

**Mongrel Media**

Presents

# GET LOW

A Film by Aaron Schneider

(102min., USA, 2010)

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## SYNOPSIS

For years, townsfolk have been terrified of the backwoods recluse known as Felix Bush (Robert Duvall). People say he's done all manner of unspeakable things -- that he's killed in cold blood; that he's in league with the Devil; that he has strange powers -- and they avoid him like the plague. Then, one day, Felix rides to town with a shotgun and a wad of cash, saying he wants to buy a funeral. It's not your usual funeral for the dead Felix wants. On the contrary, he wants a "living funeral," in which anyone who ever had heard a story about him will come to tell it, while he takes it all in.

Sensing a big payday in the offing, fast-talking funeral home owner Frank Quinn (Bill Murray) enlists his gentlemanly young apprentice, Buddy Robinson (Lucas Black), to win over Felix's business. Buddy is no stranger to Felix's dark reputation, but what he discovers is that behind Felix's surreal plan lies a very real and long-held secret that must get out. As the funeral approaches, the mystery-- which involves the widow Maddie Darrow (Sissy Spacek), the only person in town who ever got close to Felix, and the Illinois preacher Charlie Jackson (Bill Cobbs), who refuses to speak at his former friend's funeral -- only deepens. But on the big day, Felix is in no mood to listen to other people spinning made-up anecdotes about him. This time, he's the one who is going to do the telling about why he has been hiding out in the woods.

An 8-year labor of love for producer Dean Zanuck (*Road to Perdition*), **Get Low** is directed by Aaron Schneider who makes his feature debut after winning the Academy Award® for his short, *Two Soldiers*, and written by Chris Provenzano (*Mad Men*) and C. Gaby Mitchell (*Blood Diamond*). The behind-the-scenes team includes Emmy Award-winning cinematographer David Boyd, A.S.C. (*Deadwood*), Academy Award®-nominated production designer Geoffrey Kirkland (*The Right Stuff*, *Children Of Men*) and twice Oscar®-nominated Costume Designer Julie Weiss (*Frida*, *Twelve Monkeys*).



## **ABOUT THE PRODUCTION**

It is an American folktale that has been passed down by storytellers for decades, spreading across distance and time to take on the proportions of a larger-than-life legend: that of the eccentric hermit known as Felix “Bush,” who temporarily came out of hiding to throw a grand funeral bash for himself -- while he was still very much alive and kicking. Now, the story has taken on another incarnation: inspiring a motion picture that peers behind the folklore to unfold the colorful drama of a man’s last-ditch quest for redemption.

Like many classic American yarns, the story of Felix “Bush” is based in truth. The real Felix “Bush” Breazeale lived in Kingston, Tennessee in the 1930s. Born into a prominent Southern family, he was nevertheless reknown for his wild and offbeat ways. For years, Felix famously dwelled completely alone, refusing all company save for his beloved mule, in the deep, deep woods. Then, suddenly, Felix decided that, before he died, he’d like to know in advance what people were going to say about him after he was gone. Thus was born his wild idea for a “living funeral,” which would soon command national attention.

To draw a crowd to this highly irregular memorial, Felix sold lottery tickets offering his valuable plot of land as the prize; and the ploy worked. In the end, it was said that as many as 12,000 “mourners” from at least 14 different states showed up on June 26, 1938 -- including a *Life Magazine* photographer and major newspaper reporters -- to pay their respects to Felix . . . as he watched it all transpire. Afterwards, Felix explained to the *Roane County Banner*: “Just wanted to hear what the preacher had to say about me while I am alive.”

The story has been told and retold since that day, and a few generations later, screenwriter Chris Provenzano (*Mad Men*) was at a Thanksgiving Dinner when the entertaining yarn was spun once again, this time by his friend Scott Seeke - whose grandfather-in-law, a retired undertaker, had been sharing the tale of Felix’s offbeat funeral for decades.

Provenzano, however, was more than just amused. He was struck immediately by the magic, mystery and open questions at the heart of the story. He wondered: *Why had Felix done it? What was he looking for? What terrible, gnawing secrets might have driven him into his unusual backwoods life and what might have suddenly urged Felix, late in life, to so openly and urgently seek amends before it was too late?*

Those questions lie at the heart of the screenplay Provenzano and C. Gaby Mitchell (*Blood Diamond*) would ultimately write, as they dug deeper into the legend and fictionalized the facts that had been lost to time. (When it came to inner motives, the real Felix “Bush” had kept largely mum, mentioning only in passing that there was a woman he wanted whom he could never have.)

Imagining the background to Felix “Bush’s” story, Provenzano and Mitchell carved out an array of both historical characters (such as the Reverend Charles Jackson, who did indeed preach at Felix’s funeral party) and fictional characters (including the morally challenged funeral home owner, Frank Quinn, and the alluring widow, Maddie Darrow, whose undisclosed past with Felix leads to shocking revelations of an unsolved murder), each of whom is seeking the answer to why Felix is planning a funeral . . . and each of whom has his or her own reasons to care about the outcome.

Felix himself was fully fleshed as a man filled to overflowing with secrets and regrets, a tough, rugged, diehard individualist whose seclusion and primal backwoods knowledge has won him a supernatural reputation that has, up till now, allowed no one to know his true heart. The resulting tale unraveled in the tradition of big-hearted Southern storytelling – with its broad cast of quirky, heartbroken characters; its haunting riddles of the past; and its themes of thwarted love, unpunished crimes and the longing for deliverance.

When producer Dean Zanuck read the screenplay, he was taken aback by its literary acumen and evocative Southern atmosphere. He says: “I thought the screenplay was very unique -- unlike anything I had ever read before. The story and its lead character of Felix were absolutely compelling, and I was drawn in even further by the screenplay’s themes of reconciliation and forgiveness.”

Along the way another filmmaker fell in love with the **Get Low** screenplay: Aaron Schneider, an accomplished cinematographer (*Kiss the Girls*) who had been searching for the right project for his feature directorial debut. Schneider had garnered global attention when he directed the Academy Award® winning short, *Two Soldiers* -- based on William Faulkner classic Southern story about two brothers preparing for war – and had been looking for material of a similar strength.

When Schneider read **Get Low**, he knew this was the project he’d been waiting for. “It was a story that I felt a personal connection to based upon my own life experiences,” he explains. “I think a director needs a personal connection to a story’s themes and overtones so that the movie has not only a directorial point of view but also an emotional one. **Get Low** had that for me.”

He continues, “I was moved by the idea of how a profound loss early on in life can affect who we are and how we live out our lives. I think the story touches on a very universal chord—that the only meaningful way to live life is to ultimately engage with the world and accept the love and forgiveness that’s offered to you.”

Schneider’s early meetings with Zanuck made it clear the two shared a similar vision for the film. Schneider comments: “Dean Zanuck was the only one I had to convince I could direct

this script and I think he understood right away that I had something personal and unique to offer both in the development of the story and the telling.”

Zanuck was impressed both with Schneider’s cinematic eye and his take on the film. He recounts: “I was first introduced to Aaron through a colleague who had seen Aaron’s short, *Two Soldiers*. After watching his film, and then meeting Aaron in person and hearing his vision for **Get Low**, the choice was clear: he was our director. His passion for **Get Low** was infectious and his efforts to get the project off the ground were inspirational.”

**ONE CASKET ATTRACTS A COLORFUL CAST OF CHARACTERS:  
CASTING GET LOW**

To get ***Get Low*** off the ground, the filmmakers knew they would need a highly skillful and creative actor in the lead role of Felix – someone capable of making a character who seems right out of a backwoods fable feel palpably real and alive. They found that quality in Robert Duvall, one of America’s most diverse and adored actors, and winner of the Academy Award® for his performance as a broken-down country singer trying to turn his life around in Bruce Beresford’s *Tender Mercies*.

Duvall has long been drawn to richly flawed, complicated characters and he immediately agreed to the role of Felix once he read the screenplay. In fact, he says it reminded him of the film that gave him his first big break: the American classic, *To Kill A Mockingbird*, based on the beloved Southern Gothic novel about the power of prejudice by Harper Lee, and adapted for the screen by Horton Foote, who won the Academy Award® for his work.

Duvall explains: “The writing of this script reminded me of my friend, Horton Foote, who recently passed away. There are wonderful things to this script, things like you find in a Horton Foote script—just with more of an edge. This movie offers a deep slice of humanity, and with the great actors we have, we’ve tried to make it as real as possible.”

He was also attracted to his character’s unusual POV: a tough, no-nonsense man’s open-eyed, honest acknowledgement of his encroaching demise and all that it might mean. Notes Duvall: “I thought Felix was a very important part and a wonderful character to do at this point in my career. Felix has been maybe not such a great guy at various points in his life, but now he’s moved to ask for a certain forgiveness at the end.”

Sissy Spacek, another actor whose work has been a staple of modern American filmmaking and an Oscar® winner for her incisive portrait of Loretta Lynn in *Coal Miner’s Daughter*, was also drawn to the film’s writing. “When I read the script, I never knew what was going to happen next,” Spacek says. “It’s so NOT a formula film and the script had so much depth — it’s a great group of characters in this odd, peculiar story that is really about something.”

Spacek was especially moved by the journey of the strong, independent widow, Maddie, the old flame who thinks she is the only person on earth to have ever loved Felix, only to discover the terrible and long-hidden reason he never fully loved her back. “My character really is the emotional center of the film,” she notes. “There’s a lot of unrequited love here with both Maddie and Felix. It’s kind of sweet and it’s kind of sad that these two people can’t really see what’s going on right in front of them. And for me, what was also quite amazing is that, at my age, I get to be ‘The Girl.’”

The icing on the cake for Spacek was the chance to work so closely with Robert Duvall. She comments: “Robert Duvall has embodied this character. When he came on set, he just was Felix, which meant all I had to do was react to him. He was fantastic—working with him was so easy.”

Easy, but also intense, Spacek says. “It’s been very combustible while we were making the film. Things happened in the scenes that took us to places that we didn’t really expect. It just really felt like something different and wonderful.”

Spacek also was thrilled to work with another member of the cast – Bill Murray, the Oscar® nominated star whose work in such films as *Lost in Translation*, *Groundhog Day*, *Rushmore*, *Broken Flowers* and *The Life Aquatic with Steve Zissou* has explored the borderlands where comedy and drama meet.

Murray takes on the vivid role of feisty, snake-oil salesman Frank Quinn, of Quinn’s Funeral Home, who matches wits with Felix as he tries to make a mint off the “living funeral,” while simultaneously attempting his own awkward stab at connection. “When I found out Bill Murray was playing Frank Quinn, I just thought it was a stroke of genius because he brings a whole new dimension of humor and emotion to this character,” Spacek says.

Murray jokes that he was dragged out of idleness by the screenplay. “I really don’t like to work, so it was a drag when I read the script and it was really good,” he deadpans. “Then I saw the director’s short and that was really good. I was actually quite comfortable just going out to dinner but Dean Zanuck and Aaron Schneider just wore me down and I knew I had to do it. Plus, I figured I’d get to find out what it’s like to work with Robert Duvall and Sissy Spacek.”

That experience turned out to be inspiring. “Robert is a unique cat,” Murray observes. “There’s only one drum that’s marching in that head, so when you watch him work, he’s just a magnet. It was a lot of fun to watch him carry this relentless confessional story all the way to its conclusion.”

As for his relationship with Spacek, he demurs: “I was kind of hoping that I’d end up with the girl in this movie, but you know girls have trouble warming up to a funeral director—I don’t know why...”

While Murray’s portrait of Frank Quinn is that of the morally challenged American salesman – a guy who is just as likely to sell you a car or a watch as a casket – he also notes that his current job keeps prodding Quinn with the reminder that nothing lasts forever, not even money. “When you’re talking about funerals, you’re talking about death,” Murray observes. “This is a story about a man who knows he’s about to die and is trying to amend the errors of his youth. I guess the lesson of this film is that the awareness of the inevitability of death can change your life.”

Perhaps that lesson hits home hardest with the film’s youngest main character: Buddy Robinson, Frank Quinn’s kindhearted apprentice and new father, who is driven to try to better understand why Felix “Bush” wants to throw himself a living funeral. Playing the role is Lucas Black, who was last seen on screen in *Fast & Furious: Tokyo Drift*, and is best known for his role in the cult CBS series *American Gothic*.

Black was drawn to the character of Buddy and especially to the way he grows so close to Felix in the midst of trying to pull off the funeral. He notes that collaborating with Robert Duvall on such a deep level was a dream come true. “When I first read the script, I knew

Duvall was playing 'Bush.' He's definitely one of my favorite actors—just his demeanor, all the charismatic things that he does. He fit perfectly in my mind and once we started to work, I knew it was going to be really fun to be a part of this great story.”

Then there was his yin-yang relationship with Frank Quinn, played by Bill Murray, whom Buddy simultaneously wants to please and keep on the moral up-and-up. “Bill brings a different kind of edge to the story,” Black notes. “It’s good to have a character that’s like him, that gives the audience some comedy—it really plays well for the story. Bill also likes to do scenes in variety of ways which made each take fun because we were always playing around with new ideas.”

Rounding out the cast are Gerald McRaney, who is known for his starring roles in such hit television series as *Major Dad*, *Simon and Simon* and HBO’s *Deadwood*, as the local Reverend Gus Horton; and screen veteran Bill Cobbs as the real-life Illinois preacher Charles Jackson.

McRaney admits, “The chance to work with Robert Duvall was all I needed. When I was first starting out as an actor ages ago, Robert Duvall was the benchmark—that was who you wanted to be if you worked your tail off and were blessed with enough talent—that was the goal—to be THAT good.”

Once they had scenes together, McRaney says, “The first day I worked with him, I got so caught up watching him work that I was out of the scene. I had to stop and start again because I was so captivated just watching him work! It’s so simple, so honest, so real—it sort of takes your breath away.”

As for Sissy Spacek, McRaney comments, “She’s spectacular and she’s someone who does it so simply and directly. I worked with Henry Fonda and he said of himself that he worked his tail off so that the audience wouldn’t see the wheels turning. I think Sissy does that, too. Not that it’s easy, but by the time it gets to the screen it just looks that way.”

Finally, McRaney was equally taken with Bill Murray. “Bill has a very different approach to acting than some of the other people in the cast, but there is that same sincere honesty about what he brings to the character and to the role. It’s like they wrote this role for Bill Murray. They didn’t; but he’s perfect for it.”

McRaney summarizes: “We had a wonderfully crafted script, a great story, and fellow actors that we all felt extremely fortunate to be in the company of. I think audiences will know they are in for a treat as soon as they start to watch this movie.”

**A 1930S FOLK TALE COMES TO THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY:  
SHOOTING GET LOW**

With a folkloric screenplay and a stellar cast, the filmmakers needed just one more element to allow **Get Low** to soar: an authentic landscape to bring the story's dense, Appalachian woods and New Deal-era towns come to life. Both Dean Zanuck and Aaron Schneider agreed that production could only take place on location in the historic reaches of the American South.

Ultimately, the film was shot in Georgia. There, the filmmakers were able to hunt up a very special collection of locations that have changed little since the Great Depression, including the small town of Crawfordville (population 572); the Gaither Plantation, a historic (and allegedly haunted) 1800s cotton plantation, in Covington; a beautiful old church near Sparta; and Pickett's Mill Battlefield, a Civil War site and State Park near Dallas, Georgia.

To carry out his vision, Schneider recruited an artistic team headed by Oscar®-nominated production designer Geoffrey Kirkland whose diverse work has included forays into both the past and future in films such as *The Right Stuff*, *Children of Men* and *Bugsy Malone*. Says Kirkland: "We started in Atlanta and set off, driving and driving, in search of 1930's America."

Kirkland and Schneider worked closely with rising cinematographer David Boyd -- who also worked on Schneider's Oscar®-winning short, *Two Soldiers*, and has shot for two of television's most acclaimed series, *Friday Night Lights* and *Deadwood* – to forge a look for the film that honors both the wildness of Felix's soul and the lure of civilized contact that calls him back.

Also joining the design team was twice Academy Award®-nominated costume designer Julie Weiss, whose films range from *Frida* and *American Beauty* to Terry Gilliam's *Twelve Monkeys* and the comedy *Blades of Glory*. Weiss says it was more than the costuming challenges that drew her to the project. "When I first read **Get Low** I knew how important it was to be a part of this film. It was a chance to work with Robert Duvall, Sissy Spacek, and Bill Murray – and a chance to have everyday discussions about our observations on life and how one might approach his or her own eulogy. The experience was all about simple laughter drawn from the memories of shared pain," she concludes.

All of the film's design ideas and emotions would converge at the crux of the story: the creation of Felix's famous funeral party. To spark a festive atmosphere, the production recruited the Grammy-nominated, Nashville-based band, the Steeldrivers, to play their rootsy, Bluegrass soul on camera (the real Felix "Bush" hired the Friendly Eight Octet of Chattanooga to play the funeral.) The Steeldrivers were even joined by music lover Bill Murray on his mandolin between takes, further setting the mood.

To inspire locals to come out as extras for the large funeral crowd scenes, the film's actors took a page right out of the script – going on local radio to invite citizens of Georgia to appear in the film in exchange for free food, raffled prizes and a chance to meet the Academy Award®-winning cast. In the end, over 600 people showed up at 5am on a crisp March morning to bring Felix "Bush's" service to life.

Although there were any number of potential snafus -- one day the set was threatened by tornadoes; another day it was snowing -- cast and crew's unabated passion for the project kept spirits high. To a person, everyone involved in **Get Low** cites the movie as a deep bonding experience filled with the very things Felix "Bush" comes, at the last possible moment in his life, to desire: the simple power of kindness, conversation and communion.

Bill Murray says: "Being an independent movie, everyone was truly committed to this thing. We were thrown together very intimately for a short time, but it was the gypsy mentality where everyone pulls together and takes care of each other for the time that you have. That happened on this movie -- and it's what I like best about the movie business."

That level of devotion and artistry made it all worth it for Dean Zanuck, after eight years of trying to bring **Get Low** to the screen. He concludes: "All you ever hope for is to deliver a satisfying movie-going experience for the audience. Between an engaging story based on a real legend, a rich, complex screenplay and an incredible cast, I think we've made a wonderful film."

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## ABOUT THE CAST

A leading man since the 1960s, **ROBERT DUVALL** (*Felix Bush*) has specialized in taciturn cowboys, fierce leaders and driven characters of all types. Respected by his peers and adored by audiences worldwide, he has earned numerous Oscar nominations for his performances in *The Godfather*, *Apocalypse Now*, *The Great Santini* and *The Apostle*. Duvall won the Academy Award® as Best Actor for his role in *Tender Mercies*, and later earned the Golden Globe for his performance in the title role of HBO's *Stalin*. More recently, Duvall was honored with the Golden Globe and Emmy Award for his iconic portrayal of 'Print Ritter' in AMC's *Broken Trail*.

Duvall made his big screen debut in 1962, as the creepy 'Boo Radley' in *To Kill A Mockingbird*. He has gone on to star in such classics as *Bullitt*, *True Grit*, *M\*A\*S\*H*, *The Conversation*, *Network*, *The Natural*, *Colors*, *Days Of Thunder*, *A Handmaid's Tale*, *Rambling Rose*, *Wrestling Ernest Hemingway*, *Phenomenon*, *A Civil Action*, *Open Range*, and *Thank You For Smoking*, among many others.

As a director and producer, Duvall got behind the camera for his labor of love project *The Apostle* in which he also starred. The film went on to earn many accolades, including being named on over seventy-five film critics 'Top 10 Films for 1997' lists, including the New York Times and Los Angeles Times. He also wrote, produced and starred in *Assassination Tango*.

Duvall was most recently seen as the 'Old Man' in *The Road*, based on the novel by Cormac McCarthy, that stars Viggo Mortensen.

**BILL MURRAY** (*Frank Quinn*) is one of the world's most beloved film stars. He began his career as a member of the National Lampoon Radio Hour, alongside Dan Aykroyd, Gilda Radner and John Belushi, and soon rose to prominence with them as one of the most popular members of NBC's *Saturday Night Live*, winning the Emmy for Outstanding Writing in Comedy in 1977.

He landed his first starring role in *Meatballs*, which marked the beginning of an ongoing collaboration with director Ivan Reitman and actor Harold Ramis. Murray went on to star in such audience favorites as *Caddyshack*, *Stripes*, *Ghostbusters*, and *Ghostbusters II*.

Murray has a string of comedic hits, including *Scrooged*, *Groundhog Day*, *What About Bob?*, *Mad Dog & Glory* and Tim Burton's *Ed Wood*. He also starred in critically acclaimed dramatic roles for director Wes Anderson, including *Rushmore*, *The Royal Tenenbaums*, *The Life Aquatic with Steve Zissou* and *The Darjeeling Limited*. In addition, Murray starred in Jim Jarmusch's *Broken Flowers* and *The Limits Of Control*.

In 2003, when Murray starred in Sofia Coppola's *Lost In Translation*, he won the Golden Globe, the Independent Spirit and BAFTA Best Actor Awards for his performance. In addition, he was honored with a Best Actor Academy Award nomination for his portrayal as 'Bob Harris,' the lonely movie star stuck in Tokyo.

**SISSY SPACEK** (*Mattie Darrow*) has been one of the industry's most respected actresses for more than three decades. Her many honors include an Academy Award, five additional Oscar nominations, three Golden Globe Awards and numerous critics awards.

She first gained the attention of critics and audiences with her performance in Terrence Malick's widely praised 1973 drama *Badlands*, in which she starred opposite Martin Sheen. In 1976, Spacek earned her first Academy Award nomination and won a National Society of Film Critics Award for her chilling performance in the title role of Brian De Palma's *Carrie*, based on the Stephen King novel. The following year, she won the New York Film Critics Circle Award for her work in Robert Altman's *Three Women*.

In 1980, Spacek starred as 'Loretta Lynn' in the acclaimed biopic *Coal Miner's Daughter*, winning the Oscar and Golden Globe Award for her performance. Spacek also swept the New York Film Critics Circle, Los Angeles Film Critics, National Board of Review, and National Society of Film Critics Awards for her portrayal of the country music legend.

Spacek received another Golden Globe nomination the next year for her work in *Raggedy Man*, directed by her husband, Jack Fisk. She earned her third Oscar and Golden Globe nominations for her role in Costa-Gavras' 1982 drama *Missing*, opposite Jack Lemmon, and her fourth Oscar and Golden Globe nominations for her work in 1984's *The River*, in which she starred with Mel Gibson.

In 1987, Spacek received her fifth Academy Award nomination and won another Golden Globe and the New York film Critics Circle Award for her performance in the dark comedy *Crimes of the Heart*. Her most recent Oscar nomination came for her portrayal of a mother grieving for her murdered son in the drama *In the Bedroom*, for which she also won a Golden Globe Award, an Independent Spirit Award, and an AFI Film Award for Best Actress. In addition, she garnered Best Actress Awards from a number of critics' organizations, including the Los Angeles, New York and Broadcast Film Critics. Her work in *In the Bedroom* also brought Spacek two Screen Actors Guild (SAG) Award nominations, one for Outstanding Lead Actress and another for Outstanding Cast, shared with the rest of the film's ensemble. Spacek's other film credits include *A Home at the End of the World*, *The Straight Story*, *Blast From the Past*, *Affliction*, *The Grass Harp*, *JFK*, *The Long Walk Home*, *'Night, Mother*, *Marie*, *North Country*, *Nine Lives*, *Hot Rod*, *Lake City* and *Four Christmases*.

Spacek has also been honored for her work on the small screen, where she has starred in several highly praised longform projects. She received Emmy Award nominations for her portrayal of 'Zelda Fitzgerald' in *Last Call* and for her work in Tommy Lee Jones' Western *The Good Old Boys*, as well as SAG Award nominations for her performances in *Midwives* and *A Place for Annie*. Her additional television credits include *If These Walls Could Talk*, *Beyond the Call*, *Streets of Laredo*, *A Private Matter* and most recently, a Golden Globe nomination for *Pictures of Hollis Woods*.

**LUCAS BLACK** (*Buddy Robinson*) made his acting debut at age 11, opposite Kevin Costner in Jon Avnet's *The War*. His performance led him to being cast in CBS' series *American Gothic* where he played 'Caleb Temple' for the season.

He next went on to play opposite Billy Bob Thornton in *Sling Blade*, as the young boy who compassionately befriends a mentally handicapped murderer. He continued acting while going to school, appearing in Rob Reiner's *The Ghosts Of Mississippi*, Antonio Banderas' directorial debut *Crazy In Alabama*, Rob Bowman's big screen version of *The X Files* and *All The Pretty Horses*, opposite Matt Damon.

A native of Alabama, after Black graduated from high school he went on to appear alongside Jude Law in Anthony Minghella's *Cold Mountain*. He followed that performance with leading roles in *Killer Diller*, *Deepwater*, Sam Mendes' *Jarhead*, and *Friday Night Lights*. He also starred in *Fast & Furious: Tokyo Drift*.

Next up for the talented young actor is *Legion*, opposite Dennis Quaid, and the starring role in *Whiskey Beginnings: The Junior Johnson Story*.

**GERALD McRANEY** (*Reverend Gus Horton*) is a highly respected and talented character actor who easily transitions between the stage, television and movies. He most recently starred in the CBS drama *Jericho*, his fourth television series for the network, and on HBO's award-winning series *Deadwood* as 'George Hearst', father of newspaper publisher William Randolph Hearst. He also appeared this past season in the Broadway production of Horton Foote's *Dividing The Estate*. It is during his run in this play, that Robert Duvall asked him to join the cast of *Get Low* after watching his performance.

Recognized by fans around the world, McRaney spent eight years as the irrepressible, yet immensely likable private investigator 'Rick Simon' on *Simon and Simon*. He went on to become the nation's favorite U.S. Marine in *Major Dad*. A further measure of his popularity is that both series continue to be aired in reruns and DVDs of entire seasons of *Simon and Simon* are currently in wide distribution.

McRaney was born in Collins, Mississippi. He became interested in acting when he injured a knee playing football in junior high school and found the only openings left were in the drama club. Encouraged by his performances in school productions, he went on to major in drama at the University of Mississippi.

McRaney's first acting job when he moved to Hollywood was in an episode of *Night Gallery*. He next followed it with four appearances on *Gunsmoke* which then led to steady work in television movies such as *The Law*, *Roots II*, and in many series, including *The Incredible Hulk*, *The Rockford Files*, *Police Woman*, *Designing Women* and *How the West Was Won*, among many others.

McRaney, who is married to actress Delta Burke, is a founding member of the Entertainment Industries Council, Inc., a non-profit organization that addresses health issues such as drug, alcohol, and tobacco use and addiction; firearm safety; human trafficking; mental health and HIV/AIDS prevention. In that role, he has testified before the Senate Subcommittee on Investigations to obtain Senate endorsement of the group's efforts.

**BILL COBBS** (*Reverend Charlie Jackson*) was born and raised in Cleveland where his mother was a cleaning lady and his father a construction worker. Prior to pursuing his passion of acting, he was an Air Force radar technician, worked in office products at IBM and

sold cars.

In 1970, at age of 36, Cobbs left Ohio for New York to seek work as an actor. He supported himself by driving cabs, repairing office equipment, selling toys and performing odd jobs. His first professional acting role was in *Ride A Black Horse* at the Negro Ensemble Company. From there, he appeared in small theater productions, eventually performing at the Eugene O'Neill Theater.

His first television credit was in *Vegetable Soup*, a New York PBS educational series, and then he landed a role in *The Taking Of Pelham One Two Three*. Cobbs has since gone on to appear in numerous films, including *The Hudsucker Proxy*, *Things To Do In Denver When You're Dead*, *New Jack City*, *That Thing That You Do!*, *Ghosts Of Mississippi*, *A Mighty Wind* and the blockbuster *Night At The Museum*, to mention a few.

## ABOUT THE FILMMAKERS

Halfway through his undergraduate studies at Iowa State University, **AARON SCHNEIDER** (*Director*) transferred out of Mechanical Engineering into the production program at USC's School of Cinema-Television. Inspired by the work of guest-lecturing cinematographers, he soon gravitated to the visual craft of storytelling embodied in the role of cinematographer. Upon graduation, he began a decade-long career working in commercials and music videos, encompassing such clients and artists as Nike, Mercedes, L'Oreal, Whitney Houston, Gwen Stefani and Michael Jackson.

In 1995, Schneider was invited to photograph the ground-breaking legal drama, *Murder One* for Executive Producer Steven Bocho for which he earned an Emmy Award nomination and was twice awarded the American Society of Cinematographer's Award. In addition to numerous network television pilots, Schneider went on to photograph feature films, including *Kiss The Girls*, *Simon Birch* and 2<sup>nd</sup> unit for James Cameron on the worldwide mega-hit *Titanic*.

Schneider began his directing career in episodic television and as Director/cameraman in television commercials and feature films, including Universal's upcoming *The Express*. When Schneider wrote and directed an adaptation of William Faulkner's short story *Two Soldiers*, he won the Academy Award® for Best Live-Action Short Film.

*Get Low* marks his directorial debut of a full-length feature film.

**CHRIS PROVENZANO's** (*Screenwriter/Executive Producer*) work on AMC's acclaimed television series *Mad Men* earned him a 2007 Peabody Award and the WGA Award for Best New Series. His teleplay for "The Hobo Code" received a WGA Award nomination for Best Episodic Drama. *Get Low* is the second feature film Provenzano has had produced; his screenplay *Thank You, Good Night* was made independently. Additionally, his work has been published in the *Los Angeles Times*.

**C. GABY MITCHELL** (*Screenwriter/Executive Producer*) brings a wealth of experience and compassion to *Get Low*. Known in Hollywood circles for his ability to rework screenplays into viable movies, he has worked his magic on such scripts as *Seabiscuit*, Oscar nominated seven times, including for Best Adapted Screenplay, and Ron Howard's *Cinderella Man*, starring Russell Crowe, to name a few. For Edward Zwick's critically acclaimed *Blood Diamond*, starring Leonardo DiCaprio and Djimon Hounsou, the multi-talented writer received story credit.

**DEAN ZANUCK** (*Producer*) began his early career in Hollywood as a set production assistant on the films, *Clean Slate*, *Wild Bill* and *Mulholland Falls*. He then worked as a personal assistant for producer Brian Grazer during the production of *Apollo 13*, before joining his father, Oscar-winning producer Richard D. Zanuck at The Zanuck Company in 1995 as Vice-President of Development.

As Vice-President of Development, Zanuck oversaw production on such films as *True Crime*, starring and directed by Clint Eastwood, *Rules of Engagement*, starring Tommy Lee Jones

and Samuel L. Jackson, and the blockbuster *Deep Impact*. He also served as production executive on Tim Burton's *Planet Of The Apes*, *Big Fish*, *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* and *Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street* as well as last year's *Yes Man*, starring Jim Carrey.

As a producer, Zanuck discovered the graphic novel Road To Perdition and ended up producing the multiple Oscar®-nominated *Road To Perdition*, starring Tom Hanks and Paul Newman that was directed by Sam Mendes. He also served as Co-Producer on *Reign Of Fire*, starring Matthew McConaughey, and executive produced the television movie, *Dead Lawyers*, starring Sean Patrick Flanery and F. Murray Abraham.

**DAVID BOYD, A.S.C.** (*Cinematographer*) grew up on four continents, the son of an army officer. As a physics major at the University of California, San Diego, he took a film studies class for an easy four units and discovered he loved it. Transferring to the Motion Picture/Television program at U.C.L.A., upon graduation, he worked as a 2nd Camera Assistant, Focus Puller, Camera Operator, and in 1998 became a Director of Photography.

His credits include 2nd Unit photography on *Cast Away* and *Galaxy Quest*, and the main units of *Deadwood*, *12 Rounds*, the series *Friday Night Lights*, and the Academy Award®-winning short film *Two Soldiers*, directed by Aaron Schneider. *Get Low* is their second collaboration.

Boyd was invited to join the American Society of Cinematographers in 2006.

**GEOFFREY KIRKLAND** (*Production Designer*) is an Oscar-nominated production designer, who recently won the BAFTA for Best Production Design on *Children Of Men*, starring Clive Owen. He also designed the sets for the basketball movie, *Glory Road*, produced by Jerry Bruckheimer, and the independent horror spoof, *Pig Hunt*.

A long-time collaborator with Director Alan Parker, Kirkland has worked on nine of his movies: *The Life Of David Gale*, *Angela's Ashes*, *Mississippi Burning*, *Birdy*, *Come See The Paradise*, *Shoot The Moon*, *Fame*, the Academy Award-winning *Midnight Express* and *Bugsy Malone*. For his work on *Bugsy Malone*, Kirkland was honored with his first BAFTA Award for Best Production Design.

Other credits for the UK-born designer include *After The Sunset*, *Desperate Measures*, *Space Jam*, *Renaissance Man* and *The Right Stuff*. For his work on *The Right Stuff*, where he served as Production Designer, the design group shared an Academy Award nomination for Best Art Direction. In addition, Kirkland served as the visual consultant on *War Games* and production designer on the world-renowned long format music video, *Captain EO*, starring pop icon Michael Jackson.

Esteemed, award-winning **JULIE WEISS** (*Costume Designer*) has made a name for herself as an artist whose designs have won recognition in every medium—stage, television and film. She has been honored twice with the Academy Award nomination and multiple times with the Emmy for her work in television and has received honors from Women In Film.

Her work as a costume designer began in New York with the play, *Elephant Man*, for which she received a Tony nomination. Other theater credits include plays at the Mark Tapper Forum, Resident Designer at Phoenix Theater in New York designing costumes for plays written by Christopher Hampton, Richard Nelson, Sam Shepard, Samuel Becket, and William Shakespeare. Emmy Awards were received for *The Dollmaker* with Jane Fonda and *Woman of Independent Means* with Sally Field. *Mrs. Harris* with Annette Benning and Ben Kingsley, *Evergreen*, *Little Gloria Happy At Last*, and *Liza Minelli: Life From Radio City Music Hall* all received Emmy Nominations for Best Costume Design.

Academy Award® nominations include *Frida* and *12 Monkeys*. The Costume Designer Guild Award was given for *American Beauty* and *Blades of Glory*. Other film credits include *A Simple Plan*, *Marvin's Room*, *It Could Happen To You*, *Searching For Bobby Fischer*, *Honeymoon In Vegas*, *The Freshman*, *Steel Magnolias*, *Tequila Sunrise*, *F/X*, *Auto Focus*, *Hearts In Atlantis*, *The Gift*, *Bobby*, *Hollywoodland*, *The Missing*, *The Ring*, *Fun With Dick and Jane* and Bette Davis Costumes for *Whales of August*. She recently completed *Shanghai* with John Cusack, Gong Li, Chow Yon Phat, and Ken Watanabe.. Teaching Credits include being on the faculty of Stanford University and serving as a visiting professor at UCLA.

Academy Award® Winner **JAN A.P. KACZMAREK** (*Composer*) has written the scores for over 50 feature films and documentaries including *The Visitor*, *Unfaithful*, *Aimee and Jaguar*, *War and Peace*, *Total Eclipse*, *Washington Square*, *The Third Miracle* and *Lost Souls*. His upcoming projects include *Hachiko*, directed by Lasse Hallstrom and starring Richard Gere, and *City Island*, winner of the Audience Award at Tribeca Festival, directed by Raymond de Felitta, starring Andy Garcia.

He began touring Europe in the 1970s with The Orchestra of the Eighth Day. In 1982, Kaczmarek recorded his debut album, titled *Music for the End*. He relocated to America in 1989 and began composing for theatre, winning two New York theatre awards in 1992. After his success for the stage, he returned to film composition. In 2005, he won his first Oscar for *Finding Neverland*, as well as The National Board of Review's award for Best Score. He was nominated for a Golden Globe and BAFTA's Anthony Asquith Award for Achievement in Film Music.

Currently, he is establishing the Rozbitek Institute in his native Poland. The Institute will serve as a European center encouraging creative work in film, theatre, music, and new media.

Internationally recognized as the world's most renowned Dobro player, **JERRY DOUGLAS** (*Additional Composer/Music*) undoubtedly ranks amongst the top contemporary maestros in American music. Douglas has garnered twelve GRAMMY® Awards and numerous International Bluegrass Music Association awards, and holds the distinction of being named "Musician of the Year" by The Country Music Association (2002, 2005, 2007), The Academy of Country Music (11 times), and The Americana Music Association (2002, 2003), and was honored as the 2008 Artist In Residence at the Country Music Hall of Fame in Nashville, TN. In 2004, the National Endowment for The Arts honored Douglas with a National Heritage Fellowship, acknowledging

his artistic excellence and contribution to the nation's traditional arts, their highest such accolade.

The Ohio-born Douglas was seduced by music early in life. As a child growing up in Warren, Ohio, Douglas recalls lying on the floor listening to his father's bluegrass band, a collection of West Virginia coalfield refugees who'd come to work in the steel mills of the Midwest. At eight years old, after a few years of guitar, Jerry's father took him to a 1963 Flatt & Scruggs concert, where he heard both of the men who put Dobro on the bluegrass map: Brother Oswald Kirby and Uncle Josh Graves.

He was immediately attracted to the sound of the Dobro, and he began playing the instrument in earnest soon after. "I just liked the sound it made," he recalls. "It can be real lonesome, or it can be really brash and percussive. It's such a vocal instrument; you can do so many things on it, because of the sustain and because there are all these different voices you can get out of it."

Douglas adapted a Silvertone acoustic guitar to be played dobro-style, and acquired his first real Dobro in 1966. By age 13, he was part of his father's West Virginia Travelers, studying Graves and Kirby on record, and creating a new vocabulary of Dobro licks by listening to the banjo, fiddle, and guitar. His father's band mates "were great to let me learn how to play and play in the band at the same time," Douglas says. "They were good players, and I adapted a lot of stuff from their instruments."

After several years of playing with his dad's group the West Virginia Travelers, the 17-year-old Douglas joined the pioneering newgrass band the Country Gentlemen in 1973. In 1975, he became a member of the seminal J.D. Crowe and the New South, which also included future stars Ricky Skaggs and Tony Rice. In 1976, Douglas and Skaggs co-founded the now-legendary bluegrass combo Boone Creek. In 1979, Douglas launched his solo career with his LP Fluxology, and became a full-time member of the beloved family group the Whites. He remained with the Whites until 1985, but still found time to play on such now-classic albums as Emmylou Harris' *Roses in the Snow* and Ricky Skaggs' *Don't Get Above Your Raising*.

By the time he left the Whites, Douglas had become Nashville's busiest session Dobro player, while continuing his solo career with such albums as 1982's *Fluxedo*, *Under the Wire* (1986) *Changing Channels* (1987), *Everything Is Going To Work Out Fine* (1987), *Plant Early* (1989) and *Slide Rule* (1992). In the late '80s, he formed the acoustic supergroup *Strength in Numbers* with Sam Bush, Béla Fleck, Edgar Meyer and Mark O'Connor; the quintet debuted with 1989's landmark recording *The Telluride Sessions*.

Douglas formed a trio with Russ Barenberg and Edgar Meyer to record the 1993 album *Skip, Hop and Wobble*. The next year, Douglas co-produced and performed on the all-star multi-artist project *The Great Dobro Sessions*, for which he won a Grammy for Best Bluegrass Album. In 1996, Douglas joined Edgar Meyer and Indian musician Vishwa Mohan Bhatt for the genre-bending experiment *Bourbon and Rosewater*, and collaborated with singer-songwriter Peter Rowan on the album *Yonder*. Douglas released his next solo effort, *Restless on the Farm*, in 1998.

It was around that time that Douglas chose to abandon his lucrative session career, which had ceased to offer new musical challenges. "I did so many sessions for so long, and it wasn't really

doing anything for me anymore," he explains. "I was making a fine living playing on other people's records, but the music changed, and I didn't really like where mainstream country was going. It started to really bother me, so I had to stop."

At around the same time, Alison Krauss asked Douglas to fill in on a Union Station tour. "The shows went so well that he was offered a permanent slot in the group. I really love playing with these people; it is a creative atmosphere and the music is coming from all of us, so it is a dream gig." Since then, he's managed to balance his Union Station work with his solo career and a variety of collaborative efforts.

In addition to his groundbreaking work as a member of Alison Krauss & Union Station, The Country Gentlemen, J.D. Crowe & The New South, Boone Creek, and Strength in Numbers and others, Douglas's musical brilliance has graced over 2,000 recordings by such distinguished artists as James Taylor, Paul Simon, Ray Charles, Lyle Lovett, Elvis Costello, Garth Brooks, Charlie Haden, Earl Scruggs, Phish, Emmylou Harris, Bill Frisell, The Chieftains, and the eight million-plus selling soundtrack to *O Brother, Where Art Thou?*.

Douglas's twelfth solo release, *Glide*, features nine instrumental compositions and two tracks with standout vocal performances by country music legends Travis Tritt and Rodney Crowell, it is a follow-up to his critically acclaimed, *The Best Kept Secret* (KOCH Records), and the 2007 collection, *Jerry Douglas: Best of the Sugar Hill Years* (Sugar Hill Records). *Glide* portrays his adventurous and eclectic musical palette as it incorporates elements of bluegrass, country, rock, folk, Celtic, Scottish and New Orleans-inspired music. Earl Scruggs, Sam Bush, Edgar Meyer, Lloyd Green, Tony Rice, Carmella Ramsey and members of his touring band including drummer Doug Belote, bassist Todd Parks, violinist Luke Bulla and guitarist Guthrie Trapp support Douglas on various tracks on his much-anticipated new album.

Whether he is touring with Elvis Costello & The Sugarcanes, performing alongside Eric Clapton at the 2007 Crossroads Guitar Festival in Chicago, on tour with his band opening for Paul Simon (Fall 2006), appearing live on *A Prairie Home Companion*, or playing his featured role with Alison Krauss & Union Station, there is only one Dobro player who can voice such a distinctive and familiar sound: Jerry Douglas. As he continues his incalculable influence on bluegrass and its many related genres, Douglas forges as a true pioneer in American music.

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**CREDITS**

Directed by  
AARON SCHNEIDER

Screenplay by  
CHRIS PROVENZANO  
And  
C. GABY MITCHELL

Story by  
CHRIS PROVENZANO  
&  
SCOTT SEEKE

Produced by  
DEAN ZANUCK

Produced by  
DAVID GUNDLACH

Co-Producer  
RICHARD LUKE ROTHSCHILD

Executive Producer  
DAVID B. GINSBERG

Executive Producer  
HARRISON ZANUCK

Executive Producers  
C. GABY MITCHELL  
JOEY RAPPA  
ROBERT DUVALL  
ROB CARLINER  
OLIVER SIMON  
DANIEL BAUR  
ALAIN MIDZIC  
BLERIM DESTANI  
DARIUSZ GASIOROWSKI  
BRAD & BRANDIE PARK  
KONRAD WOJTERKOWSKI  
SCOTT FISCHER  
DON MANDRIK  
CHRIS PROVENZANO

Associate Producers  
LILY PHILLIPS

JUSTYNA PAWLAK

Cinematographer  
DAVID BOYD A.S.C.

Production Designer  
GEOFFREY KIRKLAND

Editor  
AARON SCHNEIDER

Music by  
JAN A. P. KACZMAREK

Music Supervisor  
EVYEN KLEAN

Costume Designer  
JULIE WEISS

Casting by  
CRAIG FINCANNON, CSA  
&  
LISA MAE FINCANNON, CSA

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Presents

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In Co-Production with  
DAVID GUNDLACH PRODUCTIONS  
LARA ENTERPRISES  
TVN

In Association with  
BUTCHER'S RUN FILMS  
GET LOW

Unit Production Manager  
Richard Luke Rothschild

First Assistant Director  
Eric Tignini

Second Assistant Director

Hope Garrison  
Additional Music by  
Jerry Douglas

**CAST**

FELIX BUSH  
MATTIE DARROW  
FRANK QUINN  
BUDDY  
REV. GUS HORTON  
REV. CHARLIE JACKSON  
CARL  
KATHRYN  
WKNG ANNOUNCER  
BONNIE  
TOM  
GRIER  
GARY  
ORVILLE  
PHOTOGRAPHER  
MR. FELDMAN  
BUSH'S MULE

Robert Duvall  
Sissy Spacek  
Bill Murray  
Lucas Black  
Gerald McRaney  
Bill Cobbs  
Scott Cooper  
Lori Beth Edgeman  
Linds Edwards  
Andrea Powell  
Chandler Riggs  
Danny Vinson  
Blerim Destani  
Tomasz Karolak  
Andrew Stahl  
Marc Gowan  
Gracie