life, his friends, his relationships. I listened only to his music. Before they had even begun to audition I sent Baz a video of me playing the piano and singing ‘Unchained Melody.’”

When he was finally able to meet Baz in person, Butler says he discovered that “Baz is such an amazing human being. We really connected and started a process over many months where we would workshop and play around with ideas” until at last the day of the official screen test arrived. Surprisingly, the actor confesses, “I thought I blew it. I had prepared three songs but Baz changed them at the last moment, so I had to sing three other songs I hadn’t prepared.

Knowing Baz now as I do, I'm sure it was a test to see how I would perform under pressure, but at the time I thought I had absolutely blown it."

He needn't have worried. When the call came a few days later to tell him he'd be playing Elvis Presley, Butler remembers, "That's when I really did feel the weight of it. Every day I was nervous because I wanted to do him justice and to do his family justice, to honor him and his life. It was hard not to feel like a little kid in your dad's suit, like you're wearing these big shoes that you can hardly walk in."

Luhrmann offers, "Austin went on an extraordinary journey to play this role but, more importantly, to discover this human being, Elvis. In the same way that Marilyn Monroe isn't just another movie star—she embodies a time, a place, a sensibility, a symbology—Elvis as we came to know him happened in a flash. One minute he's a truck driver and the next minute he's the most famous man in the world. He becomes famous in the South, and within a couple of years he's on 'Ed Sullivan' and he's the most talked about, most provocative, most famous young man in the world and a millionaire overnight. Certainly, stars like Sinatra had made women swoon before Elvis, but Elvis's popularity intersected with the emergence of teenagers as an insatiable market force, connecting directly with their idols through radio and television. The level of rapid celebrity and wealth had no precedent and Elvis was on his own. As he said later in life, 'It's very hard to live up to an image.'"

And, despite the benefit of hindsight, a challenge to bring such a life to life for the screen. "I was fortunate to have so many people to help me," Butler says, "starting with Baz. The brilliant thing about Baz is that, in the most gentle and caring way, he can take you to a place where you can do more than you ever thought possible. He creates an environment where you're free to make mistakes, and free to try things."

To internalize Elvis's physicality, Butler says, "I worked with movement coach Polly Bennett prior to filming and then all the way through the shoot," he tells. "She helped me enormously not only to move the way he did, but to understand what makes a person move in the way they do."

But to speak and sing in the icon's distinct manner was the real key to the role, and the actor also worked with a number of different vocal coaches, he says, "because the voice is so important, and the dialect. And Elvis' voice really changed over the years."

Luhrmann remarks, "We were faced with one very simple technical challenge: almost all recordings of Elvis before, say, the '60s, all those classic '50s tracks are mono recordings; you can't actually separate the voice from the band, which is one of the critical things you need to do to make a movie. Perhaps more pertinent than the technical aspect, is that these recordings,

though charming and deeply familiar, do not capture the shocking, raw experience of young Elvis live on stage. In those early days, Elvis felt like the original punk rocker. That meant we had to create the sound.

“And in finding Austin we were so lucky because he was capable of actually singing so much like Elvis from that era, this kind of early, rough, rock and roll punk sound,” he continues. “At the same time, Austin’s job was to reveal the man not in the public light, but the man when he’s tinkering at a piano and he’s sad and he’s singing ‘Are You Lonesome Tonight?’ Reveal the private Elvis and most of all, reveal the humanity and the spirituality of the man. While I really respect the craft of the ‘tribute artist,’ this is fundamentally different work; it’s acting through song as opposed to impersonating an icon.”

The filmmaker came up with a solution, ultimately working with both Butler’s voice and the original. “The pre-1960s part of the movie is Austin’s voice, while occasionally blending both Austin and Elvis. But the latter Elvis, those big, iconic performances in his later years, that simply had to be Elvis’s own voice.”

Butler appreciated Luhrmann’s ingenuity, noting, “Baz is a genius in every sense of the word—but he doesn’t rest on that, he works hard and his attention to detail is unlike anyone else’s. He’s also incredibly supportive, kind, empathetic, caring... He makes everyone feel welcome and I couldn’t have gone on this journey with any other director.”

In the film, Elvis’s journey really begins when he is discovered during his first public performance at the Hayride by the man who would become his lifetime manager, Colonel Tom Parker. Luhrmann introduces Parker much later in his life, and the tale is told as a reflection of his experiences with the artist. Parker warns the audience they might think him the villain of the piece, but of course that’s not the way he tells it.

“When Elvis meets Colonel Tom Parker, he had graduated from the world of the carnival into the flourishing country music scene, which was itself still deeply wedded to the carnival circuit in the South,” describes Luhrmann. “The Colonel speaks carny language and is a master of the snow job—pulling the wool over people’s eyes, but in a way that excites them. They’re happy to pay for it, they know they’re being tricked, but in that moment they’ve got something to believe in and they enjoy it. It’s an emotional and psychological manipulation. That’s a snow job.”

The enigmatic figure has worked his way through the freak shows, the acts that horrified and shocked, shows that would attract audiences while repelling them. Always on the lookout for an extraordinary act, Parker is working the country music circuit, delivering such acts as Hank Snow to the carnival crowds, when he learns from one of his performers of a singer who’s taking over the local radio. Parker and company venture out to see what turns out to be this kid who

seems not only to naturally meld country music with early rhythm and blues and gospel—what would become labeled rock n' roll—but it isn't the music that strikes a chord with the Colonel.

Luhrmann explains, "He doesn't care about the music; by his own admission he's got a tin ear. He sees what that kid does to the audience and realizes that this young man will make *him* great. And it happens—beyond even Parker's wildest dreams, together they transform the country, popular culture and the world."

Parker's real name may not have been Tom, but the filmmakers turned to perhaps the most beloved Tom in entertainment to play the role of the enigmatic figure: Tom Hanks.

"Elvis Presley is big around the world and as big today as he ever has been. Much of that credit goes to Colonel Tom Parker," the actor states. "The Colonel was a carnival operator guy who was in the business of promoting the likes of Eddie Arnold, Hank Snow and Jimmie Rodgers Snow. He took one look at this kid from Tupelo... [He] saw the effect he had on the audience, primarily the women. Elvis never had any other manager—promoter, I would say, more than manager."

Hanks also appreciated Luhrmann's way into the story coming via the perspective of the Colonel as storyteller and the timeline as possibly unreliable as his narrative. "The film is told like an opera, bigger than big and jumping around in time and space and perspective, which I think was the only way to do it," Hanks observes. "Baz is the hardest working man in show business as far as I'm concerned, and he has made a number of movies that I think are about as iconoclastic as you're going to get, but there's always a logic to it no matter how fluid the point of view is. Linear storytelling would not have been big enough, not after all we know about Elvis—and all that we do not know about Elvis that Baz went back and mined for this film."

In addition to the performances one would expect, Hanks tells, "There are also moments of bone-crushing intimacy and quiet in this film. Just about the best time I've ever had in the subtle, quiet demands of make a movie was the scene on the Ferris wheel, where Parker is convincing Elvis that he's going to be his sole client and Parker will be his sole manager. The implications, in hindsight, were really big stuff."

In researching the role, Hanks spoke with perhaps the greatest source imaginable, Priscilla Presley, relating, "I was expecting to hear stories about the distrust she had for Colonel Tom Parker over these many years. And she said, 'No. He was a wonderful man, and I wish he was alive today. He took really great care of us. He was a scoundrel in his way.'"

Whatever one's opinion may be of the man, Parker didn't look a thing like Hanks, who credits the makeup and hair team with the stunning transformation; all the actor had to do was shave his head and submit to the process, and he was happy to accommodate them.

Luhrmann states, "I've worked with many actors, every kind of performer, and I believe that Tom is not just one of the greatest actors of our time, but one of the greatest of *all* time. Tom has incredible instincts, he has a point of view, he does his homework. And if you want him to do something different, his favorite phrase, and I love it, is 'Watch this.' And then he'll do as you hoped, plus more. And that's why he's Tom Hanks."

Nevertheless, the director understood that the role was somewhat unusual for the actor. "If there's one true thing about the Colonel, it's that his first and foremost thought was always, 'How can I make as much money as possible?' without much consideration to Elvis's creative and spiritual well-being. And there's a tragedy in that. And the exciting thing about Tom is that he's so gifted at playing people that you love and admire, just as he is admired around the world. But he's also an actor who wants to play different notes on their instrument, and he's never really got to play the dark note, the scary note, the bad-guy note, the 'Gee, I don't really think I want to hang around that guy much,' note. I think he was really excited to play this not particularly lovable or even likable character."

Luhrmann readily admits to hoping for a repeat collaboration down the road. "Tom is a great person and he has a really great spirit. I hope to get to work with him again, any time, any day, anyhow."

Butler concurs, adding, "Working with Tom was amazing; he's kind and generous and fun to be around, and I learned a lot from him. He brought so much humanity to the role of the Colonel and even made him likable, which I think was really important for the story."

Despite the two-hander nature of the story, Hanks says, "I did not get to shoot as many scenes with Austin as I would have liked, but I got to watch him. And I have to say, you could not take your eyes off of Austin Butler. He did not phone in a thing, did not fake a thing, he undeniably went there; the dedication that he gave to it was impressive right off the bat."

The actor—who has spent his fair share of time casting talent for his own projects—recalls when Luhrmann initially told him he had Butler in mind for the part. "It was one of those things Baz does where he recreated a scene for the movie and it was Austin. Except it was Elvis. That's all you could say. That's the guy—I told Baz, 'I'm not saying that's the guy who should be cast as Elvis, I'm saying that's Elvis, there's just no question about it. Austin found some deep, molecular connection to Elvis and Baz saw that."

"When he came on stage for the Vegas performances, for example, it was electrifying," Hanks continues. "I think he had to do it 30 times, and you just wanted to see him do it again and again. Part of that is his drive as an actor, but I think there's also a huge amount of faith in the process, which is not unlike Elvis himself."

Early on and throughout the years they worked together, Elvis was not the only member of the Presley family that Parker snowed. To lure the young talent, the Colonel also baited his parents, Vernon and Gladys, by crafting a family business in which Vernon played a significant—if in name only—role.

Thomson says, “I think Gladys, firstly, was a very simple woman; the only time she ever had money in her life was when her son made all this money, so poverty was just very much a part of who Gladys was. When that’s who you are, inside, what is yours becomes very precious, and that was Elvis. Baz spoke to me about the nature of her relationship with Elvis and just how precious it was because, as we know, she gave birth to twins and the first baby died. She never really got over that, which is not uncommon, psychologically, for a mother of a surviving twin or any child where there’s been trauma attached, that that living child becomes so precious, maybe even a little unnaturally so.

“Gladys’s whole world became this child and they were very close,” she considers. “It was actually quite a happy relationship and they got on very well. I don’t think Elvis was ever the same after she died. It was a beautiful relationship and I feel very privileged to have been given the honor of playing her.”

The actress enjoyed working with Luhrmann, happily attesting, “I would take any role that Baz offered me, he’s so inspiring,” Thomson also reveals that while on set, “Baz loves to play a soundtrack that is going to go with a scene, really loudly, to get you into the mood, or into the vibe of something. And that brings a huge energy. And Baz, too, is a ball of energy and it’s very infectious. He always brings his A-game and every single person, from every department, always brings their A-game as well. That’s just how it works and it’s glorious to be a part of that.”

Richard Roxburgh, who plays Vernon and who has worked with Luhrmann many times, endorses the sentiment, adding, “Every conversation with Baz is always a joy. Baz loves life, he loves character, he loves story. Working with Baz is always going to be fun because he shows up every day in technicolor, always. He never has an off day. He’s always got great ideas and he always welcomes more.”

It’s clear in the story that Vernon was not as strong a presence nor as present a parent as Gladys. “Vernon is Elvis’ father but in many ways he’s the polar opposite of Elvis. He was extremely reserved and a very complex character,” Roxburgh suggests. “He went to prison early on in Elvis’s life—he had purportedly forged a check, although that’s disputed, but the end result was that he went to prison and that brought terrible shame on the family and on him.”

When Elvis began to rise to fame, Vernon had returned. “From the moment Elvis started to become famous, and make money, I think Vernon spent his entire life in shock,” Roxburgh

posits. “They were a very poor, simple family from Mississippi and I don’t think he could ever adjust to their new life, or to the fact his life became glued to his son, who was going to become one of the greatest, most iconic human beings in history. I think you can constantly sense Vernon’s head is spinning at what his life has become, and I think it would have been very difficult for him.”

Roxburgh believes that Parker’s entry into the Presleys’ world served as almost a relief for his character, despite the management “role” the Colonel assigned him. “I think Vernon accepted the Colonel’s presence in Elvis’s life because he felt that the Colonel knew his stuff, that he was a big, powerful man. I think he had the feeling of ‘we should be so lucky’ that this important man wants our son to be a part of his life. Vernon was given the role of business manager by the Colonel, but that was a very cunning move on the Colonel’s part; Vernon was, for all intents and purposes, illiterate, and was never going to be strong enough, or brave enough, to stand up to the Colonel. That meant the Colonel could get in and run the whole show whilst also involving the family. I do think Vernon’s best interests were always for Elvis, but he often didn’t understand what the Colonel was getting Elvis into.”

In the development of the project, Luhrmann sought the input of individuals who knew Elvis at various times in his life, and one person in particular who knew him as well as anyone ever had: Priscilla Presley. Her blessing was invaluable to the filmmaker, and her portrayal in the film a key factor.

“Just as we didn’t want Austin impersonating Elvis, we didn’t want somebody impersonating Priscilla,” he says. “Priscilla, herself, was incredibly generous and I met with her several times. It was a really delicate journey to bring her to the screen because, on the one hand, she’s an icon in her own right. Yet she’s always been at the center of Elvis’s story and, despite living her own life and doing very significant things, she did really good things for the Presley name and estate as well.”

What drew him to actress Olivia DeJonge during the extensive casting process was that intangible quality he saw in the real Presley: “The thing about Priscilla that I perceived at the very beginning was that she’s quite self-possessed, and Olivia immediately struck me the same way.”

“Priscilla was such an interesting character to step into,” DeJonge offers. “I found her to be so intriguing and the fact that they were together for so long, to play those different stages of their life together, was exciting. I really wanted to strip away all the historical ideals that we placed on these people, to really get through to the human aspect. For me, Priscilla was a woman who really loved this man, and his job takes him away from her all the time. So, how would that make me feel?

"I think Priscilla put Elvis first for a very long time and I think she loved him with her whole heart and cared for him in a way that nobody else did, and I think she was home for him," DeJonge adds. "In the beginning, she tries to become everything that Elvis wanted in a woman, but then she finds her own voice and I think she realizes the life she's been living with Elvis is not the life she wants to live anymore... Although she never stopped loving him."

"She's a bright young woman who falls in love and is suddenly part of Elvis's chaotic life; often she is the only voice of reason for him in the middle of all the chaos," DeJonge expands. "She's married to the most famous man in the world and, over time, their relationship is tested, and she is tested, as a wife and a mother."

Before cameras rolled, DeJonge says that, in addition to the script and conversations with Luhrmann, "A lot of my preparation came down to reading Priscilla's book, *Elvis and Me*, watching her interviews, watching the home videos of her and Elvis, and also reading books that were written about her, just to get as well-rounded a perspective as I could. Then sifting through what elements would best serve the story."

The bulk of DeJonge's scenes in the film are, naturally, opposite Butler, with whom she enjoyed working. "Austin was really great; from the get-go we developed a beautiful friendship and were very trusting of each other throughout the whole journey. He's so incredibly talented, and so passionate about this work, and inspiring to be around. He really respects the craft, and really respects the story. It was easier to step into these shoes and to play these characters because when you're working with him, he's right there with you, giving you everything all the time."

"Olivia is just wonderful," Butler reciprocates. "She is such a generous actor, a hard worker and a really gifted storyteller. We spent a lot of time rehearsing and at times we'd even drive home together at the end of the day and run scenes in the car, she was always game for that. It was a true joy to go through this with her."

Over the course of his life and career, Elvis Presley was in close contact with many individuals who would help shape him as an artist and a man. "Elvis' interactions with black musicians, be they blues or gospel, was crucial to his development as an artist," says American historian, author and music and culture critic Nelson George, who helped the filmmakers research Elvis's relationship with African-Americans in Memphis and Tupelo. "Moreover the performers [portraying them in the film] did a great job embodying some of the most important singers and musicians of the 20th century."

Adamant about mixing big music stars and up-and-coming talent to create authenticity as well as further induce audience engagement, Luhrmann sought to cast current hitmakers and

famous faces as many of those key characters in the story, especially those involved in music, including: Beale Street's own B.B. King, played by Kelvin Harrison Jr.; Big Mama Thornton, played by Shonka Dukureh; Sister Rosetta Tharpe, portrayed by Yola; Little Richard, played by Alton Mason (and sung by Les Greene); and Arthur "Big Boy" Crudup, played by Gary Clark Jr. Shannon Sanders and his Gospel team of Leneshia Randolph and Jordan Holland also came on board as Pentecostal singers and, along with Yola, were involved in the project early on, working with Luhrmann from Nashville to Australia.

During the extensive development process, Luhrmann began collaborating with multi-Grammy award winning producer Dave Cobb, who works out of Nashville, Tennessee's famed RCA Studio A, where Elvis himself recorded hundreds of songs. With Cobb's expert guidance, they assembled some of the best session musicians working today in Music City (as Nashville is known) to back Austin Butler while he recorded his versions of early Elvis hits. Some of these musicians had even played with the lead guitarist from Elvis's first band, Scotty Moore, himself. Bringing together acclaimed Gospel artists from across the region, a particular highlight of those sessions in late 2019, was a Gospel recording session undertaken in a tiny rural church, utilizing original 1940s and '50s period microphones. Those recordings formed the foundation of the Pentecostal revival sequence in the film.

Yola, who participated in these early Nashville sessions at RCA Studio A, offers, "I was surprised to find out when I got the call to go into the studio that the film wasn't already made, because usually people make the film, then make the music fit into it. Baz believed if this was going to be a movie about Elvis, how could we not let the movie come *from* the music?"

Continuing, Yola adds, "It was really important and quite an honor to portray Sister Rosetta Tharpe, one of the principal creators of rock 'n' roll music; no one had ever played like that before. This is my acting debut," she adds, "and working with Baz is one of the great joys of my life."

Also making her acting debut, Dukureh relates that she originally came in to provide vocals alongside Yola, as well as to sing Big Mama Thornton's original hit "Hound Dog."

"I received an email from Elliot Wheeler and to my shock it said, 'Well, Shonka, we want to talk to you about being a part of the film on camera.' And when I talked to Elliot I said, 'Do you know who you're talking to?' she laughs. "And of course, he was sure, he said, 'Yes, absolutely.' Then he told me that they wanted me to come and be a part of the Pentecostal scene and do the part of Big Mama Thornton as well."

In advance of filming, Dukureh's research uncovered similarities between herself and the legend. "I know that she was a self-taught singer, like myself; I never took a formal class, just like her. She taught herself how to sing, she taught herself how to play the drums, harmonica, and

she said things like, 'I don't know how to read music, but I know how to sing and I know what good music sounds like.' And I can relate to all of it."

The role of Little Richard came to rising supermodel-turned-actor Alton Mason in a rather unexpected way. "I flew out to Sydney, Australia for The GQ Awards and I remember walking into the hair and makeup room, and Baz Luhrmann was there. And he kind of was just looking at me, and I was looking at him, and I said, 'I like your hair,' and he said, 'I like *your* hair.' We just kind of met each other then and there and he finished up before me and he was like, 'Alright, I'll see you down there.' Then there was an after-party and he asked my mom if he could talk with me and then he asked me "Do you sing? Or does anyone in your family sing?" And I said that I sing but my family has some *singers* and there's a difference—my great, great, great aunt was Mahalia Jackson."

One of the most influential gospel singers of the 20th century, Jackson appears briefly as a character in the film. The coincidence—along with Mason's spot-on look—was enough for Luhrmann. Mason remembers, "We ended up just talking and kickin' it and the next day he was supposed to fly out, but he extended his stay just to talk with me about the role."

It didn't take much convincing for Mason to sign on. Singer Les Greene would provide the vocal, but Mason thoroughly embodies Little Richard's physicality when he performs what would later become the renowned "Tutti Frutti" in the film.

"Little Richard was so powerful and his energy was so electric and so on fire. But he was also very angelic, which is an essence that I really adore, honestly. Watching his videos and watching him perform made me want to move and want to dance, you kind of can't help it!" he smiles. "I wanted to see what it would feel like to embody some of those essences and to honor all that he did as one of the architects of rock 'n' roll."

Luhrmann also went straight to Gary Clark Jr. to play Arthur Crudup, the musician and songwriter who wrote "That's All Right"—the first single Elvis released in 1954. "I've studied blues since I was a child, and there are just some guys you need to know. These guys invented rock 'n' roll," says Clark.

"I knew it was so important to have Crudup in the story," explains Luhrmann, continuing, "The list of musicians who could embody him in music and in spirit really comes down to one name: Gary Clark Jr. Melding multiple traditional blues songs, making it seem spontaneous in the moment (as is the essence of the form), was no easy feat. Gary went well beyond my wildest dreams in doing this."

Clark learned new-old-techniques in order to play guitar in the manner Crudup did and headed into the production with confidence. "I came with 100% faith in Baz," he says.

One of the closest friendships seen in the film is between Elvis and B.B. King, whom Elvis goes to for advice, or when things simply get out of control in his life and he needs a safe haven. King is portrayed in the film not only as a musician, but as a shrewd businessman, a role he would continue to fulfill throughout his lifetime.

Kelvin Harrison Jr. found “the idea of playing B.B. exciting. It was his calmness and his clarity and how he approached it that I think made me really want to play this part, within this story.”


The actor dove into his research, noting, “It started with watching videos; I watched an interview from ’68, and then I watched a lot of guitar tutorials that he did. That was really interesting because it let me break down how he talked and how he played. Listening to the music, especially the early albums, and a lot of the live shows gave me a real sense of the man.”

Harrison also appreciated the environment Luhrmann created on set, stating, “Working with Baz is something I don’t think I will ever forget; I’d never experienced anything like it before. He knows what he wants and he knows how to encourage and empower artists. Everyone felt so alive and so excited to come to work and even the background artists felt like they had a character. The energy, the excitement for the music... Baz creates a world and you walk into the world and you exist. You don’t overthink it, you get out of your own head, let your ego go and, as we would say in Club Handy, we let it all hang out.”

“Elvis” also introduces those who would be part of the singer’s entourage in various capacities—friends, family, musicians, producers—throughout his life, among them Luke Bracey as Jerry Schilling, Xavier Samuel as Scotty Moore, Dacre Montgomery as Steve Binder, Gareth Davies as Bones Howe, and many more.

The film also contains scenes at Sun Records, the label where Elvis cut his very first recordings—including the radio hit that caught the attention of the Colonel. Sun founder Sam Phillips and Marion Keisker are played by Josh McConville and Kate Mulvany, and Elvis’s early girlfriend, Dixie Locke, is played by Natasha Bassett. Kodi-Smit McPhee stars as Jimmie Rodgers Snow, the young musician who plays the single for Parker, and David Wenham as his father, Parker’s headliner Hank Snow.

“This is my fourth time working with Baz and I love working with him,” Wenham smiles. “His work is so distinctive; it has a particular stamp to it and I do think he will go down in history as one of the truly great filmmakers. Baz is an entertainer, he’s a showman, but he’s also an artist in the way he makes films. I’ve never come across anybody with as much energy, enthusiasm, and drive. It’s always a joy to work with Baz, and for him to explore a character like Elvis Presley, seen through Baz’s unique perspective, is a match made in heaven.”

 *We're lost in a cloud
With too much rain
We're trapped in a world
That's troubled with pain
But as long as a man
Has the strength to dream
He can redeem his soul and fly...*

PRODUCTION DESIGN

To take audiences back in time through Elvis's life, production designers Catherine Martin and Karen Murphy focused on blending historic reference with Luhrmann's larger-than-life visual storytelling. With the exception of a few area locations, everything would be accomplished on the massive sound stages and backlot at Village Roadshow Studios in Australia's Gold Coast.

Martin has been interpreting Luhrmann's vision since his first foray into film. "The way we work is something that we've done for such a long time," Luhrmann says of partner Martin, whom he calls CM. "There's no mechanics to it, it's almost like our own language. I start out with my scribbles and collages and bibs and bobs and tear sheets and a *lot* of words. And I know my scribbles and my sketches and my boards are practically illegible, I know it," he laughs, "but I am able to convey to her how I see things. And she has many gifts, but one of her extraordinary gifts is that she can take all that jumble and execute it at such a level that is pretty rare. I am involved in the process all the way; while I might obsess over the hem of a costume or the colors on a set wall, we are a true partnership—there's a spiritual, creative connection that's really special. Since the moment we met, we have always had an ongoing dialogue, and that conversation hasn't ever stopped."

Graceland

"We attempted to recreate Graceland in certain periods as precisely as we could, however, we were not making a documentary," Martin says. "And of course there's a unique perspective because the story is told by Colonel Tom Parker. It was not meant to be a blow-by-blow recreation of Elvis's life and his world because not only is there a filmmaking perspective, but there's also the perspective of Colonel Tom Parker. He's telling the story, so we are seeing his memories of their experiences."

That said, Graceland exists today and has been preserved for fans and tourists who would have a definite idea of how it would have looked during Elvis's lifetime. Martin allows that, despite Parker's storytelling filter, "We wanted to recreate Graceland in its specific periods as much as

possible. All our architectural details were based on blueprints that we were very fortunate to access from the Graceland estate. We had such dedicated support from head archivist Angie Marchese and her team. For us, Graceland was very much the symbol and expression of Elvis's success. We see it from the exterior when he first arrives at Graceland with his parents after he's just bought it.

"Then we see the interior and it's the way it was when Elvis first purchased the house," she continues. "For instance, when they first moved in, it had floorboards. But then they covered it all in red carpet, so it was important to show that change. Then through the '60s and '70s there were many interior decoration changes. And Baz felt it was very important we display the house as it is seen now, open to the public and on display, as that is the way it is most remembered today."

For Martin, the process of design and execution is about collaboration and teamwork. "I rely on some incredible lieutenants who really help achieve this body of work. We had three art directors in the art department who took on each individual set and steered it to completion." For Graceland's interiors and exteriors, that list included art director Matt Wynne.

"We also had a great set decorator who steered all the decorating," Martin adds. "It's an incredibly well-oiled machine, where everybody is working together to achieve the unachievable!"

Set decorator Bev Dunn says that her focus is never on one table or one chair, but the room as a whole. "It's the entire room, or the entire ballroom, or two blocks of shop fronts, not just one. So, you do your best to get it right, mixing the old with the new. I couldn't go out and just buy all vintage mid-century style furniture, so we manufacture a lot of things and I use vintage thrift shops."

The exterior of Graceland was a 10-week build initially, however with the pandemic shut down, the set sat wrapped in plastic for almost a year. Remarkably it only required a 10-day refresh prior to the final shoot. All of the established greens and plants had to be relocated and stored, watered and manicured during the break, as did the immediate grass and lawns around the mansion and driveways. The actual location was quite unique as it had to be close to the Studios and offer the correct geographic land fall plus a backlit option.

While all of the exterior locations had very specific requirements, one of the biggest was privacy, which Guanaba, a semi-rural locality, and Suntown Landfill in Arundel, both provided. Moviegoers will undoubtedly appreciate the Graceland exterior, where much of the action at the home takes place in the film, thanks in large part to Elvis's penchant for cars—including the famous pink Cadillac.

Senior art director Damien Drew was responsible for the picture vehicles department's

acquisition of over 300 cars and motorbikes. Elvis was a big collector of both cars and bikes, which is well-documented. Says Drew, “The team at Graceland were very helpful with giving us a big list of the cars Elvis owned throughout his life. He was a fanatic when it came to vehicles. Some he only owned for a short amount of time, and then he would gift them to family or friends. And he bought bikes from a very young age. We started looking at what might be available to us in Australia and what we might have to purchase from the US. Initially we were concerned that we wouldn’t find left-hand drive versions of our hero cars in Australia, but the deeper we dug, the more came out of the woodwork.

“In Queensland, where we were filming, there was a huge volume of car collectors,” he resumes. “People had cars tucked away in sheds that we never really dreamt we would find. In the end, we only had to purchase about 15 cars, and only half a dozen or so came from the US. The remainder we were able to lease from these Australian collectors. Many of the owners were happy to let us lease the cars for an extended period of time because they knew we were going to improve them, reupholster and repair them, therefore adding value.”

Beale Street

In the film, Elvis occasionally retreats to the comfort of friends and live music at clubs along Beale Street in Memphis. This exterior set, created on location in Suntown Landfill, was one of the biggest and most complicated to build. Says supervising art director Ian Gracie, “Beale Street took 12 weeks to build initially.” Like Graceland, though, “The set itself sat wrapped in plastic for almost a year.”

The references for Beale Street were all historical and one of the first requirements was that the street be constructed on a slope, as it was at the time. Due to the action in the scenes, however, some compression, geographically, had to be factored in when erecting the hero buildings, such as the proximity of Lansky’s to Club Handy. Rain, wind and general atmospheric elements were also a challenge, as was the initial alignment of the set for a particular sunset shot.

Altogether, more than 60 vehicles, including trucks, pickups, sedans, and coupes were used in Beale Street across the two time periods, with most sourced locally. Many were vinyl wrapped and some physically altered to make them historically correct.

Carnival


An early and vital setting in the story is the carnival where Parker, having previously witnessed Elvis’s effect on the crowd at the Shreveport, Louisiana Hayride, approaches Elvis to be his manager. Gracie, who worked closely with art director Tuesday Stone, says of the massive

build, “All the elements, including the signage, tents, side shows, concession stands, freak shows, hero tent, Hank Snow Show, food stands, wagons and carriages, Madam Zeena’s and more were all designed and built within the art department. Only the Ferris wheel, carousel and swing chair, all of which had a decent degree of art department embellishment, were existing elements sourced by us.”

The set also had to work for two different story beats: one night in Florida and the other, daytime in Texas. With just one day to changeover between the two, the elements—storm cells, torrential rain, and hail—played havoc with the set.

The International

In the film, Parker secures an extensive run for Elvis in Las Vegas at the new International Hotel, requiring a lavish set encompassing both a large performance stage and audience area. Dunn states that one of the most significant elements for her was “an incredible, fully operational gold curtain, which was enormous. When I first started there was talk of that being a visual effect, because it was so big. It was wonderful that we were finally able to source the material, dye the fabric gold, import it to Australia and sew it, all in under eight weeks! But it was worth it to allow the actors to interact with such a curtain and to fully create that scene.”

 *Deep in my heart there's a trembling question
Still I am sure that the answer's, answer's gonna come somehow
Out there in the dark, there's a beckoning candle, oh yeah...*

COSTUME DESIGN

It might be difficult to imagine an artist whose costumes were more emblematic than Elvis. On top of that, the film spans at least three decades, over which fashion evolved radically. Martin and her team were up to the challenge.

She offers, “In terms of costume design, we had to bridge three decades: the 1950s, `60s and `70s. We needed to get into the heart of each decade so there would be a distinct shift in the look between all the periods. It also helped to position people into the iconic star moments—Priscilla, for instance, was a contemporary style icon; the way that she wore her hair, her clothes, is iconic. It was very important for us to hit those particular markers.”

“Austin, who looks good in everything, has over ninety costume changes!” she exclaims. “And because costumes are a big part of the process of helping the actor and director create character, it’s so important to get them right.”

Butler raves about the costume designer and her team, observing, “Catherine Martin had everything to do with everything that I wear in the film, and she had just an absolutely brilliant team. It helps massively when you look in the mirror and you start to see the transformation just one costume can make.”

No film featuring as many of Elvis’s iconic performances would be complete without a vast array of his famed jumpsuits, of which there are several, but for Butler the real discovery came with the artist’s “everyday” attire, as well as a few surprising designs. “I’ve never worn so many laced shirts! I loved those and the bolero jackets. And the all-blue suit in the `50s, with the blue lace shirt, I really liked that.”

At that point in Elvis’s career in the mid- and late-1950s, he was buying a majority of his clothing to wear on and off stage from Lansky Bros. on Beale Street in Memphis, Tennessee. “In the 1950s, Lansky Bros. was *the* place to shop for the sartorially splendid look favored by the performers of the region; it represented an aspirational look for would-be music artists, including the young Elvis Presley,” relates Martin. “One of the wonderful things about our research trips to Memphis was the time I spent with Hal and Julie Lansky, who carry on the Lansky Bros. store founded by Hal’s father, Bernard.”

But back to the jumpsuits... Martin and her team were privileged to collaborate with Kim and Butch Polston of B&K Enterprises in Charlestown, Indiana, who faithfully recreated Elvis’ iconic 1970s stage wear with the express permission of Elvis’s longtime costume designer Bill Belew. Through the Polstons, Martin was able to not only commission jumpsuits for the movie that were made in precisely the same manner as the originals, but also with the spectacular and complex chain-stitch embroidery all done by Jean Doucette, who personally embroidered Elvis’s own jumpsuits. Says Martin, “It was really meaningful not just for the costume team, but also I believe for Austin, to be able to bring these pieces to the screen with such a touching, personal authenticity.”

Though it would be hard to choose a favorite among so many costumes, Butler admits, “The leather outfit I wore for the `68 Special was empowering. It just felt great to wear that.”


For fashionista Priscilla, Martin says, “I was lucky enough to rekindle my collaboration with Prada and Miu Miu. I thought that was a wonderful way to tap into Priscilla’s iconic style and find a way of connecting it to iconic designers and their designs. Priscilla has some beautiful clothes in the film—one of my favorites is a white sleeveless gown that she wears to a dinner party, a beautiful Miu Miu gown that’s a symphony of laces and organza and chiffon. It’s a truly beautiful dress.”

Comments Olivia DeJonge, “One of the really exciting aspects of this film for me was Priscilla’s costumes. Priscilla’s fashion, her look, is of course very well-known and documented. Being able to wear those costumes and the hair and make-up was such a privilege. It was definitely an exciting aspect of the film, although it took about three or four hours in make-up, depending on the day!”

And her personal favorite? “If I had to choose, a favorite would be the costume Priscilla wore to the Vegas concert. It was a bejeweled matching pantsuit. At that time, she had long, long dark hair with these thick eyelashes. It was just incredible and it made me feel like a queen. I don’t think I’ll ever wear anything as amazing as that again. Something like that really adds to your performance.”

The sourcing of the costumes would prove extensive, resulting in a combination of vintage costumes and vintage clothes, costumes purchased from collections and costumes designed and made in-house, supplemented by some hired clothes from America and Europe. But the vast majority were designed and made by the costume department.

“We had a very skilled workroom who made a vast number of our costumes, from suits for Elvis to aprons for maids,” Martin relates. “We also had very large numbers of crowd and supporting artists, from street scenes in Beale Street in Memphis in the ‘50s to a large showroom for an Elvis concert in the ‘70s, and everything in between. Those supporting artists and extras create a large part of the context in which you see Elvis evolve as a performer, so those extras’ costumes were equally as important as any that Elvis wore.”

 *And while I can think, while I can talk...*

SPECIAL MAKE-UP EFFECTS

When “Elvis” opens, the audience is introduced to its narrator, Colonel Tom Parker, near the end of his life. Thus, to portray him over the 40-plus years covered in the film, Tom Hanks spent many hours in the make-up chair each and every day under the creative eye of prosthetics supervisor Jason Baird and his team of artists.

Baird describes the process, detailing, “The starting point of any big prosthetic make-up is the life castings of the actor’s head and the digital scanning of the actor’s body. From there, the body suits are crafted and different variations of each look are prepared.”

For Parker there were three different versions: mid-to-late 40s, the age he was when he discovered Elvis; through middle-age, his 60s; and Parker at age 87. Baird says, “The late 60s

version was a little bit fatter in the throat to distinguish the age jump, along with a change of wig and additional age spots to his complexion. As an 87-year-old man, he was very pale and sickly; Tom's head was completely covered in prosthetics for this version of Parker, and we added a different wig with more white, thinning hair, a set of prosthetic teeth, and even more age and sun spots.

"The total application for the first two aging looks took three-and-a-half hours every day; the older, ghostly version took around five hours to apply," he continues. "Tom was amazing throughout the application process. He would more or less go to sleep and, at the two-hour point, he would take a break to stretch his legs."

Hanks says, "We were working with the best of the best—Jason, Sean [Genders] and Brittany [Jones] were my crack team, and I spent up to five hours with them every morning before the sun comes up, so we got to know each other's rhythms."

Baird adds that "Most of the time we see Colonel Parker with his coat on, but there were a few scenes where he had bare arms, so we took molds of Tom's arms and sculpted fat sections for his forearms and upper arms. Each set of arm appliances needed hair-punching, the process where individual hairs are inserted into the silicone arm skins, a time-consuming discipline but vital in creating realism."

Co-star Richard Roxburgh, who plays Vernon, remembers, "When I first arrived, I walked to my trailer and saw a sign on the next trailer that said 'Tom Hanks, Colonel Parker.' and sitting outside was a big bald guy eating his lunch. I thought he must be an assistant or someone, but of course it was Tom with his bald wig on, his double chins, his fat suit. The transformation was quite remarkable."

Because Austin Butler plays Elvis Presley throughout the three or so decades he factors into the story (Elvis having died long before Parker), Butler would have to go from a teenager of 17 to an older Elvis just before he died at 42. Though none as extensive as Hanks' transformation required, Butler, too, was fitted for many prosthetic variations.

Comments prosthetics designer Mark Coulier, "One of the things we had to consider with Austin is how would we take him from age 17 to 42 and could that in fact be done. For the earlier part of the character's life, we had to achieve the slight weight change that you get as you're developing from your mid-20s right through to your late 30s. But that has to be subtle, not something that is too noticeable. Then for his final concert, Elvis was very heavy and he hadn't been seen for a while, so obviously then you do want to show a progression, show the change, so the audience can see how he really does look not only overweight but unhealthy. That was the challenge."

That final look took close to five hours to apply, but Butler, like Hanks, took it in stride, his eye on the end result and how it would aid his performance. “We had the most incredible prosthetics team,” he says. “When you start to see the transformation, it makes you feel different, it really does. When you have a little bit of weight on, you walk differently, you breathe differently, and it really does help. That final Elvis performance is heartbreaking. You see the little boy in Elvis, shining through this big, sick body, and you know that he only lived for a short while after that. It’s very emotional.

“When I had that fat suit on, it felt like so much extra weight,” he recalls. “Then I was strapped into the jumpsuit and my lungs felt constricted, I could only take shallow breaths and it was very hot. It felt very claustrophobic and I felt a great sadness because I’m sure Elvis felt the same way, that he could hardly breathe. And yet his voice still soared.”



While I can stand, while I can walk...

CINEMATOGRAPHY

To lens the massive production, Luhrmann turned to frequent collaborator Mandy Walker, with whom he has developed a shorthand over time—an invaluable relationship between director and director of photography on any production, but most especially one of this scope, scale, and precision.

For example, there were several times during production where filming became what Luhrmann refers to as “trainspotting.” Walker explains, “Trainspotting is a complete reproduction of existing footage, such as the Elvis ‘68 Special, the Elvis performances in Vegas, and his performances on the Steve Allen and Milton Berle shows. There was so much reference material available to us for all those shows and for this ‘trainspotting’ footage, we reproduced each event very exactly, from the lighting to the lensing, including the moments where we zoomed in and out. It was a great challenge for us to do.”

Because the story covers a long span of time, all of it in period, from the very beginning of pre-production, Luhrmann and Walker worked closely with Dan Sasaki, who is in charge of Optical Engineering at Panavision. Sasaki created two original and completely different sets of lenses to capture the photography on the film. “First, the lenses that take us up until Elvis goes to Las Vegas, which were 65mm and had a softer color palette and less contrasty feel,” Walker shares. “And they have a softer feel to create that historical element or reference to an earlier time.

“Then, when Elvis goes to Vegas, we went anamorphic because it represents the `70s—the way that the lenses flare and distort. These lenses were built from scratch and they even have little Elvis symbols on them and were enhanced to be of more saturated color with a bit more contrast. So, when the film cuts back and forth from different time periods, you feel the transition and it helps take the audience back to that time.”

“Mandy is crazy for a handmade lens,” Luhrmann grins.

Walker also used a lot of new LED technology, providing, “We had everything on a dimmer switch, so that if we turned the camera around, we could turn the lighting around at the same time, and I could change the color of the lights very quickly and all from an iPad. We even made some LED soft lights that were eight feet long; they give a beautiful soft light but could be hidden up in the ceiling.”


The color palette was very specific to the time period of the movie as well. Colored light doesn’t come in until later on in Elvis’s life; the early part of his life in Memphis is, as Luhrmann dubbed it, “color black and white,” which is the renowned 20th century American photographer Gordon Parks photo-reference of color photography at that time—early color photography.

Walker explains, “Color black and white is a pastel-like version of color, but still with strong black and white, something I looked to in order to reproduce in the Beale Street scenes. For Beale Street during the day, we studied a lot of those early pictures of Gordon Parks and Saul Leiter and I always had those in the back of my mind when we were lighting and composing, so we could recreate references of the time and images that people are familiar with from that period of Elvis’s life.”

Luhrmann advises, “Mandy and I, we just love photographers and photographs, and the way an eye catches something familiar, so we had go-to iconic photographers like Parks that we used as touchstones. Mandy is absolutely in service of the story, and the references we worked out early on kept the look and feel from leaning too nostalgic but instead feeling very in the moment.”

Walker also says that Luhrmann would frequently “talk to me about the story, about the emotional journey, and I would go through the script and write down notes about what he had said to me in terms of what was going on for each character at the time, or how he wanted the audience to feel, or the emotion that’s portrayed in each scene. Once I had that then I would start thinking technically about how we could achieve that and express it photographically. Most of the time we were shooting with at least two cameras and sometimes three, even up to five cameras for the concert scenes. Baz would sit with all the monitors on and talk to everybody on the cameras the whole time. He’s like a conductor,” she smiles. “Part of my job was to make sure

he had all the options available to him, really quickly, so we could easily make adjustments in the moment.”

 *While I can dream
Oh, please let my dream
Come true
Right now...*

MUSIC

Anyone who’s seen a Baz Luhrmann film, no matter the subject or style of storytelling, knows he takes the score and soundtrack as seriously as any scene, any performance, any frame of film. “I consider music, the script and the visual language all as one,” he states. “I have the same sort of depth of collaboration with my music team as I do with camera—Anton Monsted is the music supervisor on ‘Elvis,’ Elliott Wheeler is the composer and executive music producer, and I’ve worked with them both before. The music script, the written word, and the visual script—at a certain point with those collaborators I bring it all into one synthesis, so that when actors come into my world, there’s a visualization already. There’s ‘musicalization’ already, which I know is not a word,” he laughs, “I use it but I made it up. Because to me, all the elements, they all live at once. I don’t come in and say now that there’s a script, let’s think about the music. Music is not a background.”

Especially with “Elvis,” the filmmaker asserts. “To access the inner life of Elvis... He was not a particularly verbal person, but when he opens his mouth and he sings, you feel you know him. You feel you understand him. You feel *him*. That’s just a very particular gift.”

Therefore, the performances in the film, while many, had to be executed just so. “My entire team and I are research junkies,” the director reveals. “We follow a process that’s both academic and in the field, anecdotal. But of course we’re making a feature-length drama of a life of 42 years, so ‘artistic license’ has to be engaged to compress time and take multiple historical events and combine them into a single moment. The 1956 concert at Russwood Park is a good example. The rioting crowd incident actually occurred at a concert in Canada not long after, but we folded it into the one dramatic event.”

Says Butler, “Playing Elvis was such an incredible, humbling experience. There were many moments, right from the very beginning, where I just had to walk into the fire. For instance, before we started filming, we went to Nashville and Memphis, and recorded at RCA where Elvis actually recorded, in Studio A there. We had the actual machine that he recorded ‘Heartbreak

Hotel' on. It was my first time in a recording studio and I was so nervous! Baz asked all the people from the offices of RCA to come out and be in the audience, and I had to sing 'Blue Suede Shoes' to them. I'd just been cast and now there I was singing these iconic songs in front of all those people!"

And yet, he understood the logic behind it. "Slowly and surely, moments like that pushed me so far outside my comfort zone that the fear was still there, but it became a different experience," the actor concedes. "And I knew it was the way that Elvis would have felt when he went out onstage for the first time."

The preparation proved even more useful on the first day of the shoot. "We started filming with the Comeback Special, with about 300 extras, and I had to walk out there in the full leather suit, first day of filming, and become Elvis," Butler reveals. "It surpassed my conscious mind at times. It was terrifying and yet also very exciting and exhilarating. And then, once those first couple of takes were down—and I believe Elvis would say this as well—then you realize it's okay, nobody is going to throw a rock at me. And you start to feel a connection with the audience, you see a twinkle in someone's eye, you make someone laugh. You feel that rapport. It's the closest I could feel to the real thing and there were days I didn't want it to be over. It was all so moving."

Says Luhrmann, "There were a handful of 'never happened to me before on a movie' moments. While Austin was performing the Vegas scenes—and I don't just mean the songs—even while the cameras were off, he was riffing gags with the audience, singing little pieces. A cameraman whom I have worked with for many years came up and said to me, 'It's just such a privilege to be part of this.'

"On another occasion," he continues, "a grip, with wry humor, who had held me up ladders and learned to dance with the camera but was a man's man of few words, acknowledged to me that we had seen a lot of things, but as he watched Austin embody Elvis in those performances, he said, 'I have never seen anything like that.'"

Throughout filming, Butler would be surrounded by artists who've undoubtedly had such a first experience. "We were so very fortunate with the musicians who became involved," Wheeler says. "Yola came to our music sessions in Nashville and had one of the most phenomenal voices I've ever heard, she's such an incredible talent. Gary Clarke Jr. is another of those rare talents where you just point a microphone at him, and away he goes; he's just sensational. And he was very excited to be able to pay homage to Arthur Crudup.

"Shonka Dukureh came along to one of the recording sessions and did a bunch of Big Mama tracks and was just incredible, we were very lucky to find her," he continues. "Shannon Sanders, Leneshia Randolph and Jordan Holland are absolutely amazing gospel singers and the

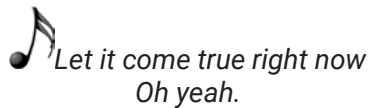
day we recorded the gospel session in the Pentecostal church was one of the most profoundly moving musical experiences I have ever had. And then Alton Mason, who plays Little Richard, is one of the most unique performers I've ever seen. We were so blessed to find them all."

The Presley canon is vast; he recorded over 700 songs. Luhrmann and his team had to make tough decisions as to what could and could not be included in the film, not based on popularity but based solely on what would tell the story most effectively. In addition, Luhrmann says his mission in storytelling, "whether I am taking classical material from *Romeo and Juliet* to *The Great Gatsby*, or an iconic singer like Elvis, is always to decode not what it *was*, but what it *felt like* for the audiences back in the day. For example, when Big Mama Thornton sings, "*You ain't nothin' but a hound dog...*" it is really the story of a woman telling an unfaithful and unworthy man to 'hit the road' in what would have been confronting street vernacular at the time. Counterpointing the Thornton track with a rap from Doja Cat translates the lyrics and the sentiment for a contemporary, and especially a younger, audience."

The filmmakers offers, "A similar example would be when Elvis performs live for the first time in the film at the Louisiana Hayride. Austin sings 'Baby Let's Play House' and we adhere fairly accurately to the style of the time. But to underline what it felt like for the young crowd at that time—the electrifying, punk-like intensity—we anachronistically employed a shredding guitar riff (helpfully provided by Gary Clark Jr). I used this technique throughout the film and had the privilege of engaging with guest artists from the young to the established to living legends."

The music, whether it was Elvis or any of the other performers, had an effect on everyone on set. Butler recalls, "The background performers and extras were all truly amazing. We would finish an 18-hour day and I'd be getting my make-up off, and the background actors would all be in these buses, going back to base, singing 'Suspicious Minds' or 'Burning Love,' whatever it had been that day, at the top of their lungs. It was a beautiful thing that they still had that energy."

That lasting reaction, that undeniable impulse to continue the experience after the director called "Cut" for the day and even long after production wrapped, is exactly what Baz Luhrmann hopes will permeate into the theater when audiences gather to see "Elvis" on the big screen: "I hope they get all the buzz of the highs, the lows, the music, the love, the looks, the fashion, but most of all that they come out and they're still talking about it when they leave. That's the way I look at this movie and that's why I make movies, to create—to celebrate—that singular experience we can have together in the theater and that we can take with us long after the credits roll. It's definitely a feeling I feel Elvis would understand and celebrate."



"If I Can Dream"
Songwriter: Walter Earl Brown
Recorded June 1968
Released by RCA December 1968

ABOUT THE CAST

AUSTIN BUTLER (Elvis) boasts a long list of credits on the big screen and television. In spring of 2018, he made his Broadway debut, starring opposite Denzel Washington in "The Iceman Cometh," which was nominated for eight Tony Awards. Butler received rave reviews for his work in the role of lost boy Don Parritt.

2019 proved to be a very successful year for Butler when his films "The Dead Don't Die" and "Once Upon A Time... In Hollywood" were both released. He appeared alongside Bill Murray, Tilda Swinton, Adam Driver, and Selena Gomez in "The Dead Don't Die," directed by Jim Jarmusch. Director Quentin Tarantino cast him in the role of Tex in "Once Upon A Time... In Hollywood," which included a star-studded cast: Leonardo DiCaprio, Brad Pitt, Margot Robbie and Dakota Fanning, among others.

TOM HANKS (Colonel Tom Parker) is an award-winning actor, producer, and director. One of only two actors in history to win back-to-back Academy Awards for "Best Actor in a Leading Role," he won his first Oscar in 1994 for his moving portrayal of AIDS-stricken lawyer Andrew Beckett in Jonathan Demme's "Philadelphia." The following year, he took home his second Oscar for his unforgettable performance in the title role of Robert Zemeckis' "Forrest Gump." He also won Golden Globe Awards for both films, as well as a SAG Award for the latter.

Hanks has also been honored with Academy Award nominations for his performances in Penny Marshall's "Big," Steven Spielberg's "Saving Private Ryan," Robert Zemeckis' "Cast Away," and, most recently, for his portrayal of Fred Rogers in Marielle Heller's "A Beautiful Day in the Neighborhood." He also won Golden Globes for "Big" and "Cast Away."

In 2013, Hanks starred in the Academy Award-nominated film "Captain Phillips" (for which he received Golden Globe, SAG, and BAFTA nominations), as well as the AFI Movie of the Year "Saving Mr. Banks." Four years later, he received his ninth Golden Globe nomination, as well as

“Best Actor” from the National Board of Review, for his work in Steven Spielberg’s Academy Award-nominated film “The Post,” alongside Meryl Streep.

Most recently, Hanks starred in the WWII drama “Greyhound” for Apple TV+, which he also wrote, and Paul Greengrass’ pre-Civil War drama “News of the World,” and Apple TV+’s post-apocalyptic sci-fi drama, “Finch.” He will next be seen in “Pinocchio” for Disney+, Sony’s “A Man Called Otto,” and Wes Anderson’s upcoming untitled film.

His other acting credits include the Tom Tykwer, Andy Wachowski, and Lana Wachowski film “Cloud Atlas”; Stephen Daldry’s “Extremely Loud & Incredibly Close”; the animated adventure “The Polar Express” (which he also executive produced and which reunited him with director Robert Zemeckis); the Coen brothers’ “The Ladykillers”; Steven Spielberg’s “The Terminal” and “Catch Me If You Can”; Sam Mendes’ “Road to Perdition”; Frank Darabont’s “The Green Mile”; Nora Ephron’s “You’ve Got Mail” and “Sleepless in Seattle”; Penny Marshall’s “A League of Their Own”; Ron Howard’s “Apollo 13,” “The Da Vinci Code,” “Angels & Demons,” “Splash,” “Hologram for a King” “Inferno,” “Sully”; and the computer-animated blockbusters “Cars,” “Toy Story,” “Toy Story 2,” “Toy Story 3,” and “Toy Story 4.”

In 1996, Hanks made his successful feature film writing and directing debut with “That Thing You Do,” in which he also starred. He later wrote, produced, directed, and starred in “Larry Crowne” with Julia Roberts. Under his Playtone banner, founded in 1998 with producing partner Gary Goetzman, Hanks’ additional film producing credits include the smash-hit romantic comedy “My Big Fat Greek Wedding” with Hanks’ wife Rita Wilson, “Where the Wild Things Are,” “The Polar Express,” “The Ant Bully,” “Charlie Wilson’s War,” “Mamma Mia!,” “Mamma Mia! Here We Go Again,” “The Great Buck Howard,” and “Starter for 10.”

Hanks’ work on the big screen has translated to success on the small screen as well. Following “Apollo 13,” he executive produced and hosted the acclaimed HBO miniseries “From the Earth to the Moon,” also directing one segment and writing several others. His work on the miniseries brought him Emmy, Golden Globe and Producers Guild Awards, as well as an Emmy nomination for “Outstanding Directing for a Miniseries.”

In 2001 he then went on to executive produce his second miniseries for HBO, and first television series under his Playtone banner, “Band of Brothers,” alongside Steven Spielberg. The WWII drama, based on the book Stephen Ambrose, won Emmy and Golden Globe Awards for “Outstanding Miniseries.” Hanks directed one episode of the series and wrote another, earning him an Emmy Award for “Outstanding Directing for a Miniseries” and an Emmy nomination for “Outstanding Writing for a Miniseries.” He also received another Producers Guild Award for his work on the project. In 2010, he and Spielberg re-teamed for the award-winning HBO miniseries

“The Pacific,” for which Hanks once again served as executive producer. The 10-part program won eight Emmy Awards, including “Outstanding Miniseries,” and brought Hanks his fourth PGA Award.

Hanks additional executive producing credits include the HBO miniseries “John Adams” (Emmy and Golden Globe Awards for “Outstanding Miniseries,” PGA Award); the HBO political drama “Game Change” (Emmy and Golden Globes Awards for “Outstanding Miniseries/Television Film,” PGA Award); the HBO miniseries “Olive Kitteridge,” based on the Pulitzer Prize-winning novel by Elizabeth Strout (Emmy Award for “Outstanding Limited Series”); and hit CNN documentary series “The Sixties” (Emmy Award nomination), “The Seventies” (Emmy Award nomination), “The Eighties,” “The Nineties,” and “The Movies.”

In 2013, Hanks made his Broadway debut in the Nora Ephron-penned play “Lucky Guy.” His performance earned him Drama Desk, Drama League, Outer Critics Circle, and Tony Award nominations.

At the 77th Annual Golden Globe Awards, Hanks was honored with the prestigious Cecil B. DeMille Award by the Hollywood Foreign Press Association. Hanks has also received the American Film Institute’s Lifetime Achievement Award in 2002, the Film Society of Lincoln Center’s Chaplin Award in 2009, and, in 2014, Hanks received a Kennedy Center Honor.

HELEN THOMSON (Gladys) is a Helpmann Award winner with an extensive list of theatre, film and television credits.

Her recent theatre credits include “Death of a Salesman,” “No Pay? No Way!,” “Mary Stuart,” “Harp in the South,” “Top Girls,” “Hay Fever,” “King Lear,” “After Dinner,” “Children of the Sun,” Mrs. Warren’s Profession” and “Splinter” (Sydney Theatre Company); “Things I Know to Be True,” “Hir,” “Mark Colvin’s Kidney,” “Ivanov” and “Measure for Measure” (Belvoir); and “A Winter’s Tale” (Bell Shakespeare).

Thomson’s most recent television credits include “Fires,” “Bad Mothers,” “Doctor Doctor,” “Rake: Series 3 & 5,” “Pulse,” “A Place to Call Home: Season 4,” “Top of the Lake: China Girl,” “Love Child” and “Wonderland.” She will next be seen in upcoming original Binge series “Colin from Accounts.”

Her film credits include “A Man’s Gotta Do,” “The Rage in Placid Lake,” “Kangaroo Jack” and “Getting’ Square,” for which she was nominated for Best Supporting Actress at the AFI awards.

For her performance in “After Dinner,” Thomson was awarded the Helpmann Award for Best Female Actor in a Supporting Role. Her other nominations include Best Actress in a

Supporting Role for “Ivanov” and Best Actress in a Leading Role for “Mrs. Warren’s Profession” at the Sydney Theatre Awards, along with Best Female Actor in a Play for the latter and for “Summer of the Seventeenth Doll,” and Best Female Supporting Actor in a Play for “In the Next Room” at the Helpmann Awards.

RICHARD ROXBURGH (Vernon) is an award-winning actor who has worked on stage and screen around the world. His film credits include “Moulin Rouge”; “Doing Time For Patsy Cline”; “Mission: Impossible II”; “Oscar and Lucinda”; “Thank God He Met Lizzie”; “Children of the Revolution”; James Cameron’s action-adventure film “Sanctum”; Mel Gibson’s “Hacksaw Ridge”; the adaptation of Tim Winton’s novel “Breath”; “Looking For Grace”; “Danger Close,” with Travis Fimmel; “Angel of Mine,” with Noomi Rapace; “Go!”; and “H Is For Happiness,” with Miriam Margoyles and Emma Booth.

Roxburgh’s well-known television credits include the role of Cleaver Greene in the ABC hit series “Rake,” which he also co-created, writes and produces. His performance earned him a TV Week Silver Logie for Most Outstanding Actor and the AACTA Award for Best Actor in a Television Series. His performance in the role of Prime Minister Bob Hawke in telemovie “Hawke” also earned him critical acclaim, along with his award-winning electrifying portrayal as the notorious Roger Rogerson in the ABC controversial mini-series “Blue Murder.” The sequel, “Blue Murder: Killer Cop,” earned him a Best Lead Actor in a Television Drama nomination. His other credits include the SBS miniseries “The Hunting”; the HBO/Sky UK Miniseries “Catherine The Great,” opposite Helen Mirren; the two-part drama series “The Silence”; and “East of Everything.”

Also an accomplished director, Roxburgh’s debut film “Romulus, My Father,” starring Eric Bana, drew critical acclaim. His theatre credits include the critically acclaimed “The Present,” at the Sydney Theatre Company and on Broadway. He also appeared as the title character in STC’s hugely successful production of Chekhov’s “Uncle Vanya,” opposite Cate Blanchett. The play had a revival at the Kennedy Center in Washington and was remounted at Lincoln Center in New York City. His other stage credits include “Waiting For Godot” (including a critically acclaimed tour to the Barbican, London); “Toy Symphony”; “The Seagull”; “Hamlet”; and “Closer.”

OLIVIA DEJONGE (Priscilla) is rapidly emerging as one of young Hollywood’s most sought-after talents. She can currently be seen in the eight-episode adaption of “The Staircase,” based on the docuseries. The HBO Max adaption is written and executive produced by Antonio Campos and Maggie Cohn. The series also stars Colin Firth and Toni Collette.

DeJonge's movie credits include Caryn Waechter's thriller "Sisterhood of the Night," the Miranda Nation-directed film "Undertow," and "Stray Dolls," directed by Sonejuhi Sinha.

She was nominated for a Young Artist Award in the category of Best Performance in a Feature Film Lead Young Actress for her role as Becca in M. Night Shyamalan's "The Visit," and won the WASA Award for Best Young Actress for her performance in "The Good Pretender."

DeJonge's television credits include Netflix's "The Society," opposite Katheryn Newton, TNT's Shakespeare drama "Will," and the drama series "Hiding."

YOLA's (Sister Rosetta Tharpe) debut album, *Walk Through Fire*, received widespread acclaim from publications, including *Rolling Stone* magazine and *The New York Times*. The album earned Yola four Grammy award nominations, including Best New Artist.

Originally from the UK, Yola's rapid rise in the USA saw her perform with Kacey Musgraves, Mavis Staples, The Highwomen (she is also featured on The Highwomen's self-titled debut album) and Dolly Parton. Her first U.S. headlining tour had multiple sold out dates, including two nights at the Troubadour in Los Angeles, and she has appeared on "Austin City Limits," "Jimmy Kimmel Live," "The Tonight Show," "The Late Late Show With James Corden" and at The Hollywood Bowl, Newport Folk Festival, SXSW and Farm Aid.

Yola has performed remotely on NPR Music's "Tiny Desk" and PBS's "Great Performances: Grammy Salute to Music Legends" show honoring Sister Rosetta Tharpe. She performed "Young Gifted And Black" on "Late Night With Seth Meyers" and was featured on Ringo Star's single "Here's To The Night," alongside Paul McCartney, Dave Grohl and Lenny Kravitz.

She has also supported a number of charitable and public awareness initiatives, including appearing on CBS's "Play On" benefit concert, alongside Gary Clark Jr., Ziggy Marley, Andra Day and Snoop Dogg, helping charities NAACP, LDF and WhyHunger. She was also featured on BBC's Children in Need single "Stop Crying Your Heart Out," WME's RWQuarantunes and "Twitch Aid," raising funds for the World Health Organization, performing alongside John Legend. Yola also took part in BMI's Tennessee Diversity Consortium Surviving Crisis panel and contributed a performance for Annie Lennox's Circle Music Auction.

SHONKA DUKUREH (Big Mama Thornton/Pentecostal Singer) is a vocal powerhouse, actress, author and playwright. Hailing from Nashville, Tennessee by way of Charlotte, North Carolina, this quadruple threat holds a bachelor's degree in Theatre from Fisk University and a master's degree in Education from Trevecca Nazarene University, credentialing her as a "Highly Qualified" K-6 teacher. Dukureh's initial career aspiration was to become a teacher, however,

she would soon learn that her vocal talents, coupled with an innate sense for the dramatic, were most suited for a career as a performing artist.

She has wielded her singing and acting skillfully and always managed to stop the show, even in the most inconsequential roles. This is the gift of her talent. Over the years, she has successfully starred in many touring musicals and plays around the country. She garnered critical acclaim for her role in “American Duet” by Marcus Hummon and was nominated and won the 2003 Tennessean Theatre Award for Best Musical Direction or Performance as a Vocalist. Additionally, she spent over ten years touring across the country to college campuses and conferences, performing with the First Amendment Center’s “Freedom Sings,” a multi-media musical production.

Dukureh has also toured internationally with recording artist Jamie Liddell and The Royal Pharaohs. Her musicality and character development are impeccable. When it comes to her singing, the emotions she enlists in her live performances have been compared by luminaries in the entertainment industry to the greats of the past. As an actress, her ability to transform into characters so convincingly taking on the emotional baggage required to make them believable catapults her to elite status. She can hold her own with the greatest of well-known character actors.

Dukureh has had a well-rounded and grounded journey as a performing artist. Her ability to make you feel in a manner that is emotionally transformative is the core of the beauty and unique essence of her creative gifts. Her talent is simply undeniable and she is just getting started.

ALTON MASON (Little Richard) is an American top model and rising star who moved from the mid-west to Los Angeles to study dance and theatre at the American Musical and Dramatic Academy. Through celebrity choreographer Laurieann Gibson, Mason was soon cast as a dancer for P Diddy at the BET Awards, quickly gaining attention for his unique look. Shortly after, he was cast for his first fashion show via Instagram and walked in Kanye West’s Yeezy Season 3 show.

Since then, Mason has walked various fashion shows around the world and has been featured in major campaigns for numerous fashion companies, including Hugo Boss, Paco Rabanne fragrance, Tom Ford, Fendi, Louis Vuitton, and Off-White, just to name a few. He made history by becoming the first black male model to walk for top fashion house Chanel. Mason has also appeared on the covers of *L’Uomo*, *Vogue* and *WWD*.

KELVIN HARRISON JR. (B.B. King) is one of the most in-demand actors in Hollywood, known for bringing to life some of the most dynamic and diverse characters on screens both big and small. In the past couple of years, he has been recognized for his incredible talents as a SAG Award winner along with the ensemble cast of 2020's Oscar-nominated "The Trial Of The Chicago 7." In 2019, he captivated audiences in the drama "Luce," as the title character opposite Octavia Spencer, Tim Roth and Naomi Watts. The film first premiered in competition at the 2019 Sundance Film Festival and was released to great critical acclaim, resulting in Independent Spirit Award and BAFTA nominations for both Harrison and the film. That same year, Harrison starred in the drama "Waves," which garnered early Oscar buzz coming out of Telluride and Toronto Film Festivals. "Waves" was his second film with director Trey Edward Shults, and reviews singled out Harrison's performance, which earned him mentions on several early Oscar contenders' lists.

2020 was another banner year for Harrison, who starred in back-to-back romantic comedies. First, he was seen in "The Photograph," opposite Issa Rae and Lekeith Stanfield, and he also starred as the male lead in "The High Note," opposite Tracee Ellis Ross and Dakota Johnson. He also starred as Fred Hampton in the Aaron Sorkin drama "The Trial of the Chicago 7."

In 2021, Harrison was seen in the Joe Wright-helmed "Cyrano," starring opposite Peter Dinklage and Haley Bennett. He also recently wrapped filming the lead role in "Chevalier," a biopic about the French classical composer and virtuoso violinist Chevalier de Saint-Georges, which is rumored to release late next year. He will also voice the role of Scar in Barry Jenkins' prequel of "The Lion King." Harrison is currently in pre-production for his role as Jean-Michel Basquiat in the upcoming film "Samo Lives," in which he will reunite with director Julius Onah and will star and executive produce.

Born and raised in New Orleans, Harrison grew up surrounded by the influence of music, alongside his twin sisters. His family of musicians shared their passion with him at an early age, which he embraced by learning to play the piano and trumpet. After studying jazz instrumental at the prestigious New Orleans Center for Creative Arts, Harrison further discovered his passion for performing and began doing local theater and musicals before enrolling at the University of New Orleans to study film. Shortly after, he realized that acting was what he was meant to do when he booked a small role in the sci-fi action film "Enders Game." He went on to book several guest star projects and, in 2016, Harrison had his first film of many at that year's Sundance Film Festival, where he delivered an emotional performance in "The Birth Of A Nation." He continued building his resume, solidifying his presence as a face of independent film with standout performances in "Monster," "Monsters And Men" and "It Comes At Night."

Harrison loves his craft and enjoys researching and prepping for the characters he plays. He is also a black belt in Korean martial arts and enjoys playing music. When not working, Harrison enjoys hanging out with friends, painting and photography.

GARY CLARK JR. (Arthur “Big Boy” Crudup) won the Grammy for Best Rock Song and Best Rock Performance for the song “This Land,” and has released five studio albums and two live albums and contributed to music for over 20 films. He signed with Warner Bros. Records and released *The Bright Lights* EP, followed by the albums *Blak and Blu*, *The Story of Sonny Boy Slim* and *This Land*.

Throughout his career, Clark has been a prolific live performer, which has been documented in *Gary Clark Jr. Live* and *Gary Clark Jr. Live/North America*. He has shared the stage with Eric Clapton, Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers, B.B. King and The Rolling Stones. In 2014, he was awarded a Grammy for Best Traditional R&B Performance for the song “Please Come Home,” and in 2020 he won the Grammy Award for Best Rock Song and Best Rock Performance for the song “This Land,” from the album of the same name.

DAVID WENHAM’s (Hank Snow) film credits include “Lion”; “The Lord Of The Rings: The Two Towers” and “Return of the King”; “Pirates Of The Caribbean: Dead Men Tell No Tales”; “Moulin Rouge!”; “Australia”; “Getting Square”; “300”; “The Proposition”; “The Boys”; “Van Helsing”; “In Like Flynn”; “Dirt Music”; and “Peter Rabbit.”

Wenham is well-known to television audiences as Diver Dan in the award-winning ABC series “Seachange,” a role which earned him an AFI Award nomination. He won the same award for the critically acclaimed miniseries “Simone de Beauvoir’s Babies.” His other television credits include Jane Campion’s “Top Of The Lake”; “The Code”; “Killing Time”; “Romper Stomper”; “Iron Fist”; “Better Man”; “Banished”; and “Wake In Fright.”

His numerous stage appearances include “Cyrano De Bergerac,” “The Crucible” and “True West” for Melbourne Theatre; “Tartuffe” for Sydney Theatre Company; “Hamlet,” “The Tempest,” “The Seagull,” “The Headbutt” and “Splendids” for Belvoir St Theatre; “The Boys”; “That Eye The Sky” and “Jerry Springer The Opera” for the Sydney Opera House Trust.

LUKE BRACEY (Jerry Schilling) is a formidable talent with credits that include Netflix’s original rom-com “Holidate,” opposite Emma Roberts; the independent drama “Violet,” with Olivia Munn and Justin Theroux; “Little Fires Everywhere,” alongside Reese Witherspoon and Kerry Washington; the action-crime thriller “Lucky Day”; “Danger Close: The Battle of the Long Tan,”

based on a true story; Mel Gibson's WWII drama "Hacksaw Ridge," alongside Andrew Garfield, Vince Vaughn, Sam Worthington and Hugo Weaving; "November Man," in which he played a CIA operative opposite Pierce Brosnan; the film adaptation of a Nicholas Sparks best-selling novel, "The Best of Me"; and the 2015 update of the cult classic "Point Break."

Bracey made his acting debut on the popular Australian television show "Home and Away," in which his convincing portrayal of bad boy Trey Palmer led to his starring role opposite Selena Gomez and Leighton Meester in the movie "Monte Carlo," and the coveted role of Cobra Commander in the mega-franchise "GI Joe: Retaliation."

DACRE MONTGOMERY (Steve Binder) is best-known for his role as Billy Hargrove in seasons 2 and 3 of Netflix's hit series "Stranger Things," and was nominated for the SAG Ensemble Award for his performance.

The Australian actor made his big screen debut in "Power Rangers" as Jason Lee Scott, the Red Ranger. His other credits include "The Broken Heart Gallery," opposite Geraldine Viswanathan. In addition to his film and television work, Montgomery also wrote and produced the beat poetry podcast DKMH, and wrote, directed and produced his first short film, "In Vitro."

ABOUT THE FILMMAKERS

BAZ LUHRMANN (Writer/Director/Producer) is a master storyteller and pioneer of pop culture working across film, opera, theatre, events and music. His signature blend of fantasy, romance and decadence fuses high and low culture, a unique sonic and cinematic language and trademark theatrical aesthetic that continuously captivates audiences and ignites imaginations around the world.

The Oscar-nominated director, writer and producer burst onto the scene with the first of the Red Curtain Trilogy, *Strictly Ballroom* (1992), followed by the ambitious modern adaptation of William Shakespeare's "Romeo + Juliet" (1996) and Academy Award-winning "Moulin Rouge!" (2001), which brought back the movie-musical and cemented Luhrmann's cult-like following amongst audiences and industry alike.

In addition, "Moulin Rouge! The Musical" won Tony Awards for scenic design, costume, lighting, sound design and orchestrations, and a featured acting Tony for Broadway favorite

Danny Burstein. Sonya Tayeh won for choreography on her Broadway debut, and Alex Timbers won the trophy for best direction of a musical.

Showing his versatility and talent across all creative fields, Luhrmann's production company, Bazmark Inq, went on to garner two Tony Awards for the Broadway run of Puccini's opera "La Bohème" (2002), followed by the sweeping historical epic "Australia" (2008).

The adaptation of F. Scott Fitzgerald's "The Great Gatsby" (2013), added to his potent resume, winning two Academy Awards and becoming Luhrmann's highest-grossing film to date. A collaboration with Netflix later produced "The Get Down" (2016), a critically successful series based on the birth of hip-hop in 1970s South Bronx.

Luhrmann's recent directorial projects include "Faraway Downs," a six-part Hulu series reimagining his 2008 feature film, "Australia," where he is currently living with wife and long-time collaborator, Catherine Martin (CM), and their two children.

CATHERINE MARTIN (Producer/Production Designer/Costume Designer) has collaborated with Baz Luhrmann, director and visualist, on the distinctive look of all his films and theatre productions for over 30 years. Along with Luhrmann, Martin is a partner in Bazmark Inq, which includes subsidiaries Bazmark Live and Bazmark Music, and is one of the world's most innovative producers of film, theatre and entertainment.

Martin began collaborating with Luhrmann during her final year at NIDA, when she was hired by Luhrmann's experimental theatre company to design his production of "Lake Lost" for the Australian Opera. This earned Martin and colleague Angus Strathie a Victorian Green Room Award for Best Design.

Since then, Martin has designed almost all of Luhrmann's subsequent productions, including Benjamin Britten's "A Midsummer Night's Dream," for which she won the Sydney Theatre Critic's Award for Best Opera Design, and a version of Puccini's opera "La Bohème" set in 1957. The latter went on to open on Broadway in 2002 to critical acclaim and won Martin a Tony Award for Production Design.

In 1992, Martin began designing for film and partnered with Luhrmann on his hugely successful film debut, "Strictly Ballroom." Her work garnered two BAFTA awards for Best Production Design and Best Costume Design, and an AFI award for Best Production Design.

She followed this success in 1996 with William Shakespeare's "Romeo + Juliet," also directed by Luhrmann, for which she received an Academy Award nomination for Best Art Direction and won another BAFTA for Best Production Design.

In 2001, Martin's acclaimed design work on "Moulin Rouge!" won her two Academy Awards for Best Costume Design and Best Art Direction, two AFI awards for Best Production Design and Best Costume Design, and a Los Angeles Film Critics Award for Best Production Design, among other accolades.

Martin co-produced Luhrmann's epic "Australia" in 2008 and was also the film's production designer and costume designer. Starring Nicole Kidman and Hugh Jackman, the film earned Martin an Academy Award nomination for Best Costume Design.

Martin's additional projects with Luhrmann include guest editing the first signature edition of *Vogue Australia* (January 1994) and designing the look of 2004's lavish Chanel No. 5: The Film, a global campaign starring Nicole Kidman, for which Martin designed sets while legendary designer Karl Lagerfeld designed costumes. Following up on the success of their first Chanel campaign, Luhrmann created and directed another Chanel No. 5 film, starring Gisele Bundchen with Production Design by Martin and Costumes by Karl Lagerfeld.

Martin also has her own homewares brand, Catherine Martin Home, collaborating with Designer Rugs and Mokum Textiles on fabrics and wallpaper. Her rugs and fabrics feature prominently in the Faena Hotel, Miami Beach.

In addition to winning two Academy Awards for Best Production Design and Best Costume Design for her work on Luhrmann's 2013 film "The Great Gatsby," Martin was also a producer.

In 2014 Martin worked as both costume designer and production designer on Luhrmann's stage production of "Strictly Ballroom The Musical."

Martin executive produced Luhrmann's Netflix Original Series "The Get Down" (2016), and shared co-costume designer and co-production designer credits with Jeriana San Juan and Karen Murphy respectively on Episode One.

Martin divides her time between Sydney, New York and Paris and has two beautiful children, Lillian (18) and Egg (16).

GAIL BERMAN (Producer) is recognized as one of the most prolific content creators in the entertainment business, having launched award-winning properties for television, film, digital and the Broadway stage.

Berman is the Chairman and CEO of The Jackal Group, a production studio creating scripted and unscripted television, feature films, and commercial theater. TJG has produced such varying projects as the cultural phenomenon "Tidying Up with Marie Kondo" for Netflix and "The Addams Family" and "The Addams Family 2" animated hit films. Jackal currently has a number of scripted and unscripted television projects in production, including

“Monarch,” a drama set in the world of country music; “Grimsburg,” an animated comedy starring Jon Hamm; and “The Perfect Couple” for Netflix. On the feature film side, The Jackal Group is producing “I Almost Forgot About You,” based on the Terry McMillan best-selling novel.

Concurrently, in 2019 Berman initiated and served as the Chairperson of Sidecar Content Accelerator, an in-house production studio for Fox Entertainment.

Berman is one of the few media executives to hold the top posts at both a major film studio and a broadcast television network. She was named President of Paramount Pictures in March 2005. Before joining Paramount, Berman served from 2000 to 2005 as President of Entertainment for Fox Broadcasting Company. She took the network to the top of the ratings for the first time in its history, developing iconic hits such as “American Idol,” “24,” “House” and “Arrested Development.”

Prior to Fox, Berman served as founding President of Regency Television, the TV studio created in 1998 as a co-venture between Fox Television Studios and New Regency Productions. Under Berman, Regency Television quickly grew into one of the most prolific and respected suppliers of TV entertainment programming, including the primetime hit “Malcolm in the Middle.” Earlier, as President and CEO of Sandollar Television, Berman served as executive producer on the global hit shows “Buffy the Vampire Slayer” and “Angel.” Berman has produced over 300 episodes of television.

Berman spent seven years as co-founder and co-owner of the media company BermanBraun, which became an innovator in the digital arena, creating and operating many successful online brands in categories including celebrity, entertainment and lifestyle.

She began her career as a theater producer after graduating with a bachelor’s degree in theater from the University of Maryland. At 23, she co-produced her first Broadway show, the original Broadway production of “Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat,” which went on to garner seven Tony Award nominations. Berman’s other Broadway productions include “Hurlyburly,” by David Rabe (1984); Athol Fugard’s “Blood Knot” (1985); and “The Nerd,” by Larry Shue (1987). All three productions received Tony Award nominations. Currently, Berman is developing two stage musicals based on award-winning films: “Black Swan,” with composer Dave Malloy and director Rachel Chavkin, as well as “The Rose,” with producer/songwriter Glen Ballard.

In 2003, Berman was named to *Fortune* magazine’s list of the 50 Most Powerful Women in American Business (#25). That same year, she received the coveted Lucy Award, recognizing women who have revolutionized the television industry, from Women in Film. In

2004, she was named to *Forbes* magazine's list of the 100 Most Powerful Women in the World (#49), reappeared on the *Fortune* list (#25), and received the inaugural Brandon Tartikoff Legacy Award from the National Association of Television Production Executives (NATPE). Berman also was awarded the title of Executive of the Year (2004) by the Caucus for Television Producers, Writers and Directors in January 2005. In 2006, Berman became a Paley Center for Media "She Made It" honoree.

Berman serves on the Board of Directors of the Center Theatre Group, Los Angeles's preeminent non-profit theater company, which oversees the Ahmanson Theatre, the Mark Taper Forum and the Kirk Douglas Theatre. She is a member of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences and the Television Academy. Berman currently serves as President of the Producers Guild of America.

PATRICK MCCORMICK (Producer) served as executive producer on "Tomb Raider," starring Alicia Vikander, and "Allied," directed by Robert Zemeckis and starring Brad Pitt and Marianne Cotillard. His wide-ranging international producing career has included two films with director Tim Burton, "Charlie and the Chocolate Factory" and "Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street"; and two films with director Mike Newell, "Prince of Persia: The Sands of Time," starring Jake Gyllenhaal and Ben Kingsley, and "Donnie Brasco," starring Johnny Depp and Al Pacino.

McCormick produced "Black Mass," directed by Scott Cooper and starring Depp, Benedict Cumberbatch, and Joel Edgerton. He also produced two additional films starring Johnny Depp: "The Rum Diary," based on the novel by Hunter S. Thompson, and the comedy "Mortdecai," directed by David Keopp; as well as Bryan Singer's fantasy adventure "Jack the Giant Slayer"; P.J. Hogan's "Peter Pan"; Martha Coolidge's "Angie," starring Geena Davis and James Gandolfini; "A Shock to the System," starring Michael Caine; and "Last Rites," starring Tom Berenger.

McCormick served as executive producer on three films directed by Barry Levinson: "Bandits," a comic caper starring Bruce Willis, Billy Bob Thornton and Cate Blanchett; "An Everlasting Piece"; and "Liberty Heights." His other credits as executive producer include Chris Columbus's "Stepmom," starring Julia Roberts, Susan Sarandon and Ed Harris; "The Juror," starring Demi Moore, Alec Baldwin and James Gandolfini; and Paul Mazursky's "The Pickle." He was also a co-producer on Herbert Ross's "Boys on the Side," starring Drew Barrymore, Whoopi Goldberg, Mary-Louise Parker and Matthew McConaughey; Mazursky's "Scenes from a Mall," starring Woody Allen and Bette Midler; and Joe Roth's "Streets of Gold," starring Wesley Snipes. Earlier in his career, he served as an associate producer and/or unit production manager on such

films as Brian De Palma's "Wise Guys," Ivan Reitman's "Ghostbusters" and Mazursky's "Moscow on the Hudson."

SCHUYLER WEISS (Producer) has worked with Baz Luhrmann's production company, Bazmark, since 2005, beginning as assistant to director/producer/writer Luhrmann on all aspects of the feature film "Australia," and even co-writing a song with Elton John.

Since then, Weiss has gone on to consistently produce content with Luhrmann, ranging from branded material to a series of short films that formed the basis of the 2012 Metropolitan Museum of Art Costume Institute exhibition "Schiaparelli & Prada: Impossible Conversations."

Outside of his work at Bazmark, Weiss co-founded New York-based Tandem Pictures in 2010, which he built into a successful film and commercial production company and sold in 2016. He has produced numerous independent films, including three features selected for the Sundance Film Festival ("The Sleepwalker," 2014; "The Eyes of My Mother," 2016; "Piercing," 2018) and a VR project presented at Tribeca and Cannes Next. In 2018, Weiss executive produced the latest instalment of the genre franchise "The Grudge," marking his third collaboration with rising directing talent Nicolas Pesce.

In 2018, Weiss returned to Bazmark full-time as Managing Director, overseeing all production and development activities. In addition to producing "Elvis," Weiss is currently executive producing the re-mounting of Luhrmann's "Australia" as a limited series for Hulu and Disney+, titled "Faraway Downs."

SAM BROMELL (Screenplay by) is a screenwriter whose creative experience spans film, television, musicals, biopics, fashion shorts, art exhibits, literary adaptations and historical dramas. Occasionally, all-in-one. He's penned fashion films for H&M, a series of shorts starring Judy Davis, exhibited at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and was a co-producer and writer on the Netflix series "The Get Down." "Elvis" is his debut feature.

CRAIG PEARCE (Screenplay by) is the creator, showrunner and writer of "Pistol," a six-part limited series about the rise and revolution of the Sex Pistols, directed by Danny Boyle and on FX as of May 31st.

"Elvis" continues Pearce and Luhrmann's longstanding collaboration, which includes "Strictly Ballroom," "Romeo + Juliet," "Moulin Rouge!" and "The Great Gatsby."

In 2010, Pearce also wrote the screen adaptation of "Charlie St. Cloud," starring Zac Efron. In 2014, Pearce collaborated again with Luhrmann on "Strictly Ballroom: The Musical," for

London's West End. In 2017, Pearce completed his first major television project, serving as writer, executive producer and showrunner for TNT's "Will," a ten-hour episodic drama about the lost years of William Shakespeare.

Pearce was honored with the Australian Writer's Guild Lifetime Achievement Award in 2016. He studied acting at Australia's National Institute of Dramatic Art. A keen surfer, he divides his time between Sydney, London and Costa Rica.

JEREMY DONER (Screenplay by/Story by) works in film and television in the U.S. and France. He has written and produced the dramas "The Killing" and "Damages," and penned "Napoleon" for director Ridley Scott. Additionally, he wrote "Odysseus" and a prequel to "Apocalypse Now."

In France, he has made a name for himself as a writer of comedies, including "Sur la Piste du Marsupilami," which was the highest grossing French film of 2012, and "L'Arnacoeur" (Heartbreaker) which earned four César nominations, including Best Picture.

MANDY WALKER's (Director of Photography) feature credits include Baz Luhrmann's Oscar-nominated "Australia," for which she won a Satellite Award, the Hollywood Cinematographer of the Year Award, and the Women in Film Kodak Vision Award; the Oscar-nominated "Hidden Figures"; "Mulan"; "Shattered Glass" for director Billy Ray, which earned her a nomination for best cinematography at the Independent Spirit Awards; "Lantana"; "Parklands"; and "Love Serenade," which won the Camera d'Or at the Cannes Film Festival.

Walker has also shot many commercials, including two of the glamorous Chanel No 5 mini-films directed by Baz Luhrmann; director Martin Campbell's Louis Vuitton commercial; and director Daniel Askill's Dior commercial as well as his *New York Times* Take Flight campaign, including the virtual reality components.

KAREN MURPHY (Production Designer) started in production design art directing on films by directors Michael Apted, Marc Forster, Lana and Lilly Wachowski, Gavin Hood and Alex Proyas. She has been a longtime key creative collaborator of Catherine Martin's, with credits on Baz Luhrmann's films "Moulin Rouge!" and "Australia," moving on to co-design "The Great Gatsby" for which, in 2014, the design department were presented with Australian Academy of Cinema and Television Arts (AACTA), BAFTA and Art Directors Guild Awards. She was also production designing feature, short films and commercials with independent film directors Justin Kurzel, Joel Edgerton, Mirrah Foulkes, Luke Doolan and Matthew Saville in her native Australia.

She production designed Kurzel's "True History of the Kelly Gang," Melina Matsoukas's "Queen & Slim," Bradley Cooper's "A Star Is Born," Trey Edward Shults' "It Comes at Night," Derek Cianfrance's "The Light Between Oceans," the Baz Luhrmann-credited Netflix original 1970s series "The Get Down," and "Krisha."

Murphy has won one and been nominated for three additional Art Directors Guild Awards, for "The Great Gatsby," "A Star Is Born," "The Chronicles of Narnia: The Voyage of the Dawn Treader" and "The Kite Runner," respectively, and won three AACTA Awards, for "The Great Gatsby," "Australia" and "True History of the Kelly Gang."

MATT VILLA (Editor) has collaborated three times previously with director Baz Luhrmann. For his work on "The Great Gatsby," he won two Best Editing Awards from the Australian Academy of Cinema and Television Arts (AACTA) and the Film Critics Circle of Australia (FCCA) and earned a nomination from the Australian Screen Editors (ASE) Guild for Best Editing on A Feature Film. He also worked on Luhrmann's "Moulin Rouge!" and "Australia," for which he received a second ASE Guild nomination.

Villa has worked on numerous films with genre directors The Spierig Brothers, including "Winchester," "Daybreakers" and their sci-fi thriller "Predestination," for which he again won a Best Editing Award from both AACTA and the FCCA. In addition, he was nominated for the AACTA and FCCA Best Editing Award for Russell Crowe's "The Water Diviner." He also has a list of family and animated films to his name, having worked on "Happy Feet"; "Happy Feet Two"; "Legend of the Guardians: The Owls of Ga'hoole"; "Peter Rabbit 2"; and "The LEGO® Batman Movie," for which he was nominated for an ACE Award and an Annie Award, both for Outstanding Achievement in Editing for an Animated Feature Production.

JONATHAN REDMOND (Editor) has collaborated with director Baz Luhrmann for more than 20 years, beginning with his work as first assistant editor on "Moulin Rouge!" This was followed by his role as editor on "The Great Gatsby," for which he won both an Australian Academy of Cinema and Television Arts Award, and the Film Critics Circle of Australia Award for Best Editing.

His other credits as editor on projects created and directed by Luhrmann include the Netflix television series "The Get Down" and "No 5 The Film" (assistant editor), a short film starring Nicole Kidman featuring the iconic Chanel perfume as well as costumes designed by Karl Lagerfeld. This short film began a new era of fashion advertising and became a landmark in the evolution of

branded content. It was followed by the another, “Chanel No 5 The One That I Want,” starring Gisele Bundchen, and more recently ERDEM x H&M “The Secret Life of Flowers.”

ELLIOTT WHEELER (Composer/Executive Music Producer) excels at the pressurized heights where contemporary music and film fuse. He is adept at bringing diverse artists—from Nas to Bryan Ferry—into synch with the complex demands of music-driven visuals, and with working on period needle drops and mixes, or composing traditional dramatic scores. He has a unique ability to bring varying talents, eras and idioms into coherence with an overall vision. That was on display in his work with Baz Luhrmann on “The Great Gatsby” and the Netflix series “The Get Down,” as well as projects such as the “Ship Song Project” for the Sydney Opera House. Wheeler’s music was most recently heard in the romantic fantasy drama “Every Day.”

His collaborations cross many musical boundaries, from Nas, Jay Z, Grandmaster Flash, Bryan Ferry, Florence + the Machine, Sia, Diane Warren, will.i.am, Nile Rogers, Christina Aguilera, Duncan Sheik, and many more. Based in both Los Angeles and Sydney, Wheeler is in high demand as a screen composer and producer across a broad spectrum of genres from studio album releases to film, theatre, and commercials.