

## **WORLD PREMIERE -- SUNDANCE FILM FESTIVAL 2020** PRODUCTION NOTES

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## PERCEVAL PICTURES AND INGENIOUS MEDIA PRESENT

IN ASSOCIATION WITH

HANWAY FILMS

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## FOR CHARLES AND WALTER MORTENSEN

Written and Directed by VIGGO MORTENSEN

Produced by VIGGO MORTENSEN p.g.a. DANIEL BEKERMAN p.g.a. CHRIS CURLING p.g.a.

Executive Producers
DANIELLE VIRTUE
BRIAN HAYES CURRIE

Executive Producers PETER TOUCHE STEPHEN DAILEY

Executive Producers PETER HAMPDEN NORMAN MERRY

Associate Producer PEDER PEDERSEN

LANCE HENRIKSEN VIGGO MORTENSEN TERRY CHEN SVERRIR GUDNASON HANNAH GROSS AND LAURA LINNEY

Director of Photography MARCEL ZYSKIND, DFF

Production Designer CAROL SPIER

Editor RONALD SANDERS, CCE, ACE

Costume Designer ANNE DIXON

Hair Designer
VINCENT SULLIVAN

Make-Up Designer JULIA VALENTE

Casting DEIRDRE BOWEN

Music by VIGGO MORTENSEN

With the participation of Ontario Creates and the Governments of Canada and the United Kingdom

RUNNING TIME: 112 minutes



Viggo Mortensen, Sverrir Gudnason, Grady McKenzie, Hannah Gross Photo by: Brendan Adam-Zwelling



## **SUNDANCE FILM FESTIVAL 2020**

## **SCREENINGS**

PRESS & INDUSTRY - Friday, January 24, 9:00AM at Park Avenue Theatre, Park City WORLD PREMIERE - Friday, January 31, 6:30PM at Eccles Theatre, Park City PUBLIC SCREENING 2- Saturday, February 1, 5:30PM at The MARC Theatre, Park City PUBLIC SCREENING 3 - Sunday, February 2, 3:30PM at Rose Wagner Center, Salt Lake City

## **SYNOPSIS**

John (Viggo Mortensen) lives with his partner, Eric (Terry Chen), and their daughter, Mónica (Gabby Velis), in California, far from the traditional rural life he left behind years ago. John's father, Willis (Lance Henriksen), a headstrong man from a bygone era, lives alone on the isolated farm where John grew up. Willis's mind is declining, so John brings him west, hoping that he and his sister, Sarah (Laura Linney), can help their father find a home closer to them. Their best intentions ultimately run up against Willis's angry refusal to change his way of life in any way.

In his debut as a writer/director, Mortensen explores the fractures and contrasts of a contemporary family. Willis's abrasive nature, by turns caustic and funny, is aggravated by memory loss, bringing past and present into conflict. He is in the early stages of dementia, and no longer seems able to handle the farm on his own. During his stay at John's California home, tension builds between Willis and the rest of the family. As he and John confront events that have torn them apart, including their differing recollections of John's mother, Gwen (Hannah Gross), we embark on a journey from darkness to light, from rage and resentment to acceptance and hard-won grace.

The film stars three-time Golden Globe nominee Lance Henriksen (*Aliens, Near Dark, Appaloosa*), along with Mortensen, international star Sverrir Gudnason (2020 Sundance title *Charter, The Girl in the Spider's Web, Borg vs. McEnroe*), Hannah Gross (2020 Sundance title *Tesla, Joker*, "Mindhunter"), Terry Chen ("House of Cards"), and three-time Academy Award® nominee Laura Linney ("Ozark," *Savages, Kinsey, You Can Count on Me*).

Production leads on the film include acclaimed cinematographer Marcel Zyskind (*Code 46, Country, Two Faces of January, Trishna, Mammut*), award-winning production designer Carol Spier (*Eastern Promises, A History of Violence, The Kindness of Strangers*) and award-winning editor Ronald Sanders (*Eastern Promises, Maps to the Stars, Coraline*).

FALLING is produced by Daniel Bekerman (*The Witch, Percy*) of Scythia Films and Chris Curling (*The Bookshop, The Last Station*) of Zephyr Films together with Mortensen, who previously produced *Everyone Has a Plan, Far From Men* and *Jauja* through Perceval Pictures. Executive producers are Peter Touche and Stephen Dailey for Ingenious Media, Danielle Virtue and Brian Hayes Currie and Norman Merry for Lip Sync Productions.

## FALLNG

The film stars three-time Golden Globe nominee Lance Henriksen (*Aliens, Millennium, Near Dark, Appaloosa*), along with Mortensen, international star Sverrir Gudnason (2020 Sundance title *Charter, The Girl in the Spider's Web, Borg vs McEnroe, Original*), Hannah Gross (2020 Sundance title *Tesla, Joker,* "Mindhunter"), Terry Chen ("House of Cards"), and three-time Academy Award® nominee Laura Linney ("Ozark," *Savages, Kinsey, You Can Count on Me*).

John Peterson (Mortensen) lives with his partner Eric (Chen) and their adopted daughter Mónica in Southern California, a long way from his Northeastern rural roots. His father Willis (Henriksen) lives alone on the old farm where John grew up. Willis' mind has begun to decline, and he no longer seems able to handle the farm on his own, so John brings him to stay at his California home while he and his sister Sarah (Linney) try to figure out where Willis might retire.

While in California, Willis' abrasive demeanor is increasingly aggravated by his short-term memory problems. This brings the past and the present into conflict, causing old wounds and years of mutual mistrust between father and son rise to the surface. As they confront the events that have torn them apart, they relive memories of the last 40 years, including their differing recollections of John's mother, Gwen (Gross). The challenge they both face is to find a way to forgive each other, to accept what has happened in the past, and most importantly, what is happening in the present.

Production leads on the film include acclaimed cinematographer Marcel Zyskind (*Code 46, Country, Two Faces of January, Trishna, Mammut*), award-winning production designer Carol Spier (*Eastern Promises, A History of Violence, The Kindness of Strangers*) and award-winning editor Ronald Sanders (*Eastern Promises, Maps to the Stars, Coraline*).

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Grady McKenzie, Sverrir Gudnason

Photo by: Brendan Adam-Zwelling

## THE BEGINNINGS OF FALLING

There are few relationships as fundamental and complex as that of parent and child, and few events as destabilizing as the loss of a parent -- when the tethers that bind you to the earth are cut. It was in this shifting and reflective moment in life when the multi-hyphenate actor, artist, publisher and poet Viggo Mortensen began writing the story that would become his directorial debut.

While not a fully autobiographical story, speaking with Mortensen about FALLING offers an uncharacteristically revealing look at a singular moment in the artist's life: "The idea for FALLING came to me as I was flying across the Atlantic after my mother's funeral. I couldn't sleep; my mind was flooded with echoes and images of her and our family at different stages of our shared lives. Feeling a need to describe them, I began to write down a series of incidents and snippets of dialogue I recalled from my childhood. The more I wrote about my mother, the more I thought about my father. By the time we landed, however, the impressions I'd been writing down had evolved into a story primarily made up of conversations and moments that had never actually happened, parallel and divergent lines that felt right somehow, that widened my perspective of the actual memories I had built about our family. It seemed as though these invented sequences allowed me to get closer to the truth of my feelings for my mother and father than any straightforward enumeration of specific memories could. What I ended up with was a father-son story called FALLING, about a fictional family that shares some traits with my own. In my notebook I had the basic structure of what eventually became the present screenplay."

"A few days later I looked at the story I'd written on the plane, not at all convinced that I would find much merit in it. When I went over what I had written, however, I found that the story flowed quite well. The timelines and the structure of the flashbacks I'd eventually use in the screenplay were already roughly in place, and the visuals felt strong to me. I could "see" the story. 'This could be a movie...', I thought."

It's not surprising that an artist who has explored so many mediums would eventually be interested in writing and directing his own movie story. As an actor, Mortensen has had the benefit of working with some of the world's leading directors –Jane Campion, Peter Jackson, David Oelhoffen, Matt Ross, Peter

Weir, and close friend and frequent collaborator David Cronenberg -- and he made active study of his time on set.

"I've been lucky," he says. "I've learned from some really good directors and have tried to apply those lessons in preparing for the shoot and communicating effectively with the actors and the crew. As an actor, I've always been pretty nosy, I guess. I'm always interested in what lens someone has chosen, why and how a scene is lit in a certain way, why a certain coat or dress was chosen. I've always liked the collaborative aspect of moviemaking, the opportunity to witness and fully participate in the story-telling process. If a movie works, it only works as well as the compromise everybody makes, the joint sacrifice that a team of creative people makes. I think that the best directors really understand that they alone are not the movie, that the movie is the culmination of the contributions of many people, actively in dialogue with each other over a long period of time."

Almost four years after he had completed a first draft of FALLING -- and after a couple of frustrated attempts to find the funding necessary to make the movie -- the opportunity to finally get behind the camera and begin that process of collaboration presented itself when he was introduced to Toronto-based producer Daniel Bekerman of Scythia Films, who had been part of the team that made the acclaimed film *The Witch*, and British producer Chris Curling of Zephyr Films, producer of Isabel Coixet's *The Bookshop* and Michael Hoffman's *The Last Station*. Mortensen had worked on films in Canada previously, most notably with David Cronenberg, and had formed relationships with Toronto crews that he was anxious to continue, so the decision to shoot in Ontario was an easy one. The team came together and began an extensive period of careful preparation which included location scouting and landscape filming many months before the planned winter shoot. This was accomplished during repeated trips with production designer Carol Spier and cinematographer Marcel Zyskind during summer and autumn to the rural areas in which the story was to take place.

"As an actor, Viggo is celebrated for the thoroughness of his preparation and the attention to detail he brings to any role he takes on," comments producer Chris Curling. "You can see this attention to detail in all the work he does, his acting, his writing, his painting, his photography, his publishing. He brings the same rigor to his work as a director; we experienced that from the very beginning in his approach to directing FALLING. I really believe that his commitment to every detail of performance, of picture and of sound, that deep attention to having each element contribute to the creative whole, is what makes FALLING a standout film."

## **STORY & CHARACTERS**

In FALLING, set in the winter of 2009, John (played by Mortensen), is an ex-Air Force officer turned commercial pilot who lives in Los Angeles with his partner Eric (Terry Chen) and their adopted daughter, Mónica (Gabby Velis). His father Willis (Lance Henriksen) continues to live in the rural Northeast on the large, isolated farm where John and his sister Sarah (Laura Linney) were raised, but he's now struggling with the onset of dementia. Willis, aware of the fact that running the farm on his own is becoming increasingly difficult, agrees to travel to California with John in order to find a more manageable place to relocate. The differences between John's modern, urban life and sensibilities and Willis' more conservative mind-set and ingrained prejudices come into stark contrast. As the story unfolds, the film moves back and forth in time, gradually exposing -- through individual as well as shared memories of the two men -- pivotal events that have defined their complex relationship.

"The dynamic of their relationship is driven by generational and geographical divides between a conservative, aging farmer and what he views as his wayward, morally weak son," comments Mortensen. "It's also a contrast between rural, heartland USA and West Coast urban progressive society. In the end,

the damaged bonds of familial affection that once united them, and which the story visits through their differing subjective recollections, aid them in overcoming some of the pain they have caused themselves and each other in the decades since John's childhood."

While not specifically drawn from the details of Mortensen's own upbringing, some details in the film are based on real events and conversations: "My father had been an overwhelming presence in my mother's life, and their acrimonious separation when I was 11 years old and my brothers were 8 and six, changed the three of us profoundly. Our father's shadow hung over the new home we made with our mother for years after they'd both moved on and found new partners. Around the time my mother passed away, my father was in the early stages of dementia and had started to occasionally confuse me with his own father, slipping now and then into the distant past of his own childhood and adolescence. While FALLING is not really an autobiographical story, some of its elements, including some of the flashbacks related to John's childhood, are based on real events and conversations that I remember from my youth."

Though initially reluctant to play a role in a film he had written and was to direct, Mortensen agreed to play the role of the adult son in order to secure financing for the film. John, who is in a same sex marriage and has an adopted daughter, is the image of a certain kind of West Coast progressive. By contrast, Willis, born and raised in America's heartland and an independent farmer by trade, is the definition of a traditional conservative man. The film, while primarily focused on a story of family, memory, and hardwon acceptance, offers a compelling study of changing views of masculinity.

In 2008 Mortensen had starred in *Appaloosa*, a film written and directed by Ed Harris, where he met Lance Henriksen, the iconic actor best known for his roles in *Aliens* and *The Terminator*. Henriksen is equally recognizable for his tough and weathered stature, as he is for his rumbling baritone voice. Mortensen approached Henriksen to play the challenging and complex role of Willis, a man whose primary self-defining quality is self-sufficiency, but who has begun to struggle with dementia.

"Willis is slipping into a kind of confusion in his life, his memories are all coming back, like ghosts," says Henriksen. "He's aware that his mind is playing tricks on him and he's angry about it." The actor who has so often been cast as the bad guy was excited by the opportunity to play a complex patriarchal figure and to undertake the challenge of portraying someone with dementia. He also appreciated the script's stark portrayal of a family: "FALLING portrays the profound stamina that it takes to be a family in the first place, something that I've never seen depicted so strongly in a film before. The sheer challenge of going through it —it's revelatory."

As the film cuts back and forth between the past and the present, we also meet Willis as a young man, first meeting the love of his life and raising a young family -- a man who, while still obstinate, is not as hardened and angry as he eventually becomes. Icelandic actor Sverrir Gudnason, known to North American audiences for his roles in *Borg vs McEnroe* and *The Girl in the Spider's Web*, plays the younger Willis. A friend of Mortensen's had in fact once pointed out that Sverrir bore some resemblance to Viggo. "There's a certain uncanny look that connects Viggo, Lance, and Sverrir," says producer Bekerman. "Sverrir also has an otherworldliness - an enigmatic quality that underscores the mystery in the film as to how Willis became the angry older man we get to know in this story. Sverrir is essentially the vehicle for the unfolding of that mystery."

"I would say Willis is very much a 'my way or the highway' kind of guy," Gudnason notes. "He's not very good at putting himself in the shoes of other people and understanding their feelings. He kind of expects everybody to think and act like he does. And if they don't, he's not very patient about it. He loves his son and he loves his family. He works very hard. He provides for them, and he puts food on the table. And at the same time, he's emotionally like an island. He's constantly fighting these wars, and he doesn't understand that if a relationship is a war, he can never win."

As Willis gets older, his inflexibility ultimately drives John's mother Gwen -- the love of Willis' life -- to leave him, taking John and his sister Sarah with her. The film weaves back and forth in time looking for clues as to where the rift began. "A lot of the movie is about trying to understand why that breach happened. John's trying to come to terms with his father, and Willis is trying to come to terms with John, and a lot of it has to do with them both coming to terms with the feelings they have about John's mother, Gwen," comments Mortensen.

Gwen is portrayed by actress Hannah Gross, who most recently came to prominence in Todd Phillips' *Joker* and a starring role in the Netflix series "Mindhunter", executive produced by David Fincher. "To me, Gwen is the conscience of the movie," says Mortensen. "She is the fulcrum that the characters gravitate around."

"Gwen is someone who has a real love of life and who pretty effortlessly lives in the moment," says Gross. "There's a real searching quality about her, she's someone who enjoys expanding her world in various little ways, someone who is curious. And that curiosity is imbued with a really deep sense of caring. I think that, like a lot of women of that era, she has this yearning, this searching quality, but is also not entirely sure of how to express it. And when she's met with resistance by the person who's supposed to love and support her, things become pretty difficult."

This rigidity on Willis' part cuts to the heart of the relational dynamics explored in FALLING. "We try so hard to make people into who we want them to be," says Mortensen. "Instead of seeing them for who they really are and letting them be that. Inevitably, there are discrepancies between how we perceive things, remember things, and how they actually happened. This creates misunderstanding and tension which builds up over time."

"FALLING is about relationships with parents in so many ways," adds producer Dan Bekerman. "I think as we get older, we sort of start to put the character of our parents in a certain box of who we believe they are, and we start to edit out of our understanding the full life that they've actually led. One way of looking at this movie, I think, is the revelation to a child of that full breadth of the life that any parent has lived."

Gudnason adds, "When you're a kid, there is so much you don't understand. And then when you're a grown up, you get to know your parents from a broader point of view, but their world may be beginning to contract somewhat. It's a story about growing up and growing down at the same time."

Subjectivity of perception and unreliability of memory are equally important themes in FALLING that underlie the execution of the plot and our understanding of the characters. "FALLING is a complex story. It's layered throughout with memory, and memory is imperfect," offers Mortensen. "One person will remember the same moment, the same scene, the same person, differently than someone else will. We become fixated in these imperfect memories that come to define how we see ourselves and others."



Hannah Gross

Photo by: Brendan Adam-Zwelling

## VISUAL APPROACH & CINEMATIC IMPRESSIONS

There was a sense throughout the filmmaking process of working to express an intangible but lucid and recognizable truth. The visual style of FALLING is natural and unaffected, with camera movement restricted to genuinely motivated moments.

Danish cinematographer Marcel Zyskind - best known as Michael Winterbottom's Director of Photography - first met Mortensen in London on the set of David Cronenberg's *Eastern Promises*. Zyskind had friends on the crew and went to pay them a visit. He and Mortensen immediately connected over a shared interest in still photography and their ability to communicate in Danish.

Some years later, Zyskind was the cinematographer on Hossein Amini's *Two Faces of January*, in which Mortensen starred. The pair had the opportunity to get to know each other better, and soon after that shoot, Mortensen began speaking with Zyskind about some feature film ideas.

"Viggo's very visual," says Zyskind. "When we were discussing the movie, he sent images and photographs -- some of his own photography as well as other references -- but more than just talking about visuals, we spent as much time talking about the feeling we were trying to capture in each scene."

When FALLING began to come together, they traveled to rural Ontario on a few occasions to begin capturing the landscape in various seasons, giving them the opportunity to begin developing a specific visual language as they filmed memory fragments to be used for the characters of Willis, John, and Sarah. It was during this exploratory period that their collaborative relationship started to develop in earnest.

"We needed to shoot as much of the landscape as we could through the seasons, and we wanted to see how shooting widescreen could work for the film. I found right away with Marcel that we had a similar approach to framing a shot. We'd go out and shoot all these things in the woods and fields. And we didn't have to speak that much. We were on the same wavelength, working together very intuitively," says Mortensen. Zyskind adds, "We were starting to find a visual world of memories."

Mortensen references the minimalist Japanese filmmaker Yasujirō Ozu in speaking of his visual approach. Recognized for his quiet, understated family dramas, often dealing with generational conflict, Ozu's films employed a semi-austere, observational style that often allowed scenes to play out at length in a single frame. "You have to find the right moment to move the camera. Many of the filmmakers that I really like, they often stay back and kind of low, you can see the room and the scene can breathe - you can see the behavior and the gestures. We did that quite a bit, certainly at first, especially with some of the flashbacks from the farm, and tried to be very judicious in choosing when to break from that approach.

"In the editing phase, we were also careful not to cut earlier than absolutely necessary from shot to shot. That is not to say we were attempting to replicate anything that Ozu or any other director has done. Marcel and I worked out composition and camera placement strictly in accordance with what we felt each sequence of FALLING demanded. While editing the movie, care was taken to allow each shot, no matter how brief or how long it ended up being, to speak for itself, to tell us the timing and rhythm it called for.

"In terms of approaches to photography and editing that successfully capture subjective perceptions of time and memory, there are singular accomplishments by masterful directors like Tarkovsky, Resnais, Welles, Dreyer or Varda, to name just a few, that I greatly admire but would never copy. We found our own ways to evoke the weight of the past on different characters in FALLING, and to represent the changeable nature of time as perceived at any given moment in our story."

Producer Curling adds, "FALLING takes the audience on a demanding journey –it tells an American story, but tells the story with a European sensibility and tone. It's a film that will leave audiences very reflective and very moved."

The non-linear nature of the story allowed Mortensen and Zyskind freedom to follow their intuition to create the emotional tone they were pursuing in any given scene: "The memory sequences generally have a warmer tone to them, but I also like to work with whatever the actual weather is on the day. The freedom of a memory-based story is that you don't need to be dictated to by light continuity and you can really go off what feels right and follow your gut on the day," offers Zyskind.

"Memory is feeling, really," Zyskind continues. "In the end, it's all feeling, because you can't remember the specifics of everything, but you can palpably recall how it felt."

This ephemeral yet uniquely personal quality in the story is perhaps its defining feature: "What is striking to me about FALLING is how it captures a very fundamental conflict at the heart of relationships and existence. We generally accept a fairly black and white version of what we perceive the truth to be -- the truth of who we are and what has happened in our lives. But memory is much less of a fixed thing than we may wish to believe. We choose which memories we keep with us and we only remember the events of our lives from our point of view. And then these imperfect memories come to define us and who we become. We become defined by these self-selected moments that we can remain stuck in for a long time, if not forever. It's pretty remarkable," says producer Bekerman.

Comments Hannah Gross: "I think in this story Viggo has translated something that is a quality, this kind of enigmatic ineffable quality that's really rare, especially in a really literal medium like film. There's this articulation of truth that he captures somehow. It's not clearly decipherable but is immediately recognizable."

In the end, nothing is perfectly resolved in FALLING: "Not everyone is forgiven. Not everybody figures out a way to communicate. Some people try and fail. Some don't try very much at all. The way that you get acceptance and forgiveness in this story – and perhaps in most stories - is by making mistakes and at least sometimes admitting that you made those mistakes. That's how the father and the son in our story begin to

find a way to actually see each other," says Mortensen. Ultimately, in taking this first leap into directing, he aimed to stay focused on the creative work in front of him and to work one step at a time, "I feel, as an artist, whether you're making a drawing or writing a poem or composing music, or acting, that you have to please yourself. If you believe in what you're doing individually and as a team, and events have been allowed to unfold in a way that's just right somehow, in a way that is specific and feels authentic to the characters from moment to moment, then there's a chance that other people will believe in your story, be drawn to it. As a director, you're juggling a lot of elements. There's an overall story you're trying to tell. But you can only do one moment at a time. Just like in life, really. And with each step, you're just focused on that moment, with all the elements that go into it -- the way it's lit, the way the clothes and hair and makeup work together, the tones of voice, the gestures. If all of that coalesces, we can move on and take the next step and the one after."



Hannah Gross, Sverrir Gudnason

Photo by: Brendan Adam-Zwelling

## FALLNG

## ABOUT THE CAST

## LANCE HENRIKSEN (Willis, 75)

Iconic actor Lance Henriksen has starred in a multitude of films and television projects exemplifying the diversity of his talent. He's worked with some of the most prominent directors in the motion picture industry, including Steven Spielberg, James Cameron, Sidney Lumet, Jim Jarmusch, Kathryn Bigelow, John Woo and Sam Raimi.

He recently shot *The Unhealer* and had the leading role in the feature *Gone Are The Days* (Lionsgate) with Tom Berenger and Danny Trejo. Henriksen recurred on both seasons of "Into The Badlands" (AMC), "The Black List" (NBC), "The Night Shift" (NBC), and also appeared on "Legends Of Tomorrow" (CW), "Criminal Minds" (CBS) and "Grey's Anatomy" (ABC).

Born in New York, Henriksen studied at the Actors Studio and began his career off Broadway in Eugene O'Neill's "Three Plays Of The Sea." One of his first film appearances was for director Sidney Lumet in *Dog Day Afternoon*, followed by Lumet's *Network* and *Prince of the City*. Henriksen then appeared in Steven Spielberg's *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* with Richard Dreyfuss and Francois Truffaut, *Damien: Omen II* and director Philip Kaufman's *The Right Stuff*.

James Cameron cast Henriksen in his first directorial effort, *Piranha Part Two: The Spawning*, followed by *The Terminator*, and he next featured him as android Bishop in the sci-fi classic, *Aliens*.

Other notable titles include *Appaloosa*, directed by Ed Harris, *Jennifer Eight*, *Aliens 3*, *Color of Night*, and writer/director Jim Jarmusch's *Dead Man*. For television, Henriksen starred in Dreamworks' and TNT's 12-hour miniseries "Into The West," executive produced by Steven Spielberg. He also starred for three seasons on "Millennium," Fox-TV's critically acclaimed series created by Chris Carter ("The X-Files"). Henriksen's performance as Frank Black, a retired FBI agent who has the ability to get inside the minds of killers, garnered three consecutive Golden Globe nominations for "Best Performance by a Lead Actor in a Drama Series" and a People's Choice Award nomination for "Favorite New TV Male Star." He was also nominated for a Golden Satellite Award for his portrayal of Abraham Lincoln in the TNT original film "The Day Lincoln Was Shot."

## VIGGO MORTENSEN (John, 50)

See ABOUT THE FILMMAKERS section

## **TERRY CHEN** (Eric)

Terry Chen is a Pacific Islander born in Edmonton, Canada. He moved around growing up, but was raised mainly on the West Coast. After two years of traveling throughout Cuba and the Cayman Islands, Chen moved back to Vancouver, British Columbia to pursue his dream of being an actor. He made his debut in a supporting role as "Ben Fong-Torres" in the much lauded film *Almost Famous*, directed by Cameron Crowe. His performance was praised in reviews from *Variety* magazine to Ebert & Roeper's "At the Movies."

Over the last two decades, he's had supporting and lead roles alongside the industry's best; *Memory* (Dennis Hopper), *Chronicles of Riddick* (Vin Diesel), *The A-Team* (Liam Neeson) and *Elysium* (Matt Damon), to name a few. Chen filmed the ABC/Global drama "Combat Hospital" as a series regular, US Captain Dr. Bobby Trang, as well as guest starring in series such as "Bates Motel" (A&E), "Battlestar Galactica" (NBC), "Hawaii Five-O" (CBS) and "The 100" (The CW). He recurred in the fan favorite "Continuum" (Showcase), and recurred in the award-winning series, "House of Cards" (Netflix). More recently, Chen recurs on the latest seasons of "The Expanse" (AmazonPrime), and as a lead in the second season of "Jessica Jones" (Netflix). He can also be seen in the four-part limited series "Foreign Skies" (Channel 4).

## **SVERRIR GUDNASON** (Willis, 23-43)

Sverrir Gudnason is a leading actor with a career spanning film, television and theatre. His recent credits include a starring role opposite Shia LaBeouf in Janus Metz's film *Borg McEnroe* in which Gudnason stars as "Bjorn Borg." He also starred in *The Girl in the Spider's Web*, directed by Fede Alvarez in the role of "Mikael Blomkvist," alongside Claire Foy. Other recent film credits include Camilla Strøm Henriksen's *Phoenix, The Circle*, directed by Levan Akin and Jens Östberg's *Blowfly Park*. Additionally, Gudnason has had lead roles in an adaptation of Hjalmar Söderberg's classic Swedish novel *A Serious Game*, directed by Pernilla August and the comedy-drama *Original*. Gudnason has also featured in the biopic *Monica Z*, Mikael Marcimain's *Gentlemen, Fröken Sverige* directed by Tova Magnusson and Johan Melin's *Köftbögen*. In addition to *Falling*, Gudnason will be seen in Amanda Kernell's second film *Charter*, which will also screen at Sundance. He will also star in Carlo Hintermann's *The Book of Vision*, alongside Charles Dance. Gudnason's television credits include *Gentlemen & Gangsters* alongside David Dencik and Sven Nordin. Other notable television projects include *How Soon Is Now*? directed by Mikael Marcimain and *A Breach In The Wall*, directed by Jimmy Karlsson. Gudnason also appeared in *Marie Krøyer* and Kathrine Windfeld's *Drottningoffret*. Last year, he filmed the second season of Josephine Bornebusch's hit Swedish show *Love Me*.

## **HANNAH GROSS** (Gwen)

Hannah Gross has two films premiering at Sundance this year, Michael Almareyda's TESLA, opposite Kyle MacLachlan, Ethan Hawke, and Even Hewson and FALLING. Gross also stars in the independent feature *Clifton Hill*, directed by Albert Shin and opposite Tuppence Middleton. She appears in Todd Phillips' *Joker*, opposite Joaquin Phoenix. Gross can also be seen in season 2 of USA's critically acclaimed series, "The Sinner", opposite Bill Pullman. She also completed filming *The Education of Fredrick Fitzell*.

Gross' first foray into television was a starring role in David Fincher's "Mindhunter" for Netflix opposite Jonathan Groff. Prior to this, she had a leading role in the indie film UNLESS starring opposite Catherine Keener and was featured with Jon Hamm in the film *Marjorie Prime*. Gross was also in *The Mountain*, opposite Tye Sheridan and Jeff Goldblum. The film premiered at the 2018 Venice Film Festival.

Gross' past credits include Matt Porterfield's *I Used To Be Darker*, Dustin Guy Defa's short film "Lydia Hoffman, Lydia Hoffman," as well as an episode Defa directed for "The Sixth Year," *Uncertain Terms*, directed by Nathan Silver, and Charles Poekel's *Christmas*, *Again* which premiered at the 2014 Locarno International Film Festival.

Gross graduated with a BFA from NYU's Experimental Theatre Wing in 2012.

## LAURA LINNEY (Sarah)

Laura Linney is an American actress who works in film, television and theatre.

She was most recently seen in the highly anticipated Netflix revival of "Tales of the City," for which she served as an executive producer and stars opposite Olympia Dukakis and Ellen Page. Premiering in 2020 is season three of "Ozark," a critically acclaimed Netflix original series where she plays Wendy Byrde opposite Jason Bateman and Julia Garner. Also premiering in 2020 is the Sally Potter directed Molly, in which Linney stars opposite Elle Fanning Salma Hayek. Molly follows a turbulent 24 hours in the life of a father and daughter, grappling with the challenges of dealing with a father's chaotic mental state.

In June 2018, Linney made her London theatre debut in Richard Eyre's limited three-week run of "My Name Is Lucy Barton," the stage play adapted from the Elizabeth Strout novel of the same name and opened to rave reviews. Back by popular demand, the show returned to the London stage in 2019, and will be making its Broadway debut in January 2020. The story follows Lucy Barton, who after an operation, wakes to find her estranged mother at the end of her bed, bringing back memories of her early life in the country, her subsequent escape to New York and the two women's complex relationship.

Linney's numerous film credits include, *The Dinner*, *Nocturnal Animals*, *Sully Genius*, *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles: Out Of The Shadows*, *You Can Count on Me*, Kinsey, *The Savages*, *The Fifth Estate*, *Hyde Park on Hudson*, *The Squid and the Whale*, *Mystic River*, *Absolute Power*, *The Truman Show*, *Primal Fear*, *The Mothman Prophecies*, *Love Actually*, *P.S.*, *The House Of Mirth*, *The Details* and *Congo*, among many others.

Linney starred in and served as an executive producer for the Showtime series "The Big C" for four seasons for which she won several awards. She also won multiple awards for her portrayal of Abigail Adams in the HBO miniseries "John Adams," directed by Tom Hooper. Early in her career, she starred as Mary Ann Singleton in Armistead Maupin's "Tales of the City" series, a job for which she continues to be most grateful and proud. She appeared as Kelsey Grammer's final girlfriend in the last six episodes of "Frasier;" was directed by Stanley Donen in "Love Letters," and starred opposite Joanne Woodward in *Blind Spot*.

She has also appeared in many Broadway productions, most notably "The Little Foxes," "Time Stands Still" and "Sight Unseen," directed by Daniel Sullivan and written by Donald Margulies. Additional credits include Arthur Miller's "The Crucible," directed by Richard Eyre opposite Liam Neeson, "Six Degrees of Separation," "Honour," "Uncle Vanya," "Les Liaisons Dangereuses," "Holiday" and "The Seagull."

Linney has been nominated three times for an Academy Award, four times for a Tony Award, six times for a SAG award, once for a BAFTA Award, and five times for a Golden Globe. She has won one Screen Actors Guild Award, one National Board of Review Award, two Golden Globes and four Emmy Awards. She holds two honorary Doctorates from her alma maters, Brown University and The Juilliard School.

## **BRACKEN BURNS** (Jill)

Bracken Burns grew up in a small town in northern Alberta, Canada, called Peace River. From a young age, she was enthralled with the theatre, which eventually led to her obtaining her Master of Arts (performance) at the prestigious Royal Conservatoire of Scotland. She stayed in the UK for 8 years, touring in stage shows such as "Saturday Night Fever" (English Theatre Frankfurt and No. 1 UK tour), "Wasted Love," and "CLINTON The Musical," and she spent several summers at the Edinburgh International Fringe

Festival. Burns first dipped her toe into the world of cinema with *HERO: Inspired by The Extraordinary Life and Times of Ulric Cross, Frankie Drake Mysteries*, and Winston Rowntree's *People Watching* (Canadian Screen Award winner 2018) where she plays the singer-songwriter Flossey and co-wrote her original songs, which were featured in the show.

Burns now splits her time between London, UK, and Toronto working on both theatre and screen. She recently starred as Elle Woods in "Legally Blonde The Musical" and released her first single "Just Kept Walking." Burns also stars in two new pilots set to premiere later this year.

As a producer, Burns works with her own production company Blahzay Creative, and is currently in development with a new musical series called "Wasting Love," based on the award-winning stage show, and a narrative drama called "Wilds of Canada."



William Healy, Sverrir Gudnason

Photo by: Brendan Adam-Zwelling

# FALLNG

## ABOUT THE FILMMAKERS

## VIGGO MORTENSEN (Writer/Director/Producer/Composer)

Viggo Mortensen has consistently earned acclaim for his work in a wide range of films. Some of these include *Green Book*, *Captain Fantastic*, *A Dangerous Method*, *Eastern Promises*, *A History of Violence*, *The Road*, *Appaloosa*, *Far from Men*, *The Two Faces of January*, *Jauja*, *Hidalgo*, *Alatriste*, and *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy. He has received various nominations and awards from groups including the Screen Actors Guild, the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, the Hollywood Foreign Press Association, and the British Academy of Film and Television Arts.

Mortensen is also poet, photographer, and painter. He is the editor of Perceval Press, an independent publishing house which he founded in 2002. His new collection of poetry and photography is *Lo que no se puede escribir* (*What Cannot Be Written*).

## **DANIEL BEKERMAN** (Producer)

Daniel Bekerman, founder and president of Scythia Films, is one of Canada's most prolific feature film producers, with broad experience in creative producing, financing, international co-productions and service productions, having completed over 25 films in the last five years.

Selected credits include *The Witch* - winner of the Best Director Award at the Sundance Film Festival, as well as two Independent Spirit Awards - and feature *Bang Bang Baby*, directed by Cannes Residency alumnus Jeffrey St. Jules, and winner of the Best First Feature Film Award at TIFF and the Canadian Screen Awards.

Slated for 2020 releases are *Percy*, starring Christopher Walken; *Slash/Back*, an arctic set sci-fi adventure by Nyla Innuksuk with Sierra Affinity attached for international sales; and *Come to Daddy*, starring Elijah Wood, a New Zealand/Ireland/Canada Treaty Co-Production that premiered at Tribeca in April.

Bekerman executive produced *The Craft* (Sony/Blumhouse), directed by Zoe Lister Jones; *Ready or Not* (Fox Searchlight Pictures/Vinson Films), *Radio Silence*, which premiered in July at Montréal's renowned Fantasia Film Festival; and *How It Ends* and *Anon* for Netflix.

Currently touring the festival circuit is feature documentary *Youth Unstoppable*, which captures the vibrant untold story of the Global Youth Climate Movement over the last ten years, culminating in the rise of Greta Thunberg and *Kayak to Klemtu* which received the Audience Choice Award at the ImagiNATIVE Film Festival in 2017.

## **CHRIS CURLING** (Producer)

Chris Curling has produced over 30 films over the last 20 years. Previously he worked as an award-winning documentary director.

In the middle of its worldwide release is Marcus Rosenmuller's *The Keeper* (aka Trautmann), a coproduction with Lieblingsfilm in Munich. *The Keeper* has won a host of prizes including Best Film at Germany's annual Bavarian Film Awards. Last year saw the release Isabel Coixet's *The Bookshop* starring Emily Mortimer, Bill Nighy, and Patricia Clarkson-a co-production with Acontracorriente Films in Barcelona. *The Bookshop* won Best Film, Best Director and Best Screenplay at Spain's annual Goya Awards. Also nearing completion is *Special Couple*, the first China-UK feature film co-production.

Curling produced Michael Hoffman's Tolstoy drama *The Last Station*, starring Helen Mirren, Christopher Plummer, Paul Giamatti and James McAvoy. Mirren and Plummer both secured Academy Award, Golden Globe and SAG Award nominations for their roles in the film. Both were also nominated for Independent Spirit Awards - Michael Hoffman was nominated for Best Screenplay and Best Director, and Curling and the film were nominated for Best Picture.

Among the other films that Curling has produced are Terry Gilliam's Zero Theorem, starring Christoph Waltz, Andrea Arnold's short "Dog," Mark Palansky's Penelope, Gillian Armstrong's Death Defying Acts, Hanif Kureishi and Udayan Prasad's, My Son The Fanatic, Gurinder Chadha's It's a Wonderful Afterlife, Peter Webber's Hannibal Rising, Chris Smith's Black Death, and David Mackenzie's Asylum.

## MARCEL ZYSKIND (Director of Photography)

Marcel Zyskind lives in Denmark and works internationally on an array of films, television projects, documentaries and commercials. His many films include *The Day Shall Come*, directed by Chris Morris, *Steel Country*, directed by Simon Fellows, *Two Faces of January*, directed by Hossein Amini, *Summer 92*, directed by Kasper Barfoed, *Bullet Boy* for director Saul Dibb, *Mammoth* for director Lukas Moodysson and *Mister Lonely* for director Harmony Korine. He is well known for his frequent collaborations with director Michael Winterbottom, which include *Everyday*, *Trishna*, *The Killer Inside Me*, *Genova*, *A Mighty Heart*, *The Road to Guantanamo*, *Tristram Shandy: A Cock And Bull Story*, *Nine Songs*, *Code 46*, and *In This World*. Among his music videos is Massive Attack's "Live with Me," for director Jonathan Glazer.

Marcel won the highly regarded cinematography award at the San Sebastian Film Festival in 2004 for his work on *Nine Songs* and has twice been a nominee for the best cinematographer award at the European Film Academy Awards, for *In This World* in 2002 and *Code 46* in 2003 (shared with Alwin Kuchler).

## **CAROL SPIER** (Production Designer)

Carol Spier is an award-winning, international production designer, based in Toronto, Canada. She is known for her long collaboration on numerous films with director David Cronenberg, including such films as *Eastern Promises* (which earned her a Genie Award nomination), *Dead Ringers* (which won her a Genie Award for Best Production Design), *A History of Violence* and *Maps to the Stars* (for which she won DGC Craft Award).

Spier has also worked with director Guillermo del Toro on several films, including *Pacific Rim*, *Blade 2* and *Mimic*. Other notable credits include Paul Gross' *Passchendale* (for which she won Genie and DGC Outstanding Achievement Awards). Other credits include *The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen* for director Steve Norrington, Christopher Gans' *Silent Hill* and Jim Sheridan's *Dream House*.

Spier's recent credits include "Black Mirror" for director Jodie Foster; the television series "11/22/63," directed by Kevin McDonald, and the upcoming Lone Sherfig-directed *The Kindness of Strangers*.

## **ANNE DIXON** (Costume Designer)

Anne Dixon's costume design has been seen internationally both on stage and on screen for over two decades. Her collaboration with such directors as François Girard, Niki Caro, Jeremy Podeswa, Mick Jackson, Angelica Huston, Paul Mazursky, Kathy Bates, Bob Gale, Sudz Sutherland and Veronica Tennant have kept her designs fresh and inspiring. Her feature films include *The Song of Names*, *Lavender*, *Born to Be Blue*, *Fugitive Pieces*, *Saint Ralph*, and *Interstate 60*, to name but a few.

Dixon is a graduate in Art & Design from The University of the Arts, London, England.

## **RONALD SANDERS** C.C.E. A.C.E. (Editor)

Ron Sanders has worked with directors including Robert Longo, Daniel Petrie Jr., Sturla Gunnarson, Norman Jewison, and Henry Sellick. He has collaborated with David Cronenberg on 19 films, winning Genie Awards for *Dead Ringers* (1989), *Crash* (1996), *eXistenZ* (2000) and *Eastern Promises* (2007), garnering DGC Awards for *A History of Violence* (2006), *Eastern Promises* (2008) and *A Dangerous Method* (2012). He was nominated for an American Cinema Editors Award for his work on *Coraline* (2010).



Lance Henriksen, Viggo Mortensen

Photo by: Brendan Adam-Zwelling

# FALLNG

Unit Production Manager CARMEN ARNDT

First Assistant Director JACK BOEM

Second Assistant Director TYLER DELBEN

Willis (23 - 43 Yrs) **SVERRIR GUDNASON** Willis (75 Yrs) LANCE HENRIKSEN Eric TERRY CHEN

Gwen HANNAH GROSS Sarah (4 - 6 Yrs) CARINA BATTRICK Sarah (11 Yrs) **AVA KOZELJ** Sarah (45 Yrs) LAURA LINNEY Mónica **GABBY VELIS** 

Jill BRACKEN BURNS John (Baby) LIAM AND LUCA CRESCITELLI

John (4 Yrs) **GRADY MCKENZIE** John (9 - 11 Yrs) ETIENNE KELLICI John (16 Yrs) WILLIAM HEALY John (50 Yrs) VIGGO MORTENSEN Paula ELLA JONAS FARLINGER

Will PIERS BIJVOET

Dr. Klausner DAVID CRONENBERG

Dr. Solvei PAUL GROSS Sergeant Saunders HENRY MORTENSEN

Diner Waiter Rasmussen **NOAH DAVIS** 

TAYLOR BELLE PUTERMAN Gracie

Flight Attendant Harris **BO MARTYN** 

Eddie MAXWELL MCCABE LOKOS Danny Ward JOHNNY O

**Stunt Coordinator** ALICIA TURNER

Willis Stunt Double (23 - 43 Yrs) **CURTIS PARKER** John Stunt Double (4 Yrs) WOLFGANG SZOKE John Stunt Double (16 Yrs) LUKE MCCOAG

**CREW** 

Third Assistant Director ELIZABETH LEE

Fourth Assistant Director - Trailers **EMMA PETRAKIS** Set PA ROBERT POMPOSO

**Associate Producers** ANYA RYZHENKOVA

NATALIE NOVAK REMPLAKOWSKI

**Production Coordinator** SHEENA GRAHAM First Assistant Production Coordinator **MEAGHAN CAREY** 

Assistant to Viggo Mortensen LANDON RAMIREZ **Production Assistants** 

**IOLANDA SANTOS** LEO DI LEO

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Art Director

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Graphic Designer

Art Department Coordinator

Kev Scenic Lead Scenic Artist **Head Painter** Set Decorator Lead Dresser Set Decorator Buyer

Set Dressers

On Set Dresser

Steadicam Operator First Assistant A-Cam Second Assistant A-Cam

Camera Trainee

DIT

Video Assistant **Dailies Coordinator** 

Script Supervisor

Sound Mixer **Boom Operator** 

Sound Utility

Gaffer

Best Boy Electric Electricians

Genny Operator

Key Grip Best Boy Grip Dolly Grip A-Cam

Grips

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YORK LI

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JOYCE MCPHERSON **ELIOT REVINGTON** IAN NELMES SCOTT KELLER

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YURII SHVETS

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**SEAN SEALEY** 

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ZOË BIGIO

PAUL GOSSE

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> ANDREW VAN EEK MAKENZIE POZZEBON

JOSHUA CAMPBELL Location PAs KRIS SLISKO

**Assistant Location Managers** 

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Props Master MARIO MOREIRA Props Buyer SANG MAIER

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Key Hair Stylist CAROL HARTWICK Key Make-UP **GILLIAN BROWN** 

Visual Effects Supervisor RIAN MCNAMARA

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SACHA GUTTENSTEIN

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TUSHAR MANEK

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Sound Effects Editors ALASTAIR SIRKETT

PHIL LEE

Final Mix Recorded at ABBEY ROAD STUDIOS

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Studio Manager

JACK CHEETHAM
Head of Technical
Technical Engineers

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DAN COLE

DAN COLE IAN TAYLOR FIONA GILLOTT

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ADR Coordinator LIZZIE CAMPBELL-KELLY

ADR at TECHNICOLOR TORONTO

ADR Recordist PAUL LYNCH

Group Supervisor

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JOHN JARVIS TAMMY ISABELL SHAUNA BLACK

SHAUNA BLACK EMMA CAMPBELL CALLUM SHONIKER

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GAGE GRAHAM-ARBURTHNOT

MOLLY LEWIS

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Visual Effects Supervisor

Visual Effects Producer

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LUCA ZAPPALA

DHAVAL MALAVIA

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FX TD

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**Background Artists** 

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OLGA SIRAZHDINOVA

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ALTHEA TAYLOR

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Dolly Grip B-Cam

Dolly Grip B-Cam

Dolly Grip

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Assistant Buyer TARA MEYER

Assistant Buyer TARA MEYER
Costume PA NICOLE QUESADA

Hair and Make-Up Supervisor BENJAMIN ROBIN Hairdresser AUDREY ANZURES

Make-up Artist ANNIE MANISCALCO

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**ELIZABETH TWAITS** 

CARLA M MIRELES MARK EDWARD SCHOLL

BRANDON JAMES VAN BURKLEO

POOM YOODEE

Stand-In MARK SCHOLL

Studio Teacher PAT JACKSON

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MATT DEAMICIS UMBERTO FERNANDEZ

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Poom Thai Cooks SALILA MAXWELL

SARAN YOODEE

Medic JOHN TAYLOR

Score by VIGGO MORTENSEN

Guitar BUCKETHEAD

Piano VIGGO MORTENSEN

Music Recording by TRAVIS DICKERSON

Score recorded at THE CRYPT STUDIO, LONDON

Music Supervisor MAGGIE RODFORD

## **SOURCE MUSIC**

"Waltz In C-Sharp Minor, Op. 64, No. 2"
Frédéric Chopin
Performed by Van Cliburn
Courtesy of Sony Classical
Licensed by Sony Music Entertainment UK Limited

"Andante Festivo"

Performed by The Finnish Radio Orchestra conducted by Jean Sibelius
Written and conducted by Jean Sibelius
Courtesy of Yle, The Finnish Broadcasting Company
Published by Fennica Gehrman
By permission of Boosey & Hawkes Music Publishers Ltd

"Don't Walk Away" Written by Terry Devine-King and Steve Levine Published by Audio Network Limited Courtesy of Audio Network Limited

"Lantan"
Traditional
Arranged by Pichit Paiboon
Performed by Duriyapraneet Ensemble
Courtesy of SAS and Sonoton Music

"The Challenge" and "The New Brand"
From the MGM film RED RIVER
Written & Performed by Dimitri Tiomkin
Published by BMG Rights Management UK Ltd, a BMG Company
Courtesy of Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Music Inc

"Hold My Ladder"

Composed by Viggo Mortensen

Performed by Buckethead and Viggo Mortensen

Courtesy of Perceval Press

"I've Been Everywhere""

Performed by Hank Snow

Written by Geoff Mack

Licensed by Sony Music Entertainment

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Piano improvisation of "A Little Late"
Performed by Rafel Plana
Courtesy of Perceval Press
Written by Peyton Bighorse and Kelli Mayo
Published by Terrorbird Publishing
By arrangement with Terrorbird Media

"A Little Late"
Performed by Skating Polly
Courtesy of Chap Stereo
Written by Peyton Bighorse and Kelli Mayo
Published by Terrorbird Publishing
Courtesy of Terrorbird Media
By arrangement with Terrorbird Media

"Sharon of Eden" Mural by Tristan Eaton
Barack Obama "Hope" poster Painting by Shepard Fairey
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