



## **PRODUCTION NOTES**

Paul Giamatti  
Dustin Hoffman  
Rosamund Pike  
Minnie Driver  
Rachelle Lefevre  
Scott Speedman  
Bruce Greenwood

## **BARNEY'S VERSION**

Directed by Richard J. Lewis  
Produced by Robert Lantos  
Based on the novel by Mordecai Richler

Release date: March 24, 2011  
Running time: 131 minutes  
Rated: TBC

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## BARNEY'S VERSION

### Short Synopsis

Based on Mordecai Richler's prize-winning comic novel, *BARNEY'S VERSION* is the warm, wise, and witty story of Barney Panofsky, (Paul Giamatti), a seemingly ordinary man who lives an extraordinary life. Barney's candid confessional spans four decades and two continents, and includes three wives (Rosamund Pike, Minnie Driver, and Rachelle Lefevre), one outrageous father (Dustin Hoffman), and a charmingly dissolute best friend (Scott Speedman). *BARNEY'S VERSION* takes us through the many highs -- and a few too many lows -- of a long and colorful life with an unlikely hero at its center -- the unforgettable Barney Panofsky.

## BARNEY'S VERSION

### About The Story

Based on Mordecai Richler's prize-winning comic novel--his last and, arguably, best--*BARNEY'S VERSION* is the warm, wise, and witty story of Barney Panofsky, (Paul Giamatti), a seemingly ordinary man who lives an extraordinary life. A candid confessional, told (as its title implies) entirely from Barney's point of view, the film spans three decades and two continents, taking us through the many highs, and a few too many lows, of our hero's long and colorful life. The reason that Barney must tell his story now--or, at least his *version* of it-- is that his sworn enemy has just published a tell-all book that dredges up the more compromising chapters of Barney's past: the many, often murky entrepreneurial schemes that lead to his success; the three marriages, all of them terminated; and, most problematically, the mysterious, as-yet-unsolved disappearance of Barney's best friend, Boogie, a possible murder for which Barney remains the prime suspect. Since his memory sometimes fails him, and because he has the unfortunate habit of getting blind drunk at pivotal moments, Barney leads us on this somewhat unsteady walk down memory lane, not only to explain his life to others, but also to explain it to himself.

Mostly, we learn about Barney by witnessing his three marriages, each representing, like the rings of a circus, different "acts" of his life. There is his first wife, Clara, (Rachelle Lefevre), a flame-haired, flagrantly unfaithful free spirit with whom Barney briefly lives *la vie de Boheme* in Rome. Then, after returning home to Montreal, Barney marries the "Second Mrs. P.," (Minnie Driver), a wealthy Jewish Princess who shops and talks incessantly, barely noticing that Barney is not listening. It is at their lavish wedding that Barney meets, and starts pursuing, Miriam (Rosamund Pike), the woman who will become his *third* wife, the mother of his two children, and the love of his life. Throughout their life together Barney is believed by many—including, at times, himself—to have murdered Boogie (Scott Speedman), the friend whom he both adores and envies, who simply vanishes one day, along with Barney's youth.

In telling us, as he calls it, "the true story of my wasted life," Barney is honest to a fault, owning up to every one of his flaws and failings with a self-lacerating wit that positively dares us not to like him. However, it's impossible not to forgive someone as smart, funny, and self-aware as Barney. Not only does he turn out to be an unrepentant romantic man, as his lifelong devotion to Miriam attests, he is also capable of all kinds of sneaky acts of gallantry, generosity, and goodness when we --and he-- least expect it. Far from "wasted," his is a gloriously full life, played out on a grand scale. And, at the center of his story stands an unlikely, but unforgettable, hero--Barney Panofsky.

Produced by Robert Lantos, whose quest to bring Richler's sprawling narrative to the screen took more than a decade, the film was directed by Richard J. Lewis from a screenplay by Michael Konyves. Co-produced by Lyse Lafontaine, Domenico Procacci, and Ari Lantos, *BARNEY'S VERSION* is a Serendipity Point Films production made in association with Rome's Fandango and Montreal-based Lyla Films. Mark Musselman is executive producer.

## BARNEY'S VERSION About The Production

Since his death in 2001 at the age of 70, Mordecai Richler's *oeuvre*-- a body of work that encompasses ten novels, nine essay collections, three children's and two travel books, a short story collection, and more than a half-dozen screenplays, (including one that garnered him an Oscar-nomination)-- remains one of the most significant literary legacies in Canada's history. BARNEY'S VERSION, the film adaptation of Richler's last and arguably greatest novel, is not only a loving celebration of that legacy; it is also a rare example of a cinematic rendering of a major work of literature that does justice to its original source material. Starring Academy Award®-Nominee Paul Giamatti as the eponymous Barney Panofsky, a seemingly ordinary man who ends up living a most extraordinary life, and Academy Award®-Winner Dustin Hoffman as his father, Izzy, the film boasts an expansive ensemble cast that also includes Rosamund Pike, Academy Award®-Nominee Minnie Driver, Rachelle Lefevre, Scott Speedman, Bruce Greenwood, Mark Addy, Jake Hoffman, and newcomer Anna Hopkins. Produced by Robert Lantos, whose quest to bring Richler's sprawling narrative to the screen took more than a decade, the film was directed by Richard J. Lewis from a screenplay by Michael Konyves. Co-produced by Lyse Lafontaine, Domenico Procacci, and Ari Lantos, BARNEY'S VERSION is a Serendipity Point Films production made in association with Rome's Fandango and Montreal-based Lyla Films. Mark Musselman is executive producer.

First published in 1997, Richler's novel was instantly anointed as the author's finest, with the Los Angeles Times proclaiming it "Richler's great achievement" and Time Magazine hailing it as "exuberant," "wonderfully written," and "cunningly designed for maximum suspense and beaucoup laughs." Barney Panofsky himself was named "Richler's best hero yet." Nearly 400 pages in length, the book is a candid confessional as told by Barney when he, like Richler when he wrote it, was nearing 70 and feeling intimations of mortality. The reason Barney needs to tell his life story--or, more accurately his *version* of it--is that his sworn enemy has just published a book that dredges up all the disappointments, scandals, and dark secrets of Barney's past--the assorted, sometimes shady entrepreneurial schemes; the three marriages, all of them terminated; and, most problematically, the mysterious and as-yet-unsolved death of Barney's best friend, Boogie, a possible murder for which Barney remains the prime suspect. Since Barney's memory is somewhat blurred with age, and because he has the unfortunate habit of getting blind drunk at many of the most important moments of his life (including at least one of his own weddings *and* the aforementioned death of Boogie), Barney embarks upon his epic apologia, not only because he needs to explain his life to others; he also needs to explain it to himself.

Calling it "the true story of my wasted life," Barney's warts-and-all version of things reveals someone who is extremely self-aware when it comes to his own peculiarities, peccadilloes, and personal failings. But, those familiar with Richler's protagonists--both in the books and in the films adapted from them, such as "The Apprenticeship of Duddy Kravitz," and "Joshua Then and Now"--know that even a deeply flawed character can be worthy of book-length/feature-length exploration. Described as "Falstaffian" by The New York Times, Barney Panofsky has much in common with Shakespeare's bawdy, buffoonish anti-hero. Both are well known for their excessive consumption of alcohol, both are characters whom we alternately laugh *with* and laugh *at*, and both are primarily comic figures who reveal surprising depth when least expected. More importantly, both are easily forgiven -- whatever their lapses and excesses may be -- because they are completely open and frank about their shortcomings. These are men who fully acknowledge that they make trouble, and get into it, yet they accept complete responsibility for their actions.

It was his deep affection for Barney Panofsky that fueled Robert Lantos' desire to bring Richler's book to the screen. "I first read BARNEY'S VERSION when Mordecai sent me the manuscript," recalls the producer, who had collaborated previously with the author, having produced the 1985 adaptation of Richler's intensely autobiographical "Joshua Then and Now," for which Richler himself did the screenplay. "The character of Barney speaks to me," Lantos says, adding that, "this is a story of a life fully lived by a man with flaws and warts, but whose heart is in the right place." However, he notes, "not everyone knows this about Barney until the end," referring to the

character's tendency to be his own worst enemy, and to hide his warmth and generosity beneath a gruff exterior. "I'm particularly attracted to someone who is underestimated by everyone, or

misunderstood by everyone." Of the book in general he says, "It stayed with me, it wouldn't let me go. It was a novel written by one of my favorite authors, and it's the best book he's ever written."

Stressing that the novel, like Barney (*and* Richler), hides its heart under a mask of irreverence and political incorrectness, Lantos observes that, "at a time when the western world, and especially where I live, has sheepishly flocked towards a dictatorship of the politically correct, making a movie based on this magnificently bawdy and wildly irreverent book, seems a necessity!" A notorious satirist and political gadfly, Richler was a controversial social commentator who managed to ruffle more than a few feathers with his strong opinions about politics, religion, and society. About him, co-producer Lyse Lafontaine (who, like Richler and Lantos, hails from Montreal), says, "He managed, at one point in his life, to be totally hated by the three main communities here which, in those days, were the French Canadians, the WASPs, and the Jews. He had very clever opinions about society in general, and he was generous in his criticism of everybody; he was very democratic."

Similarly caustic, curmudgeonly, and quick to offend friends and foes alike, (not to mention ex-wives, and children), Barney Panofsky was undoubtedly created in Mordecai Richler's image. Like Richler -- and any number of his protagonists -- Barney comes from Montreal's Mile End area, a middle-and-working class neighborhood that was overwhelmingly Jewish in a city, province, and nation that is overwhelmingly *not*. Forever feeling like a second-class citizen, Barney tries desperately to "make it," and embarks upon a series of business ventures -- import/export, fund-raising and, ultimately, television production -- that propel him to success. Regardless, Barney always feels unworthy, and longs to be the many things he is not. Though he has no obvious talent for anything other than making money, an olive oil-importing enterprise takes him to Rome, where he lives *la vie de Boheme*, and consorts with (and subsidizes) a host of artists, including his best friend Boogie (Scott Speedman), a Byronic writer, womanizer, and substance abuser, whom Barney both envies and adores, and Clara (Rachelle Lefevre), the flame-haired free-spirit who becomes the first Mrs. Panofsky.

Though she sleeps with all of his friends and subjects him to endless humiliation, Clara, who is both a painter and, better still, a *shiksa*, (or, so he believes), is Barney's idea of "marrying up." Though this union comes to a sudden and tragic end, Barney "marries up" again, when he returns to Montreal and weds the second "Mrs. P." (Minnie Driver), a fabulously wealthy Jewish princess whose family connections help him get ahead. He will do it one more time by marrying Miriam, the *third* Mrs. Panofsky, whom he happens to meet at his wedding to the second. Miriam, who ends up being the love of his life, is beautiful, intelligent, patient--in short, perfect. Though the marriage lasts for decades and produces two children, sooner or later Barney is bound to screw it up, simply because he never feels that he deserves Miriam. And, screw it up he does.

Self-deprecating to a fault -- he calls his successful television company "Totally Unnecessary Productions"-- Barney is as tough on himself as he is on any of the other characters he describes, and derides, as he tells his tale. Though he would have us believe that his life hasn't amounted to much -- he is less loyal and loving than Miriam, less talented than Boogie, less dramatic than Clara, less vibrant than his father, Izzy, and less attractive than Miriam's second husband, Blair -- over the course of two hours we realize that he is wrong; this is only *his* version. What we discover instead is that Barney is a true *mensh*, albeit a closeted one. He is a wonderful thinker and talker, whose insights are sharper and more humane than any of the self-proclaimed artists whom he thinks are better than him. Though he would never own up to it, he is capable of extraordinary acts of kindness, generosity, and forgiveness. And, despite all evidence to the contrary, in his dogged pursuit, and dog-like devotion to Miriam, he proves to be an unrepentant romantic. As director Richard J. Lewis observes, Barney "somehow falls prey to the monster, and the monster is him. I think we all have that within us," he continues, "that monster that is lurking, and wants to sabotage our very happiness." To be sure, it is not always possible to trust Barney Panofsky's version of things, least of all when it comes to the subject of Barney himself.

Spanning nearly four decades and two continents, BARNEY'S VERSION proved to be a daunting project to adapt and, even at the earliest stages, Lantos and Richler foresaw the challenges. In the book, Barney is reminiscing, which is not particularly interesting visually, and he's narrating his own story. I prefer to avoid narration in my films," Lantos adds. "As Mordecai wrote the first draft

and the second," he continues, "the difficulties of adaptation, and finding a cinematic language for this literary masterpiece became apparent." Then, sadly, Richler became ill and passed away in 2001.

"The challenge became really acute," Lantos recalls, as he struggled "to find a writer who could do justice to Mordecai Richler's distinct brilliant voice. There was one draft after another," he says, "but none of them truly sang. I loved this book too much to make it into a movie until I had a screenplay that I loved as well." Lantos made a dozen other films while *BARNEY'S VERSION* was in development. "This was always very special to me. Because it was so special, I took my time."

Director Richard J. Lewis, who had worked with Lantos previously on the feature, "Whale Music," was equally obsessed with telling Barney's story. "I read the book in '98," he recalls, "when it first came out, and I was very attached to it immediately." Not only did he start badgering Lantos about letting him direct, he dedicated his evenings, while directing episodes of *CSI* by day, to writing a script of *BARNEY'S VERSION* on spec. "It kind of opened up the process," Lewis recalls, explaining why he took the initiative. Lantos wasn't impressed enough by Lewis' script to produce it, but he was impressed by his tenacity and passion for the project. "That resourcefulness," he says, "that deep desire is the kind that Barney himself would have." Ultimately, Lewis' understanding and love for Richler's characters played a large part in convincing Lantos to let Lewis direct the film. "He had tremendously intimate knowledge of these characters," says Lantos, "He understood them as well as I did."

About three years ago, a friend of Lantos' came across a young screenwriter, Michael Konyves, whom he thought would be perfect for *BARNEY'S VERSION*, and recommended him to the producer. A meeting ensued and, as Konyves recalls, "I was allowed five minutes in the room with Robert to give my pitch." Lantos not only heard the writer out, he gave him a previous draft and asked Konyves for notes. "I took a month," he says, "and wrote an entire treatment for him. I think he was expecting a few notes on the draft, not a whole treatment for an entirely new and radical way of structuring the movie out of that massive book!" What Lantos didn't know was that Konyves, like him and Lewis, was equally obsessed with *BARNEY'S VERSION*. "You can't be from Montreal and Jewish and not know Mordecai Richler," he says. "He's just such a huge part of this city. Coming from Montreal, and growing up in the very neighborhood he writes about, you connect with it. That's just one of the reasons why I identified with the book."

Konyves goes on to say that *BARNEY'S VERSION* is the only book he's ever read twice and that, once he had re-read it, he had to pursue the possibility of adapting it to the screen. "It got me interested in finding out who had the rights to it, which began a very long series of events that led me to Robert Lantos. I didn't know he had a long history with the project," the young screenwriter confesses, "or that he'd been working on it for ten years. I was so naive about the situation; I didn't know there had been so many incarnations of it, and so many writers and drafts before I got there. I just came in fresh, as if it were a new project," he observes, "and, although the script went through many *more* incarnations -- we worked consistently for two years on it --the initial structure I proposed in my treatment is the existing structure of the movie."

"We brought Michael in," recalls Lewis, "and he did his own version, which was far superior to mine." Lantos notes Konyves "found a way to take this very long, sprawling novel with its many subplots -- it flashes forward, it flashes backwards, it has a huge cast - -and he actually found the heart." Konyves adds, "It's hard to condense these characters in the book, who have so much life and vitality, to the short amount of time that you're allowed in a feature film. You have to make sure that there's not a moment, not a second, that's wasted. When you're reading the book," he notes, "it's a solitary experience. You sit at home, you spend days, weeks, sometimes months if you're a slow reader, whereas, with the movie, you're there for two hours and you're participating in the narrative in a very different way." Lantos credits Konyves with translating the novel from written to cinematographic form, and with creating a visual narrative to function in place of the literary one. "Michael eliminated the narration," Lantos says, "along with all the other literary devices that Richler used in the book. He found visually exciting ways to tell the story, and scenes that might take twenty-five pages in print are now rendered in thirty seconds of screen time. He found what I would call a 'cinematic language'." Lewis adds that, while Richler's plot required a lot of surgery, his characters transferred well from page to screen. "Michael pared away a lot of the anecdotal material that exists in the book, much of which is hilarious and funny as hell. But the characters were always clearly filmic and really well-drawn, beautifully drawn."

Richler's book is divided into three parts, each corresponding to one of Barney's wives. While the film essentially follows the same path, both the first wife, Clara, and the nameless "2nd

Mrs. P." are somewhat abbreviated. Conversely, other characters, principally Barney's father, Izzy Panofsky, (played by Dustin Hoffman), have been beefed up. Several of the less pivotal characters in the book have either been eliminated, condensed, or combined. For instance, Constable O' Hearn, (played by Mark Addy), who serves as Barney's Javert-like nemesis, combines multiple elements from the novel. First, he serves as the investigating officer who accuses Barney of murdering Boogie. Then, many years later, he publishes a tell-all book about the supposed crime that forces Barney to present his side of the story, thus providing the basis for the entire film.

Konyves stresses that all the changes were made to remain true to the heart of the novel. "Robert was always the defender of the book," he says, "because he was an old friend of Mordecai's. Doing this book properly was a huge thing for him, so everything is really loyal. I really think it keeps the exact spirit and character of the book." Even a change of a principal location turns out to have been "authorized." Lantos chose to replace Paris, where Barney spends his youthful European sojourn in the book, with Rome because he felt that liberating trips to France had become cliches. "No one really needs to see another group of artists and bohemians in St. Germain-des-Pres," he insists, "and Rome seemed of greater interest." "But," he adds, "there's another reason for the change that's more compelling: when I first began to talk about transplanting Paris to Rome with Mordecai Richler, when we were working on the script, he not only gave it his blessing; it turns out that, as a young man, that is where he went to live as an expatriate. Taking refuge with his second wife, Florence, when they left their respective marriages, they eloped to Rome, where he lived for some years. Interestingly, the book is massively read and respected in Italy. With BARNEY'S VERSION, Mordecai Richler became a rock star there."

Lantos also sought Richler's blessing when it came to casting and, over the years, the two of them discussed many possible actors for the role of Barney Panofsky, with no success. "Barney couldn't be your conventional leading man," notes Lantos. "We needed an actor who didn't have movie star looks but had charisma, charm, and wit. And who, while being gruff --and it's very important that Barney be gruff -- has an inner lovability that would play to an audience. Barney has to be quirky," he continues, "he simply cannot be conventionally handsome. It would be too predictable for beautiful women to fall for him. This is a man who's out to get what he wants, by cutting corners and out-maneuvering others, by relentlessly finding a way to get to the front of the line. Not because he's born with the attributes, but because he cunningly supplants what he *doesn't* have with smarts."

It was only when Lantos saw Golden Globe and Emmy® Award-winning actor Paul Giamatti in "Sideways," that he knew he'd found his Barney and, in many ways, Giamatti's memorable "Miles Raymond" in that acclaimed comedy was perfect preparation for Barney Panofsky. Both characters are notably lovelorn, both have far more opinions than they have tact, and both required the actor to play many shades of drunk. Most importantly, both characters, despite their difficult personalities are, finally, forgivable. The requisite "lovability" that Lantos was looking for is, he says, "something that Paul has in spades." He also points out that, "the only other actor who, would have been perfect for Barney, was some thirty years too old to play him." That actor was Dustin Hoffman, so Lantos approached him to play Barney's father, the tough but tender retired policeman, Izzy Panofsky.

Though Richler didn't live to see his last and best book brought to the screen, his family was very involved in the production, and several appear as extras in the Ritz Garden wedding scene -- a major set piece involving most of the film's principal characters, in which Barney not only marries the "Second Mrs. P," he also falls in love-at-first-sight with Miriam. Lantos recalls that "the Richler family was on the set many times. I loved having them there," he admits, "because I think that's something that Mordecai would have enjoyed. Ultimately, this is *his* film, and it belongs to his family more than anyone else. I was really happy that they wanted to be a part of it, and that they embraced the process and made it theirs."

Pointing out that there are many correspondences between Richler's art and his life, Lantos observes that his old collaborator even placed *him* in the novel: "there are bits and pieces of the book where I know that Mordecai was taunting me and having a little fun at my expense -- things like Totally Unnecessary Productions. Responding with equal good humor, Lantos appears --as himself -- in the film. And, to further reinforce the connection between BARNEY'S VERSION and the *making*

of BARNEY'S VERSION, many of Richler's friends, colleagues, and fans make cameo appearances in the film. His dear friend, director Ted Kotcheff, with whom he worked on a number of projects,

including the adaptations of both "Duddy Kravitz" and "Joshua Then and Now," can be seen as a train conductor during Barney's first declaration of love to Miriam. Richard J. Lewis makes an appearance as a pathologist, and both David Cronenberg and Atom Egoyan show up as directors of Barney's soap opera starring Paul Gross, "O' Malley of the North." Rounding out the who's who of Canadian cinema is Quebec's greatest director, Denys Arcand, who appears as the *maitre d'* at Barney's favorite restaurant. If all of this serves as a wink of the eye to the audience, it also serves as a tip of the hat to Richler.

Such felicities of friendship, family, and a lifetime's worth of intimate connections are the very heart of what BARNEY'S VERSION is about. "If we do our job well on this film," says Lantos, "those who see it will laugh, they'll cry, and then they'll laugh and cry at the same time. If they do, then we will have accomplished the most one can hope for, which is to move an audience through the full range of human emotions." By way of conclusion, Lantos adds, "there are no lessons to be learned in BARNEY'S VERSION. It's not a morality tale, and it's not about how life should be lived, because there are no *shoulds*. Rather, it's about the joys of being alive, and it's about compassion. Translating that to film was our objective, and Mordecai Richler gave us a splendid, stupendous map to guide us there. Our task was to follow that map."

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## CAST BIOGRAPHIES

### PAUL GIAMATTI – “Barney”

With a diverse roster of finely etched, award-winning and critically acclaimed performances, Paul Giamatti has established himself as one of the most versatile actors of his generation.

In 2008, Giamatti won an Emmy® Award for Best Actor in a Miniseries for his portrayal of the title character in the HBO 7 Part Emmy® Award Winning Mini-Series *John Adams*. Directed by Emmy® Award Winning director Tom Hooper, Giamatti played President John Adams in a cast that also included award-winning actors Laura Linney, Tom Wilkinson, David Morse and Stephen Dillane.

In 2006, Giamatti's performance in Ron Howard's *Cinderella Man* earned him a SAG Award and Broadcast Film Critics' Award for Best Supporting Actor, as well as Academy Award® and Golden Globe nominations in the same category.

Giamatti recently wrapped the film *Ironclad*, in which he portrays 'King John' in the year 1215 as he tried to gain control of Rochester Castle from the Knights of Templar. And *Win-Win*, a film written and directed by Oscar® nominee Tom McCarthy, in which he portrays 'Mike Flaherty', a disheartened attorney moonlighting as a high school wrestling coach who stumbles across a star athlete through some questionable business dealings while trying to support his family.

Giamatti was recently seen in a trio of films: *Cold Souls*, which Giamatti also Executive Produced through his production company Touchy Feely Films; *Duplicity* directed by Academy Award® Winner Tony Gilroy and starring Clive Owen and Julia Roberts; and *The Last Station*, the story of famed Russian writer Leo Tolstoy, opposite Helen Mirren and James McAvoy.

For his role in Alexander Payne's critically-lauded *Sideways*, Giamatti earned several accolades for his performance including Best Actor from the Independent Spirit Awards, New York Film Critics Circle and a Golden Globe nomination.

In 2004, Giamatti garnered outstanding reviews and commendations (Independent Spirit Award nomination for Best Actor, National Board of Review Breakthrough performance of the Year) for his portrayal of Harvey Pekar in Shari Springer Berman and Robert Pulcini's *American Splendor*.

Giamatti first captured the eyes of America in Betty Thomas' hit comedy *Private Parts*. His extensive list of film credits also includes David Dobkin's *Fred Claus*, *Shoot Em' Up* opposite Clive Owen, Shari Springer Berman and Roger Pulcini's *The Nanny Diaries*, M. Night Shyamalan's *Lady in the Water*, *The Illusionist*, directed by Neil Burger, Milos Forman's *Man on the Moon*, Julian Goldberger's *The Hawk is Dying*, Tim Robbins' *The Cradle Will Rock*, F. Gary Gray's *The Negotiator*, Steven Spielberg's *Saving Private Ryan*, Peter Weir's *The Truman Show*, Mike Newell's *Donnie Brasco*, Todd Solondz' *Storytelling*, Tim Burton's *Planet of the Apes*, *Duets*, opposite Gwyneth Paltrow, the animated film *Robots* and *Big Momma's House*, co-starring Martin Lawrence. Giamatti also appeared in James Foley's *Confidence* and John Woo's *Paycheck*.

As an accomplished stage actor, Giamatti received a Drama Desk nomination for Best Supporting Actor as "Jimmy Tomorrow" in Kevin Spacey's Broadway revival of *The Iceman Cometh*. His other Broadway credits include *The Three Sisters* directed by Scott Elliot; *Racing Demon* directed by Richard Eyre; and *Arcadia* directed by Trevor Nunn. He was also seen Off-Broadway in the ensemble cast of *The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui* with Al Pacino.

For television, Giamatti appeared in *The Pentagon Papers* with James Spader, HBO's *Winchell* opposite Stanley Tucci and Jane Anderson's *If These Walls Could Talk 2*. He resides in Brooklyn, NY with his wife and son.



## DUSTIN HOFFMAN – “Izzy”

A two-time Academy Award® winner and seven-time nominee whose arrival in Hollywood helped usher in a new and revitalized approach to filmmaking, Dustin Hoffman continues to add singular performances to a career rich with characters that have obliterated the line previously dividing the archetypes of "character actor" and "leading man."

Hoffman caught the world's attention for his role as Benjamin Braddock in Mike Nichol's Academy Award® nominated film, *The Graduate*. Since then, he has been nominated for six more Academy Awards® for diverse films such as *Midnight Cowboy*, *Lenny*, *Tootsie* (a film he also produced through his company, Punch Productions), and *Wag the Dog*. Hoffman won the Oscar in 1979 for his role in *Kramer Vs. Kramer* and again in 1988 for *Rain Man*. In 1997, he was awarded the Golden Globe's esteemed Cecil B. DeMille Award.

Hoffman is currently in production on David Milch and Michael Mann's horse racing drama *Luck*, for HBO.

Hoffman last starred in *Last Chance Harvey*, a love story set in London, written and directed by Joel Hopkins, and co-starring Emma Thompson. He received a Golden Globe nomination for Best Performance by an Actor in a Motion Picture - Comedy or Musical category for his role.

Recently, Hoffman lent his voice to the box office hit, *Kung Fu Panda*. The film was nominated for an Academy Award® for Animated Feature Film of the Year and Hoffman received the Annie Award for Voice Acting in an Animated Feature Production. He will continue voicing the character of Shifu in the upcoming *Kung Fu Panda 2: The Kaboom of Doom*.

Other film credits include: *The Tale of Despereaux*, *Mr. Magorium's Wonder Emporium*, *Stranger Than Fiction*, *Perfume*, *Meet the Fockers*, *Finding Neverland*, *I Heart Huckabee's*, *The Lost City*, *Racing Stripes*, *Runaway Jury*, *Little Big Man*, *Straw Dogs*, *Papillon*, *All the President's Men*, *Marathon Man*, *Straight Time*, *Agatha*, *Ishtar*, *Dick Tracy*, *Billy Bathgate*, *Mad City*, *Hero*, *Sleepers*, *Sphere*, *American Buffalo*, *Hook*, and *Outbreak*.

On stage, Hoffman has had an equally impressive career. His first stage role was in the Sarah Lawrence College production of Gertrude Stein's *Yes is for a Very Young Man*. This performance led to several roles Off Broadway, such as *Journey of the Fifth Horse*, for which he won the Obie, and *Eh?*, for which he won the Drama Desk Award for Best Actor. His success on stage caught the attention of Mike Nichols, who cast him in *The Graduate*. In 1969, Hoffman made his Broadway debut in Murray Schisgal's "*Jimmy Shine*." In 1974, Hoffman made his Broadway directorial debut with Schisgal's "All Over Town." In 1984, Hoffman garnered a Drama Desk Award for Best Actor for his portrayal of Willy Loman in the Broadway revival of "*Death of a Salesman*" which he also produced. In addition to starring in the Broadway production, a special presentation aired on television and Hoffman won the Emmy® Award. Additionally, Hoffman received a Tony Award Nomination for his role as Shylock in "*The Merchant of Venice*" which he reprised from his long run on the London Stage.

As a producer, Hoffman produced Tony Goldwyn's feature film *A Walk on the Moon* starring Diane Lane, Viggo Mortensen, Liev Schreiber and Anna Paquin. He executive produced *The Devil's Arithmetic* starring Kirsten Dunst and Brittany Murphy, which won two Emmy® Awards.

Hoffman was born in Los Angeles and attended Santa Monica Community College. He later studied at the Pasadena Playhouse before moving to New York to study with Lee Strasberg.

Hoffman serves as the chair of the Artistic Advisory Board for the Eli and Edythe Broad Stage Theater, which opened on September 20, 2008. This intimate 499-seat state-of-the-art theater provides a much-needed performance facility for Santa Monica College and the surrounding community.

Hoffman was recently awarded the Honorary César Medal at the 2009 César Awards.

## **ROSAMUND PIKE – “Miriam”**

Rosamund Pike began her career at the age of 16 when she discovered her love of the stage while starring as ‘Juliet’ in “Romeo and Juliet.” After starring in many other stage productions such as “The Taming of the Shrew” and “The Libertine,” she found herself starring in her first BBC production, *Wives and Daughters* opposite Michael Gambon. She received such critical acclaim for her performance that her film career immediately took off.

Pike then starred in the MGM / James Bond film, *Die Another Day*, opposite Halle Berry and Pierce Brosnan. After Bond, Pike returned to the London stage starring in the Royal Court Theatre production of “Hitchcock Blonde,” directed by Terry Johnson. Due to its enormous success, the play eventually moved to the Lyric Theater in the West End.

In 2004, she began work on Laurence Dunmore’s film version of *The Libertine*, opposite Johnny Depp. She portrayed Elizabeth Malet, wife to Depp’s Earl of Rochester. The film also starred John Malkovich and Samantha Morton. Pike was rewarded for her extraordinary performance in this film with a 2005 British Independent Film Award for Best Supporting Actor/Actress.

Pike then starred alongside Kiera Knightley, Brenda Blethyn and Judi Dench in the Focus Features film adaptation of the classic Jane Austen novel, *Pride and Prejudice*, directed by Joe Wright. Pike earned rave reviews as well as a 2006 London Film Critics Circle Award for her portrayal of “Jane Bennett.”

In 2007, Pike was seen opposite Ryan Gosling and Anthony Hopkins in the New Line legal thriller, *Fracture*, directed by Gregory Hoblit. She also starred in the Jeremy Podeswa directed independent film, *Fugitive Pieces*, which opened the 2007 Toronto Film Festival. She then starred in the independent film, *Devil You Know*, directed by James Oakley and co-starring Lena Olin.

Pike returned to the theater, starring at the Old Vic Theater in Patrick Hamilton’s Victorian thriller “*Gaslight*,” directed by Peter Gill. She followed that performance by starring in the independent film, *An Education*, directed by Lone Scherfig, which was well received at the Sundance Film Festival in 2009. After completing *An Education*, Pike starred in the Disney film, *Surrogates*, opposite Bruce Willis and then segued to another independent film, *Burning Palms*, directed by Christopher Landon (who previously wrote *Disturbia*), about 5 vignettes of life in Los Angeles.

In 2009, Pike starred in The Wyndham Theater’s production of “Madame de Sade,” opposite Judi Dench. Shortly after completing this production, she began pre-production on the independent film, *Dagenham Girls*, opposite Sally Hawkins and directed by Nigel Cole.

2010 has been an incredibly busy year for Ms. Pike. She began the year by starring as the title role of the UK touring production of “Hedda Gabler” for which she received rave reviews for her performance. Immediately following the final performance, Pike traveled to Cape Town, South Africa to star in the BBC movie, *Women in Love* and then onto Vancouver to star alongside Owen Wilson, Jack Black and Steve Martin in the Fox 2000 film, *The Big Year*, directed by David Frankel.

### **MINNIE DRIVER – 2<sup>nd</sup> Mrs “P”**

Audiences may not know where Minnie Driver’s next character calls home, but they can be sure that no matter where it is, British-born Driver will make her authentic.

Minnie Driver first came to the attention of audiences and critics alike in 1995 for her critically acclaimed performance in *Circle of Friends*, in which she starred with Chris O’Donnell. She went on to earn Oscar® and Screen Actors Guild nominations, both in the category of Outstanding Performance by a Female Actor in a Supporting Role for Miramax’s award-winning feature, *Good Will Hunting*, directed by Gus Van Sant. In 1998 she was honored with ShoWest’s prestigious Female Star of Tomorrow for her work.

Her film career is not only filled with characters from all over the world, but ~~are~~ representing a diversity of choices in both the independent and major film worlds. Among her critically acclaimed performances are the films *Take*, which premiered at the 2007 Tribeca Film Festival; the dark comedy *Grosse Pointe Blank*; *Return to Me*, opposite David Duchovny; the feature of Oscar Wilde’s, *An Ideal Husband*; provided the voice of “Jane” in Walt Disney’s, *Tarzan*; *High Heels and Low Lites*; *The Governess*; *Beautiful* (which she produced with her sister, Kate for their production company, Two Drivers); *Big Night*; *Ella Enchanted*; and *Sleepers*; the only female alongside Robert DeNiro, Brad Pitt and Dustin Hoffman, directed by Barry Levinson.

Driver appeared as the unforgettable, “Dahlia Molloy” on the critically acclaimed FX television series, *The Riches*. An audience favorite, Driver received an Emmy® and Golden Globe nomination for her role. She also made several guest appearances on NBC’s *Will & Grace*, as “Lorraine Finster,” a critic and fan darling. She recently completed a five-part thriller set thousands of feet below the arctic ice in the BBC’s, *The Deep*.

Driver, a singer before she became an actress, lent her vocals to the original title track, “Learn to be Lonely,” written by Andrew Lloyd Webber, for the 1995 film version of his *Phantom of the Opera*, directed by Joel Schumacher. The song, which played over the end credits, was nominated for a Golden Globe and an Oscar® in the “Best Original Song” category. Driver made an indelible impression as “Carlotta,” the reigning Italian opera house diva, and received critical praise for her performance including a nomination by the Critics Circle in the Best British Actress in a Supporting Role category.

Driver released her debut album, “Everything In My Pocket” in 2004. Driver toured with the Finn Brothers in the UK and headlined her own sold-out tour in the US. In 2007, Driver’s second album, “Seastories,” was released. The album features performances from Ryan Adams and his band “The Cardinals,” as well as indie queen Liz Phair.

On stage, Driver appeared at London’s Comedy Theatre with Matthew Perry and Hank Azaria in David Mamet’s “Sexual Perversity in Chicago.” The play held the record for the largest box-office advance for a West End show at that time. Other theatrical productions include: “The Comedy of Errors,” “The Married Man,” “School for Scandal” and “Camino Real.”

Among Driver’s charitable causes is OXFAM, for which she is a spokesperson. In 2004, she traveled to Cambodia and Thailand for the international aid agency, to draw attention to the exploitation of the poverty stricken workforce in the garment industry. She is also active on behalf of the environment and animal well-being.

### **RACHELLE LEFEVRE – “Clara”**

RACHELLE LEFEVRE was most recently seen on the big screen in the record-breaking hit *New Moon*, the sequel to international blockbuster *Twilight* and based on the second book in the best-selling series by Stephenie Meyer. In the film, Lefevre reprises her role as Victoria, the ruthless, flame-haired vampire hell bent on revenge against Kristen Stewart’s heroine, Bella. Lefevre most recently completed the psychological thriller *The Caller* opposite Stephen Moyer. In the film she plays Mary Kee, a woman trying to regain her strength after an abusive relationship and who becomes tormented by mysterious phone calls from the past. The cast also includes Luis Guzman and Lorna

Raver.

Prior to *Barney's Version*, Lefevre enjoyed a supporting turn opposite Kevin Spacey and Barry Pepper in *Casino Jack*, based on the true story of disgraced Washington lobbyist Jack Abramoff, largely considered the biggest scandal to hit Washington, D.C., since Watergate. Lefevre stars as Emily Miller—Tom DeLay's former press secretary and the jilted fiancée of Abramoff's partner Michael Scanlon—widely believed to be the original FBI source on the scandal. The film also stars Kelly Preston and Jon Lovitz.

Lefevre moved to Los Angeles when she landed the female lead in the Fox comedy series *Life on a Stick*, in which she played Lily, a girl Lefevre describes as "a smart, free-spirited wild card." Lefevre has since gone on to enjoy a successful television career. On a five-episode arc on CBS's summer hit *Swingtown*, Lefevre played Melinda, an ambitious stock exchange runner fighting for a place in the male-dominated '70s workplace who eventually lures lead character Jack (Jack Davenport) away from his wife (Molly Parker). She also had a recurring role on the critically acclaimed series *Boston Legal* as Jerry's love interest Dana Strickland, a role David E. Kelly wrote specifically for her. Lefevre also starred in the CBC/BBC-produced miniseries *The Summit*, a political thriller revolving around a terrorist threat at a G8 summit. Lefevre plays the activist daughter of the Canadian Prime Minister (Bruce Greenwood), Leonie, who after an attack is exposed to the small pox virus and threatens the safety of everyone at the summit. She also starred on the small screen as Heather, the self-assured stripper who wins Matt Davis's heart on the second season of ABC's *What About Brian*. Lefevre will next be seen in an arc on ABC's new legal drama *The Deep End* as a paralegal torn between new associate Dylan (Matt Long) and law firm partner Cliff (Billy Zane).

On the big screen, Lefevre has enjoyed playing a diverse range of characters. In *American Summer*, a *Risky Business* update from *American Pie* producer Warren Zide, she stars opposite Matthew Lillard and Tom Arnold as Laura, the straight-talking escort who becomes a madam for the summer. In a very different turn, Lefevre starred opposite Stephen Dillane and Rosamund Pike in *Fugitive Pieces*, adapted from the internationally best-selling novel by Anne Michaels, directed by Jeremy Podeswa (*The Pacific*) and produced by Robert Lantos. In the film, Lefevre plays Naomi, a young, spirited, Jewish wife whose marriage is severely affected by wounds left after the Holocaust.

Lefevre is passionately involved with the literacy organization School on Wheels and is an Ambassador for the Cure with the Susan G. Komen Foundation. She greatly enjoys rock climbing, horseback riding, and scuba diving. When not working, she often fulfills her passion for travelling.

### **SCOTT SPEEDMAN – "Boogie"**

SCOTT SPEEDMAN most recently starred in Atom Egoyan's film *Adoration*. Prior to that, he starred opposite Liv Tyler in Universal/Rogue's box-office smash *The Strangers*, and IFC Films' *Anamorph*, starring opposite Willem Dafoe for director Henry Miller.

His other film credits include Allan Moyle's *Weirdsville*; Len Wiseman's *Underworld: Evolution*, starring opposite Kate Beckinsale; Ron Shelton's *Dark Blue*, opposite Kurt Russell; Isabel Coixet's *My Life Without Me*, opposite Sarah Polley, for which he won Best Actor at the Bordeaux International Film Festival; Tony Piccirillo's *The 24th Day*, opposite James Marsden; Bruce Paltrow's *Duets*, co-starring Gwyneth Paltrow and Maria Bello; Lee Tamahori's *xxX: State of the Union*; and Gary Burns' *Kitchen Party*.

His first film was the short feature *Can I Get a Witness?*, directed by Kris Lefcoe. The film was developed at the Canadian Film Centre in Toronto, which was founded by Norman Jewison, and was screened at the 1996 Toronto International Film Festival. Speedman then began studying at the Neighborhood Playhouse in New York before landing the role of Ben Covington in the popular WB Network drama *Felicity*, which had a successful four-season run. He made his stage debut in 2000 during his summer hiatus from *Felicity*, performing the lead in the Edward Albee play "The Zoo Story" at the Equity Theatre in Toronto.

He next stars in *Good Neighbours* opposite Jay Baruchel for director Jacob Tierney.

## **BRUCE GREENWOOD – “Blair”**

BRUCE GREENWOOD was previously seen in the Paramount Pictures blockbuster *Star Trek* as Captain Christopher Pike opposite, Chris Pine, Zachary Quinto and Eric Bana for director J.J. Abrams. Following that he starred opposite Noel Fisher and Linda Emond in the holiday movie *A Dog Named Christmas*, based on the Greg Kincaid novel. The Hallmark Hall of Fame presentation aired on CBS in November, 2009.

He recently appeared opposite Steve Carell and Paul Rudd in the comedy *Dinner for Schmucks* for director Jay Roach of *Meet the Parents*, and *Meet the Fockers* fame for Paramount. *Schmucks* is a remake of director Francis Veber's César award-winning 1998 comedy about an extraordinarily stupid man who possesses the ability to ruin the life of anyone who spends more than a few minutes in his company.

This summer he was also seen in *Mao's Last Dancer* for director Bruce Beresford. The film is based on the bestselling memoir of dancer Li Cunxin who was taken from his poor Chinese village at age 12 by delegates of Madame Mao, brought to Texas during a cultural exchange and ends up falling in love and defecting. Greenwood plays Ben Stevenson, artistic director of the Houston Ballet, who was his mentor. The film premiered as a Special Presentation at the 2009 Toronto International Film Festival and will be released August 6<sup>th</sup> for Samuel Goldwyn Films.

He recently finished production on the drama *Meek's Cutoff* with Michelle Williams for director Kelly Reichardt. The Jon Raymond screenplay was inspired by historical accounts of Stephen Meek (Greenwood) and the Tetherow Wagon Train of 1845 and chronicles an exhausted group of travelers hoping to strike it rich out west.

Previously he appeared in the Walt Disney action thriller *National Treasure: Book of Secrets* as the President of the United States opposite Nicolas Cage. In 2009, his dual role in the unconventional biopic of legendary singer/songwriter Bob Dylan *I'm Not There* opposite Cate Blanchett and Richard Gere for writer/director Todd Haynes earned the Independent Spirit Awards inaugural Robert Altman Award.

He is well known for his outstanding portrayal of President John F. Kennedy negotiating the Cuban Missile Crisis and its fallout in the riveting drama *Thirteen Days*, opposite Kevin Costner and Steven Culp. The film earned Greenwood a Golden Satellite Award for Best Supporting Actor.

In 2006 he appeared in the thriller *Déjà Vu* for director Tony Scott alongside Denzel Washington and Val Kilmer. That same year he played opposite Paul Walker in the Disney adventure *Eight Below*, based on the true story of the rescue of a pack of arctic sled dogs.

In 2005 he starred opposite Philip Seymour Hoffman as Truman Capote's partner, writer Jack Dunphy, in *Capote*. That performance earned him a Screen Actors Guild Nomination for Outstanding Performance by a Cast in a Motion Picture. That same year he played Kentucky horse trainer Nolan Walsh in the live-action/animated family film *Racing Stripes*.

In 2004 he appeared opposite Will Smith in the sci-fi box office hit *I, Robot* in which he played a ruthless CEO of U.S. Robotics who was suspected of murder. That same year he played the dashing paramour of an aging actress (Annette Bening) in the critically- praised *Being Julia*. That role earned him a Genie Award nomination for Best Supporting Actor.

In 1999 he starred opposite Ashley Judd as a murderous plotting spouse in the suspense thriller *Double Jeopardy*, which earned him a Blockbuster Entertainment Award nomination for Favorite Supporting Actor.

He has worked three times with acclaimed Canadian director Atom Egoyan. He had a lead role in *Exotica* as a tax inspector obsessed with a stripper. The film was screened In Competition at Cannes and named Best Canadian Feature Film at the Toronto International Film Festival. He also starred in the drama *The Sweet Hereafter* playing a father of two children killed in a tragic bus

accident. The film earned the Jury Grand Prize at Cannes and swept the Genie Awards including Best

Motion Picture and also earned him a Genie Award nomination for Best Actor. Additionally he starred in the drama *Ararat*.

Greenwood's other film credits include *Firehouse Dog*, *Hollywood Homicide*, *The World's Fastest Indian*, *Eight Below*, *Rules of Engagement*, *Here on Earth*, *The Lost Son*, *Thick as Thieves*, *Disturbing Behavior*, *Passenger 57* and *Wild Orchid*.

Greenwood also enjoys a diverse and successful career in television. In 2007 he was the lead in the HBO series "John from Cincinnati" and played opposite Rebecca De Mornay as Mitch Yost, the patriarch of a dysfunctional California surfing family.

Earlier in his career he was a regular as Dr. Seth Griffith on the award-winning series "St. Elsewhere." He also appeared on the critically-acclaimed "Larry Sanders Show," the nighttime drama "Knots Landing" and starred in the cult series "Nowhere Man" as a documentary photographer who has his whole existence erased.

He also starred in the remake of the *The Magnificent Ambersons*, as well as several movies-of-the-week presentations, including *The Riverman*, for A&E and *Saving Millie* for CBS.

Bruce and his wife Susan divide their time between their homes in Los Angeles and Vancouver.

#### **MACHA GRENON – "SOLANGE"**

Macha Grenon is one of Quebec's most beloved actresses.

On television, she delivered notable performances in series such as "Le Cœur a ses raisons," "Lance et Compte," "Mon meilleur ennemi," "Juliette Pomerleau," "Scoop" and "l'Or du temps." Her popularity twice earned her the MétroStar people's choice award for best lead actress (1993 and 1995), along with Gémeaux nominations in 1999 and 2002 and a Genie nomination in 1998, for both leading and supporting roles.

Although successful on television, it is on the big screen that Macha Grenon has truly made her mark, with parts in popular films in both French and English. In 2007, she made a triumphant return to the cinema with *L'Age des Ténèbres*, following up such films as *Familia*, *Daniel et les Superdogs* and *The Secret*. Her film credits also include *Café Olé*, *L'Homme idéal*, *La Conciergerie* and *Louis 19*. In 2009 she played the lead role of "Mimi Mathieu" in *L'Enfant prodige* and in 2010 she will appear as "Marion" in *The Year Dolly Parton Was My Mom*.

Macha Grenon is also the author of *Charlotte porte bonheur*, treasured by its young readers.

## FILMMAKERS' BIOGRAPHIES

**Richard J. Lewis - Director**, holds a Bachelor of Science degree from Northwestern University in Chicago as well as a Masters Degree in film from the University of Southern California. In 1994, Lewis directed his first feature film *Whale Music* which opened both the Toronto and Vancouver International Film Festivals and received nine Genie nominations including Best Achievement in Direction and Best Adapted Screenplay. In 2002, Lewis directed *K-9: P.I.* for Universal Pictures starring James Belushi. In between his two features, Lewis remained active in television directing the pilot episode of "The Chris Isaak Show" (2000) for Showtime as well as the pilots "Justice" for the Global Television Network (1998) and "The City" for CTV (1999).

In 2000, Lewis directed multiple episodes of the freshman CBS drama entitled "CSI: Crime Scene Investigation." As the show gained in its popularity, Lewis committed himself to the series full time. Lewis remained with CSI for nine seasons as a writer, executive producer and director as the series remained the most watched drama on television. While working on CSI and under an overall deal at CBS Richard also directed the pilot entitled "Waterfront" in 2007 which starred Billy Baldwin, Mary Stuart Masterson, and Joe Pantoliano.

In addition to writing and directing, Lewis is also involved in teaching. He regularly gives workshops in Toronto and Los Angeles. His work with high school students has taken him to rural Minnesota, Chicago, Toronto, and Edmonton, Alberta. Lewis also serves as a committee member of Southern California's chapter of the Human Rights Watch.

**Robert Lantos – Producer**, *Barney's Version* is producer Robert Lantos' second adaptation of a Mordecai Richler novel. In 1985, he produced *Joshua Then and Now* (with Stephen J. Roth), directed by Ted Kotcheff which screened In Competition at that year's Cannes Film Festival. *Barney's Version* also marks Lantos' second collaboration with director Richard J. Lewis. In 1992 Lantos produced and Lewis co-wrote and directed *Whale Music*, which opened the 1993 Toronto Film Festival.

Lantos was Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Canada's leading film and television company, Alliance Communications Corporation, from its inception until 1998, when he sold his controlling interest. He then formed his production company Serendipity Point Films, where he produces films he is personally passionate about.

Since 1978, when his first film *In Praise of Older Women* opened the Toronto Film Festival, Lantos has produced 35 feature films. He has established longstanding creative relationships with several of the world's pre-eminent directors. His productions include David Cronenberg's *Eastern Promises* which earned Academy Award®, Golden Globe and BAFTA Nominations; *Crash* (winner of a Special Jury Prize at the Cannes Film Festival) and *eXistenZ* (winner of The Silver Bear at the Berlin Film Festival); István Szabó's *Being Julia*, (for which Annette Bening received an Academy Award® Nomination, a Golden Globe Award and the National Board of Review Award for Best Actress); and *Sunshine*, (three Golden Globe Nominations, including Best Picture, three European Film Awards and the Best Picture Genie Award); Atom Egoyan's *The Sweet Hereafter* (Cannes Grand Prix winner; nominated for two Academy Awards®, and the Best Picture Genie Award); *Where the Truth Lies* (In Competition, Cannes Film Festival); *Ararat* (Official Selection, Cannes Film Festival; Opening Night Toronto International Film Festival, and the Genie Best Picture Award); *Adoration* (In Competition, Cannes Film Festival, Winner of the Ecumenical Prize); *Felicia's Journey* (In Competition, Cannes Film Festival; Opening Night Gala, Toronto Film Festival); Bruce Beresford's *Black Robe* (Opening Night Gala, Toronto Film Festival, Genie Best Picture Award); Denys Arcand's *Stardom* (Closing Night, Cannes Film Festival; Opening Night Gala, Toronto Film Festival); Norman Jewison's *The Statement* (National Board of Review Winner) and Jeremy Podeswa's *Fugitive Pieces* (Rome Festival Best Actor Award, Opening Night Gala, Toronto Film Festival) among others.

Robert Lantos is a member of the Order of Canada and a member of the Board of Entertainment One.

He holds an honorary Doctor of Letters from McGill University.

**Michael Konyves - Screenplay**, is a Montreal-born screenwriter. After graduating with a B.A. in English literature from Concordia University, he started working on film sets around Montreal, working in every department he could—from production to locations, camera to post-production. After working as an assistant to director Christian Duguay for a few years, Konyves wrote and sold his first screenplay in 2002 to Summit Entertainment in Los Angeles and has been writing ever since.

**Guy Dufaux - Director of Photography**, born in Lille, France, in 1943, Guy Dufaux moved to Canada in 1965 and has become a recognized and celebrated Canadian cinematographer and DOP with multiple awards to his name. In 2006, Dufaux won the award for Best Artistic Contribution from the Montreal World Film Festival for *The Chinese Botanist's Daughters*, in 2002 he worked on *The Barbarian Invasions*, directed by Denys Arcand which won the 2004 Academy Award® for Best Foreign Language film, and in 2002 he won the Canadian Society of Cinematographers' Kodak New Century Award. Dufaux won a Genie Award in 1990 for his work on Denys Arcand's internationally acclaimed feature film *Jesus of Montreal*, which was also nominated for an Academy Award® for Best Foreign Language Film, won a Jury Award at Cannes in 1989, and is second on the TIFF list of Top Ten Films of All Time. He also won a Genie in 1988 for *Night Zoo/Un zoo la nuit* (1987, directed and written by Jean-Claude Lauzon, the film won a record 13 Genie Awards and the International Critics' Award at TIFF) and received a Gemini Award for his work on the television series *Haven* (2001).

He was the Director of Photography on *The Trotsky* (2009), *The Timekeeper* (2009), starring Roy Dupuis, *The Age of Ignorance* (2006), directed by Denys Arcand), *Love the Hard Way* (2001), *Stardom* (2000), directed by Denys Arcand), *Léolo* (1992), *Nelligan* (1991), *Sam & Me* (1991), *Eye of the Beholder* (1998) directed by Stephan Elliott and *Equinoxe* (1986). His television credits include *Marie-Antoinette* (2006), *The Great Gatsby* (2000), and *Napoléon* (2002).

**Claude Paré - Production Designer**, is currently designing the FOX prequel : *Caesar : Rise of the Apes*. He previously designed *Night at the Museum*, and its sequel *Night at the Museum : Battle of the Smithsonian*. He also worked with Isabel Coixet's New York set *Elegy* starring Penelope Cruz and Ben Kingsley.

Paré was Supervising Art Director on Martin Scorsese's award-winning film *The Aviator*, which won an Academy Award®, a BAFTA Award, and a Los Angeles Film Critics Association Award for Best Art Direction. Prior to *The Aviator*, he served as Supervising Art Director on Roland Emmerich's blockbuster *The Day After Tomorrow*.

In 2002, Paré Art-directed Martin Campbell's film *Beyond Borders*, starring Angelina Jolie and Clive Owen. He served as Supervising Art Director on *The Sum of All Fears*, starring Ben Affleck and Morgan Freeman; Frank Oz's *The Score*, starring Robert De Niro, Marlon Brando, and Edward Norton; *The Bone Collector* starring Denzel Washington; Richard Attenborough's *Grey Owl*, starring Pierce Brosnan; and Jean-Jacques Annaud's *Seven Years in Tibet*, starring Brad Pitt.

Paré, who is a native of Montreal, was also the Production Designer on the Canadian features *This Is My Father*, *Les Boys*, *La Comtesse de Bâton Rouge* and *Rainbow*.

**Pasquale Catalano - Music**, was born in Naples in 1966 and studied violin, guitar, piano and later music composition at the Naples, Avellino and Matera Music conservatories. Besides being a musician, he began his career as a composer in 1985, collaborating with Gennaro Vitiello and then with Mario Santella, inaugurating two prose seasons at the Ausonia Theater in Naples. He abandoned his career as a musician in 1990 to dedicate his life exclusively to his career as a composer. He has collaborated as conductor, orchestrator, arranger and composer for films such as *Libera* and *I Buchi Neri* directed by Pappi Corsicato, *Il Diavolo nella Bottiglia* by Stefano Incerti, *Maruzzella* (an episode of *The Vesuvians*) by Maria Antonietta de Lillo, *Il Ronzio delle Mosche* by Dario D'Ambrosi, *One Man Up* and *The Consequences of Love* by Paolo Sorrentino, *Mario's War* by Antonio Capuano. He also composed the music for *Signorina Effe* directed by Wilma Labate, *The Sicilian Girl* by Marco Amenta, *The Double Hour* by Giuseppe Capotondi and Stefania Sandrelli's first film as director *Christina, Christine*. He is the composer of the scores of *Meno Male Che Ci Sei* directed by Luis

Prieto and TV series *Romanzo Criminale – La Serie* directed by Stefano Sollima. He began collaborating with Ferzan Ozpetek in 2010 with the film *Loose Cannons* earning a nomination for the



David di Donatello and Silver Ribbon Film Awards. His works have been performed at the Valle Piana Giffoni Festival, Volterra, Turin, New York, Zurich and Oporto festivals at the Biennial Theater and Biennial Cinema Music Festival of Venice and at the Holland Festival of Amsterdam.

**Susan Shipton – Editor**, her many credits as Editor include *Being Julia* directed by Istvan Szabo; *A Cool Dry Place*, starring Vince Vaughn; *Love and Death on Long Island*; *Turning April*; *Long Day's Journey Into Night* (for which she received a Genie Award nomination for Best Achievement in Film Editing); *When Night Is Falling*; and *Mesmer*. She has collaborated several times with director Atom Egoyan on the films: *Chloe* starring Julianne Moore, Liam Neeson and Amanda Seyfried; *Adoration* (winner of the Ecumenical Prize in Cannes); *Where the Truth Lies*; *Ararat*; *Felicia's Journey*; *The Sweet Hereafter* and *Exotica* (both for which she received a Genie nomination for a Best Achievement in Film Editing) and *The Adjuster*. Shipton won a 2001 Genie Award for Best Achievement for her work on Robert Lepage's *Possible Worlds* and received a Gemini Award nomination for her editing of *Blessed Stranger: After Flight 111*. In addition to her work as an editor, Ms. Shipton has also written, produced, and directed the short film *Hindsight* (based on Dennis Foon's play of the same name), which screened at numerous international film festivals, including the 2000 Montreal World Film Festival, the Toronto Film Festival, and the Los Angeles International Film Festival. She is currently writing a screen adaptation of Helen Humphrey's novel *Wild Dogs*, which she will direct.

**Nicoletta Massone - Costume Designer**, was born in Genoa, Italy, and studied at the Istituto d'Arte del Figurino of Milan and the Piccolo Teatro of Milan. A Canadian citizen and resident of Quebec, Massone has been a well-known figure in the Canadian and U.S. film and television industries for over 35 years. She has designed costumes for over 120 feature films, period documentaries, and TV series. She also had the rare honour of designing the costumes for the opening and closing ceremonies of the 1976 Olympics in Montreal, designing over 5,000 costumes for the event! In 1994, Massone won an Emmy® Award for Outstanding Individual Achievement in Costume for *Zelda* (starring Natasha Richardson, Timothy Hutton, and Marie-Josée Croze). She won a Gemini Award in 1999 for the TV series "Big Bear," a Genie Award in 1995 for the feature film *Margaret's Museum* (starring Helena Bonham Carter, Kate Nelligan, and Clive Russell), and was nominated for Genie Awards for *Choice: The Henry Morgentaler Story* (2006) and *Varian's War* (2001).

Nicoletta has been the costume designer on numerous Canadian and Hollywood feature films, including *Black Box* (2009, directed by Fabrice Genestal), *Enter the Void* (2008), *Emotional Arithmetic* (2006, starring Susan Sarandon and Gabriel Byrne), *The Great Gatsby* (1999, starring Mira Sorvino), and *Once Upon a Time in America* (1982, starring Robert De Niro and James Woods). She has won many awards for her period costumes and has also worked on period documentaries such as *Marie-Antoinette* (2005) and *Titanic* (2008). Her work on *Barney's Version* included creating the costume design for the main characters over a 40-year period, and entailed maintaining each character's essential style as it evolved from the 1970s to the present.

**Adrien Morot - Head of Hair and Make-Up**, in his 22+ years in the film and television industry, Adrien has established himself as a hands-on technician, often found side by side with his team on-set, elbow-deep in sculpting, painting, and designing his creations. In 1998 Mr. Morot established Maestro Studio in Montreal. The company specializes in creating and designing make-up effects for film and television. Morot has created memorable monsters, battle wounds, prosthetics, and make-up for such films including *The Day After Tomorrow*, *300*, *Night at the Museum & Night at the Museum 2: Battle of the Smithsonian*, *The Mummy: Tomb of the Dragon Emperor*, *The Fountain*, *Death Race*, *Punisher: War Zone*, *Secret Window*, and *Taking Lives* among many others. Over the course of his career, Morot has worked with some of the marquee names in cinema, including Angelina Jolie, John Travolta, Hugh Jackman, Denzel Washington, Nicolas Cage, Forest Whitaker, and Ben Stiller to name but a few. Morot was awarded a Gemini Award in 2005 for his work on *Homo Sapiens* and a Genie Award in 2009 for *Cruising Bar 2*. He was nominated for a Jutra Award in 2006 for makeup on *Aurore* and in 1995 he received an Emmy® Award nomination for his work on *Hiroshima*.

**Domenico Procacci – Co-producer**, in 1989 producer Domenico Procacci founded the Rome based production company Fandango. Over the last 20 years, films produced by Fandango have won numerous awards and participated in scores of international film festivals including Cannes, Locarno, Berlin, Venice, Rotterdam, Toronto, Tribeca, Rio, Sydney, Pusan, Tokyo and Sundance.

Procacci has won the most prestigious Italian awards as Best Producer: the David di Donatello three times for *L'ultimo Bacio* (*The Last Kiss*) by Gabriele Muccino, *Respiro* (*Grazia's Island*) by Emanuele Crialese and *Gomorrah* by Matteo Garrone and the Silver Ribbon in 2002, 2003, 2008 and 2009.

Fandango productions or co-productions received multiple nominations and awards including *La Stazione* (*The Station*) by Sergio Rubini, *Radiofreccia* (*Radio Nights*) by Luciano Ligabue, *L'imbalsamatore* (*The Embalmer*) by Matteo Garrone, *Velocita' Massima* (*V-Max*) by Daniele Vicari and *Ricordati di Me* (*Remember Me*) by Gabriele Muccino. In 2005 *Le Conseguenze dell'Amore* (*The Consequences of Love*) won five David di Donatello awards, including Best Film and Best Director for Paolo Sorrentino and was in competition at the Cannes Film Festival in 2004.

In 2008 Matteo Garrone's *Gomorrah* won the Grand Prix at Cannes and was the official Italian entry for the Academy Awards® 2009. That year it went on to win European Film Awards for Best Film, Best Director, Best Actor, Best Screenplay and Best Cinematography, the Arri Zeiss Award in Munich, the Silver Hugo Best Screenplay in Chicago and seven David di Donatello awards. It also gained a BAFTA nomination for Film Not in the English Language and was nominated Best Foreign Film at the Cesars.

In 2009 *Gomorrah* received a Golden Globe nomination for best foreign film as it happened before for *La Corsa dell'Innocente* (*The Flight of the Innocent*) by Carlo Carlei and *Come due Coccodrilli* (*Like Two Crocodiles*) by Giacomo Campiotti.

*Caos Calmo* (*Quiet Chaos*), directed by Antonello Grimaldi, starring Nanni Moretti, was in competition at Berlin and Tribeca Film Festivals in 2008, won the Silver Plaque at Chicago Film Festival and three David di Donatello Awards.

*Il Passato è Una Terra Straniera* (*The Past is a Foreign Land*) directed by Daniele Vicari, was in competition at Rome International Film Festival 2008 and won Best Film and Best Actor at Miami International Film Festival.

In 2009 Fandango produced *Lo Spazio Bianco* (*The White Space*) by Francesca Comencini in competition at Venice Film Festival, and *Cosmonauta* by Susanna Nicchiarelli, best film at Venice Controcampo section.

*Baciarmi Ancora* (*Kiss Me Again*) the sequel of *L'ultimo Bacio* (*The Last Kiss*) by Gabriele Muccino has won the best movie, best actress and best director awards at the Shanghai International Film Festival 2010. *Mine Vaganti* (*Loose Cannons*) the new film from Ferzan Ozpetek premiered at the Berlinale 2010-Panorama and received a special mention at the Tribeca film Festival. Also it won 5 Silver Ribbons. Additionally, in 2010 Fandango produced *La Passione* by Carlo Mazzacurati in competition at the Venice Film Festival 2010. Also in 2010, together with Sacher film, Fandango produced the last Nanni Moretti movie *Habemus Papam* starring Michel Piccoli and Moretti himself which is currently in post-production.

In addition to numerous celebrated Italian films, Fandango has also produced or co-produced films from such noted international filmmakers as Rolf de Heer with *Bad Boy Bubby*, *Epsilon*, *The Quiet Room* and *Dance Me to My Song*; Jiri Menzel's *The Life and Extraordinary Adventures of Private Ivan Chonkin*; Tim Roth's *The War Zone*; Richard Lowenstein's *He Died With Falafel in his Hands*; Milcho Manchevski's *Dust*; Wong Kar-Wai, Steven Soderbergh and Michelangelo Antonioni's *Eros*; Ermanno Olmi, Abbas Kiarostami and Ken Loach's *Tickets* and *Silk* by François Girard.

Fandango is also a distribution company (Fandango Distribuzione), a publishing company (Fandango Libri), and a music label (Radiofandango).

**Lyse Lafontaine - Co-producer**, is one of Canada's most highly regarded producers. A veteran of both film and television production, she produced *Léolo* by Jean-Claude Lauzon in 1992. The film was in official competition in Cannes and won the Concha de Oro at the San Sebastian Film Festival.

In 1999, she founded her own production company Lyla Films, which produced the Genie-nominated film *Les Muses Orphelines*, directed by Robert Favreau, and the 2001 Prix Gémeaux-winning documentary *Lauzon Lauzone*, directed by Louis Bélanger. *Camping Sauvage*, starring Guy A. Lepage, topped the box office of Quebec films in 2004 and was the winner of the Gold Reel at the Jutra Awards.

Recently, she produced *Un dimanche à Kigali (A Sunday in Kigali)*, directed by Robert Favreau and starring Luc Picard and Fatou N'Daye (best actress at the Marrakesh Film Festival); *La Capture*, a film by Carole Laure; *Maman est chez le coiffeur (Mommy is at the Hairdresser's)*, directed by Léa Pool (sold in 30 countries) and from the same director, she co-produced with Iris Productions, in Luxembourg, *La dernière fugue (The Last Escape)*, based on Gil Courtemanche's novel. *Laurence Anyways*, Xavier Dolan's next film project, will be produced by Lyse Lafontaine.

**Ari Lantos - Co-Producer**, the son of award-winning film producer Robert Lantos and actress Jennifer Dale, Ari Lantos grew up surrounded by many of the motion picture industry's leaders. Lantos began his career working in distribution at Alliance Atlantis MPD. Shortly thereafter he made the leap from distribution to production and co-produced the acclaimed short film *The Waldo Cumberbund Story*, which premiered at the Toronto International Film Festival in 2004, and followed with TV sales in the US and Canada.

In 2007 Lantos produced his first feature film, the Slamdance opener *Real Time* starring Randy Quaid and Jay Baruchel. In 2008 he produced *You Might As Well Live* written and directed by Simon Ennis and starring Michael Madsen. He is currently executive producing the new half-hour comedy series *Men With Brooms* for the CBC, a spin-off of the 2004 Canadian box office hit.

**Mark Musselman – Executive Producer.** A lawyer by training, Mark Musselman enjoyed an active private practice with the Entertainment Group of Goodmans, LLP in Toronto and Vancouver since 1993, where he acted as counsel to producers, financiers, distributors, banks, talent and motion picture studios in respect of the development, financing, production and exploitation of television and motion picture content. Musselman left private practice in 1999 to join Serendipity Point Films as Vice-President and since that time has overseen the commercial affairs of the company's financing, production and exploitation of Serendipity's feature film and television productions including, among others, *Eastern Promises* (2007); *Fugitive Pieces* (2007); *Where The Truth Lies* (2005); *Being Julia* (2004); *The Statement* (2003); *Ararat* (2002); *Men With Brooms* (2002); *Stardom* (2000); *Sunshine* (1999); and *eXistenZ* (1998). He is currently executive-producer of the half-hour comedy series *Men with Brooms* for the CBC, a spin-off of the 2004 Canadian box office hit. Mr. Musselman is a member of the Canadian and Ontario Bar Associations and the Board of Directors of the Canadian Media Producers Association.

Serendipity Point Films

In association with

Fandango and Lyla Films

presents

# **BARNEY'S VERSION**

Dedicated to  
Mordecai Richler  
1931-2001

Directed by  
Richard J. Lewis  
Produced by  
Robert Lantos  
Based on the Novel by  
Mordecai Richler  
Screenplay by  
Michael Konyves

## **BARNEY'S VERSION**

Paul Giamatti

Rosamund Pike

Minnie Driver

Rachelle Lefevre

Scott Speedman

Bruce Greenwood

Macha Grenon

Anna Hopkins

Jake Hoffman

Mark Addy

Saul Rubinek  
Thomas Trabacchi  
Clé Bennett

Harvey Atkin  
Massimo Wertmuller

Howard Jerome  
Linda Sorensen

and Dustin Hoffman

Co-Producer  
Domenico Procacci

Co-Producer  
Lyse Lafontaine

Co-Producer  
Ari Lantos

Executive Producer  
Mark Musselman

Director of Photography  
Guy Dufaux

Production Designer  
Claude Paré

Music by  
Pasquale Catalano

Editor  
Susan Shipton

Costume Designer  
Nicoletta Massone

Makeup Design  
Adrien Morot

Music Supervisor  
Liz Gallacher

Casting by  
Dierdre Bowen  
Nina Gold  
Pam Dixon

a Robert Lantos production

a Richard J. Lewis film

Produced In Association With  
Telefilm Canada  
Corus Entertainment  
Astral Media

Produced In Association With

SODEC  
Société de développement des entreprises culturelles - Québec

The Canadian Broadcasting Corporation

The Harold Greenberg Fund

The Ontario Media Development Corporation

## The Chronicle Herald

Giamatti a gem - Barney's Version both hilarious, heartbreaking  
By DAVID GERMAIN The Associated Press | MOVIE REVIEW Fri 14 Jan

PAUL GIAMATTI doesn't spring right to mind as the guy to play the title character of Mordecai Richler's sardonically funny and bitterly sad novel Barney's Version.

After seeing director Richard J. Lewis' sparkling film adaptation, which moves effortlessly between churlish hilarity and aching melancholy, it's hard to imagine anyone but Giamatti as lovably self-destructive curmudgeon Barney.

For all his coarse behaviour, Barney on the page seems more conventionally attractive than the schlubby Giamatti. Yet as he did playing the sad-sack romantic in Sideways, Giamatti just becomes Barney Panofsky, Canadian producer of schlock TV, wooer of women way out of his league, self-righteous and self-loathing arbiter of all that is wrong with the world and the people around him.

This is another Academy Awards-worthy performance for past nominee Giamatti, while co-stars Dustin Hoffman and Rosamund Pike also deserve serious Oscar consideration.

Producer Robert Lantos, a friend of the late Richler, spent a decade trying to adapt the sprawling novel, which hurtles back and forth over 30 years of Barney's life and is told by the most unreliable narrator — Barney himself, as he savages friends and enemies alike while his memory fades from Alzheimer's disease.

Director Lewis, a writer, director and executive producer on CSI: Crime Scene Investigation, was among those who took a pass at the screenplay before Lantos and Richler's fellow Montreal native Michael Konyves wrote the winner.

The filmmakers have done a terrific job compacting the novel, diminishing or dropping some characters and combining others to present a faithful rendition of Barney's rich, sordid and always interesting life story.

The film still shifts about in time quite a lot, from the 1970s to the present day, as Giamatti's Barney progresses from Canadian expatriate living among bohemians in Europe to rich, gruff, boozy TV producer back in his home city of Montreal.

Along the way, Barney is shamefully cuckolded by his first wife, artistic spitfire Clara (Rachel Lefevre), driven to despise his shrewish, Jewish princess second wife (Minnie Driver, her character known only as the "second Mrs. P."), and smitten for life by his third wife, Miriam (Pike), who also is coveted by a family friend (Bruce Greenwood).

Amid the ups and downs of his romantic and professional life, he copes with conflicting feelings about best friend Boogie (Scott Speedman), a writer whose mysterious fate taints Barney with scandal.

Hoffman is a perpetual scene-stealer as Barney's dad, Izzy, who regales and horrifies listeners with tales of his life as a rare Jew on the Montreal police force.

The heart of Richler's novel is the love story between Barney and Miriam. The filmmakers wisely keep their story focused there, too, scaling back Barney's relationships with his first two wives.

Partly through great costume design and makeup, but mostly through the actors' deft changes in carriage and body language, Giamatti and Pike age authentically through the years. Pike's Miriam grows older with grace and beauty, while Giamatti's Barney gradually goes sour, lamenting the things he's lost, the things he did, the things he failed to do.

Giamatti and Pike create a wonderful portrait of mismatched lovers, she an embodiment of virtue and devotion, he an outrageous, blustering yet big-hearted buffoon that Miriam — and the audience — just cannot help but love.

It's a joy to watch Giamatti rail and plot and scheme, and it's heartbreaking to see him falter and ultimately fade as his life, body and mind unravel.

Literary works inevitably have to lose a lot when adapted for film.

Yet the filmmakers have preserved so much of Barney's spirit that Richler probably would be very pleased with how the version he wrote was translated to the version on screen.

## **The NY Daily News**

3<sup>rd</sup> Dec, 2010 By Joe Neumaier

4 out of 5 stars

Barney's Version' review: Paul Giamatti's labor of love offers one of year's most satisfying films

There isn't a moment in "Barney's Version" that doesn't feel like a labor of love. From the smallest details of romance or friendship to astute observations about hopefulness and self-delusion, everything is tended to, while drops of wit courtesy of Mordechai Richler's 1997 source novel dance through it all. Don't let it get away.

Adapted by Michael Konyves and directed by Richard J. Lewis (no, you've never heard of them, but you will), "Barney's Version" recalls the luxurious literary adaptations of the 1970s and '80s, rife with comic and tragic set pieces -- often at the same time -- and cast perfectly down to one-line walk-ons. If it falters slightly toward its conclusion, rushing things along and telescoping events for quick closure, remember the small moments that led up to it; they all resonate and linger.

Barney Panofsky (Giamatti) is a man at a perpetual crossroads. He's first glimpsed in his mid-60s, a successful TV producer in Montreal, the very face of practiced schlumpiness.

Yet Barney is burdened by the stresses of his past: He's been accused of murder in a nonfiction book recounting the death of his best friend, Boogie (Scott Speedman), some three decades earlier. He's still in love with one of his ex-wives, and he's haunted by memories.

Those start in Rome in 1974, when Barney was an expatriate would-be artiste hanging with his doomed first wife and Boogie's Vespa-riding, literate crowd. Returning to Canada, he reluctantly takes a job in TV and marries a wealthy vulgarian (Minnie Driver), who looks down on Barney's gruff, plainspoken policeman father (Dustin Hoffman, sweetly poignant).

But at his wedding reception -- where Barney looks hilariously horrified as his bride bellows, "We're m-a-a-rried!" -- the woeful groom meets Miriam (luminous Rosamund Pike), a New York public radio broadcaster, and all bets are off. Miriam is almost too perfect, which merely guarantees that he'll pursue her for years until their personal time lines connect, resulting in Barney's third marriage, two children and one final, heartbreaking chance to screw things up.

It may sound like a John Irving novel with a few Yiddishisms plopped in, but the cozy touches and the throwaway gestures that accumulate help to turn "Barney's Version" into one of the year's most satisfying films. Add to that Pike's ethereal allure, Speedman's charmingly dissolute turn, Hoffman's consummate old-pro character work and the great Giamatti's best performance, and you've got a version of a life not soon forgotten.



## CTV News

Friday Dec. 24, 2010

What can you say about a man who picks up a beautiful stranger and pursues her relentlessly at his own wedding reception?

He is Barney Panofsky, the rude, selfish, heartless son of a bitch who commands the screen in Richard J. Lewis's new comedy-drama, "Barney's Version."

Based on Mordecai Richler's 1997 novel, this adaptation starring Paul Giamatti is profane, tender and funny in the way that peoples' lives could be if they had the nerve to carry out their every impulse.

Thanks to Giamatti's blue-chip performance, this forlorn drunk stumbles through bad relationships. He laments his youth and tortures himself with the nagging belief that he may have killed his drug-addled best friend (Scott Speedman).

In the cold light of day, there isn't much to like about this Montreal policeman's son. But Giamatti plays this jerk with the utmost skill, making this film a memorable meditation on the vanities of life and where they could lead you if you're too busy looking the other way.

Giamatti's Barney is profanely perfect

As in Richler's book, this film begins with Barney carousing through 1970s Italy, where he steps into a brief, turbulent marriage with an artist named Clara (Rachelle Lefevre).

Barney lusts for this woman the way he yearns for a fine bottle of Italian Grappa. But he does not love Clara. In a surprisingly old-fashioned move, Barney marries her because she is pregnant with his child.

The failed marriage, and their stillborn child, are the first of many hurts that Barney skirts over on his way to fulfilling his sexual urges and his puffed-up artistic ambitions.

Like many self-dubbed geniuses, Barney discovers that the world is not ready for his greatness. So he heads back to Canada, where this newly-minted TV producer marries a loud-mouthed Jewish girl (Minnie Driver) who he is happy to unload on his wedding night. It's a cold move and one that makes us question what this insufferable bastard will do next. But once Barney marries his soul mate Miriam (Rosamund Pike), his blustery ways begin to dissipate.

Suddenly, this cocky grandstander fears that he will lose the one real love of his life. He senses time racing by and robbing him of his physical strength and his belief in himself.

Blindsided by such awareness, this oddly tender man that emerges looks at what is left of his life and panics.

When his broken-down body begins to show the first signs of dementia, it becomes painfully clear that life is finally going to present Barney with a bill for his careless ways.

It's inescapable. It's heart-wrenching. And what it does to Barney earns our respect.

Dustin Hoffman also brings surprising nuance to the role of Barney's loud, lowbrow father, Izzy. This guy freely talks about "shtupping and multiplying" at his son's second engagement party.

But for all his embarrassing ways, this vulgar shmuck knows who he is.

The same cannot be said for Barney.

Like so many people, Barney only learns that all-important lesson when it is too late.

## Montreal Gazette

Jan 1, 2011 by Brendan Kelly

MONTREAL - A friend of mine who knows a thing or two about movies and books mentioned the other day that there are only two big scenes in *Barney's Version*, the book, and he's right. The first unforgettable scene, the defining moment in Mordecai Richler's last novel, is the gala wedding at the Ritz-Carlton. That's when Barney Panofsky is set to marry the derisively named Second Mrs. P. and a drunken Barney infamously sees and falls instantly head-over-heels in love with Miriam, who will eventually become the Third Mrs. P.

The other key moment occurs when Barney finally has it out with his old, old pal Boogie, another booze-fuelled encounter that may or may not have ended in murder.

The new film version of *Barney* nails that first scene, in what really is a classic moment of recent Canadian cinema, and doesn't quite pull off the later one. That kind of neatly sums up the much-anticipated film adaptation from director Richard Lewis and producer Robert Lantos.

*Barney's Version*, the film, is a funny, quite moving take on the Richler opus, and it's a must-see for anyone remotely interested in the life and work of English-Montreal's most noted novelist. In other words, if you're reading this newspaper, you should go see it. But for reasons I don't fully understand, it doesn't quite do the book justice. Maybe it's because a novel about a self-centred, misanthropic old guy losing his memory just isn't the easy thing to capture on the big screen.

The best thing about *Barney's Version* is the cast and Lewis's subtle direction. Paul Giamatti in the title role and Dustin Hoffman as Barney's dad, Izzy, deliver two of the best performances I've seen all year. Giamatti just becomes Barney in all his rumpled, cigar-smoking, single-malt-gulping glory. What's amazing here is how this fine actor makes this sort of horrible character somewhat endearing, but is smart enough to realize Barney without an edge is just not Barney. There's a fury in his eyes on a few occasions – Giamatti makes you believe he is indeed capable of murder.

Hoffman, on the other hand, is unbelievably charming as a roguish former Montreal detective who always has a twinkle in his eye and a politically incorrect anecdote to tell.

The actresses playing the three wives are also perfectly chosen, from a sexy, wise-crackin' Rachelle Lefevre as the unhinged first wife, Clara, to a deliciously irritating Minnie Driver as the unbearable Second Mrs. P., to the luminous Rosamund Pike as Miriam, the love of Barney's life.

But the problem, and it's a big one, is Scott Speedman as Boogie, Barney's great pal who plays a small but central role in both the book and film. I just never really bought this hunky show-offy actor as Bernard (Boogie) Moscovitch.

The film doesn't make us believe these two were ever thick as thieves. So when the friendship snaps, it lacks the dramatic – heck, tragic – force necessary to give that moment the requisite oomph.

But somehow the film still works and that's why you have to give props to Montreal screenwriter Michael Konyves, who has done a downright astonishing job of transforming this sprawling, introverted novel into a movie that captures the spirit of the original without being

slavishly beholden to Richler's prose. Konyves wisely built the film around the love story between Barney and Miriam, and the result is a deeply touching romantic drama. That final

scene with the two of them at the Ritz is a heartbreaker, and if you're not fighting back a tear or two at that point, you might want to check your pulse.

Giamatti has said that *Barney's Version* is an epic character study, no more and no less, and he's probably right. This is the tale of a guy who sowed his wild oats in Rome (or in Paris in the book), became a successful TV producer in Montreal (thanks to his aptly named *Totally Unnecessary Productions*) and managed to royally mess up his personal life whenever given half a chance. Some have criticized *Barney* for being an old-fashioned movie, and it is, but in a good way. It's a throwback to the best kind of movies Hollywood used to make in the '70s, back when it was still possible to shoot ambitious, personal stories that had time for nuance, adult emotion and characters with a few rough edges. So, yeah, sure this version is flawed. But it's still nice to spend a couple of hours with this miserable curmudgeon

## UPTOWN MAGAZINE

January 12th 2011 by Kenton Smith

Had this film not opened in Winnipeg this month, I'd have put it on my Best Of list for 2010.

Barney's Version is one of the best Canadian films I've ever seen. It embraces the ethos of Canadian directorial icon Norman Jewison, expressed when he won the prestigious Irving Thalberg Award: just find some good stories.

That's the film's great strength: it understands how affecting the sweep of a grand narrative can be. The film medium can do a lot of things, but it's inherently good at telling tales that unfold over spans of time.

What director Richard J. Lewis and screenwriter Michael Konyves have given us is the fullness of an adult life — that of one Barney Panofsky, played by Paul Giamatti. Based on the Mordecai Richler novel, the movie's a great character study.

But even more so, it's a deeply touching essay on human weakness. It understands the poignant truth that people can obtain their heart's desire, yet nonetheless remain the authors of their own unhappiness.

Barney, when we meet him, is characteristically drunk; he's something of a rougher-hewn Arthur Bach. He makes a dead-of-night phone call, asking for his wife. He's had three in total, and the story turns around his matrimonial misadventures.

Mrs. Panofsky No. 1 (Rachelle Lefevre) becomes so in Rome, many years ago. The marriage doesn't last, but it shows us who Barney is: feisty, but fundamentally decent. Too bad he can't pick better friends, chief among them being "Boogie" Moscovitch (Scott Speedman).

Then he gets hitched to the second Mrs. P (Minnie Driver), whose father is loaded; she herself has a great rack, observes Barney's own pops (Dustin Hoffman). Too bad Barney meets his dream woman, Miriam (Rosamund Pike), at his wedding reception.

Does Barney get what he deserves? I haven't even described the half of it: this film is almost like a Greek tragedy in its total arc. While the entire ensemble cast is uniformly excellent, this is Giamatti's film; his performance steals our hearts and has us behind his underdog hero to the end.

The performance culminates in a scene near the end that's almost unwatchable in its hurt and pain. So lovable does Giamatti make Barney, it almost makes us consider another character in the scene cruel. Almost.

For the movie to work, we have to believe Miriam really is that wonderful. We do — Pike makes us see how this almost saintly woman could be beguiled by this needy little man. Of course, his inadequacy isn't such a charming thing in the long run.

It's also great to see Canadian films embracing Canada. Just as Scott Pilgrim vs. the World made no apologies for Toronto, this movie unabashedly flaunts Montreal, and a TV reporter's microphone prominently displays the CBC logo.

But that's not what makes the film special. Most love stories are about boys getting girls and vice versa. Barney's Version understands that it's not simply about the getting, but the caring

for — a distinction Barney Panofsky understands too well by the close of his own story.