



## SYNOPSIS

*Calls me when I'm ailing... When I can't find my home...  
Mm-mm... got no mama now... I calls it the **Black Snake Moan**.*  
- Lazarus

There was a time when Lazarus (SAMUEL L. JACKSON) *played the blues*; a time he got Bojo's Juke Joint shakin' back in the day. Now he lives them. Bitter and broken from a cheating wife and a shattered marriage, Lazarus' soul is lost in spent dreams and betrayal's contempt ... *Until Rae* (CHRISTINA RICCI).

Half naked and beaten unconscious, Rae is left for dead on the side of the road when Lazarus discovers her. The God-fearing, middle-aged black man quickly learns that the young white woman he's nursing back to health is none other than the town tramp from the small Tennessee town where they live. Worse, she has a peculiar anxiety disorder. He realizes when the fever hits, Rae's affliction has more to do with love lost than any found. Abused as a child and abandoned by her mother, Rae is used by just about every man in the phone book. She tethers her only hope to Ronnie (JUSTIN TIMBERLAKE), but escape to a better life is short-lived when Ronnie ships off for boot camp. Desperation kicks in, as a drug-induced Rae reverts to surviving the only way she knows how, by giving any man what he wants to get what she needs ... *Until Lazarus*.

Refusing to know her in the biblical sense, Lazarus decides to cure Rae of her wicked ways – and vent some unresolved male vengeance of his own. He chains her to his radiator, justifying his unorthodox methods with quoted scripture. Preacher R.L. (JOHN COTHRAN) intervenes, but it is Lazarus and Rae who redeem themselves. Unleashing Rae emotionally, Lazarus unchains his heart, finding love again in Angela (S. EPATHA MERKERSON). By saving Rae, he frees himself.

The film is the third feature by Writer-Director Craig Brewer, his first film *HUSTLE & FLOW* won an Academy Award® for Best Song and the 2005 Sundance Film Festival Audience

Award. A Paramount Vantage production, ***BLACK SNAKE MOAN*** is produced by John Singleton and Stephanie Allain, who also produced *HUSTLE & FLOW*. Paramount Vantage is a specialty division of Paramount Pictures.

***BLACK SNAKE MOAN*** stars Samuel L. Jackson, Christina Ricci, Justin Timberlake, S. Epatha Merkerson, John Cothran and Michael Raymond-James. ***BLACK SNAKE MOAN*** will open on February 23, 2007 nationwide. The film is rated R, with an approximate running time of 116 minutes.

## **ABOUT THE PRODUCTION**

### ***The Moan of Love's Torment***

*"There is a balm in Gilead to make the wounded whole.  
There is a balm in Gilead to save my sick, sick soul..."*  
- Angela

Fate can be a twisted sister when it comes to rescue, and when it comes to love's torment, rescue can come in the pairing of the most disparate souls. Fate found that coupling in Lazarus (SAMUEL L. JACKSON) and Rae (CHRISTINA RICCI).

"**BLACK SNAKE MOAN** is really about two very different people coming together to heal each other," says Writer-Director Craig Brewer, "and it is a very strange set of circumstances that brings these two people together."

It is an audacious story and a phenomenal script that had Producer John Singleton wondering, "how in the hell we were going to get this picture made." Singleton, who received Academy Award® nominations for Best Original Screenplay and Best Director for his bold and controversial *BOYZ N THE HOOD*, calls **BLACK SNAKE MOAN** "much more daring than Craig's other picture (*HUSTLE & FLOW*). It is certainly something people have never seen before."

But it bares Brewer's indelible trademark of traversing the raw metamorphosis of deeply wounded people, hungry for a better life.

"We're all wounded in some way. We all have our weaknesses, our anxieties, our foibles, and the way we get through life is by that connection, to actually be connected to someone else," says Producer Stephanie Allain, who championed the making of both Singleton's *BOYZ N THE HOOD* and Brewer's *HUSTLE & FLOW*. "Craig's work allows us to put ourselves into somebody else's shoes. In the beginning, you may not relate to it. You may not want to relate to it. You may even feel a certain sense of judgment, hostility or negativity towards it, but by the end of the movie, you love these characters, and not only do you love them, you realize you *are* them. It really is all about the power of being connected to someone else," she says, "and in this case it's Rae's connection to Lazarus."

It is the story of Lazarus, who packed away his guitar playing, juke joint days, found religion and settled for the married life. "He put all his love into this woman and at the beginning of the story she's leaving him," says Brewer. She's not just walking out the door; she's leaving him for his younger brother Deke. "Lazarus is an older guy, and it is breaking him apart. After

falling into sorrow and darkness, he reaches for that guitar that's been under the bed for the past 10 years. He used to be a blues man back in the day. He used to play and be a real hard cat, but he put all of that behind him."

"Lazarus had become a man of the land," elaborates Samuel L. Jackson, an Academy Award® and Golden Globe nominee (*PULP FICTION*). "Going away from music, his life had become sedate and, in a way, boring; certainly boring enough for him to lose his wife to his brother. Then he finds this girl and tries to take a measure of control over her."

It is Rae, "this wild girl, your town slut. That's what many people would think of her," continues Brewer, "but Rae is a girl suffering from intense anxiety. She has this past and this abuse that really takes hold of her sexually. It is easier for her to reach this tilt of emotion and physical exertion that makes it all go away."

Just hours after Ronnie (*JUSTIN TIMBERLAKE*), her true love, leaves for boot camp, Rae numbs her misery by bingeing on sex and drugs. She even hustles Ronnie's best friend Gil (*MICHAEL RAYMOND-JAMES*). He beats and leaves her on the side of the road. Lazarus finds her, takes her home and nurses her back to health.

Aside from curing Rae of her wickedness, Lazarus is "really an old man who wants to say a few things to a woman who's been running around on people," says Brewer. "He's got some deeply rooted male vengeance that he wants to unleash on her. At the same time, they find this connection with each other – a connection that goes far beyond this chain he's put around her waist."

The connection evolves through a test of wills.

"No matter what she does to throw herself at him, he pushes her away," adds Jackson. "She's not used to being unable to use her sexuality to get what she wants. This guy frustrates her, but he takes care of her, nurtures her, and eventually frees her in another kind of way."

When Rae emerges from her semi-psychotic state and realizes a man has wrapped a long heavy chain around her waist and locked it to his farmhouse radiator, she goes ballistic. "I think she's probably thinking about all of the horror stories she's heard about psycho-killers in the woods," says Christina Ricci of her character. "She's wondering, 'what did I get myself into now?'" But Rae has no sense of boundaries. "Most people would have a big problem with that chain around their waist for a long time," quips Ricci.

"Rae has had a terrible life because of what has been done to her and what she has done to herself. Because of that, her thinking is pretty twisted," she says. "Abuse and love always came in the same package, so for her that chain meant 'oh, he loves me'. What's strange is, he really

does come to love her and she grows to love him, in the right way, not as you would think. The chain, ironically, becomes a metaphor for their lives together – a link no one can ever break.”

Until Lazarus, Ronnie was the only decent love Rae had ever encountered. He is the only dependable person in her life. “He has internal problems too,” notes Singleton, “but when they are together they form a unit and feel at peace with each other.”

“They are the small town dream,” says Justin Timberlake, the two-time Grammy Award® winner who plays Ronnie. “They are young and in love, and they want to get out and start a new life together. They will probably never leave, and that is where their problems come from. Despite their issues, Ronnie is the only one who understands Rae’s weakness and how to help her deal with it.”

When Ronnie leaves, Rae’s self-control is threadbare.

When Lazarus finds her, “he tries to take a measure of control,” says Jackson.

It is Preacher R.L. (JOHN COTHRAN) who helps Lazarus measure his self-control. Lifelong friends, “both of these men are spiritual in non-traditional ways. R.L. is a regular guy,” says Cothran. “Despite the fact that he wears a collar, has a congregation and totes a Bible a lot of the time, he knows that fundamentally he is *exactly* like Laz. These two guys suffer from the same things. In fact, when R.L. is talking to Rae he tells her, ‘I’m full of sin, just like the world is full of evil.’ So he knows exactly where he is. He’s not deluded.”

Lazarus’ quest to take control of Rae leads him back to music. “It gives him a new sense of self,” relates Jackson. “The more he gets back to it, the more he becomes himself again. He finds his strength, confidence and compassion. He knows that music is part of the way for him to have a better life.”

The other part is love – and the trust of a good woman.

He begins that slow dance with Angela (S. EPATHA MERKERSON).

“She’s probably had a little thing for Laz for years,” says Merkerson, a Golden Globe and Emmy Award® winner (*LAW AND ORDER*). “Angela knows who Laz was married to, and she didn’t agree with that woman. She knows Laz to be the good man that he is. She finds herself with an opportunity to show this man how she feels about him, and then she meets this young girl Rae who is a part of his life. She doesn’t quite understand what’s going on, but she decides to trust this man that she loves.”

Angela’s faith in love keeps her filled with hope. “She does require something from Laz and that is his honesty,” says Merkerson. “It’s not that she comes to him as an angel, but she comes to him with her own set of issues and her own background.”

She also comes to him on common ground: A desire to sing the music of her soul. It may be gospel music, not the blues, but to Lazarus, Angela *is* his Angel of mercy.

Resurrected, Lazarus realizes he could have it all – religion, the love of a good woman *and the blues*.

### ***Licks On A Guitar***

*You know you home, old man. You just walked through the door.*

- Preacher R.L.

“‘What is it that I don’t have? /What is it that I need? /Am I going to hell? /Where’s my woman? /I gotta have that woman. /Where’s my man? /I gotta have that man.’ When you start really listening to the music, you feel you are listening to something that is truly at its irreducible essence: One man, one guitar and a whole lotta pain.”

“This,” Brewer emphasizes, “is about the blues.”

“I’m not talking about singing “*Mustang Sally*” on a cruise ship with blue-haired ladies dancing. I’m talking about north Mississippi, blood and guts blues. This is not pretty music. This is music that comes from a raw, emotional state of need.”

In the film, vintage footage of 1930s blues legend and former Paramount Records recording artist Son House, makes it clear: “*There’s only one kind of blues...that consists between male and female.*”

That is what ***BLACK SNAKE MOAN*** is all about.

“A lot of people ask me, ‘Why did you name this movie ***BLACK SNAKE MOAN***?’ Well, there’s this song called ‘*Black Snake Moan*,’ by Blind Lemon Jefferson, and I think that it’s one of the most haunting, wicked blues songs of all time. A lot of his music is viewed with this sense of fear of the unknown. What’s in my room? What’s crawling around? Somebody, come help me.”

Memphis Producer and the film’s Music Supervisor Scott Bomar said, “Jefferson wrote the song about going blind, and there is a line in the song about ‘*black snakes crawling over me.*’ It was this darkness that was coming over him, and he called it a black snake.”

“It proved the perfect metaphor for a pivotal scene in the film,” adds Brewer. “There is a moment in the movie where Lazarus and Rae are confronting their darkest secrets. Locked in a house in the country with no one around you and the right amount of thunderstorms on your back and moonshine in your mug, you’re just going to tap into something that’s really primal. That’s

what that song is, and after it plays and they experience it, the two of them are never the same. They are tied to each other forever.”

It is from the spirit of that song that the film drew its title.

“The only way to make *BLACK SNAKE MOAN* come about,” says Brewer, “was to immerse the cast in the world where that music breeds: Memphis.”

“I was in New York doing press for another film, and I happened to be in the Waldorf during the Rock ‘n’ Roll Hall of Fame,” recalls Jackson. “I was standing there, watching U2, and all of a sudden a voice behind me says, ‘You know, you ought to play a blues musician in a movie and let me teach you how to play the guitar.’ I turned around and it was Felicia Collins, who plays guitar on the David Letterman show. I said, ‘Yeah, okay, if that ever happens, I’ll definitely do that.’ A couple of weeks later I talked to Craig and all of a sudden I had the job. They sent the guitar to New York. I called Felicia and started taking lessons. I had started *SNAKES ON A PLANE* and when I got to Vancouver the prop man saw me with this guitar case. As it turns out, Luther the prop master was a master guitarist. So everyday at lunch he was in my trailer, beating me down on this guitar.”

Jackson’s traveling days were ahead of him.

“We got Sam Jackson down into Mississippi, into Clarksdale and areas around Oxford,” tells Brewer. “We got him with people like Big Jack Johnson, Kenny Brown, Cedric Burnside and Sam Carr – all north Mississippi legends with their own particular sound.”

During one of the early trips through the Delta blues basin with Jackson and Brewer, “we visited all these studios and musicians in Mississippi,” says Bomar, who previously collaborated with Brewer on *HUSTLE & FLOW*. “Every stop we made, the musicians would sit down with Sam and show him licks on the guitar, teach him songs. It was that trip that really brought everything together. We had Sam’s input as to what songs he liked. We started to fine tune it and figure out what Lazarus was going to perform.”

Jackson credits his two previous and “extremely good teachers” with prepping him for his Delta tour. “We went through several different places, and I actually got to sit down and play with Big Jack Johnson. Apparently, I was just supposed to play the guitar. Bizarre set up.”

It proved to be a magic moment for the director. “The great thing that I’ve learned about Samuel L. Jackson is he is strong enough to allow himself to be taught by great people,” says Brewer. “Sam goes into Big Jack Johnson’s house and Big Jack just puts a guitar in his hands. A half-hour in and there’s Sam – never played this song before – and he’s doing it. He’s doing it well, to the point where Big Jack Johnson was like, ‘Man, get outta my house.’ That’s a big deal. That started the journey. Sam got that guitar in his hands, and he just never put it down.”

The producers and director credit Bomar for bringing all of the critical blues elements together on ***BLACK SNAKE MOAN***. Allain, Singleton and Brewer say it was Bomar who pulled together the music that drove *HUSTLE & FLOW*, a film that took home the Academy Award® for Best Song. “Craig was really insistent that Scott do the music,” Allain adds. “He was so right because Scott is basically responsible for bringing together these legends, like Skip Pitts and Willy Hall, who call themselves the Bo-Keys. He’s put together an incredible roster of blues musicians who are playing on the soundtrack and also as characters in the movie.”

With the blues, Bomar was entirely in his element. “When I was in high school, I would go down to Holy Springs, Mississippi to Junior Kimbrough's Juke Joint. Every Sunday night they would crank up the music in this shack off the highway, in the middle of nowhere, about 45 minutes south of Memphis,” he recalls. “Being able to experience that was one of the biggest influences on music in my life. There’s just really nothing like it. Junior Kimbrough would play with his sons and R.L. Burnside would perform with his sons. One of the primary inspirations for Lazarus and his music in the film is R.L. Burnside. R.L. performed his entire life and for most of his life he performed at these little juke joints out in the country. He’d play for whiskey or a few dollars. He died during pre-production,” Bomar says, “but, for Craig, his music was the big inspiration for Laz and his music. In the film, Laz performs a song called ‘*Alice Mae*,’ which is an R.L. Burnside song. Alice Mae is R.L.’s wife.” Although R.L. is gone, two of his longstanding band members perform in the film. “We have R.L.’s grandson, Cedric Burnside, playing drums and R.L.’s guitar player, Kenny Brown,” says Bomar. “Over time, Kenny and Cedric became R.L. Burnside’s backup band, toured the country, played on Letterman and made a lot of great records. That’s who we have to back up Samuel L. Jackson for the juke joint scene.”

It is the scene where Lazarus gets his mojo back, the scene where Preacher R.L. welcomes Lazarus back into the juke joint fold.

“Rae is once again completely rejected by her mom and very depressed,” tells Brewer. “Laz knows a way to make her feel better; he takes her to the juke joint. He gets on stage and plays. She ends up dancing and feeling warm, accepted and safe, which is something Rae doesn’t feel very often.”

The scene is typical of the scene that plays out just about every Friday and Saturday night around Memphis. “They go down to the local juke, plug their electric guitar into an amp, blare it really loud and bring it to you raw,” Brewer says. “When we filmed this juke joint scene, we had all these extras, and they knew – they knew how to dance to this. They knew this music was supposed to affect them, how they were supposed to move. They were old people, young people, fat people, skinny people, but they all had this beauty. They just danced.”



### *More than the Mesopotamia of Music*

*“Here alone with a beaten, half naked white woman...I been toe to toe with the law in this town, for no more than being black and nearby.”*

- Lazarus

“Memphis is very much a character in a Craig Brewer movie. At first glance it’s a little rough around the edges,” says Allain, “a little dangerous, a little scary. Once you’re here and you’re in the rhythm of it, you understand that it’s a town that’s born out of music, born out of a black and white collision of music and that there’s this incredible creative energy that’s seething through. It’s already the Mesopotamia of music: The crossroads of blues, rap and R&B and all the Stax legends, Elvis, BB King and Isaac Hayes – just so much here. It’s a very real city, where black and white sit side by side and listen to the same music and enjoy the same food.”

But it is also a city of the Deep South.

“We have a long history in this country of bad things happening to black men because of white women. This is danger. This is danger of the first order,” says Cothran. “Many, many black men have been killed for being in the proximity of this, let alone involved in this. With the proximity of a half-naked white woman, beaten up, the first things that any black man feels are steeped in American history. He realizes he is walking on precarious and dangerous turf, so he has got to be careful. Craig is writing about things we need to talk about – coming from a place of wanting to illuminate things that need to have light shed on them. There are a lot of dark places in all of us in this country. If a film like this can shed a little light, then we’re all going to be better off.”

Because of the subject matter, Director of Photography Amelia Vincent, who also shot *HUSTLE & FLOW*, says she and Brewer decided to shoot the film in a “classically formal fashion, where everything is very deliberate and the framing is very precise. You want the audience to take in everything – every choice that Craig Brewer as a director has made – is a serious choice,” she explains. “There’s nothing random about what’s happening in the frame. You have a girl in white underpants running around on a chain outside a house. If that was not shot with a certain amount of deliberate technical precision and a classical approach, then the audience could avoid acknowledging the seriousness of the material. The color tone is informed by what is in rural Tennessee, so you see a lot of faded browns and a lot of green farmland.”

“The choice to shoot in wide screen format,” Vincent says, “really comes from what is in the frame, whether it’s a guitar, or a girl lying on a couch, or a chain being pulled between two

people. The wide screen format made us look at a lot of westerns. *THE MISFITS* and *THE SEARCHERS* were a big part of our research. In terms of framing, it is nice to take a formal western approach. Instead of shooting over somebody's holster, we just shot over the guitar to Rae on the couch.”

Singleton, the first African-American director to rise to the ranks of Hollywood's top-tier filmmakers, with his explosive black exploitation film *BOYZ N THE HOOD*, praised Brewer for “doing some really challenging things with the actors, the camera and the way in which he is telling the story.”

Singleton knew the subject matter of *BLACK SNAKE MOAN* would be provocative and evocative. “This story takes us to places where people are really uncomfortable” on many levels, he says. But he was never uncomfortable with it in the hands of this storyteller. “Craig was the first person I've had as a protégé, and it's really fun for me being a director to watch Craig grow as a director and see him blossom with this movie. This movie started with our collaboration on *HUSTLE & FLOW*. In the process of getting *HUSTLE* made, Craig said that he had just written a new script.” Singleton read it and pushed to get it green lit before *HUSTLE & FLOW* was even released.

Allain had been encouraging Brewer to keep working on *BLACK SNAKE MOAN* even when it appeared *HUSTLE & FLOW* would not be made. She was convinced it would take off, and she credits Singleton for being a catalyst in making that happen. The two have made five movies together. “The fact is John shared my excitement over Craig and wanted to help usher in this new voice. He put up all of his money and gave us the creative freedom as a financier to realize Craig's dream,” Allain says. “John is an incredible talent and his energy and his excitement for the filmmaking process is very contagious. “

The story for *BLACK SNAKE MOAN* came to Brewer one evening. He carded out the entire movie that night, but he didn't have a title in mind at the time. When *HUSTLE & FLOW* won the coveted Audience Award at the 2005 Sundance Film Festival, Brewer seized the opportunity to get this film made. “We just knew that if there was ever a time to get this rather challenging movie up and going, now would be the time,” Brewer remembers. “We put the pedal to the metal; we got the right cast members and started making the movie.”

### *Nail It To The Wall*

Instinct. For Singleton, casting “Laz” was as simple as that.

“I don’t think anybody, but Sam, could play Lazarus. My first instinct when I read the script was this is a great movie. Sam Jackson. It’s Sam,” says Singleton. “Once he got involved, one of the things I asked Sam was ‘Can you sing and play guitar?’ He said, ‘I can act. Anybody can sing the blues if they got some soul in them.’ ”

And with that, Jackson began his transformation as the haunted Delta blues man.

When Christina Ricci auditioned for the role of Rae “it was mind blowing,” remembers Allain. “I was in tears. There was really no doubt once she came in and sat down and gave us her version of Rae. She is who we wanted.”

Brewer puts it this way: “If there was a train that had Katherine Hepburn, Bette Davis, Faye Dunaway and Julie Christie traveling by, they’d be like, ‘Hop on, gal, you’re one of us.’ She’s fearless. Something happens when she sinks into a role, and it’s magic. It really is. No one could play Rae *but* Christina.”

For Ricci, it was the power of the script that put her at ease in the role. “I loved it. I got it immediately,” Ricci says. “I thought it was just so honest and really showed no judgment towards things that we as a society judge left and right.”

Brewer remembers her first day of rehearsal. “We brought out the various chains and she picked up one chain and said, ‘this is the chain that I’m gonna be chained up with.’ We said, ‘Okay, we’ll make a plastic version.’ She said, ‘No, I’m never going to wear that plastic one.’ I remember her walking around in this room with this chain and this lock around her, and I said ‘Christina you’re just gonna kill yourself.’ I remember her coming back from a take and her hands would be blistered and her feet were bleeding from running on the rocks and the pavement, but she wouldn’t have it any other way. She’s an amazing artist.”

Ricci recalls how Brewer “wanted to know certain technical points and breakdowns for my fits, so we outlined those, but I don’t like to think about things a lot. I’m kind of a subconscious actor. In the back of my mind I’m always preparing for these things. The moment I have to do it, it just comes out.”

That is what happened in the scene when she picks up Lazarus’ guitar and begins to sing “*This Little Light of Mine.*”

“I didn’t know Sam knew how to play it. So Sam starts playing and Christina comes in with this soft Southern accent and starts singing – it is beautiful. She did this little choreography with her hands pointing to Heaven and it was really sweet,” Brewer says. “It was as if Rae had gone to Sunday school when she was six and this somehow stuck in her DNA. Life put her through the wringer, but somehow this managed to resurface, to bubble up. When I saw her sing, it just tore me up.”

As with Jackson, Singleton had the actor in mind for the second male lead.

He met Justin Timberlake in Memphis during the filming of *HUSTLE & FLOW*. Timberlake was in town for the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Rock and Roll at Sun Studios. “I went to seek him out,” Singleton recalls. “I said, ‘Hey listen, there’s this guy I’ve got to introduce you to and we’re here making a movie. His name is Craig Brewer, and he’s from Memphis like you.’ ”

Timberlake remembers Singleton explaining the gist of the movie. “Then I read the script and obviously loved how it took chances – it really takes chances,” he recalls. “I’m reading about these characters, and I’m thinking to myself, ‘Where in the world do these people come from?’ And I’m from Memphis, like Craig. As the movie progresses and you get into the meat of the second and third act, you start to say to yourself, ‘Oh, I’ve been there before. I know someone who’s been there before.’ I wanted to find places where it was strong for Ronnie in the midst of all that weakness; find those places where he fought it instead of giving into it.”

Timberlake and Singleton made the critical connection in that first meeting. Allain didn’t need to be convinced. “I’m a Justin Timberlake fan,” she says. “I have his albums. I know all the words. I dance to them. I imitate his dance moves. I love Justin. We started talking about Justin because he’s a Memphis native. I know he just started to act. Then he showed up day one and did his close up and tears are streaming down his face on take four. I was like, ‘This guy is incredible.’ ”

Singleton is keenly aware of the reaction to the latest trend of pop stars jumping into films. “The beautiful thing about Justin is that he’s not just some guy who’s come out of music, who is trying acting as a thing to do. I think he’s really serious about it as a craft, and I love his performance in this picture,” he says. “Justin really gets the nuances. He’s not dealing in broad strokes.”

Brewer saw sensitivity in Justin and a “deep sense of being misunderstood. I think that he knew what I was trying to do with Ronnie. We know Ronnies in our life,” he says. “We knew Ronnie, and he’s killing it. He’s doing great. I’m so proud of Justin. I really am. I see these scenes and I say, ‘Man, I can’t wait until people see this.’ ”

Preacher R.L. is the calming force in the movie. He and Angela bring a sense of balance and hope to Rae’s and Lazarus’ crumbling worlds when others abandon them and their dreams of a better life disintegrate. Angela, played by S. Epatha Merkerson and Preacher R.L., played by John Cothran, “are the audience’s way into the movie,” says Allain. “They’re the ones who have the sense and the sensibility to look at Lazarus and look at Rae and not judge them, but love them. Through their eyes, hopefully, the audience will find their way into accepting Lazarus’ very unusual remedy.”

Merkerson was determined to land the role of Angela.

“I read the script and when I found out they weren’t coming to New York, I flew myself out to LA because I really wanted to do this movie,” she says. “I’m a huge Craig Brewer fan and a huge Sam Jackson fan. I flew myself out, and got the job.”

For Cothran, “it’s been fun to play a character that’s close to some people who are very special in my life, uncles and neighbors and people like that.” He’s the kind of guy who deeply cares, the kind of guy who knows how to be enough of a loving irritant to his lifelong friend to get him back on stage.”

Allain believes that talent, like the audiences of Brewer’s films, are drawn to his flawed but fascinating characters because of a deep sympathy he carries for each of them. With empathy for their plight, his characters wrestle against all odds not to let their music die in them. “Craig couches everything in love and respect for his characters,” she says, “and that’s what I think you feel.”

Respect is the thread of Brewer’s and Allain’s work together, she says, “and the basis of all the work we want to do. Respect for everybody. It doesn’t matter who you are or what you’ve done. It matters who you want to be and who you can become. Often times in movies the heroes have no flaws or seem bigger than us or better than us, more powerful and richer, more secure and beautiful, but the truth is I think people want to go to movies so that they can see themselves in these characters. It is through them that they go on their own journeys.”

## ABOUT THE CAST

### **SAMUEL L. JACKSON (Lazarus)**

It was the role of Jules Winnfield, a philosophizing hit man in Quentin Tarantino's 1994 contemporary classic *PULP FICTION* that catapulted Samuel L. Jackson's career with Academy Award®, Golden Globe and Screen Actors Guild nominations and an award from the British Academy of Film and Television Arts for Best Supporting Actor. That role, by the actor nicknamed "The King of Cool," would make the list of Premiere Magazine's 100 Greatest Movie Characters of All Time.

Today, Jackson has 107 feature films, television episodes, series and mini-series and made for television movies to his credit and is one of the most highly respected and prolific actors working in Hollywood. He is known for averaging three to four films a year and in 2006 alone, he is involved with nine projects in both television and film.

His list of accolades is lengthy as well. Among his numerous awards, Jackson was nominated for three Golden Globes for Joel Schumacher's *A TIME TO KILL*, John Frankenheimer's Emmy Award® winning television feature "*AGAINST THE WALL*" for HBO and, Tarantino's *JACKIE BROWN*, which garnered Jackson a Berlin Film Festival Silver Berlin Bear Award for Best Actor. He also earned a Cable Ace nomination for Best Supporting Actor for "*AGAINST THE WALL*" and an NAACP Image Award for his role as accused murderer Carl Lee Hailey in *A TIME TO KILL*.

He previously appeared in three Spike Lee films, 1989's *DO THE RIGHT THING*, 1990's *MO BETTER BLUES* and 1991's *JUNGLE FEVER*, a breakout performance as drug addict Gator Purify that brought him a Cannes Film Festival Best Supporting Actor Award and the New York Film Critics Circle Award. He won two Independent Spirit Awards. One was for starring in *PULP FICTION* and the other was producing his first of four features, director Kasi Lemmons' *EVE'S BAYOU*.

Jackson is one of the few actors whose career has eclipsed from playing supporting character roles as bad guys and drugs addicts, to action heroes in such films as *THE LONG KISS GOODNIGHT* and *DIE HARD: WITH A VENGEANCE* to leading man roles in *BLACK SNAKE MOAN*, *COACH CARTER*, *THE NEGOTIATOR*, *CHANGING LANES*, *S.W.A.T.* and *SHAFT*, his first collaboration with *BLACK SNAKE MOAN* Producer John Singleton.

He received his star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame in 2000, the same year he received a Lifetime Achievement Award at the Deauville Film Festival.

Jackson was recently seen in the upcoming horror drama *SNAKES ON A PLANE*, *RESURRECTING THE CHAMP*, *1408* and Irwin Winkler's *HOME OF THE BRAVE* opposite his *BLACK SNAKE MOAN* co-star Christina Ricci, Jessica Biel and 50 Cent.

This year he appeared in *THE MAN* opposite Eugene Levy and Joe Roth's *FREEDOMLAND* based on the best selling novel, co-starring Julianne Moore.

He has appeared in two hit franchises: as Mace Windu in George Lucas' *STAR WARS: EPISODE II-ATTACK OF THE CLONES* (2002) and *STAR WARS: EPISODE III-REVENGE OF THE SITH* (2005); and, as Agent Augustus Gibbons in *XXX* (2002) and, *XXX: STATE OF THE UNION* (2005). Jackson was also the voice for Frozone in the 2004 hit Oscar nominated animated film *THE INCREDIBLES*. That year he collaborated with Tarantino for a third time in *KILL BILL: VOL. 2* and he appeared in John Boorman's South African drama *IN MY COUNTRY* based on Antjie Krog's bestselling novel Country of My Skull.

Among his many credits are: *FORMULA 51*, *CAVEMAN'S VALENTINE*, *UNBREAKABLE*, *THE RULES OF ENGAGEMENT*, *DEEP BLUE SEA*, *THE RED VIOLIN*, *TWISTED*, *187*, *SPHERE*, *HARD EIGHT*, *KISS OF DEATH*, *LOSING ISAIAH*, *AMOS AND ANDREW*, *RAGTIME*, *SEA OF LOVE*, *COMING TO AMERICA*, *RAY*, *SCHOOL DAZE*, *GOODFELLAS*, *STRICTLY BUSINESS*, *WHITE SANDS*, *PATRIOT GAMES*, *JUMPIN' AT THE BONEYARD*, *FATHER AND SONS*, *JUICE*, *FRESH* and *TRUE ROMANCE*.

He also executive produced the upcoming television mini-series "AFURO ZAMURAI" and two films in 2001 *THE 51<sup>ST</sup> STATE* and *THE CAVEMAN'S VALENTINE*, his first collaboration with Director Kasi Lemmons.

Jackson, a Washington D.C. native who grew up in Chattanooga, Tenn., received a bachelor degree in dramatic arts from Morehouse College in Atlanta. There, he made his film debut in *TOGETHER FOR DAYS*. He performed in numerous stage plays. His theatre credits include: *Home*, *A Soldier's Play*, *Sally/Prince* and *The District Line*. He originated roles in two of August Wilson's plays at Yale Repertory Theatre and appeared in *Mother Courage and Her Children*, *Spell #7* and *The Mighty Gents* for the New York Shakespeare Festival.

### **CHRISTINA RICCI (Rae)**

Christina Ricci is one of Hollywood's most respected young actors whose talent and poise is well beyond her years. Following *BLACK SNAKE MOAN*, one of her most challenging and exciting roles to date, Ricci will next star in *PENELOPE*, co-starring and produced by Reese Witherspoon. The film is a modern-day offbeat fable about a young woman (played by Ricci) who, having spent her life trapped by a family curse, sets out to find love. The film is slated to be

released by IFC Films April 2007.

Ricci's performance at age 8 in a school Christmas play caught the attention of a local theatre critic, who suggested to her parents that she consider an acting career. She made her professional acting debut one year later in *MERMAIDS* in the pivotal role of Cher's youngest daughter and Winona Ryder's sister. As a child actor, Ricci won over audiences and critics alike with her winning portrayal of the strangely adorable Wednesday Addams in *THE ADDAMS FAMILY*. Her performance so delighted the film's creators and movie fans that Ricci was given an expanded role in the sequel, *ADDAMS FAMILY VALUES*. She went on to star in the surprise hit of the summer 1995 season *CASPER*. For that Ricci received the prestigious NATO ShowEast Star of the Year Award and the Star of Tomorrow Award from the Motion Picture Booker's Club for her strong performances and the \$100 million-plus box office successes of *ADDAMS FAMILY* and *CASPER*.

In 1997, Ricci made a seamless transition into more mature roles, receiving great acclaim in Ang Lee's ensemble film, *THE ICE STORM*, co-starring Kevin Kline, Sigourney Weaver, Joan Allen and Elijah Wood; then starring as 'Dedee Truit,' in the scathing comedy *THE OPPOSITE OF SEX*, a performance which won her the Best Actress Award at the Seattle Film Festival; and as 'Layla' in Vincent Gallo's *BUFFALO 66*. She was later nominated for a Golden Globe Award, an American Comedy Award, and an Independent Spirit Award for Best Actress for her work in *THE OPPOSITE OF SEX*, and earned a National Board of Review Best Supporting Actress Award for her combined efforts in *THE OPPOSITE OF SEX*, *BUFFALO 66* and John Water's *PECKER*. Some of Ricci's other projects include Wes Craven's *CURSED*, Woody Allen's romantic comedy *ANYTHING ELSE*, Sally Potter's *THE MAN WHO CRIED* and a memorable cameo in Terry Gilliam's *FEAR AND LOATHING IN LAS VEGAS*. Additionally, Ricci starred opposite Johnny Depp in Tim Burton's *SLEEPY HOLLOW*, for which she won the Blockbuster Entertainment Award.

Ricci was last seen in the critically acclaimed film *MONSTER* starring opposite Academy Award winner Charlize Theron, and earned an Emmy Award nomination for her guest role on the ABC hit show, "GREY'S ANATOMY."

### **JUSTIN TIMBERLAKE (Ronnie)**

Two-time Grammy Award® winner, Justin Timberlake, who came to prominence as a member of the pop phenomenon N'SYNC, has transitioned into acting with four films to be released in 2007.

NSYNC continues to hold the record for first and second highest sales week in Sound



Scan history. Timberlake wrote many of the songs on the group's albums. The band formed in 1996 and went on hiatus in 2002. Timberlake launched his solo career and performed his debut single "Like I Love You" at the 2002 MTV Video Music Awards. He released his debut solo album *Justified* in November, which sold more than 8 million copies worldwide. His newest solo album, *Future/Sex Love Sounds*, sold 4 million copies, broke all digital album sales records and hit #1 on the billboard charts.

Timberlake can be seen in the upcoming crime drama *ALPHA DOG* co-starring Emile Hirsh, Bruce Willis and Sharon Stone and *SOUTHLAND TALES*. He joins Mike Meyers, Cameron Diaz and Eddie Murphy in the vocal cast of DreamWorks' third installment of the Oscar winning *SHREK* as the voice of Artie, the young King Arthur.

In addition to being a successful singer, songwriter, producer and actor, Timberlake was recognized for his philanthropic efforts when he was asked to speak at Hillary Clinton's Youth Philanthropy Conference at the White House. He founded The Justin Timberlake Foundation, which supports music education and the arts in public schools and also lends assistance to many musical causes.

Timberlake is equally committed to conservation and environmental causes. His foundation is currently working with The Jane Goodall Institute.

#### **S. EPATHA MERKERSON (Angela)**

An Emmy, Golden Globe and SAG Award winner, S. Epatha Merkerson has won critical acclaim for her brilliant work in theatre, television and film. Merkerson, currently in her 13th season on the perennial hit series "LAW AND ORDER," recently received a 2006 NAACP Image Award for her portrayal of Lieutenant Anita Van Buren.

Starring in the HBO film "LACKAWANNA BLUES" as Rachel "Nanny" Crosby Ms. Merkerson also garnered a 2006 NAACP Image Award, a Gracie Allen Award and an IFP Spirit nomination. Other film credits include: *THE RISING PLACE*, *RADIO* (Cammie Award), *JERSEY GIRL*, *RANDOM HEARTS*, *TERMINATOR II: JUDGMENT DAY*, *JACOBS LADDER*, *NAVY SEALS* and *LOOSE CANNONS*.

In addition to *BLAKE SNAKE MOAN*, she recently wrapped production on the independent film *SLIPSTREAM* written and directed by Anthony Hopkins. She stars opposite Anthony Hopkins, Fionnula Flanagan, Jeffrey Tambor and Camryn Manheim. The story is a noir comedy about an actor and would-be screenwriter who, at the very moment of his meeting with fate, comes to discover that life is random and fortune is sightless as he is thrown into a vortex where time, dreams and reality collide in an increasingly whirling slipstream.

Ms. Merkerson has co-starred in numerous television movies including "A MOTHER'S PRAYER" with Linda Hamilton, "AN UNEXPECTED LIFE," "IT'S A GIRL THING" with Stockard Channing, and "A PLACE FOR ANNIE" with Mary-Louise Parker and Sissy Spacek. In 1998, she reprised her role as Lt. Anita Van Buren for the NBC movie "EXILED" with Chris Noth.

Prior to "LAW AND ORDER" Merkerson was a series regular on "PEEWEE'S PLAYHOUSE" where she played Reba The Mail lady", Dick Wolf's "MANN AND MACHINE" and the "COSBY" spin-off "HERE AND NOW" with Malcolm Jamal Warner. She also filmed pilots "MOE'S WORLD", "ELYSIAN FIELDS" and "EQUAL JUSTICE" and made guest appearances on "THE COSBY SHOW", and the NBC comedy "FRASIER".

On stage Merkerson has performed On and Off Broadway in productions including Suzan Lori-Parks' *F\*\*king A* (Lucille Lortel nomination for Outstanding Lead Actress); August Wilson's Pulitzer Prize-winning play *Piano Lesson* (Tony, Drama Desk and Helen Hayes nominations for Best Actress); the Young Playwrights Festival's production of *I'm Not Stupid* (Obie Award); *The Old Settler* (Helen Hayes Award). She most recently performed in Cheryl West's play *Birdie Blue* (Obie Award, Lucille Lortel nomination for Outstanding Lead Actress and Drama League Distinguished Performance Award) at Second Stage Theatre in New York City.

A native of Detroit Michigan, Merkerson received a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from Wayne State University. She lives in New York City.

### **JOHN COTHRAN (Preacher R.L.)**

A veteran film, television and theatre actor, John Cothran is known for his pivotal character roles in more than a dozen critical and box office successes including Steven Soderbergh's *THE LIMEY*, Barry Levinson's *JIMMY HOLLYWOOD* and his memorable turn as Recruiter Lewis Crump in *BOYZ N THE HOOD*, his first collaboration with *BLACK SNAKE MOAN* Producer John Singleton.

He also appeared in *RICOCLET* opposite Denzel Washington, Barry Sonnenfeld's *GET SHORTY* co-starring John Travolta and *THE CELL* with Vince Vaughn.

Cothran gained critical acclaim as a theatre actor, when he was nominated for a Helen Hayes Award for his portrayal of Sterling in the Kennedy Center production of August Wilson's *Two Trains Running* and recently, for his portrayal of *Othello* at the Colorado Shakespeare Festival. The St. Louis native began his acting career in regional theatres throughout the country.

He has starred in over 100 stage productions including *Fences*, *Driving Miss Daisy*, *The Heliotrope Bouquet*, *Boesman and Lena*, and *The Island* in both the United States and abroad.

In television, he was a regular on two series, "BREWSTER PLACE" opposite Oprah Winfrey and Jay Tarses' "A BLACK TIE AFFAIR." He has more than 50 guest star turns in such hit television series as "WITHOUT A TRACE," "THE WEST WING," "24," "MONK," "ER" and "THE STAR TREK SERIES." He has appeared in several series produced by Steven Bochco.

### **Michael Raymond-James (Gil)**

Michael Raymond-James, who has made numerous guest appearances on such hit television series as "CSI" and "BOSTON LEGAL." He also appeared in the short film *THE FIX* co-starring Robert Patrick and David Paymer.

The Detroit native began his career in theatre, television and film after moving to New York and studying at the prestigious Lee Strasberg Theatre Institute. Since then, he has starred in several Off-Broadway productions and was a member of Open At The Top Theatre Company, the resident acting company for the NOHO Art Center in Los Angeles.

Other television credits include guest appearances on the series "NORTH SHORE," "ER," "THE HANDLER," "LINE OF FIRE" and "HACK".

### **KIM RICHARDS (Sandy)**

Kim Richards, once known as "The Disney Girl" and one of the busiest child actresses in recent Hollywood history, has returned from a long hiatus for her role as Sandy in *BLACK SNAKE MOAN*. Aside from a few interim performances, she has been on hiatus since the mid-1980s when she left show business to start a family.

Richards comes from a family of thespians. Her sisters are actresses Kyle and Kathy Richards. At age 4, she appeared as Prudence on the early 1970s hit television series "NANNY AND THE PROFESSOR" and would become a favorite young guest star of episodic television over the next two decades.

Her television credits include appearances on the 1970s and 1980s hit series "LITTLE HOUSE ON THE PRAIRIE," "THE STREETS OF SAN FRANCISCO," "THE ROCKFORD FILES," "POLICE STORY," "DIFFERENT STROKES," "ALICE," "CHIPS," "THE LOVE BOAT," "MAGNUM, P.I.," "THE DUKES OF HAZZARD" and "THE MISSISSIPPI". In the early 1980s she was nominated for a Young Artist Award for guest appearances in "MAGNUM, P.I." and "THE MISSISSIPPI."

She became known as "The Disney Girl" after starring in *ESCAPE TO WITCH*

*MOUNTAIN* and appearing in 17 other Disney films. Aside from Haylie Mills, she was the only young actress to be under contract to Walt Disney Studios at the time. As a child star, she had more film credits than prominent childhood actors Coogan and Cooper. She also appeared in more than 300 commercials as a child actress.

Her film credits include: *THE BLAIR WITCH MOUNTAIN PROJECT*, *ESCAPE*, *TUFF TURF*, *MEATBALLS PART II*, *RETURN FROM WITCH MOUNTAIN*, *THE CAR* and *ASSAULT ON PRECINCT 13*. She took a hiatus after appearing in *TUFF TURF* opposite Robert Downey Jr. and James Spader.

### **DAVID BANNER (Tehronne)**

Rapper Producer David Banner makes his big screen debut as Tehronne in Craig Brewer's *BLACK SNAKE MOAN*.

The multi-faceted Mississippi hip-hop artist known for his 2003 gold certified debut *Mississippi-The Album* and his critically acclaimed *MTA2: Baptized in Dirty Water*, appeared in the television film "KORN MAKES A VIDEO".

As a composer he scored the song "X'ed" for the film *SEE NO EVIL* and "Like A Pimp" for John Singleton's *2 FAST 2 FURIOUS*. *BLACK SNAKE MOAN* is Banner's second collaboration with Singleton.

Banner is also known for producing T.I.'s platinum "*Rubber Band Man*" and Nelly's "*E.I.-The Tipdrill Remix*." He recently produced tracks for Ludacris, Busta Rhymes, Nelly, Lil' Flip and Juelz Santana.

On his third release *Certified*, a mix of street anthems and politically charged rebel music, Banner collaborated with numerous standout rap artists including Twista, Jadakiss, Talib Kweli, Dead Prez and top rap producers Mr. Colli Park (DJ Smurf), Lil' Jon and Jazze Pha.

Banner began his music career as a member of the Mississippi rhyme duo Crooked Lettaz releasing the critically acclaimed *Grey Skies* in 1999. A year later he launched his solo album *Them Firewater Boys Vol. 1*. *XXL Magazine* and *Murder Dog* would cite it as one of the best albums of the year and Banner as one of the hottest underground artists in the country. Banner and his b.i.G.f.a.c.e. Entertainment imprint were signed to top music industry executive Steve Rifkind's SRC label.

Banner has appeared as a correspondent for MTV News, documenting the extreme poverty conditions of Mississippi's ghettos. His philanthropic endeavors include a college scholarship program, which he personally funds. In 2004, he awarded five fans each \$10,000.

## ABOUT THE FILMMAKERS

### **CRAIG BREWER (Screenwriter/Director)**

In 2005 Craig Brewer became the writer/director to watch when the Virginia native's *HUSTLE & FLOW* about a Memphis pimp in a mid-life crisis chasing his dream became an award-winning runaway hit. The Paramount Classics release won an Academy Award® for Best Original Song for "It's Hard Out Here For A Pimp" and its star Terence Howard was nominated for a Best Actor Oscar for his performance as the pimp DJay. Howard also received a Golden Globe nomination for that performance as well as numerous nominations and awards including the Independent Spirit Award for Best Male Lead. The *HUSTLE & FLOW* cast was nominated for a Screen Actors Guild Award for Outstanding Performance by a Cast in a Motion Picture.

Brewer took home the coveted Audience Award at 2005 Sundance Film Festival for *HUSTLE & FLOW*, while Director of Photography Amy Vincent (*BLACK SNAKE MOAN*) was awarded the festival's Cinematography Award. The film was also nominated for the Sundance Grand Jury Prize. That same year, Brewer was named among Fade In Magazine's "100 People in Hollywood You Need to Know."

He's twice won the Nashville Film Festival Audience Award, in 2001 for his breakout film *THE POOR & HUNGRY* and in 2005 for *HUSTLE & FLOW*. Shot on digital video, *THE POOR & HUNGRY* became a hit on the festival circuit and was later sold to the Independent Film Channel. It also won the 2000 Hollywood Film Festival Discovery Award.

Brewer attended the American Conservatory Theater in San Francisco and later moved back to his family home of Memphis, Tennessee. *BLACK SNAKE MOAN* is the third feature Brewer has written and directed. Next up for Brewer is *MAGGIE LYNN*, for Paramount Pictures.

### **JOHN SINGLETON (Producer)**

John Singleton is considered one of Hollywood's most adventurous and visionary hyphenate talents. The Academy Award® nominee exploded onto the scene in 1991 with *BOYZ N THE HOOD*, his intelligent, piercing and volatile close-up of gang life in South Central L.A. Not only was he nominated for Best Director and Best Original Screenplay Oscars, he was the first African-American and the youngest filmmaker to be considered for the industry's top honors. In 1992, he would win the ShoWest Award for Special Award for Directorial Debut of the Year.

That set the stage for the kind of risk taking and commercially successful films that would follow his career. This year the writer-director-producer is involved in three films. He

produced **BLACK SNAKE MOAN**, is directing *LUKE CAGE* based on Marvel comic's black superhero and, wrote and directed *FEAR & RESPECT* starring Snoop Dogg. He is also directing Paramount Pictures' upcoming action thriller *WITHOUT REMORSE* based on Tom Clancy's bestseller and starring Joaquin Phoenix.

Singleton recently directed *FOUR BROTHERS* for Paramount Pictures and *2 FAST 2 FURIOUS*, which he directed prior to producing *HUSTLE & FLOW* for Paramount Classics.

As a writer/director/producer Singleton's credits include: *BABY BOY*, which received four NAACP nominations and starred R&B singer Tyrese, Ving Rhames, Snoop Dogg and Taraji P. Henson (*HUSTLE & FLOW*); *SHAFT*, his first collaboration with Samuel L. Jackson (**BLACK SNAKE MOAN**) for Paramount Pictures; *HIGHER LEARNING* starring Omar Epps and Laurence Fishburne; and, *POETIC JUSTICE* starring Janet Jackson. He also directed *ROSEWOOD* starring Jon Voight and Ving Rhames.

While attending the Filmic Writing Program at USC, Singleton won three of the university's writing awards, which led to a contract with Creative Artists Agency during his sophomore year. He received the John Nicholson Award in 1989 and 1990 and the Robert Riskin Award in 1989.

For his 1991 breakthrough film *BOYZ N THE HOOD*, Singleton won numerous awards including the LAFCA New Generation Award in 1991, the MTV Movie Award for Best New Filmmaker in 1992 and the New York Film Critics Circle Award for Best New Director in 1991.

He previously directed commercials for Coca-Cola and AT&T with D.L. Hugley.

### **STEPHANIE ALLAIN (Producer)**

Stephanie Allain is regarded as one of Hollywood's top producers known for championing projects and talent that break the mold.

Allain has collaborated with **BLACK SNAKE MOAN** Producer John Singleton on five films. She was the young Columbia Pictures creative executive who fought for Singleton's *BOYZ N THE HOOD* in 1990 when he was a fledgling writer-director. That controversial film would become a critical and box office hit garnering Singleton two Academy Award® nominations for Best Director and Best Original Screenplay. The \$5 million film would gross \$60 million in box office, a commercial success that would become the template for black urban drama films to follow.

It was Allain who became the advocate for Craig Brewer's projects for Paramount Classics, **BLACK SNAKE MOAN** and the award winning hit *HUSTLE & FLOW*.

Allain also produced Sanaa Hamri's feature debut, *SOMETHING NEW* for Focus Features and plans to produce Brewer's next film, *MAGGIE LYNN* for Paramount. She is partnered with Brewer in their Southern Cross the Dog production company based at Paramount Pictures and is actively developing projects for Paramount and Vantage, including *CHARLEY PRIDE* and *GANG LEADER FOR A DAY*.

Allain began her film career in 1985 as a freelance script reader. She became a staff reader at Creative Artists Agency in 1986 and was admitted to the Story Analyst Union the following year. As a story analyst, she worked for 20th Century Fox, Warner Brothers and Columbia Pictures. In 1989 she was promoted to Creative Executive at Columbia Pictures under Dawn Steel and Amy Pascal.

During her tenure at Columbia, she was a Senior Vice President of Production, the highest position for an African American before or since. She was instrumental in launching the careers of directors John Singleton, Robert Rodriguez, Darnell Martin and Andy Fleming. She supervised more than a dozen films including: *POETIC JUSTICE*, *HIGHER LEARNING*, *EL MARIACHI*, *DESPERADO*, *I LIKE IT LIKE THAT* and *THE CRAFT*. Several of the films debuted at Cannes International, Telluride and Sundance Film Festivals.

In 1996, she became President of Jim Henson Pictures and produced Caroline Thompson's *BUDDY* and films for the Muppets and Elmo brands, *MUPPETS FROM SPACE* and *ELMO IN GROUCHLAND*.

In 2000 she joined 3Arts Entertainment where she developed projects for clients and produced Reggie Rock Bythewood's *BIKER BOYZ* for DreamWorks SKG.

In 2003 she founded Homegrown Pictures to produce the films of writer/directors. Her first feature *40*, written and directed by Michael Caleo, premiered at Los Angeles Film Festival. She also executive produced John Hoffman's *GOOD BOY* for MGM.

Allain holds a bachelors degree in Literature/Creative Writing from UC Santa Cruz. She is a member of the Producer's Guild of America, sits on the board of IFP's Project Involve and teaches producing in the Entertainment Studies Division of UCLA as well as corporate story seminars.

#### **AMELIA VINCENT, ASC (Director of Photography)**

Amelia Vincent has once again teamed with the filmmakers of *HUSTLE & FLOW*, a film that brought her the 2005 Sundance Film Festival Award for Cinematography.

*BLACK SNAKE MOAN* is the third time she has collaborated with the film's star Samuel L. Jackson. She shot Director Kasi Lemmons' critically acclaimed *EVE'S BAYOU*, which

Jackson produced, and *CAVEMAN'S VALENTINE*, in which he starred. Vincent received a Golden Satellite Award nomination for Outstanding Cinematography for her work on *EVE'S BAYOU*. She was also the recipient of the prestigious Women in Film 2001 Kodak Vision Award.

This year Vincent shot Kirby Dick's *THIS FILM IS NOT YET RATED*, a documentary about censorship and movie ratings.

Vincent has served as director of photography on 19 feature films and made for television movies. Her film credits include: *HOME OF PHOBIA*, *KIN*, *WAY PAST COOL*, *WALKING ACROSS EGYPT*, *JAWBREAKER*, *SOME GIRL*, *DR. HUGO*, *ANIMAL ROOM*, *THE PARTY FAVOR*, *DEATH IN VENICE, CA.*, *TWO OVER EASY* and *TUESDAY MORNING RIDE*, which received an Academy Award® nomination in 1996 for Best Live Action Short. She was also cinematographer on the television movies "CAMPUS CONFIDENTIAL" for ABC and "FREEDOM SONG" for TNT.

She was second unit director of photography on *BEWITCHED*, *LEMONY SNICKET'S A SERIES OF UNFORTUNATE EVENTS*, *GRIDLOCKED* and *BIKER BOYZ*.

Vincent's other film credits as camera operator and second assistant camera include: *FEELING MINNESOTA*, *CLUELESS*, *NATURAL BORN KILLERS*, *FATHER OF THE BRIDE*, *LITTLE MAN TATE*, *DYING YOUNG*, *HEATHERS* and *WHO'S HARRY CRUMB?*

### **SCOTT BOMAR (Composer and Executive Music Producer)**

Music composer, performer and producer Scott Bomar, who wrote, produced and engineered more than a dozen albums, feature films and television series, won the 2005 Sundance Film Festival American Dramatic Audience Award for his compelling score for *HUSTLE & FLOW*. It was the second time he served as composer on a feature film. And for the second time he is collaborating with the filmmakers of *HUSTLE & FLOW* on Paramount Vantage's *BLACK SNAKE MOAN*.

He composed the score for *TEENAGE TUPELO* in which his R&B instrumental band Impala performed. Impala's version of the Henry Mancini theme "*Experiment in Terror*" is also featured in the George Clooney film *CONFESSIONS OF A DANGEROUS MIND*. In 2003, Bomar was musical director for a segment of Martin Scorsese's PBS series, "THE BLUES".

This year Bomar can be seen as the subject of an episode in the new BET series "THE MUSICMAKERS". He will perform at London's Barbican Center as part of the "It Came From Memphis" series. And, for the fourth year in a row Bomar was bandleader for the New Orleans' Ponderosa Stomp, a three-day festival hailed as "the real deal" by Rock & Roll Hall of Fame president Terry Stewart.



He is producing a follow-up to the hit *The Royal Sessions*, a recording by the Bo-Keys, a soul-infused instrumental group he formed in the late '90s featuring veterans from Stax Records, including Isaac Hayes' sidemen Charles "Skip" Pitts and Willie Hall, who backed the Blues Brothers in concert and on film. Bomar used the Bo-Keys and several other Memphis music legends, including Marvell Thomas and Ben Cauley of the original Bar-Kays to record the score for *HUSTLE & FLOW* at Ardent Studios. The Bo-Keys' debut album *The Royal Sessions* was released to international critical acclaim in 2004. The success of the album landed Bomar the opportunity to work on Al Green's 2003 album, *I Can't Stop* as assistant engineer. In 2005, Scott re-teamed with Green's Producer Willie Mitchell on the latest Al Green recording *Everything's Okay* released by Blue Note Records.

Bomar realized he wanted to be a musician in the tenth grade when former Stax guitarist Steve Cropper spoke to his class. That year he began playing at area clubs and formed his group Impala. With its early '60s R&B sound, the group toured nationally and released five albums, recording at Sam Phillips' Studio in Memphis with Roland Janes and featured Memphis Horns trumpeter Wayne Jackson on their last recording. As a bassist, Bomar performed with many artists locally and internationally, including Stax legends Rufus Thomas, Sir Mack Rice, Carla Thomas, William Bell, Sun Records pioneer Rosco Gordon and jazz guitar great and former Ray Charles sideman, Calvin Newborn.

Bomar has been an instructor for the after-school and summer camp programs at the Stax Music Academy, a program for at-risk youth at the Stax Museum of American Soul Music.

His newest venture is his Memphis studio Electraphonic Recording.

#### **PAUL A. SIMMONS (Costume Designer)**

After 30 years of designing costumes and supervising wardrobes for more than 40 feature and television films, Paul Simmons was nominated for Excellence in Costume Design for a Contemporary Film by the Costume Designers Guild for his work on *HUSTLE & FLOW*. *BLACK SNAKE MOAN* is his second collaboration with the filmmakers of *HUSTLE & FLOW* and actor Samuel L. Jackson, with whom he worked in *THE COURT MARSHALL*.

His credits as costume designer include: *PRIDE, SIMPLE JUSTICE, THE GOSPEL, DEAD PRESIDENTS, PANTHER, POSSE, THE WHITE GIRL, JUWANNA MAN*, "ASSAULT AT WEST POINT: THE COURT MARTIAL OF JOHNSON WHITAKER" for Showtime, "CHARLOTTE FORTEN'S" for PBS, "FOREVER FREE, PORGY & BESS, HALLELUJAH" for American Playhouse, *ASHES* and *SWAMP THING*. Simmons was also the costume designer on the first 10 episodes of the hit television series "NEW YORK UNDERCOVER".

As a costume supervisor he worked on *SHE STOOD ALONE*, *THE PERFECT TRIBUTE*, “CHAMPAGNE CHARLIE” for CBS, *A SPECIAL FRIENDSHIP*, *SOLOMON NORTHRUP’S ODYSSEY*, *REMEMBER THE TITANS*, *SHAKE RATTLE AND ROLL*, *THE TEMPEST* and “DAWSON’S CREEK”. He was wardrobe supervisor on *SURVIVING THE GAME*, *MALCOLM X* and *ZEBRAHEAD*.

When he is not working on television or film production, Simmons is a tailor and a fashion designer based in Charleston.

### **KEITH BRIAN BURNS (Production Designer)**

Keith Brian Burns has designed the sets for 17 film and television productions and eight of them were collaborations with *BLACK SNAKE MOAN* Producer John Singleton.

The Paramount Vantage release is Burns’ third collaboration with Producer Stephanie Allain and his second with Writer/Director Craig Brewer. The three filmmakers teamed with Burns on their last film together *HUSTLE & FLOW*. He previously worked with Allain and Singleton on *HIGHER LEARNING* and *POETIC JUSTICE*.

Burns’ other credits as production designer include: *JOHNSON FAMILY VACATION*, *STARK RAVING MAD*, *LIBERTY STANDS STILL*, *BLACK AND WHITE* and *B\*A\*P\*S*.

Burns began his career as an architect before switching to film. He met Singleton during his senior year at the University of Southern California.

### **BILLY FOX (Editor)**

Billy Fox has re-teamed with the filmmakers of *HUSTLE & FLOW* for a third time to edit *BLACK SNAKE MOAN*. He previously collaborated with Singleton editing Paramount Pictures’ *FOUR BROTHERS* and with *BLACK SNAKE MOAN* ‘s S. Epatha Merkerson on “LAW AND ORDER”.

Paramount Classics *HUSTLE & FLOW*, a film that Fox helped in shaping the final cut, received the coveted 2005 Sundance Film Festival Audience Award and was nominated for the Grand Jury Prize. Fox was nominated for an Emmy Award for Outstanding Single Camera Picture Editing for a Miniseries, Movie or a Special for his editing of DreamWorks’ “BAND OF BROTHERS” for HBO. As part of the crew of the long running hit NBC television series “LAW AND ORDER,” he shared one Emmy Award and three nominations for Outstanding Drama Series. The series also won a Producers Guild of American Golden Laurel Award in 1997 for Television Producer of the Year in Episodic Television.

Fox' film credits include: *P.D.R.*, *STRIKE THE TENT* and *WOMEN THOU ART LOOSED*.

His television credits include "DRAGNET" for ABC and "LAW AND ORDER" for NBC, Seasons 1991-2000 as Editor, Producer, Co-Producer, Supervising Producer and Associate Producer.

**Cast:**

Lazarus  
Rae  
Ronnie  
Angela  
Reverend R. L.  
Tehronne  
Gill  
Rose Woods  
Sandy  
Lincoln  
Deke Woods  
Mayella  
Bojo  
Jesse  
Kell  
Batson  
Charlie  
Pinetop  
Gene  
Archie  
Herman  
Auto Worker  
Conner  
Bryan  
Guardsman  
Melvin  
Red  
Ella Mae  
Hershel  
Arty  
Waitress  
Cedric Burnside  
Kenny Brown

Stunt Coordinators  
=  
Stunts

SAMUEL L. JACKSON  
CHRISTINA RICCI  
JUSTIN TIMBERLAKE  
S. EPATHA MERKERSON  
JOHN COTHRAN  
DAVID BANNER  
MICHAEL RAYMOND-JAMES  
ADRIANE LENOX  
KIM RICHARDS  
NEIMUS K. WILLIAMS  
LEONARD L. THOMAS  
RUBY WILSON  
CLAUDE PHILLIPS  
AMY LAVERE  
CLARE GRANT  
JEFF POPE  
SKIP PITTS  
WILLIE HALL  
JOHN MALLOY  
T.C. SHARPE  
JOHN STILL  
JARED HOPKINS  
TOSH NEWMAN  
CODY BLOCK  
BENJAMIN REDNOUR  
CARNELL PEPPER  
DAVID CHAPMAN  
JOLYNNE PALMER  
RAYMOND NEAL  
JOHN PICKLE  
KIM JUSTIS  
HIMSELF  
HIMSELF

STEVE DAVISON  
KIANTE ELAM  
DINA MARGOLIN  
J J DASHAW  
KEVIN REID

**Crew:**

Written and Directed by  
Produced by  
Produced by  
Executive Producer

CRAIG BREWER  
JOHN SINGLETON  
STEPHANIE ALLAIN  
RON SCHMIDT

Production Designer	KEITH BRIAN BURNS
Director of Photography	AMELIA VINCENT, ASC
Editor	BILLY FOX, A.C.E.
Costume Designer	PAUL SIMMONS
Music by	SCOTT BOMAR
Casting by	KIMBERLY R. HARDIN
Art Director	LIBA DANI ELS
Set Decorator	MEG EVERIST
Graphic Designer	PETER SATTLER
"A" Camera Operator	JEFF GREELEY
"A" Camera First Assistant Photographer	JAMIE FELZ
"A" Camera Second Assistant Photographer	RYAN RAYNER
"B" Camera Operator	PAUL SANCHEZ
"B" Camera First Assistant Photographers	HEATHER LEROY
	ERIC SCOTT LEFTRIDGE
"B" Camera Second Assistant Photographer	S. BETH HORTON
Steadicam Operator	COLIN HUDSON
Film Loader	TRACY FACELLI
Production Supervisor	HALEY SWEET
Post Production Supervisor	TERRA MAIR ABROMS
Assistant Editor	DAVID ROSENBLATT
Script Supervisor	ILENE PICKUS
Sound Mixer	ANDY BLACK
Boom Operator	NATHAN BLACK
Cable Person	JOSH SWAIN
Chief Lighting Technician	DAN CORNWALL
Assistant Chief Lighting Technician	DALE FOWLER
Chief Rigging Electrician	DAVID DUREN
Assistant Chief Rigging Electrician	KYLE HUTSON
Electricians	DONNY FOWLER
	MARK A. MILLER
	CHRISTIAN HAWKINS
	CHRISTOPHER
	CROWTHER
	JOSH MALLOY
	BILL JACKSON
	JIM McMILLAN
	TONY ARNAUD
	DARRYL WILSON
	SCOTT N. SATTERFIELD
	CARLOS M. GALLARDO
	KIMBERLY McCORD
	WILSON
	ED CALLAHAN
	SUSAN KURTZ
	NANCY BARKER
	NATHAN WHITEHEAD
	CHRISTOPHER ALBA
First Company Grip	
Second Company Grip	
First Company Rigging Grip	
Second Company Rigging Grip	
Dolly Grip Operator	
Dialogue Editors	
First Assistant Sound Editor	
Assistant Sound Editors	

Apprentice Sound Editor  
Foley Artist  
Foley Mixer  
ADR Mixers

ADR Voice Casting  
Loop Group

Digital Sound Editing by  
Re-Recording Mixers

Additional Re-Recording Mixer  
Recordist  
Supervising Music Editor  
Music Editors

Set Designer  
Construction Coordinator  
Construction Forepersons

Propmakers

Transportation Coordinator  
Transportation Captain  
Transportation for Mr. Jackson  
DI Artist  
DI Editor  
GM Digital Film Services  
Digital Production Manager  
I/O Supervisor  
Flame Artist  
Color and HD Dailies by  
HD Dailies Supervisor  
HD Dailies Colorist  
Color Timers

Technical Consultant  
Visual Effects by  
Digital Effects Supervisor  
Digital Effects Producer  
Dolby Sound Consultant

MICHAEL CAMELLO  
MONIQUE REYMOND  
CAREY MILBRADT  
ERIC THOMPSON, C.A.S.  
CHRIS NAVARRO  
BARBARA HARRIS  
KIMBERLY BAILEY  
ANDREA BAKER  
NOREEN REARDON  
TERENCE MATHEWS  
AMAD JACKSON  
DOUG BURCH  
JAMES JORDAN  
DAVID MICHIE  
DANETRACKS, INC.  
DAVID E. FLUHR, C.A.S.  
KEVIN E. CARPENTER  
EZRA DWECK  
GABRIEL GUY  
BUNNY ANDREWS  
KEVIN HOUSTON  
TERRY DELSING  
ADELE PLAUCHE  
BRIAN MARKEY  
RAMSEY SMITH  
KENNETH COL  
SCOTT ANDREWS  
KURT BLONDIS  
JOSEPH BUTLER  
AARON DALE  
WILL DRUMMOND  
DWAYNE DUCAN  
LEE SILER  
JEFF HOOIE  
HALL PREWITT  
WALTER VOLPATTO  
JOHN DARO  
BILL SCHULTZ  
PAUL LAVOIE  
DAVID ROSENTHAL  
RENE' SIMEN  
FOTOKEM  
MARC VAN HORNE  
BRIAN KAHOVEC  
MATO  
KENNY BECKER  
PAUL CHAPMAN  
RADIUM INC.  
SCOTT RADAR  
KEN WALLACE  
JAMES WRIGHT

Music Clearance by

Recorded at

Score Arranged by

Orchestrated & Conducted by  
Engineers

Assistant Engineers

Score Musicians

The Spirit of Memphis

Music Production Coordinator

Music Production Assistant - Clarksdale

Music Contractor

SESSING MUSIC  
SERVICES

ARDENT STUDIOS

SCOTT BOMAR

MARC FRANKLIN

JOHN HAMPTON

MATT MARTONE

CURRY WEBER

ADAM HILL

ROY BREWER

CODY DICKINSON

JIM DICKINSON

LUTHER DICKINSON

OTHA ANDRE EVANS

JASON FREEMAN

JONATHAN

KIRKSCEY

EDWARD MURRAY

CHARLIE

MUSSELWHITE

CHARLES "SKIP" PITTS

JONATHAN WIRES

JESSE ALLEN

JIMMIE ALLEN, SR.

PERCY COLE

MELVIN MOSLEY

WILLIE WILSON

ANDRIA LISLE

PATTY JOHNSON

PETER ROTTER