

TALK TO ME

Never underestimate a man with something to say.

DON CHEADLE
CHIWETEL EJIOFOR
CEDRIC THE ENTERTAINER
TARAJI P. HENSON
MIKE EPPS
AND MARTIN SHEEN



Inspired by a true story

FOCUS FEATURES and SIDNEY KIMMEL ENTERTAINMENT PRESENT A MARK GORDON COMPANY / PELAGIUS FILMS PRODUCTION A KASI LEMMONS FILM
 DON CHEADLE CHIWETEL EJIOFOR "TALK TO ME" CEDRIC THE ENTERTAINER TARAJI P. HENSON MIKE EPPS AND MARTIN SHEEN
 WRITTEN BY VICTORIA THOMAS, T.S.A. AND PRODUCED BY BARRY COLE AND DIRECTED BY TERENCE BLANCHARD DESIGNER GERSHA PHILLIPS COSTUME DESIGNER TERILYN A. SHROPSHIRE, A.C.E. EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS WARREN ALAN YOUNG
 EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS STEPHANIE FONTAINE, A.C.E. EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS WILLIAM HORBERG, J. AMES DALE, JOE RAPPA, BRUCE TOLL, DON CHEADLE
 PRODUCED BY MARK GORDON, SIDNEY KIMMEL, JOE FRIES, JOSH McLAUGHLIN WRITTEN BY MICHAEL GENET PRODUCED BY MICHAEL GENET AND RICK FANNINGWA
 MARK GORDON COMPANY KASI LEMMONS FOCUS FEATURES

RT: 118 mins CERT: 15

To be released nationwide by Verve Pictures

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SYNOPSIS

Academy Award® nominee Don Cheadle portrays the one and only Ralph Waldo “Petey” Greene Jr. in TALK TO ME. Petey’s story is funny, dramatic, inspiring - and real.

In 1960’s Washington vibrant soul music and exploding social consciousness were combining to unique and powerful effect, providing the perfect backdrop for the colourful and charismatic Ralph "Petey" Greene (Cheadle) to fully express himself, sometimes to outrageous effect. With the support of his irrepressible and tempestuous girlfriend Vernell, the ex-con talks his way into an on-air radio gig. Whilst his biting humor and social commentary initially get him into trouble, the station’s program director, Dewey Hughes (Ejiofor) soon acknowledges Petey’s unique ability to talk to his people, and the pair forge an engaging friendship. Petey soon becomes an iconic radio personality, surpassing even the established popularity of his fellow disc jockeys and as his voice, humor and spirit surge across the airwaves, listeners tune in to hear not only incredible music but also a man speaking directly to them about race and power during this exciting yet turbulent period in American history. Through the years, Petey's "the truth just is" style - on and off-air - would redefine both Petey and Dewey, and empower each to become the man he would most like to be, in this funny and poignant picture.

A Focus Features and Sidney Kimmel Entertainment presentation of a Mark Gordon Company/Pelagius Films production. A Kasi Lemmons Film. Don Cheadle, Chiwetel Ejiofor. Talk to Me. Cedric The Entertainer, Taraji P. Henson, Mike Epps, Vondie Curtis Hall, and Martin Sheen. Music by Terence Blanchard. Costume Designer, Gersha Phillips. Edited by Terilyn A. Shropshire, A.C.E. Production Designer, Warren Alan Young. Director of Photography, Stéphane Fontaine, A.F.C. Executive Producers, William Horberg, J. Miles Dale, Joey Rappa, Bruce Toll, Don Cheadle. Produced by Mark Gordon, Sidney Kimmel, Joe Fries, Josh McLaughlin. Story by Michael Genet. Screenplay by Michael Genet and Rick Famuyiwa. Directed by Kasi Lemmons. A Focus Features Release.

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ABOUT RALPH WALDO “PETEY” GREENE JR.

*“I’ll tell it to the hot; I’ll tell it to the cold; I’ll tell it to the young; I’ll tell it to the old.
I don’t want no laughin’; I don’t want no cryin’, and most of all, no signifyin’.”*

Petey Greene

Charismatic. Hilarious. Raunchy. Controversial. Tormented. Passionate. Eloquent. Truthful. Real.

As radio DJ, television personality, and activist, Ralph Waldo “Petey” Greene Jr. (1931-1984) was a vital force for two decades in the black community of Washington, D.C. known as “Chocolate City” or “the other Washington.” Petey spoke out about social injustices and spoke up for racial pride during a period of unprecedented change in America.

Born and raised in Washington, D.C., his childhood at 23rd and L Streets NW was one of Depression era-poverty. He was brought up by his maternal grandmother, Maggie “A’nt Pig” Floyd, and attended Stevens Elementary School. But, as a teen, he started breaking the law and drinking and doing drugs. Arrests and reformatory time quickly followed. While still a teenager, he enlisted in the U.S. Army, and later served in the Korean War. Upon his return home, he began drinking heavily. In 1960, a conviction for armed robbery landed him in jail.

In Virginia’s Lorton Prison, Petey’s life began to change for the better. He honed his disc jockey skills in Lorton’s work program. His grandmother sent him records to play in prison, but died while he was still incarcerated. Petey was allowed to address his fellow prisoners over the P.A. system in morning and night “shifts” of 20 minutes apiece. He found that he was good at dj’ing, and sensed that this was something he could pursue upon his release - which he began to apply himself towards.

He did indeed manage to effect an earlier release; his 10-year sentence (or, “dime”) was commuted into an early parole (“nickel”) midway through, when he helped talk a fellow inmate down from a suicide threat atop a flagpole. There was some question about whether Petey had convinced the man to scale the flagpole, but in any case it was not the last time he would personally convince someone not to kill themselves. Once out of Lorton, he headed for a rededicated existence back in the Washington he knew as his home.

Dewey Hughes, the program director for radio station WOL-AM, took a chance on Petey. Dewey had first met Petey in Lorton as a fellow inmate of Dewey’s brother, and put Petey - who had already done a stand-up act at venues around the

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city - on the air. "Rapping with Petey Greene" became a lightning rod for the community. WOL reached metropolitan listeners not only in Washington, D.C. but also in Maryland and Virginia.

Dewey continued managing Petey for years before (in 1980) buying WOL, which then became the foundation for Radio One, Inc. (now the U.S.' seventh-largest radio broadcasting company, and the largest primarily for African-American and urban listeners).

Petey did not only advocate from the airwaves. Never to sit on the sidelines again after his prison time, Petey was a fully engaged and visible citizen, exhorting his community to think and to act for a "Cool City;" as in, getting proper job training (through the Washington Concentrated Employment Program) and education ("If you can't read, you can't do anything," he would say), and registering to vote.

Almost immediately upon his release from prison, he co-founded the volunteer-driven Efforts for Ex-Convicts, formed to provide shelter, counseling, and job support for D.C. ex-cons during the first few months of their release; for example, he would encourage those with convictions for stealing or shoplifting to channel that expertise into legitimate work as store detectives. Petey also addressed youth groups and school assemblies to discourage children and teens from starting down the path to incarceration. He also worked as a YMCA job counselor, and kept at his stand-up act as well.

With his "Ph.D. in poverty," he would encourage community attention be specifically paid to the needs of the poor and the old; he was not afraid to name names and provide addresses for his listeners to agitate for change.

Petey had grown up just a few blocks from the White House, and in March 1978 he finally got to visit his neighbors when he attended a dinner (for the President of Yugoslavia) as the guest of an invitee. While there, he took the opportunity to speak with President Jimmy Carter and - he claimed - steal a spoon. "From the jail house to the White House," he noted.

Concurrent with his radio career, television was another natural outlet for Petey. He co-hosted the local show "Where It's At," which addressed employment issues and opportunities. Subsequently, his public access program "Petey Greene's Washington" (also later the name of his radio show) aired in the city for years, providing an expanded forum for his community outreach, commentary, and humor. "Adjust the color of your television" was his intro to the program.

Among the thousands of listeners and/or viewers whom he made an impact on were future radio and television personalities. One of them was a Washington, D.C. disc jockey named Howard Stern. The latter - as ever - caused a stir with his guest appearances on Petey's television show. In one (with longtime colleague Robin Quivers in the studio

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audience), Howard told Petey, "I've learned more from your show – I listen to your show, and I go on and use your material." Petey mused, "They might not like us, but they don't change the dial."

In paving the way for other DJs, some might say that Petey was an original "shock jock," but his own history and commitment to his community combined to make him more of a trailblazer in "talk radio."

Petey won two local Emmy Awards in the 1970s, and "Petey Greene's Washington" was later broadcast nationally by the then-newly launched cable channel Black Entertainment Television (BET).

In his later years, Petey turned to religion more than he had prior, and was finally able to quit drinking. He died of cancer in January 1984. Scores of D.C. residents - at least 10,000, and some estimates were double that amount - paid their respects in below-freezing temperatures later that month at a memorial service, which was the largest gathering for a non-government official in D.C. history.

The nonprofit United Planning Organization (formed to provide human services to the people of D.C.), where Petey worked as an employee and community advocate/consultant beginning in the late 1960s, later named its Congress Heights office (in southeastern D.C.) the Ralph Waldo "Petey" Greene Community Service Center. The Center still stands today, at 2907 Martin Luther King, Jr. Avenue SE.

Petey's life story, as he told it to Lurma Rackley in the early 1980s, was published in 2003. It is entitled "Laugh If You Like, Ain't a Damn Thing Funny."

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ABOUT THE PRODUCTION

When, over 15 years after Ralph Waldo “Petey” Greene had died, Pelagius Films producer Joe Fries heard Petey’s story from his friend Dewey Hughes, who was Petey’s longtime creative partner, Fries “saw it as a dream project.” Producer Mark Gordon agreed, and took the project out as a pitch with Fries. The idea did not sell, but the project moved forward as a movie just the same.

For, as Fries explains, “I felt so passionately about this story that I contacted screenwriter Michael Genet, who is Dewey Hughes’ son, with no guarantee of a home for the project.”

Genet remembers, “Joe Fries and [executive producer] Joey Rappa called and told me they wanted to do a movie about Petey and Dewey. As Joe started talking through the story with me, it all came rushing back like a raging river because I had lived it; my father and his best friend were two powerful brothers and the talk of our town, D.C.

“I got together with Dewey and we relived his days with Petey; all the ups and downs, and trials and triumphs.”

A few years later, the script struck a chord with producer Josh McLaughlin, who had since joined the Mark Gordon Company. He notes, “Joe Fries is from D.C., and so am I. In the late ‘60s and early ‘70s, when Petey Greene had hit his stride, that city was one of the coolest places in the world to be. Hearing Petey’s name, I remembered that there was a community center office dedicated to him.

“I found it was very difficult, though, to remember a non-‘blaxploitation’ movie about an urban city in the late ‘60s/early ‘70s. The three Sidney Poitier/Bill Cosby movies, beginning with *Uptown Saturday Night*, did depict that period, and of course there was that great documentary/concert film *Wattstax*. There were also several civil rights pictures, but those were Southern-oriented. Those are all good films, but the ‘black is beautiful’ era in a world of change has largely gone unexplored. Petey’s story, about speaking your mind, was a window into there.”

Genet remarks, “When I was writing the script, I knew I had to stay true to the voices of these two men. Not to have done so would have been to dishonor them both. There’s cool that you either have or you don’t, and Dewey had it. The same work ethic he instilled in Petey, he instilled in me; paying one’s dues not only in this business but in life.

“And Petey, well, Petey was a sharp dresser and his Afro was always perfect, with never a strand out of place. But he was stone cold street, with a voice to match. Whenever he opened his mouth and spoke, I would jump. As funny as he was,

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even as a boy I could hear the pain in his voice. Listening to him on the radio, I didn't always understand what he was speaking about. But I couldn't change that dial; he had me, and an entire city, mesmerized and hypnotized."

At the core of the film is the real-life relationship between Petey Greene and Dewey Hughes. McLaughlin says, "Their friendship is the foundation of TALK TO ME. What eventually caused a rift between these two, who were like brothers during turbulent times for this country, is that Dewey assumed Petey wanted what he wanted for him."

Genet reflects, "What I found in telling their story was that there is a love shared between black men that we almost never hear tell of. You won't find it defined in any text books or dictionaries, yet it exists." McLaughlin adds, "The film is a drama, but with a lot of humor, and that's also their relationship; with two completely different people relating, you're going to have conflict but you're also going to find humor." Gordon comments, "If you elicit humor from the characters, which have been established as real human beings, then you can find the truth in the moments between them. It's one reason I fell in love with this story."

Screenwriter Rick Famuyiwa did as well, albeit initially from a different perspective. He reports, "What drew me in first was Petey. He was an iconoclast, and a torchbearer of the oral tradition that is an integral part of African-American culture. To me, he represented a bridge between the orators of the civil rights movement and the orators of today, hip-hop musicians. Like a rapper, he was the voice of people who didn't have a say. What *he* had to say wasn't always what people wanted to hear, both inside the community and out, but it represented a truth he felt had to be expressed. I felt he could be contemporary and relatable to today's hip-hop-reared generation.

"If Petey was the spark that piqued my interest, then Dewey was the fire that kept me warm. He could see the best in Petey and, in a larger sense, the best in all of us. Each of these men needed what the other had in order to succeed, and I wanted to focus not only on that part of their relationship but also on how they embodied an ongoing conversation in the African-American community – about what is considered 'keeping it real.' Dewey, who came from the same streets and neighborhoods as Petey did, was as real as Petey, but chose to fight inside the system, so that artists like Petey could find success in the mainstream."

With Famuyiwa working on the script, TALK TO ME went back into active development at the Mark Gordon Company. Another notable independent film producer, Sidney Kimmel, also saw the project's potential. "To me," he says, "Petey's story was moving and original." Sidney Kimmel Entertainment came on board to join the Mark Gordon Company and Pelagius Films in backing the film's development through studio turnaround as well as a key casting issue.



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One actor who remained interested through the years of development was Don Cheadle, who would ultimately be an executive producer on the film in addition to starring in it. Cheadle had sparked to the project because, he explains, “You sweat it out for the ones that are close to your heart. This just seemed to me to be an honest depiction of a man who was a real live wire and was definitely his own person. Petey wasn’t afraid to court controversy, or to be on the front lines of the issues; civil rights, free speech, national government, local government, riots...His story is relevant today because very few people are willing to stand up and point out what, in my estimation, are clear inadequacies. Our government is not necessarily behaving in a way that’s for most of the people. We just don’t have someone who stood out the way Petey did on WOL and on television.

“TALK TO ME went through many, many different permutations. With our budget, nobody was going to get rich; everyone did this movie because they loved the story and wanted to be part of telling it. I first heard about it through a friend of mine, [the late filmmaker] Ted Demme. Finally, Kasi Lemmons got the material, and spent so much time with it so that the vision - her vision - became really clear.”

Kasi Lemmons says, “You don’t have to be a Washingtonian, or black, to appreciate someone who was this dynamic. Here was a man who was the voice of his community, and who said things so many of us would like to say. Petey wasn’t always right, but he meant what he said. What I also saw was the potential for this biopic to evolve into something enormously entertaining and accessible.

“Petey was a real person, but as a filmmaker coming to him fresh I didn’t want to feel constrained by what-happened-when. What I did want was to stay true to the emotional authenticity of the characters.”

Lemmons met with Dewey Hughes, who signed on as consultant to the now-coalescing project, which Focus Features, the final piece of the production puzzle, joined.

McLaughlin notes. “Dewey was a resource we constantly called upon. We would go to him and ask, ‘What happened then? What was it like?’ He was there, and he would tell us all about it.”

Lemmons remembers, “The material began to – no pun intended – talk to me, and really loudly, too. I fell in love with the story and the characters, especially the contrast between these two friends. As a story about friendship, it’s universal. Petey and Dewey, like many men, shy away from revealing their vulnerabilities. It didn’t mean that they weren’t close; it meant that they had trouble expressing themselves to each other. Vernell was also very special to me, because she embodies strong women from our history that we don’t see depicted often enough.”



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McLaughlin notes that, during script meetings, Kasi “didn’t talk about why it was an important movie to do; she wanted to talk about what it was going to feel like – hip and relevant. We all recommended that TALK TO ME needed to be a really cool place to spend a couple of hours, and Kasi already had gotten that. “It just seemed like the logical next step; she finally said, ‘Would you sit down with me about it, as a director?’ And it was like, let’s go!”

Gordon comments, “The job of a producer is to make sure that everyone on a picture is making the same movie. With Kasi, we knew that would be the case.”

Lemmons reflects, “In seeking to direct TALK TO ME, I was thinking about how to realize that time period with all the color and the activism. Right now, we are living in an age where people are afraid to speak for fear of being labeled unpatriotic, anti-American, racist, sexist, whatever...It was bracing to be going back to a place where someone like Petey said what people were feeling and gave them a voice.

“I wanted to make it as an uplifting but funky and unconventional film. If I made it into a slick comedy, that would be doing Petey and the material a disservice. It needed to be gritty, musical, and authentic to the period.”

Lemmons adds, “Petey Greene is a very different kind of role for Don Cheadle, and he’s wonderful as Petey.”

Cheadle points out, “When making a movie about a real character, and I’ve made several, I always refer to the script. It’s your Bible. Yes, you do your research and try to understand who the person you’re playing is. But you’re trying to find the truth in the story that you’re trying to tell.

“Every script has to tell its story in 110-116 pages. The TALK TO ME script is well-constructed and depicts Petey in the totality of who he was; not necessarily a heroic figure, or a tragic one, but as a man who had a lot of failings and a lot of successes and who didn’t soft-pedal anything. I don’t believe he had a lot of ‘woulda, coulda, shoulda.’ He wasn’t shy, and he had his demons to deal with, too. So this is not ‘The Petey Greene Story.’”

The actor adds, “Dewey Hughes realized that Petey was raw talent, a ‘voice of the people.’ Dewey had gone through a lot of manicuring to prepare for the position he had gotten to. He appreciated that Petey could get away with saying things and doing things that Dewey might have felt strongly about, but that his position dictated he be more politic about.



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“When I met with Dewey Hughes, he was very honest about how Petey didn’t necessarily want what he wanted. He said, ‘I was trying to do things for Petey that he wasn’t necessarily comfortable with, or interested in exploring.’”

At his own expense, Chiwetel Ejiofor traveled to Los Angeles from the U.K. to meet about playing Dewey Hughes and to read on film with Don Cheadle. “They were magic together,” remembers Lemmons. “It was instantly apparent that they had great chemistry. Everyone saw what our movie could now be, exploring the bond between these two men, with these two actors.”

Ejiofor comments, “The script read as dramatic and comedic, and quite detailed about the friendship and the development of these two characters. Then there were these extraordinary scenes interweaving historical events. So I very much wanted to collaborate with Don and Kasi and make this movie.”

Taraji P. Henson also had a number of reasons for wanting to be part of TALK TO ME. “I’m from Washington D.C., and the ‘60s was *the* time to be alive. So this was a chance for me to relive the period in the city without having being there,” she notes. “Aside from my hometown, I’m a huge fan of Kasi and Don’s work. It was a chance to work with the best. Vernell jumped off the page for me; some people might look at her and think she’s a bit much, but this woman who is true to who she really is and who is comfortable in her skin. And that’s a great place to be.”

“Whatever Petey’s feeling, whatever he’s thinking, he’ll say it. ‘P.C.’ for him is ‘Petey Correct.’ She knows he can be self-destructive, so it takes a woman like Vernell to keep Petey on his game; she’s his backbone, and his pep team. She’s vested in him, so it *has* to work!”

Cheadle laughs, “They’re bananas together. But Vernell is there for her man, come hell or high water. So it’s grounding for them both, too.”

Mike Epps signed on to play Milo, Dewey’s estranged brother and Petey’s fellow prison inmate. Epps says, “Dewey is ashamed of his brother’s situation. Milo would prefer Dewey to love him unconditionally, no matter what situation he’s in; he doesn’t have the opportunities that Dewey does. What he does have is love and strength for Dewey.”

Casting for Petey’s colleagues at WOL was equally important because, as Cheadle notes, “The station was ahead of its time, and was a precursor to a lot of the modern stations we have today. There are several characters in there, bouncing off of each other.”



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Genet, who himself worked and was on-air at the station years later, remembers, “As a boy, whenever I visited the station, there was always a frenetic energy that was present, which I loved.”

To play the flamboyant old-school deejay Nighthawk (“takin’ you into the night grooves on the big O-L”), the project needed an actor who could credibly wear his coat as a cape; have wine and candles in the studio; have two Dalmatians as regular companions; and speak in a deep, sensuous voice that would lead female listeners to send him ladies’ wear along with their photos. Lemmons laughs, “Well, that could *only* be Cedric The Entertainer, right? He had the presence and the perfect tonal quality we needed.”

Cedric reveals, “This character isn’t like the usual comical ones I play. As a former late-night college deejay, I can easily identify with Nighthawk. When you’re in a smaller station and have a uniquely smooth voice, you’ll use it to beguile all the women. Nighthawk has a swagger and a certain degree of braggadocio.

“Nighthawk was the DJ name of a man named Bob Terry. I didn’t listen to tapes of him because I wanted to define the character myself, and Kasi agreed. So I applied myself to being Nighthawk the persona, not Bob the person.”

For Cedric, the characterization came together both from inside and out. He notes, “I tried a few different voices, and we went with smooth and slow. The costume department did a great job; I added the glasses with the big frames for his slightly more cosmopolitan look. If I had an idea, I would talk to Kasi about it. As a director, she knows what she wants out of her film, and out of the story she is trying to tell.

“Now, we all know Don Cheadle as an amazing actor in serious movies, but working with him on TALK TO ME, I found out that he’s also very witty, and fast!”

Vondie Curtis Hall was asked by Lemmons, who is his real-life wife, to read the script, and signed on to play WOL deejay Sunny Jim. He offers, “It’s something different for Kasi to bring her sensibility to; a period piece with a lot of testosterone. I thought it was an incredible script that showed the fascinating journey of a guy who got a second chance, and became inspirational. Those stories appeal to me as an actor.

“Dewey Hughes gave me the rundown on Sunny Jim Kelsey, ‘the man with the plan’ who came up through the ranks and later became the first black program manager at a major radio station. He was one of the biggest deejays in New York and then even more so in D.C. He was very conservative and religious, and in many ways felt that Petey was not a respectable person to be representing black people on the radio. But ultimately, Sunny Jim became one of Petey’s ardent fans and supporters, and a close friend.”



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As encouraged by Lemmons, Hall “listened to some tapes, and then tried to find my own way of playing Sunny Jim without doing an impersonation. His wardrobe did always have some ‘sunny’ (some yellow) in it. And, yes, he really did have a horn he used on-air, named Widget, which was probably a little much for the morning...”

“To be working as an actor again with this crowd was a pleasure. Kasi has a great eye and a clear knowledge of the script and every nuance and character motivation in it. On the set, she knows when she has it in a scene, and when she doesn’t have it; ‘No, try this,’ or ‘He doesn’t do that.’ She’ll talk to you about it until you can both come to a consensus. I think actors respond to that; she’s an actor’s director.”

Cheadle remarks, “I’ve made movies with directors who don’t know what they want. That was never the case with Kasi; she knew exactly what she wanted. Yet she was still able to be collaborative and flexible, and hear other ideas and perspectives.”

Henson clarifies, “Kasi’s thing is, as long as she can believe what you’re doing and it’s within the story and not taking away from the script, she’s totally open to it. If it’s not working, she’ll let you know about it.”

Cheadle adds, “TALK TO ME is so much about two men bonding and dealing with a power structure, and with who they are and who they are with each other. So it was interesting to have a woman directing Chiwetel and myself, because often she would have a perspective that we didn’t have.

“I loved acting with Chiwetel. I had met him a couple of years before, in Africa when we were filming *Hotel Rwanda*, because he’s a friend of [fellow *Hotel Rwanda* Academy Award® nominee] Sophie Okonedo’s; they had done *Dirty Pretty Things* together. Our scenes in TALK TO ME wouldn’t have worked as well if I didn’t dig the dude playing opposite me, and I’ve seen that happen. But Chiwetel is a great actor, and is going to go a long way in this business. Also, he does a much better American accent than I do a British one!”

Ejiofor had the luxury of speaking with Dewey Hughes to get firsthand information from the man he was to portray on-screen. The U.K. actor says, “I wanted to find out what the feeling was on the streets of Washington at the time, what with riots, protests, the Vietnam War... People got galvanized through different aspects of Washington’s social and political life. Petey and Dewey found themselves at the heart of what was happening in their city.”



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Epps had a different kind of direct insight to his role. He matter-of-factly states, “I know Milo ten times, a hundred times. I was incarcerated back when I was a teenager, so I know the feeling of being in jail; you feel the lowest you ever have.”

D.C. native Henson spoke to friends and relatives who well remembered Petey and his influence on the people of “Chocolate City”, a term he had helped to popularize in the early 1970s, and also watched documentaries. She reflects, “I learned things on this movie that I didn’t learn when I was in school; it was another history lesson. Those were heavy times; we needed someone to speak up and say the things that people on the street were saying but could only hear amongst themselves. Petey put it out there for everyone to hear. It was ‘P-Town,’ meaning, ‘Petey’s Town.’”

“When I invited my friend and my cousin to the set and they heard Don as Petey, the reaction was, ‘He sounds just like him.’”

Cheadle says, “I did have audio clips, speeches and recordings, of Petey to study. I tried to pick up his vocal patterns. But, you know, Petey’s speaking voice is very unique; at best, I’ve approximated it. Although sometimes I myself would be speaking about issues, and Petey’s voice would start coming through.”

Fries notes, “The late ‘60s and ‘70s were a time when activists agitated for change. Dewey chose to work quietly for change within the system, while Petey challenged the system as loudly and as often as he could.”

Ejiofor muses, “Dewey appears to be a complete conformist. Yet, when he becomes program director, his principal objective is to promote black culture and the aspirations, hopes, and ideals of black people. Petey recognizes that Dewey is doing all this, which is why they become such close friends. Although they have very different methods, their shared goal is to remove the invisibility blanket from the black working class.”

Cheadle adds, “If Petey Greene were around today, he would have years and years of material to talk about. The conditions are perfect for him right now.”

Martin Sheen was approached to play WOL station owner E.G. Sonderling. The actor notes, “I find most of talk radio today boring, but I could listen to Petey Greene all day. I really liked the script, which I saw as a very human story. When I spoke with Kasi, I said, ‘I’m particularly impressed with the sequences following Reverend King’s assassination,’ because I remembered that time so very well, and I told her a personal story about being in Reverend King’s presence.”



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McLaughlin says, “Having Martin Sheen in TALK TO ME is a dream come true. He was in the civil-rights trenches in that time period.”

Sheen states, “Those were extraordinary times – and painful ones. In five short years, we lost three leaders; John Kennedy, Martin Luther King Jr., and Bobby Kennedy. Reverend King was the pinnacle, and we’re not going to see that again in my lifetime, unfortunately.”

“I saw Sonderling as corporate, but with a soul. He’s a good man, but he’s also practical. He’s conscious about employing black people during this time, and he loves the music. Although his first, and second, impression of Petey isn’t very good, Sonderling gives him and Dewey trust, and then gets out of their way.”

Lemmons notes, “Martin found the perfect balance of conservative and compassionate that we needed for Sonderling.”

Of working with Kasi Lemmons, Martin Sheen says, “the thing that is so impressive about her is her confidence. I directed a feature film once in my life, and I remember it as the most strenuous of times. But she’s laid-back yet is also 100% focused and supportive. It doesn’t matter where an idea comes from – props department, camera operator, actors; if it works, it works.”

The entire crew of TALK TO ME concentrated on capturing an era, though not always one that was documented in the history books. Lemmons says, “A lot of the story takes place in parts of Washington that are not monument-heavy, so we chose locations that had a community feel.”

“[Cinematographer] Stéphane Fontaine and I wanted a lush look for the ‘70s sequences. In general, though, we all watched a great deal of documentary footage and tried to rise to the challenge of matching it.”

Production designer Warren Alan Young felt the full weight of the past in his efforts to recreate Washington, where he resides part-time, from the late 1960s through to the early 1980s. He offers, “The idea was to recreate what existed as best as we possibly could, so that Kasi could tell this story. A lot of time and energy went into researching exactly what things looked like – building façades, the front of the newspapers, the label on a 7-Up can...Our graphic artists had to make a lot of signage, because things we found are 30-40 years old and we needed things to look fresh in the scenes in the movie. We hope audience members who were will look at the film and say, ‘Yes, that was it.’

“Washington is one of the most heavily documented cities on the planet, particularly during the ‘60s and ‘70s. Yet there are very few images from there, or anywhere in the Unites States, of black people outside of protests and crime, and in day-to-



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day life. I did find one man, on the Internet, who was uploading his family snapshots dating back to the 1950s, so that was helpful.”

Young notes, “I wanted to ‘establish a color palette,’ but apply the colors that we know existed in the time periods we’re depicting. We also had to create colors that were complementary to all of our actors, so we did a number of camera tests with colors to find what would work where and with whom. Overall, we were able to cultivate a very warm feel with greens, oranges, reds, and yellows; the only time we see blue is in Dewey’s apartment, a sort of federal blue, given that he’s a formal guy.

“My department worked very closely with the costume department on TALK TO ME; they had a copy of the color schemes for each set so they knew what they were walking into, or onto. We had to make some changes along the way; a lot of people tend to think of style in terms of decade-long increments, but we learned it’s a lot faster than that. From the mid-1960s to the ‘80s, it was about every three years. You may have been ‘in’ with your hairstyle in ‘66, but by ‘69 or ‘70 you had to move on.”

Costume designer Gersha Phillips took her cues not only from Young’s color coordinating, but also from Lemmons’ concepts of Dewey as “button-down and pressed” and Petey as “out there.” Phillips searched through vintage magazines, books, and photographs for inspiration. Given music’s importance to the era, she also looked at iconic recording artists’ styles.

Phillips reveals, “I was truly excited to be exploring this particular period, where people became empowered and tried to effect change, and have a little more fun than on the average movie. Men’s fashion was fabulous and exciting in the late 1960s and into the early ‘70s. I wish men would dress more like that now! Just looking at the things that people actually wore – wow. There was so much experimentation with different fabrics and colors. To our eyes now, these outfits may look strange, but they’re what actually were worn.”

“We found an article in Esquire that talked about the ‘male plumage,’ as in peacock. It was all about dressing to be seen, combining accessories from head to toe so that everything was on and looking great. Petey definitely was a peacock, a dresser; he had a unique way of putting colors and combinations together. From the photos we had, you can tell that clothing was important to him. Kasi encouraged me to go as far as I needed to go with costumes for Don. The red velvet suit, which took four different tries, and the mesh underwear were particular favorites.”



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Don Cheadle sports over three dozen costume changes in *Talk to Me*, all designed by Phillips and her team to echo Petey's idiosyncratic approach to his life. Cheadle laughs, "All of those accoutrements, the wig, moustache, mutton chops, clothes that were tight as hell, helped me to find the character. Once I looked in the mirror, I wasn't looking at myself; I saw Petey."

"Don was my hero," states Phillips. "He allowed me to do what I needed to, and it was a joy to work with him. He wears the clothes amazingly well; he would walk right into them and become Petey. The day he was supposed to wear this jumpsuit, he said, 'Gersha, I can't...' But he did, and he strutted it!"

Cheadle admits, "It was fun to dress up and revisit those times. Now, you don't want to detract from the story, but I feel that Gersha did a great job in taking us back into that period in a way that was both believable and strong. When you looked around the set and saw the world the crew had re-created, with everyone costumed, you were like, 'Oh, okay, I know where I am.'"

Phillips adds, "There's a line that you don't want to cross. But when you're looking at one outfit alone, that's different from when it's in a room of people similarly dressed. So then it's not that far-out."

On the opposite end of the spectrum, Phillips muses that Chiwetel Ejiofor, as Dewey, "wears one suit throughout a lot of the movie. It's always crisp and pressed. Petey and Dewey are like night and day. But as their friendship progresses, you see a little bit of Petey influence Dewey."



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“With Vernell, it was ‘anything goes.’ The outfits she wears are risqué, and sometimes almost lingerie. It was hard to find vintage fabrics, so we got some vintage dresses and re-cut them, made them shorter and opened the necklines more. For the scenes between her and Petey, we had to balance between, rather than completely match, them; one simmers down a little as the other pops out, or the reverse. For example, when he’s in the red velvet suit, we put red shoes on her and gave her a red purse. Every time, Taraji was a blast to work with and to dress.”

Henson says, “It was lovely. I enjoyed all the different costumes, hair, nails, and lashes I got to wear. Vernell dresses over-the-top, and with lots of colors, which works for me. Although, with the middle cut out of so many of the clothes I was wearing, I couldn’t eat dessert at lunch...”

The hair department, headed by Etheline Joseph and Allison Mondesir, worked closely with Phillips’ staff and had its own trailer. There was an extensive collection of wigs, including Afros and other types of hairpieces. Any wig that was used during a shooting day had to be cleaned at the end of the day and readied for the next day’s shoot. This required considerable effort, given the number of extras who were assembled for some sequences.

Meeting another challenge, the filmmakers secured permission from the estate of Johnny Carson to use footage from *The Tonight Show starring Johnny Carson*. Although Petey ultimately did not appear with the legendary host on his iconic NBC program, in TALK TO ME Don Cheadle as Petey *does*, dramatizing a dream that was cherished by Dewey, if not Petey.

Executive producer J. Miles Dale clarifies, “We reverse-engineer Don, as Petey, into an existing show. In the script, Johnny Carson is Dewey’s hero. So that appealed to the Carson estate; they also got the message of the script, and we got a telecast to use.”

Young adds, “Working from video footage and photos, we built a re-creation, with the curtain, the chair, the desk, the bandstand, of the last set that Carson had in New York City before heading off to the West Coast.”

Aside from New York, the film’s seven-week shoot also took the production to such notable locations as Ben’s Chili Bowl (in Washington’s “Black Broadway” district) and the Washington Monument. Two full days were needed to film a sequence of the rioting that took place in Washington following the assassination of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. on April 4th, 1968. In what became a defining moment in his broadcasting career, Petey went on the air that night – and stayed on.



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Michael Genet remembers, “I was at my grandmother’s house having dinner when the news flashed across the TV. It was already a warm night, but when the news broke, you instantly felt the temperature of the city raise a hundredfold. That night, my father and Petey did a marathon broadcast to help squash the riots and convince people to go home.”

Vondie Curtis Hall reflects, “Petey was the right man to calm the rioting crowds of D.C. that night, because people knew he was one of them. He wasn’t trying to tell them how to live, or preach to them. He was saying, ‘This ain’t it, this ain’t the way to go tonight, and I don’t think Dr. King would have wanted you to do this. This is our community, and if you burn it down, we’re burning down our own stuff.’”

This had long been Petey’s counsel to his community, especially the young. Even before Dr. King was assassinated, he had said, “If we burn things down, ain’t nobody going to get hurt but us.”

Genet offers, “Although a lot of property and businesses were destroyed, Dewey and Petey’s efforts at WOL saved more shops – and lives. Martial law was declared the next day, and LBJ sent in troops full of white soldiers.”

Sheen remembers, “D.C. looked like an armed camp after Reverend King’s murder, and it could have gotten worse; who knows what would have happened if Petey hadn’t gotten on the air and calmed people? He made a huge contribution.”

Genet states, “Petey made us feel, and he made us think – which, by definition, makes him one of the true artists of his time. He embodied a power in radio that we haven’t seen since and aren’t likely to see again.”



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MUSIC OF AN ERA

Great music is heard throughout TALK TO ME, and in one instance was re-created on-camera; hundreds of extras gathered on a large field at the University of Toronto to participate in the filming of a free James Brown concert introduced by Petey. Herbert L. Rawlings, Jr., who has long performed as the late great singer in tribute and revue shows, portrays him on-screen in Talk to Me, in a sequence set just after the assassination of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Rawlings proudly recalls, “Mr. Brown saw me perform once, in 1988, in Atlanta. He told me, ‘Did great. Did great.’ He was a legend. I loved him.”

As the cameras rolled, Rawlings wowed cast and crew alike as he leapt and spun around the stage, and growled the Godfather of Soul’s “Say It Loud – I’m Black and I’m Proud.” He offers, “James Brown’s stamina was amazing, so I always have to be in shape. Filming these scenes, I felt like I was reliving 1968. It was an honor.”

Don Cheadle adds, “That all felt so vibrant and alive. Herbert was amazing, doing jump-kick splits over the mike. There was a pregnant woman there, and she fainted; after receiving medical aid and food and water, she came back to the set, because she was having so much fun at the concert!”

Also having fun were local college students, who began taking photos; filming had to be stopped at least once when a 2006 cell phone got on-camera during the 1968 recreation. “Students came out of their dorms all through the night to party and dance – even though they were in the middle of their final exams,” remembers J. Miles Dale. “Since they weren’t in period wardrobe, we had to ask them to tuck themselves into the crowd of extras.”

To keep the crowd’s spirits up during filming breaks and delays, Cheadle performed his own original stand-up routines – drawing inspiration from not only the man he was portraying (who had performed stand-up comedy) but also Richard Pryor (who had died a few months prior to filming).

Michael Genet says, “The concert, along with Petey’s words on-air, played a major part in getting the people to set aside their rage – for the time being, at least.”

In addition to following Petey and Dewey’s lives and times, TALK TO ME tracks the changing currents of the country’s music. “We go from Motown to Booker T. and the MGs, and Rufus Thomas, to name but a few,” explains Josh McLaughlin.



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"It's a shift that's very important to the movie. The music is transitioning into the same vibe that the clothes and the inner city itself are moving into, which is more of an edgier, cooler scene."

Cheadle marvels, "The music from that era was so rich and lush in its orchestration and experimentation. These songs come on, and you remember where you were when you first heard them."

Gersha Phillips says, "Kasi Lemmons made discs for us with the songs she wanted. I played them at our costume fittings, and everybody would get into it and be grooving. That created the right environment. A lot of the members of my team hadn't necessarily heard this great music before, so it was a great introduction for them. I think TALK TO ME will educate a lot of people about a lot of different things."

Lemmons states, "Music is a very important character in the film. While writing, I listened to Sly & The Family Stone, Marvin Gaye, and the great Motown artists."

"It was very important to my process, and I came to realize that the script was musical. It had a rhythm and a beat, and Petey has a definite movement all his own. His message was, always to be true to yourself and keep it real."

Cheadle reflects, "Combining the fashions, the music, and the way people talked about important things then, I hope TALK TO ME will create a resurgence for that era – one comparable to what happened when we did *Boogie Nights*. I believe people are going to say, 'I want some of that. I want back in there.'"

"In my opinion, the conditions are perfect for a Petey Greene right now. Petey told it like he saw it, and at a time where that was so vital. I think it still is in this country. The youth of today should stand up; they're not conditioned to think it's the natural way to respond, as they were during the time period TALK TO ME depicts. But, it is the time. It is the time."



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CAST BIOGRAPHIES

DON CHEADLE (Petey Greene)

Don Cheadle was nominated for the Academy Award as Best Actor for his performance as real-life Rwandan hero Paul Rusesabagina in Terry George's award-winning *Hotel Rwanda*. He also earned Golden Globe, Critics' Choice, NAACP Image, and Screen Actors Guild Award nominations for the portrayal.

He next starred in and produced Paul Haggis' independent feature *Crash*, which won three Academy Awards, including Best Picture, among a host of honors. Earlier this year, he received the Male Star of the Year award at NATO's ShoWest convention.

In 1995, Mr. Cheadle was named Best Supporting Actor by the Los Angeles Film Critics Association, for his breakout film performance opposite Denzel Washington in Carl Franklin's *Devil in a Blue Dress*. The latter also earned him his first NAACP Image Award nomination; his subsequent ones have included nods for his portrayals in John Singleton's *Rosewood* and Warren Beatty's *Bulworth*.

He has collaborated multiple times with directors Steven Soderbergh and Brett Ratner; for the former, he starred in the multi-Academy Award-winning *Traffic*, the acclaimed *Out of Sight*, and the trio of *Ocean's* movies (numbering *Eleven*, *Twelve*, and *Thirteen*). For the latter, he starred in *After the Sunset*, *Rush Hour 2*, and *The Family Man*.

Among Mr. Cheadle's other features are Mike Binder's *Reign over Me*; Niels Mueller's *The Assassination of Richard Nixon*; Jordan Melamed's *Manic*; Dominic Sena's *Swordfish*; Allison Anders' *Things Behind the Sun* (for which he earned both Emmy and Independent Spirit Award nominations); Brian De Palma's *Mission to Mars*; Paul Thomas Anderson's *Boogie Nights*; Mick Jackson's *Volcano*; Robert Townsend's *The Meteor Man*; Dennis Hopper's *Colors*; and John Irvin's *Hamburger Hill*.

The Kansas City native received his Bachelor's Degree in Fine Arts from the prestigious Cal Arts in Valencia, California. While attending Cal Arts, he auditioned for film and television roles, and landed a recurring role on the hit syndicated series *Fame*. His subsequent television series credits included a recurring role on *The Fresh Prince of Bel-Air* and a two-year stint on *Picket Fences*.

Mr. Cheadle has starred in several notable telefilms. These include Eriq La Salle's *Rebound: The Legend of Earl "The Goat" Manigault*; Joseph Sargent's *A Lesson Before Dying* (for which he earned an Emmy Award nomination); Stephen

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Frears' live broadcast of *Fail Safe*; and Rob Cohen's *The Rat Pack*. For the latter, in which he portrayed legendary entertainer Sammy Davis, Jr., Mr. Cheadle won a Golden Globe Award and was an Emmy Award nominee.

His stage work includes originating the role of Booth in Suzan-Lori Parks' Pulitzer Prize-winning play *Top Dog/Underdog* at New York's Public Theater under the direction of George C. Wolfe. His other stage credits include *Leon, Lena and Lenz*, at the Guthrie Theater in Minneapolis; *The Grapes of Wrath* and *Liquid Skin*, at the Mixed Blood Theater in Minneapolis; *Cymbeline*, at The New York Shakespeare Festival; *'Tis a Pity She's a Whore*, at Chicago's Goodman Theater; and *Blood Knot*, at Hollywood's Complex Theater. Mr. Cheadle has also directed West Coast stage productions of *Groomed*, *Cincinnati Man*, *The Trip*, and *Three, True, One*, among other plays.

Mr. Cheadle is also a writer, singer and musician. He was nominated for a Grammy Award in 2004 for Best Spoken Word Album, for his narration/dramatization of the Walter Mosley novel [Fear Itself](#).

With human rights activist John Prendergast, he has co-authored a new book, [Not on Our Watch](#), due out in May 2007. The nonfiction book contains the first-person accounts of extraordinary individuals among us who have mobilized others with an effective unified response to the atrocities in the Darfur region, and offers practical strategies for taking further action.

In an effort to further raise awareness about the latter, as producer, Mr. Cheadle is currently in post-production on a documentary about the Sudan.

CHIWETEL EJIOFOR (Dewey Hughes)

Chiwetel Ejiofor was recently a double Golden Globe Award nominee, for his performances in Julian Jarrold's *Kinky Boots* and the miniseries *Tsunami: The Aftermath* (directed by Bharat Nalluri), and a nominee for the BAFTA "Orange Rising Star" Award.

Born in the Forest Gate section of London to Nigerian parents, he started acting in school plays at the age of 13 and then earned a scholarship to the London Academy of Music & Dramatic Art. He made his feature film debut in Steven Spielberg's *Amistad*.

Mr. Ejiofor's performance in Stephen Frears' *Dirty Pretty Things* earned him Best Actor honors from the British Independent Film Awards, the San Diego Film Critics Society, and the Black Reel Awards, among other accolades.



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His other films include Alfonso Cuarón's *Children of Men*; Spike Lee's *Inside Man* and *She Hate Me*; Joss Whedon's *Serenity*; John Singleton's *Four Brothers* (which also starred Taraji P. Henson of *Talk to Me*); Woody Allen's *Melinda and Melinda*; and Richard Curtis' *Love Actually*.

Mr. Ejiofor will soon be seen in a dual role in Michael Almereyda's independent feature *Tonight at Noon*; and with Denzel Washington and Russell Crowe in Ridley Scott's highly anticipated *American Gangster*.

In addition to working in films, he has starred onstage in the U.K. His performance in Joe Penhall's play *Blue/Orange* (at the Royal National Theatre) earned him the London Evening Standard Award for Outstanding Newcomer, the London Critics Circle Theatre Awards' Jack Tinker Award for Most Promising Newcomer, and an Olivier Award nomination. Most recently, Mr. Ejiofor starred opposite Kristin Scott Thomas in the Royal Court Theater staging of Chekhov's *The Seagull* (adapted by Christopher Hampton).

CEDRIC THE ENTERTAINER ("Nighthawk" Bob Terry)

Cedric The Entertainer is well-known to audiences for his film and television work. His memorable work in the two *Barbershop* movies (directed by Tim Story and Kevin Rodney Sullivan, respectively) brought him NAACP Image and MTV Movie Award nominations, among other honors.

Through his production company A Bird & A Bear Entertainment, Cedric starred in and produced *Johnson Family Vacation* (directed by Christopher Erskin); and produced and starred in *Code Name: The Cleaner* (directed by Les Mayfield).

His stand-up comedy was showcased in Spike Lee's documentary feature *The Original Kings of Comedy*, as well as in his recent television special *Cedric: Taking You Higher* (which he also executive-produced).

Cedric's other movies include Joel and Ethan Coen's *Intolerable Cruelty*; John Schultz' *The Honeymooners* (which he also executive-produced); Brad Silberling's *Lemony Snicket's 'A Series of Unfortunate Events'*; F. Gary Gray's *Be Cool*; Raja Gosnell's *Big Momma's House*; and Doug McHenry's *Kingdom Come*.

Additionally, he has contributed voiceover performances to such features as *Charlotte's Web* (directed by Gary Winick); *Dr. Dolittle 2* (directed by Steve Carr); *Madagascar* (directed by Eric Darnell and Tom McGrath); and *Ice Age* (directed by Chris Wedge and Carlos Saldanha).



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Cedric is a five-time NAACP Image Award winner, including for his series-regular roles on *The Steve Harvey Show* and (the animated) *The Proud Family*. His other television credits include the talent showcase *Cedric the Entertainer Presents*, which he also executive-produced.

TARAJI P. HENSON (Vernell Watson)

For her performance in Craig Brewer's *Hustle & Flow*, Taraji P. Henson was named Best Supporting Actress by the Black Movie and Black Reel Awards, and Best Actress by the BET Awards; and also earned a double MTV Movie Award and NAACP Image Award nominations. She made her singing debut in the film; was featured on the original motion picture soundtrack; and performed the song "It's Hard Out Here for a Pimp" at the Academy Awards, where it won the Oscar for Best Original Song.

Ms. Henson's breakout screen role was in John Singleton's *Baby Boy*, and she reteamed with the director on the hit *Four Brothers* (which also starred Chiwetel Ejiofor of *Talk to Me*). She was most recently seen in Joe Carnahan's *Smokin' Aces* (starring as part of the ensemble cast) and Sanaa Hamri's *Something New* (also for Focus Features, and which also starred Mike Epps of *Talk to Me*).

She starred for three years on the dramatic television series *The Division*. Her telefilm credits include Anthony Shaw's *Murder, She Wrote: The Last Free Man* (with Angela Lansbury and Phylicia Rashad); Jeffrey Byrd's *Book of Love*; and Christopher Leitch's *Satan's School for Girls*. She has made guest appearances on such shows as *ER*, *CSI*, *One on One*, and *House*; and starred opposite Common in his music video "Justified."

Born and raised in Washington, D.C., Ms. Henson is a graduate of Howard University. She is currently filming David Fincher's long-awaited *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button*, with Brad Pitt and Cate Blanchett.

MIKE EPPS (Milo Hughes)

Mike Epps has, in the past seven years, become an audience and industry favorite among comic actors. The Indiana native has steadily climbed the stand-up comedy ranks, performing in sold-out theaters and clubs around the country. His 1995 appearances on Def Comedy Jam and the national tour of the same name brought him a large following. His show-stealing performance at the 1999 Laffapalooza festival in Atlanta occasioned a move to Los Angeles, where a successful appearance at L.A.'s Comedy Store caught the attention of Ice Cube. This in turn led to Mr. Epps being cast opposite the latter in Steve Carr's *Next Friday*, which more than doubled the gross of its predecessor film *Friday*. The duo soon reunited for two more movies, Kevin Bray's *All About the Benjamins* and Marcus Raboy's sequel *Friday After Next*. Mr. Epps also reteamed with director Steve Carr, providing a voiceover for *Dr. Dolittle 2*.



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His additional feature credits include another sequel that outperformed its predecessor, Alexander Witt's *Resident Evil: Apocalypse*; Jesse Dylan's *How High*; Antoine Fuqua's *Bait*; Malcolm D. Lee's *Roll Bounce*; Jonathan Lynn's *The Fighting Temptations*; John Schultz' *The Honeyymooners*; Kevin Rodney Sullivan's hit *Guess Who*; Zak Penn's upcoming *The Grand*; and, also for Focus Features, Sanaa Hamri's *Something New* (which also starred Taraji P. Henson of *Talk to Me*). Mr. Epps will next be seen in Russell Mulcahy's *Resident Evil: Extinction* (reprising his role from the earlier movie).

He recently hosted and performs on the new season of *Russell Simmons' Def Comedy Jam* as well as headlining his own stand-up comedy special, *Mike Epps: Inappropriate Behavior*.

VONDIE CURTIS HALL (Sunny Jim Kelsey)

Actor/director/screenwriter Vondie Curtis Hall has had success in both film and television, and on both sides of the camera. His most recent feature as writer/director was *Waist Deep*, which was named one of the year's Ten Best films by author/columnist Stephen King. The Rogue Pictures release starred Tyrese Gibson, Meagan Good, Larenz Tate, and The Game.

Mr. Hall also directed *Redemption: The Stan Tookie Williams Story*, which played at the Sundance Film Festival and then aired on the FX cable network. Mr. Hall won a Black Reel Award for his direction; among the biopic's other honors, lead actor Jamie Foxx received NAACP Image and Black Reel Awards as well as Golden Globe, Independent Spirit, and Screen Actors Guild Award nominations for his performance as the late activist Stan Tookie Williams.

His other feature credits as director include *Gridlock'd*, from his screenplay and starring Tim Roth and the late Tupac Shakur, for which he was honored by the National Board of Review with the Excellence in Filmmaking Award; and *Glitter*, starring Mariah Carey. For television, he has helmed episodes of such series as *Sleeper Cell*, *The Shield*, *Firefly*, and *ER*.

The latter program has featured Mr. Hall in a guest-starring arc, as well as in an earlier (separate) characterization that earned him an Emmy Award nomination. He was a series regular on *Chicago Hope* (for which the ensemble twice received Screen Actors Guild Award nominations) and *Cop Rock*. He also had guest-starring arcs on the acclaimed television series *Soul Food* and *I'll Fly Away*.

He began his career in music, training at Juilliard and then starring in several NYC stage shows. Among them were such Broadway musicals as *It's So Nice To Be Civilized*; *Lena Horne: The Lady and Her Music*; *Stardust*; and the original production of *Dreamgirls*.



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Mr. Hall next segued into films, with roles in such movies as John Landis' *Coming to America*; Jim Jarmusch's *Mystery Train*; Ridley Scott's *Black Rain*; Renny Harlin's *Die Hard 2*; John Sayles' *Passion Fish* (opposite Alfre Woodard); Joel Schumacher's *Falling Down*; Spike Lee's *Crooklyn*; Phillip Noyce's *Clear and Present Danger*; John Woo's *Broken Arrow*; Baz Luhrmann's *William Shakespeare's Romeo + Juliet*; John Herzfeld's telefilm *Don King: Only in America* (for which, as Lloyd Price, he won a Satellite Award); Leon Ichaso's telefilm *Ali: An American Hero* (as Bundini Brown); and his wife Kasi Lemmons' *Eve's Bayou* (for which he received an NAACP Image Award nomination).

He is board president of Film Independent, which is the organization that encompasses the Los Angeles Film Festival and the Independent Spirit Awards.

Mr. Hall's next project as writer/director is *The Big Biazaro*, based on Leonard Wise's novel of the same name, to star and be produced by Pierce Brosnan.

MARTIN SHEEN (E. G. Sonderling)

Whether as actor or activist, Martin Sheen is one of the entertainment industry's most respected figures. Born Ramon Estevez to immigrant parents, he left his Dayton, Ohio home for the bright lights of New York City. There, he apprenticed at Judith Malina and Julian Beck's Living Theater and also began working in movies and television.

Mr. Sheen's breakthrough role came on the stage, with Frank Gilroy's play *The Subject Was Roses*. He was nominated for a Tony Award and later reprised the role in the film version (directed by Ulu Grosbard), for which he was nominated for a Golden Globe Award. His other notable early screen credits included Larry Peerce's *The Incident*; Mike Nichols' *Catch-22*; and Terrence Malick's first film, *Badlands*.

The 1970s and 1980s saw him star in a host of groundbreaking and acclaimed telefilms. These included *That Certain Summer* and *The Execution of Private Slovik* (both directed by Lamont Johnson), which earned him his first Emmy Award nomination; *The Andersonville Trial* (directed by George C. Scott); *Welcome Home, Johnny Bristol* (directed by George McCowan); *Catholics* (directed by Jack Gold); *The Missiles of October* (directed by Anthony Page); *Choices of the Heart* (directed by Joseph Sargent); *Samaritan: The Mitch Snyder Story* (directed by Richard T. Heffron); *Nightbreaker* (directed by Peter Markle), which he executive-produced; and the miniseries *Blind Ambition* (directed by George Schaefer), in which he portrayed Robert F. Kennedy, and *Kennedy* (directed by Jim Goddard), in which he portrayed John F. Kennedy.

Mr. Sheen's many features also include Francis Ford Coppola's *Apocalypse Now*; Richard Attenborough's *Gandhi*; Jason Miller's *That Championship Season*; David Cronenberg's *The Dead Zone*; Oliver Stone's *Wall Street* (opposite his son

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Charlie Sheen) and *JFK*; Matt Clark's *Da* and Leo Penn's *Judgment in Berlin* (both of which he also executive-produced); Ronald F. Maxwell's *Gettysburg*; Rob Reiner's *The American President*; Steven Spielberg's *Catch Me If You Can*; Gregory Nava's *Bordertown*; Martin Scorsese's *The Departed*; and his son Emilio Estevez' *The War at Home* and *Bobby*.

He starred for seven years as U.S. President Bartlet on the celebrated television series *The West Wing*, earning Golden Globe, Screen Actors Guild, and ALMA Awards, among other honors.

Mr. Sheen won an Emmy Award for his guest appearance on *Murphy Brown*. His other guest roles on television series have included ones on *Mission: Impossible*; *Columbo*; and (opposite his son Charlie) *Two and a Half Men*, for which he was an Emmy Award nominee.

In 1998, he received a Lifetime Achievement Award from the Imagen Foundation.

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PRODUCTION NOTES

TALK TO ME

CREW BIOGRAPHIES

KASI LEMMONS (Director)

Kasi Lemmons' feature screenwriting and directorial debut, *Eve's Bayou*, was the highest-grossing independent film of 1997. The film went on to win the Independent Spirit Award for Best First Feature and receive seven NAACP Image Award nominations, including Best Picture. *Eve's Bayou* starred Samuel L. Jackson, Lynn Whitfield, Debbi Morgan, and Vondie Curtis Hall; and was an early showcase for young actors Meagan Good and Jurnee Smollett.

Ms. Lemmons was also honored with a newly created award from the National Board of Review, for Outstanding Directorial Debut. Among the other honors for her and the film was the Director's Achievement Award at the Nortel Palm Springs Film Festival.

Her next film, *The Caveman's Valentine*, starring Samuel L. Jackson, opened the Sundance Film Festival in 2001. The following winter, Ms. Lemmons directed the moving salute to Sidney Poitier that was broadcast on the Oscars telecast during which Mr. Poitier received an honorary Academy Award.

Ms. Lemmons also wrote and directed the short film *Dr. Hugo*, starring her husband Vondie Curtis Hall and Victoria Rowell. Made prior to *Eve's Bayou*, *Dr. Hugo* has since been screened at film festivals around the world.

Her earlier acting work includes Jonathan Demme's Oscar-winning *The Silence of the Lambs* (opposite Jodie Foster); John Woo's *Hard Target*; Rusty Cundieff's *Fear of a Black Hat*; Bernard Rose's *Candyman*; David C. Johnson's *Drop Squad*; Robert Townsend's *The Five Heartbeats*; Robert Bierman's *Vampire's Kiss*; and Spike Lee's *School Daze*.

MICHAEL GENET (Story; Screenplay)

Michael Genet is a writer and actor. His father, Dewey Hughes, is portrayed by Chiwetel Ejiofor in TALK TO ME. Mr. Genet and Mr. Ejiofor both had roles in *She Hate Me*, for which Mr. Genet conceived the original story and then co-wrote the screenplay with director Spike Lee. Mr. Genet previously starred for the latter director in *25th Hour*.

His other feature screenwriting credits include the telefilm *Hallelujah* (in which he also appeared), directed by Charles Lane and starring Dennis Haysbert, James Earl Jones, and Phylicia Rashad; *Dream Racer*, to be produced by Daniel Rosenberg; such recently completed scripts as *Sunny Royal (A Very Romantic Comedy)*, *Eagle Down*, and *Twelve*; and *Pork Pie*, which was selected for the Sundance Screenwriters Lab and will be produced by Daniel Bigel.



PRODUCTION NOTES

TALK TO ME

Mr. Genet has also adapted the latter screenplay for the stage. The play version of *Pork Pie* was selected to the prestigious Eugene O'Neill Playwrights Conference; went on to win the Kennedy Center Award for New American Plays; and world-premiered at the Denver Center Theatre for the Performing Arts.

His other acting credits include, most recently, the off-Broadway revival of Charles Fuller's *A Soldier's Play* and the Broadway musical *Lestat*. He has previously performed on Broadway in *A Few Good Men*, *Hamlet* (as Horatio), and *Northeast Local*; off-Broadway in *Earth and Sky* and *The Colored Museum*; and, at the Long Wharf Theatre, in Shakespeare's *Much Ado About Nothing* (as Benedick).

Mr. Genet starred for six years on *As the World Turns* (as Lamar Griffin), and has guest-starred several times on *Law & Order*, among other television credits. In addition to the previously mentioned movies, his screen work includes Alan J. Pakula's *Presumed Innocent*; Sidney Lumet's *A Stranger Among Us*; and Antonio Macia's recently completed independent film *Ego*.

He trained at the Juilliard School and the California Institute of the Arts.

RICK FAMUYIWA (Screenplay)

Rick Famuyiwa made his feature debut as writer/director on *The Wood*, the screenplay for which had been developed at the Sundance Institute. The sleeper hit movie starred Taye Diggs, Omar Epps, and Richard T. Jones.

He next directed and co-wrote another popular film, *Brown Sugar*, starring Taye Diggs, Sanaa Lathan, and Queen Latifah. Mr. Famuyiwa's next feature projects are *My Soul to Keep*, which he will direct from his own adaptation of Tannarive Due's book of the same name; and *The Wedding Pact* and *Bill Strickland*, both of which he is writing and will direct.

A graduate of the University of Southern California, he double-majored there in Cinema/Television Production and Critical Studies. During his senior year at USC, he wrote and directed a thesis film, *Blacktop Lingo*. The short brought him acclaim and industry attention, and was one of 29 films selected (out of 1,500 submissions) to screen at the 1996 Sundance Film Festival, making Mr. Famuyiwa the first undergraduate from USC to have a film shown at the Festival.

MARK GORDON (Producer)

Mark Gordon has produced and financed over 60 motion pictures and television programs. The theatrical box office revenue from his movies has exceeded \$3 billion. The Mark Gordon Company's current film slate includes Lasse Hallström's recently released *The Hoax*, starring Richard Gere; and Roland Emmerich's *10,000 B.C.*



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TALK TO ME

Mr. Gordon also continues to executive-produce two of network television's top-rated series, *Criminal Minds* and *Grey's Anatomy*. The latter was honored earlier this year with the Golden Globe Award for Best Television Series [Drama]. Also this year, the Company's new cable series *Army Wives* debuts.

As producer, among the honors he has received are an Academy Award nomination, a Golden Globe Award, and the Producers Guild of America's top prize, the [Darryl F. Zanuck] Producer of the Year Award, Theatrical Motion Pictures. These accolades all came for Steven Spielberg's *Saving Private Ryan*. The classic film also won the New York Film Critics Circle, Los Angeles Film Critics Association, and the Chicago Film Critics Association awards for Best Picture, among many other awards worldwide.

As executive producer of Joseph Sargent's *Warm Springs*, Mr. Gordon won an Emmy Award for Outstanding Made-for-Television Movie. He is also a Daytime Emmy Award winner, for Best Children's Program, for *The War Between the Classes* (directed by Michael Toshiyuki Uno); and a BAFTA Award winner, in the children's entertainment category, for *Paulie* (directed by John Roberts).

His other feature films as producer include such smashes as Jan de Bont's *Speed*; John Woo's *Broken Arrow*; and Roland Emmerich's *The Patriot* and *The Day After Tomorrow*.

As executive producer and/or financier, Mr. Gordon's credits include such award-winning films as Mike Nichols' *Primary Colors*; Sam Raimi's *A Simple Plan*; Milos Forman's *Man on the Moon*; and Curtis Hanson's *Wonder Boys*.

His other credits include executive-producing Bruce Beresford's telefilm *And Starring Pancho Villa as Himself*, and producing and directing the Holocaust documentary *Nothing But Sun*, for which he was again a Daytime Emmy Award nominee.

A graduate of New York University's Tisch School of the Arts (where he studied film) Mr. Gordon serves on the boards of the Producers Guild of America, the Virginia Film Festival, and Teach for America (in Los Angeles).

SIDNEY KIMMEL (Producer)

Veteran producer Sidney Kimmel is chairman and CEO of Sidney Kimmel Entertainment, the Los Angeles and New York-based production, finance, and distribution company.



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Active in the motion picture industry for more than 20 years, Mr. Kimmel is responsible for such pictures as Michael Hoffman's *The Emperor's Club* (starring Kevin Kline and Emile Hirsch); Stanley Donen's *Blame It on Rio* (starring Michael Caine and Michelle Johnson); and Adrian Lyne's *9 ½ Weeks* (starring Mickey Rourke and Kim Basinger). His passion as an independent producer eventually led to the founding of Sidney Kimmel Entertainment in October 2004. Producing up to ten features per year, the company works with esteemed filmmaking talent to create quality commercial films.

Mr. Kimmel and Sidney Kimmel Entertainment, in association with Universal Pictures, financed Academy Award nominee Paul Greengrass' critically acclaimed *United 93*, as well as executive-produced Billy Ray's *Breach* (starring Chris Cooper, Ryan Phillippe, and Laura Linney). Universal also released Nick Cassavetes' controversial *Alpha Dog* (starring Emile Hirsch, Bruce Willis, Sharon Stone, and Justin Timberlake), which Mr. Kimmel produced and financed.

He is producing a diverse slate of films for release in 2007. In addition to *Talk to Me*, upcoming releases include Frank Oz' *Death at a Funeral*, starring Matthew Macfadyen and Peter Dinklage; Jon Poll's *Charlie Bartlett*, starring Anton Yelchin, Robert Downey Jr., and Hope Davis; Ira Sachs' *Married Life*, starring Pierce Brosnan, Chris Cooper, Patricia Clarkson, and Rachel McAdams; Craig Gillespie's *Lars and the Real Girl*, starring Ryan Gosling, Patricia Clarkson, and Emily Mortimer; and Marc Forster's *The Kite Runner*, based on the acclaimed novel of the same name. The latter is being produced with DreamWorks Pictures, Participant Productions, and Parkes/MacDonald Productions, to be released by Paramount Vantage in the fall.

Sidney Kimmel Entertainment is gearing up for its 2008 slate, going into production with Academy Award-winning screenwriter Charlie Kaufman's directorial debut *Synecdoche, New York*.

In addition to his success in filmed entertainment, Mr. Kimmel founded Jones Apparel Group in 1975, which has since grown into a \$4.5 billion diversified fashion industry empire. Still active as the chairman of Jones' board of directors, he has also established the Sidney Kimmel Foundation and its subsidiary, the Sidney Kimmel Foundation for Cancer Research, which is one of the nation's largest individual donors to cancer research.

Mr. Kimmel is extremely involved in philanthropic endeavors benefiting his hometown of Philadelphia, as well as Jewish education and continuity. He recently oversaw the opening of the Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts in Philadelphia, home of the world-renowned Philadelphia Orchestra.

He is also a partner in Cipriani International, the acclaimed international restaurant and catering establishment, and is a part owner of the Miami Heat basketball team.



PRODUCTION NOTES

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JOE FRIES (Producer)

As an independent producer, Joe Fries formed Pelagius Films with Joey Rappa in January 2004. Pelagius concentrates on bringing to film and television screens real-life stories with compelling protagonists and significant artistic appeal. Among the company's current projects are *Johnny Eck*, written by Caroline Thompson, to star James Franco and be made with TALK TO ME producing partner Mark Gordon; *Bombing Harvey*, from writer/director Nick Cassavetes; and the cable sitcom *Arthur Avenue*, being developed with writers/directors Anthony and Joe Russo.

Mr. Fries began his media career in Washington, D.C., as an account executive in broadcast television. After several successful years, he joined an upstart group of ex-government politicians to form the ACSN cable network. The network later became The Learning Channel, known today as TLC. He was integral to TLC's branding and programming.

He next established Powerhouse, a top post-production facility that worked with news outlets and networks. Recognizing the value in untold stories from real people, Mr. Fries was spurred to form Pelagius.

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JOSH MCLAUGHLIN (Producer)

Josh McLaughlin is executive vice president, and co-head of the motion picture division, of The Mark Gordon Company.

Among the projects that he is currently developing for Mr. Gordon are *Hurricane Season*, a sports drama centering on a Louisiana high school football team and their struggle to unite as players and as a community post-Hurricane Katrina; a remake of *Don't Look Now*; a reworking of the classic *Robin Hood* tale, written by Cormac and Marianne Wibberley; and *Killing Pablo*, to be written and directed by Joe Carnahan.

Mr. McLaughlin began his industry career at the Gersh Agency. He has been working with Mark Gordon for the last seven years, first at Mutual Film Company and now at The Mark Gordon Company.

WILLIAM HORBERG (Executive Producer)

William Horberg is president of production at Sidney Kimmel Entertainment (SKE). He joined SKE after heading his own independent feature production company, Wonderland Films.

Prior to forming Wonderland, he was partnered for 11 years with Academy Award-winning filmmakers Sydney Pollack and Anthony Minghella in their film and television production company Mirage Enterprises.

During Mr. Horberg's tenure at Mirage, he produced such films as Mr. Minghella's *Cold Mountain* (for which Renée Zellweger won an Academy Award) and *The Talented Mr. Ripley* (starring Matt Damon and Academy Award nominee Jude Law); Phillip Noyce's *The Quiet American*, starring Academy Award nominee Michael Caine; Tom Tykwer's *Heaven*, starring Cate Blanchett; Peter Howitt's *Sliding Doors*, starring Gwyneth Paltrow; and Steven Zaillian's *Searching for Bobby Fischer*.

For television during that time, he created and produced the acclaimed anthology series *Fallen Angels* (episodes of which were directed by Tom Cruise, Tom Hanks, and Steven Soderbergh, among others); and executive-produced Bob Rafelson's telefilm *Poodle Springs*, starring James Caan as Phillip Marlowe.

Before partnering in Mirage, Mr. Horberg spent several years at Paramount Pictures, beginning in 1987 as a creative executive. He was later promoted to senior vice president of production, and oversaw the development and production of such films as Jerry Zucker's Academy Award-winning smash *Ghost*; David Zucker's *The Naked Gun 2 ½: The Smell of Fear*; Kenneth Branagh's *Dead Again*; Mike Nichols' *Regarding Henry*; Michael Hoffman's *Soapdish*; Barry Sonnenfeld's *The Addams Family*; and Francis Coppola's *The Godfather Part III*.

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J. MILES DALE (Executive Producer)

J. Miles Dale recently executive-produced another Focus Features release, Allen Coulter's *Hollywoodland*, starring Adrien Brody, Diane Lane, Ben Affleck, and Bob Hoskins. His producing credits include Danny Leiner's cult favorite *Harold & Kumar Go To White Castle*; LeVar Burton's family favorite *Blizzard*; James Toback's *Harvard Man*, starring Adrian Grenier and Sarah Michelle Gellar; and *The Skulls III*, which he also directed.

Mr. Dale was the producer of one of the USA Network's all-time top-rated telefilms, the critically acclaimed *All-American Girl: The Mary Kay Letourneau Story*, directed by Lloyd Kramer and starring Penelope Ann Miller.

His television credits also include co-executive-producing the syndicated show *F/X: The Series*, and directing multiple episodes; producing the syndicated series *RoboCop: The Series* and directing episodes; producing and directing the popular network reality series *Top Cops*; and producing three seasons of the syndicated *Friday The 13th: the Series*.

Additionally, Mr. Dale has directed episodes of two more syndicated series, *Andromeda* and *Earth: Final Conflict*; and was the production supervisor on Daniel Petrie's *The Execution Of Raymond Graham*, a live-to-air two-hour network telefilm.

His father, James Dale, worked as the musical director on such groundbreaking television variety shows as *The Smothers Brothers Comedy Hour* and *The Sonny and Cher Show*.

J. Miles Dale is currently writing the feature *Stolen Fire*, which he also plans to direct.

JOEY RAPPA (Executive Producer)

Joey Rappa is partnered with Joe Fries in the independent production company Pelagius Films, which they formed in January 2004. Pelagius concentrates on bringing to film and television screens real-life stories with compelling protagonists and significant artistic appeal. Among the company's current projects are *Johnny Eck*, written by Caroline Thompson, to star James Franco and be made with TALK TO ME producing partner Mark Gordon; *Bombing Harvey*, from writer/director Nick Cassavetes; and the cable sitcom *Arthur Avenue*, being developed with writers/directors Anthony and Joe Russo.

The UC-Berkeley graduate previously worked in development production at Universal Pictures and Imagine Entertainment. Among the projects for both companies that he was a part of were Tom Shadyac's blockbuster hits *The Nutty Professor* (starring Eddie Murphy) and *Liar Liar* (starring Jim Carrey).

DON CHEADLE (Executive Producer)

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Please refer to CAST BIOGRAPHIES.

STÉPHANE FONTAINE, A.F.C. (Director of Photography)

TALK TO ME is the first American feature for French cinematographer Stéphane Fontaine, who recently won a French César Award [France's equivalent of the Oscars] for his cinematography of Jacques Audiard's *De battre mon coeur s'est arrêté* (*The Beat That My Heart Skipped*).

His other films as director of photography include Agnès Jaoui's award-winning *Comme une image* (a.k.a. *Look at Me*); Nicole Garcia's *Selon Charlie*; Philippe Grandrieux' *La vie nouvelle* (*A New Life*); and Arnaud Desplechin's *En jouant 'Dans la compagnie des hommes'* (*Playing "In the Company of Men"*).

Earlier in his career, Mr. Fontaine was first assistant camera on such features as Jim Jarmusch's *Night on Earth* (for the Paris portion of the shoot); Nicole Garcia's *Le fils préféré* (*The Favorite Son*); Olivier Assayas' *Irma Vep*; and Arnaud Desplechin's *Comment je me suis disputé... (ma vie sexuelle)* [a.k.a. *My Sex Life...or How I Got Into an Argument*].

WARREN ALAN YOUNG (Production Designer)

Warren Alan Young's work as feature film production designer was recently on view in four 2006 releases – Doug Atchison's *Akeelah and the Bee* (starring Laurence Fishburne, Angela Bassett, and Keke Palmer); Nnegest Likke's *Phat Girlz* (starring Mo'Nique); Irwin Winkler's *Home of the Brave* (starring Samuel L. Jackson, Jessica Biel, Brian Presley, and Curtis Jackson); and, for Talk to Me's Vondie Curtis Hall, *Waist Deep* (the Rogue Pictures release starring Tyrese Gibson, Meagan Good, Larenz Tate, and The Game).

Mr. Young's previous feature credits as production designer include Nick Castle's *The Seat Filler*; Mink's *Full Clip*; Craig Ross' *Ride or Die*; and the Polish Brothers' *Twin Falls Idaho*.

For television, he has been the production designer on a wide variety of projects, including a number of BET telefilms (among them Brian Goers' *Fire and Ice*); and multi-camera concert programs spotlighting (among others) Mo'Nique, D.L. Hughley, and Talk to Me's Cedric the Entertainer.

Mr. Young holds a Bachelor's Degree in Applied Arts for Interior Design/Interior Architecture from the American College for the Applied Arts.

TERILYN A. SHROPSHIRE, A.C.E. (Editor)

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TALK TO ME continues Terilyn A. Shropshire's collaboration with filmmaker Kasi Lemmons; Ms. Shropshire previously edited the features *Eve's Bayou* and *The Caveman's Valentine*, and as well as the 2002 Academy Awards telecast's Sidney Poitier salute, for Ms. Lemmons. The latter earned Ms. Shropshire an Emmy Award nomination.

For director Vondie Curtis Hall (costarring in *Talk to Me*), she recently edited his Rogue Pictures movie *Waist Deep*. This followed their work together on the award-winning feature *Redemption: The Stan Tookie Williams Story*. The latter earned Ms. Shropshire an American Cinema Editors (A.C.E.) Eddie Award for Best-Edited Motion Picture for Commercial Television.

Her other feature editing credits include Darren Grant's hit *Diary of a Mad Black Woman*; Reggie Rock Bythewood's *Biker Boyz*; Gina Prince-Bythewood's *Love and Basketball*; and José Luis Valenzuela's *Luminarias*.

GERSHA PHILLIPS (Costume Designer)

Gersha Phillips' latest project as costume designer is the telefilm remake of *A Raisin in the Sun*, directed by Kenny Leon and reuniting the cast of the hit Broadway revival – Sean Combs, Sanaa Lathan, Audra McDonald, and Phylicia Rashad.

Her other features as costume designer encompass both major-studio and independent films. Among them have been Joe Carnahan's *Narc*, starring Ray Liotta and Jason Patric; Jeremy Podeswa's *The Five Senses*, starring Mary-Louise Parker; Richard Kwietniowski's *Owning Mahony*, starring Philip Seymour Hoffman; Kevin Bray's *Walking Tall*, starring The Rock; and Brian Levant's *Are We There Yet?*, starring Ice Cube.

Ms. Phillips designed the costumes for the television version of *Barbershop*, among other series projects.

TERENCE BLANCHARD (Music)

Terence Blanchard previously composed the scores for TALK TO ME filmmaker Kasi Lemmons' first two features, *Eve's Bayou* and *The Caveman's Valentine*.

The Grammy Award-winning trumpeter/composer's two most recent albums, "Flow" and "Bounce," were released on the legendary Blue Note Records label. Among his prior albums are "Let's Get Lost," "Wandering Moon," "The Heart Speaks," and "Simply Stated." In addition to his Grammy win last year for his collaboration on McCoy Tyner's "Illuminations" album, he has been nominated four additional times.

The New Orleans native first picked up the trumpet in elementary school, and was also coached at home by his opera-singing father. In high school, he came under the tutelage of Ellis Marsalis. After graduating, he attended Rutgers



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University on a music scholarship. One of his professors soon helped get him a touring gig with Lionel Hampton's band. Wynton Marsalis later recommended Mr. Blanchard as his replacement in Art Blakey's Jazz Messengers.

A subsequent stint in a quintet was followed by a solo career – now well into its second decade – that has expanded to encompass bandleading as well as film and television score compositions.

Mr. Blanchard has worked with Talk to Me's Vondie Curtis Hall as composer of the director's scores for the recent Rogue Pictures release *Waist Deep*, as well as *Glitter* and *Redemption: The Stan Tookie Williams Story*. Other films he has scored include Ron Shelton's *Dark Blue*; Tim Story's *Barbershop*; Daniel Algrant's *People I Know*; and Gina Prince-Bythewood's *Love and Basketball*.

He continues to enjoy an ongoing collaboration with filmmaker Spike Lee, scoring 12 of the latter's feature films – among them *Inside Man*, *25th Hour* (for which the score earned a Golden Globe Award nomination), *Summer of Sam*, *4 Little Girls*, *Malcolm X*, and *Jungle Fever* – as well as performing as a featured musician on *Mo' Better Blues* and *Do the Right Thing*. Most recently, Mr. Blanchard scored Mr. Lee's documentary *When the Levees Broke: A Requiem in Four Acts* in addition to participating in the project on-camera with interviews and off-camera with (ongoing) aid efforts in his home city.

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CAST (in order of appearance)

Petey Greene	Don Cheadle
Dewey Hughes	Chiwetel Ejiofor
Prison Sign-In Guard	Bruce McFee
Milo Hughes	Mike Epps
Warden Cecil Smithers	Peter MacNeill
Escorting Guard	Adam Gaudreau
Vernell Watson	Taraji P. Henson
"Nighthawk" Bob Terry	Cedric The Entertainer
E.G. Sonderling	Martin Sheen
Program Director	J. Miles Dale
Ronnie Simmons	Sean MacMahon
Poochie Braxton	Richard Chevolleau
Hadley	Martin Randez
Guard Captain	Todd William Schroeder
Sunny Jim Kelsey	Vondie Curtis Hall
WOL P.A.	Jeff Kassel
Freda	Alison Sealy-Smith
Bar Patron 1	Johnnie Chase
Bar Patron 2	Eugene Clark
Bar Patron 3	Benz Antoine
Bartender	Warren Alan Young
Peaches	Elle Downs
Susan	Ngozi Paul
Rioter	Malik McCall
Businessman	Matt Birman
James Brown	Herbert L. Rawlings, Jr.
Backup Singer #1	Vicky Lambert
Backup Singer #2	Mantee Murphy
TV News Anchor	Josh McLaughlin
Charles Sumner	Richard Fitzpatrick
Fred De Cordova	Damir Andrei
<i>Tonight Show</i> P.A.	Jim Annan
Johnny Carson	Jim Malmberg
Jail Guard	Dave Brown
Engineer	Robert Tavenor
Choreographers	Vicky Lambert & Paul Becker
Stunt Coordinator	Jamie Jones
Stunts	Brad Bunn, Moses Nyarko, Tom Farr, Dayo Odesanya, Errol Gee, Jeffrey Ong, Howard Green, Daryl Patchett, Curtis Hibbert, Edward Queffelec, Roque Johnston, Kevin Rushton,

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Brent Jones,
Paul Rutledge,
Kelly Jones,
Steve Shackelton,
Cotton Mather, Peter Yan,
Anthony McRae

CREW

Directed by
Screenplay by

Story by
Produced by

Executive Producers

Director of Photography
Production Designer
Edited by
Costume Designer
Music by
Music Supervisor
Casting by
and Canadian Casting by
Unit Production Manager
Production Manager
First Assistant Director
Second Assistant Director
Art Director
Key Set Decorators

Camera Operators/Steadicam

First Assistant "A" Camera
Second Assistant "A" Camera
First Assistant "B" Camera
Second Assistant "B" Camera
Camera Loader
Sound Mixer
Boom Operator
Cable Puller
Video Assist
Script Supervisor

Kasi Lemmons
Michael Genet
and Rick Famuyiwa
Michael Genet
Mark Gordon,
Sidney Kimmel,
Joe Fries,
Josh McLaughlin
William Horberg,
J. Miles Dale,
Joey Rappa,
Bruce Toll,
Don Cheadle
Stéphane Fontaine, A.F.C.
Warren Alan Young
Terilyn A. Shropshire, A.C.E.
Gersha Phillips
Terence Blanchard
Barry Cole
Victoria Thomas, C.S.A.
Robin D. Cook, C.S.A.
J. Miles Dale
Dennis Chapman
Walter Gasparovic
Penny Charter
Patrick Banister
Cal Loucks
Patricia Cuccia
Gilles Corbeil
Andris Matisse
Joseph Micomonaco
Mark Beauchamp
Brent Robinson
Blain Thrush
Heather Donald
Glen Gauthier
Steve Switzer
Moshe Saadon
Anthony Nocera
Bosede Williams

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Production Coordinator
Re-Recording Mixers

First Assistant Editor
Second Assistant Editor
Apprentice Editor
Dialect Coach
Assistant Art Directors

Graphic Designers

Art Department Coordinator
Art Department Apprentice
Storyboard Artist
Set Decoration Buyers

Lead Set Dressers

On-Set Dresser
Property Master
Assistant Property Master
Props Buyer
Gaffer
Best Boy Electric
Rigging Gaffer
Rigging Best Boy Electric
Generator Operator
Lamp Operators

Key Grip
Best Boy Grip
Dolly Grip
Key Rigging Grip
Rigging Best Boy Grip
Grips

Assistant Costume Designer
Costume Supervisors

Set Supervisor
Truck Costumer
Cutter
Seamstress
Background Supervisors

Alison Waxman
Marc Fishman
Tony Lamberti
Kenny Marsten
Angela Rentzelos
Joi McMillon
Charlotte Fleck
Doug Slater
Jennifer Heimpel
D. Scott Lyons
Paul Greenberg
H. Nancy Pak
Sam Hudecki
Greg Chown
Linda McClelland,
Lloyd Brown, Avril Dishaw,
Elena Kenney
Jeff Melvin,
Carlos Caneca,
Henry Piersig
Donavon Drummond
Vic Rigler
Jonathan Kovacs
Brenda McClennin
Kevin Alanthwaite
John O'Boyle
Davidson Tate
A. Sean Dawes
Morgan Carpenter
Steve Ferrier,
R.L. Hannah,
Tony Eldridge,
Eric Holmes
Michael O'Connor
Jason Lenoury
Ron Forward
David Pamplin
Mark Dufour
Matthew Pill
Jeff Adams
Carlo Campana
Kimberley Memory Stanley
Reneé Bravener
Susan MacLeod
Wayne Godfrey
Karen Lee
Ahmad Zargaran
Maria Belperio
Trelawnie Mead

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Key Make-Up Artist
Assistant Make-Up Artist
Second Assistant Make-Up
Key Hair Stylist
Co-Key Hair Stylist
Assistant Hair Stylist
Second Assistant Hair Stylist
Wigs by

Third Assistant Director
Trainee Assistant Director
Production Accountant
Payroll Accountant
First Assistant Accountant
Trainee Accountant
Post-Production Accounting
Special Effects by
Special Effects Coordinator
Key Special Effects
Location Manager
Assistant Location Managers

Assistant Production Coordinator
Assistant to Ms. Lemmons
Assistant to Mr. Dale
Set Production Assistant
Office Production Assistants

Location Production Assistants

Construction Coordinator
Head Carpenter
Assistant Head Carpenters

Key Scenic Artist
Head Scenic Artist
Head Painter
Assistant Head Painter
On-Set Painter
Transportation Coordinator
Transportation Captain
Transportation Co-Captain
Honeywagon Driver
Picture Car Captain
Swamper
Drivers

Suzette Daigle
Sandra Wheatle
Mario G. Cacioppo
Geralyn Wraith
Etheline Joseph
Allison Mondesir
Rhosael Ciandre
Renee Chan
Victoria Woods
Donna Gliddon
Tyler Delben
Bryn Caron
Elaine Thurston
Gerry Alfonso
Kevin Alakas
Candace Kunderman
Post Accountants, Inc.
Performance Solutions
John G. Laforet
Skyler T. Wilson
David McIlroy
Christopher Martin
Chris Dunn
Jennifer Chovancek
Nicole Jefferson
Uma Venkataramaiah
Edwin Hawkeswood
Morgan Davidoff,
Tova Harrison,
Jeanette Linton
Chris Glover
Joseph A. Dewar
J. P. Charbonneau
Sabri Lariani
Kevin McCullagh
Zac Vero
Melissa Morgan
Jacqui Hemingway
Derek Noel
Mila Roucz
Norman Kelner
Bruce McLean
Roland McGrath
Steve Russell
Dave Mead
Glenn F. Hughes,
Brian O'Hara
Gordon Ionson,
Hugh McCallum,

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PRODUCTION NOTES

TALK TO ME

Location Security
Stand-Ins

Casting Associate
Extras Casting
Extras Casting Associate
Animal Wrangler
On-Set Medic
Video/Computer Playback

Playback Operator
Catering
Craft Service

Stills Photographer

John Brown,
William Doyle,
Maurice Tremblay,
Lorne Frederick,
Norm Foster
Helie Film Support
Clinton Cameron,
Elio Campbell,
Althea Morgan-Taylor
Millie Tom
Zameret Kleiman
Luisa Cabiddu
Rick Parker
Medic One/Yan Regis
Tellavision/
Mark Lewandowski
Greg Williams
Ronald Schlueter
En Route Catering
Reel Craft/
Carlo Denuzzo
Chris Mikolovich
Michael Gibson

WASHINGTON, D.C. UNIT

Second Unit Director
Production Supervisors

Second Assistant Director
Directors of Photography

Set Decorator
Camera Operator
First Assistant Camera

Second Assistant Camera

Camera Loader
Sound Mixer
Boom Operator
Cable Puller
Video Assist
Script Supervisor
Lead Man
Props Master
Assistant Props Master
Key Grip

J. Miles Dale
Carol Flaisher
Katherine Dorrer
Alison Rosa
David Insley
Brian Heller
Carl Catanese
Murdoch Campbell
Boots Shelton
William Gray
Stuart Raul Stein
Tim Hennesey
Sarah A. Brandes
Jim Gilchrist
Lorenzo Milan
Ivan Hawkes
Rusty Gardner
Bosede Williams
Steve Shifflette
Bob Spore
Kristina M. Kilpe
Tom Nichols

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PRODUCTION NOTES

TALK TO ME

Best Boy Grip
Dolly Grip
Grips

Wardrobe Supervisor

Make-Up
Hair
Location Manager
Assistant Location Manager
Accounting Coordinator
Transportation Coordinator
Dispatcher
Picture Car Coordinator
Stills Photographer

New York Unit

Assistant Production Manager
Second Assistant Director
Second Second Assistant Director
Camera Operator
First Assistant Camera
Second Assistant Camera
Camera Loader
Sound Recordist
Boom Operator
Props Master
Gaffer
Best Boy Electric
Key Grip
Grips

Wardrobe Supervisor
Hair
Make-Up
Sound Design and Supervision
Sound Designer
ADR Supervisor
Sound Editors

Foley Mixer
Foley Artist
Assistant Sound Editor
Sound Editorial Services

Brian T. Leach
John Kimmer
Carl P. Hamilton,
Kenneth H. Harris,
Kenneth Morton,
William Iversen,
Mike Yoder
Catharine
Fletcher Incaprera
Debi Young
Lydia Bensimmon-Benaim
James C. Claggett
Christopher Gear
Ginny Galloway
Gilbert Young
Danielle Frederickson
Jacqueline L. Hurd
John Clifford

Paulette Clark
Charles Zalben
Bear Jackson
Alec Jamigan, SOC
Tim Metivier
Constantine Limberis
Jelani Atu Wilson
Lawrence Loewinger
Aaron Rudelson
Kevin Ladson
Clay Liversidge
John Belleci
John T. Kennedy
John D. Kennedy
John Glasser
Whitney Kyles
Mary Cook
Mary R. Aaron
Jay Nierenberg, M.P.S.E.
Stuart Provine
Robert Jackson
Todd Niesen,
Paul Longstaffe,
Jeremy Balko,
Pembroke Andrews
Jeremy Balko
Vicky O'Reilly Vandegrift
Rick Polanco
Sublime Sound

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PRODUCTION NOTES

TALK TO ME

Foley Recording Services
Voice Casting
Re-Recording Services provided by
Re-Recordist
Post-Production Supervisor
Conductor
Supervising Music Editor
Music Editors

Orchestrators

Session Coordinator
Session Assistant
Score Recorded & Mixed by
Assistant Engineers

Studio Crew
Score Recorded & Mixed at
Studio Manager
Contractor & Concertmaster
Orchestra

& Piano
Acoustic Guitar

Music Copyists

Music Clearances

Sonic Magic Studios
Barbara Harris
Todd-AO Radford Stage R
Robert Althoff
Elizabeth Fox
Terence Blanchard
Todd Bozung
Carl Sealove
Del Spiva
Terence Blanchard
Howard Drossin
Robin Burgess
Vincent Bennett
Frank Wolf
Sam Hofstedt
Josh Evans
Michael Kutchman
Studio X/Seattle, WA
Reed Ruddy
Simon James
The Northwest Sinfonia / Rhythm Section
Terence Blanchard / Trumpet, Keyboards
Jef Lee Johnson / Electric &
Derrick Hodge / Electric & Upright Bass
Oscar Seaton / Drums
Brice Winston
Robert Huff
Jim Black

SONGS

"It's A Man's Man's Man's World"
Written by James Brown and Betty Newsome
Performed by James Brown
Courtesy of Universal Records
Under license from Universal Music Enterprises

"Looking For A Fox"
Written by Wilbur Terrell,
Clarence George Carter
and Rick Hall
Performed by Clarence
Courtesy of Atlantic

Carter
Recording Corp

"Sweet Soul Music"
Written by Arthur Conley, Sam Cooke and Otis Redding
Performed by Arthur Conley
Courtesy of Atlantic Recording Corp
By arrangement with
Warner Music Group Film & TV Licensing

By arrangement with Warner Music
Group
Film & TV Licensing

"Johnny's Theme"
Written by Paul Anka and Johnny Carson
Performed by Doc Severinsen

and The

Tonight Show Orchestra

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PRODUCTION NOTES

TALK TO ME

"I'm Gonna Make You Love Me"

Written by Kenneth Gamble,
Leon Huff and Jerry Ross

Performed by Diana Ross & The Supremes
Courtesy of Motown Records

The Temptations
Atlantic Recording Corp

Warner Music Group
Licensing

Under license from Universal Music Enterprises

"Cool Jerk"

Written by Donald Storboll

Performed by The Capitols and
Courtesy of

By arrangement with
Film & TV

"Hello Stranger"

Written and Performed by Barbara Lewis
Courtesy of Atlantic Recording Corp.

Chambers

Brothers

By arrangement with Warner Music Group

Film & TV Licensing

"Time Has Come Today"

Written by
Joseph Chambers and Willie

Performed by The Chambers

Courtesy of Columbia Records
By arrangement with Sony BMG

"Hip-Hug-Her"

Written by Al Jackson, Jr.,
Booker T. Jones, Steve Cropper, Donald Dunn

Buttier

Drells

Corp

Music Group

Performed by Booker T & The MG's

Courtesy of Atlantic Recording Corp.

By arrangement with Warner Music Group

Film & TV Licensing

"Tighten Up (Part 1)"

Written by Archie Bell and Billy

Performed by Archie Bell and the

Courtesy of Atlantic Recording

By arrangement with Warner

Film & TV Licensing

"Hold On I'm Comin'"

Written by Isaac Hayes and David Porter

Eddie Floyd

Corp.

Music Group

Performed by Sam And Dave
Courtesy of Atlantic Recording Corp.

By arrangement with Warner Music Group

Film & TV Licensing

"Knock On Wood"

Written by Steve Cropper and

Performed by Eddie Floyd
Courtesy of Atlantic Recording

By arrangement with Warner

Film & TV Licensing

"Tramp"

"I Can't Turn You Loose"



PRODUCTION NOTES

TALK TO ME

Redding Corp. Music Group	<p>Written by Lowell Fulsom and Jimmy McCracklin</p> <p>Performed by Otis Redding & Carla Thomas</p> <p>Courtesy of Atlantic Recording Corp.</p> <p>By arrangement with Warner Music Group Film & TV Licensing</p>	<p>Written and Performed by Otis</p> <p>Courtesy of Atlantic Recording</p> <p>By arrangement with Warner Film & TV Licensing</p>
Music Group	<p><i>"I'm In Love"</i></p> <p>Written by Bobby Womack</p> <p>Performed by Wilson Pickett</p> <p>Courtesy of Atlantic Recording Corp.</p> <p>By arrangement with Warner Music Group Film & TV Licensing</p>	<p><i>"Compared To What"</i></p> <p>Written by Gene McDaniels</p> <p>Performed by Les McCann</p> <p>Courtesy of Atlantic Recording Corp.</p> <p>By arrangement with Warner Film & TV Licensing</p>
Enterprises Enterprises	<p><i>"I Want To Take You Higher"</i></p> <p>Written by Sylvester Stewart</p> <p>Performed by Sly & The Family Stone</p> <p>Courtesy of Epic Records</p> <p>By arrangement with Sony BMG Music Entertainment</p>	<p><i>"Tainted Love"</i></p> <p>Written by Ed Cobb</p> <p>Performed by Gloria Jones</p> <p>Courtesy of Universal Music</p> <p>Under license from Universal Music</p>
Redding	<p><i>"Say It Loud – I'm Black And I'm Proud"</i></p> <p>Written by James Brown and Alfred Ellis</p> <p>Performed by James Brown</p> <p>Courtesy of Universal Records</p> <p>Under license from Universal Music Enterprises</p>	<p><i>"I've Been Loving You Too Long"</i></p> <p>Written by Jerry Butler and Otis</p> <p>Performed by Don Cheadle</p>
Singers Group, Inc.	<p><i>"A Change Is Gonna Come"</i></p> <p>Written and Performed by Sam Cooke</p> <p>By arrangement with ABKCO Music & Records Inc. www.abkco.com</p> <p><i>"Time Is Tight"</i></p>	<p><i>"I'll Take You There"</i></p> <p>Written by Alvertis Isbell</p> <p>Performed by The Staples</p> <p>Courtesy of Concord Music</p> <p><i>"Grazing In The Grass"</i></p> <p>Written by Philemon Hou</p> <p>Performed by Hugh Masekela</p>

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PRODUCTION NOTES

TALK TO ME

Written by Al Jackson, Jr.,
Booker T. Jones, Steve Cropper, Donald Dunn

Courtesy of Geffen Records
Under license from Universal

Music Enterprises

Performed by Booker T & The MG's
Courtesy of Stax Records
By arrangement with
Concord Music Group, Inc.

"Whatcha See Is Whatcha Get"
Written by Anthony Hester
Performed by The Dramatics
Courtesy of Concord Music Group, Inc.

"T.O."
Written by Rob McConnell
Performed by Rob McConnell and the Boss Brass

"If You Want Me To Stay"
Written by Sylvester Stewart
Performed by Sly & The Family Stone
Courtesy of Epic Records
By arrangement with Sony BMG

"Outa-Space"
Written by Billy Preston and Joe Greene
Performed by Billy Preston
Courtesy of A&M Records
Under license from Universal Music Enterprises

"Call Me (Come Back

Home)"

Written by Al Green, Al Jackson, Jr.
and Willie Mitchell
Performed by Al Green
Courtesy of Hi Records
Under license from EMI Film & Television

Music

"Compared To What"
Written by Gene McDaniels
Produced by Meshell NdegeOcello and Terence Blanchard
Performed by Meshell NdegeOcello featuring Terence Blanchard
Bass: Mark Kelly, Drums: Charles Haynes,
Guitar: Oren Bloedow, Keyboards: Jason Lindner
Meshell NdegeOcello appears courtesy of Universal Music France
Terence Blanchard appears courtesy of Blue Note Records

Soundtrack available on Atlantic Records



PRODUCTION NOTES

TALK TO ME

Visual Effects Supervisor
Visual Effects Producer
Visual Effects Coordinator
Lead Composer
Digital Compositors

Aaron Weintraub
Fiona Campbell Westgate
Rubina Cokar
Rob Del Ciano

Tanja Boening
Anand Dorairaj
Jean Phillipe Traore
Modern Video Film, Inc.
Joe Finely
Nick Hasson

Digital Intermediate by
D.I. Colorist
iQ Artist
D.I. Scanning
Film Editorial
Digital Imaging

Adrian Colbert
Bryan Park
Carl Jacobson,
Steve Danhieux,
Peter Moc
Marisa Clayton
Pat Repola
PIC/
Pamela Green,
Jarik Van Sluijjs,
Stephan Burle
Scarlet Letters

D.I. Project Manager
Modern Video VP Feature Post
Titles by

AON/Ruben-Winkler
Karen Tyrell
Dewey Hughes

End Credits by

Insurance provided by
Publicist
Consultant

Bonnie Greenberg
Christy Gerhart
Michael J. Linowes, Esq.
Entertainment Partners
International
Film Guarantors

Executive in Charge of Music for SKE
SKE Music Executive
Production Legal
Payroll Service
Completion Guaranty provided by

Production services provided by
Talk Productions Inc., a Canada Film Capital company

Stock Footage provided by

SearchWorks Research
and Clearance/
Roxanne Mayweather,
Suzanne Shelton,
Allison Brandin

Clearances

Cleared By Ashley, Inc./
Ashley Kravitz

Rights & Clearances by
Entertainment Clearances Inc./Cassandra Barbour, Laura Sevier



PRODUCTION NOTES

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Filmed at Toronto Film Studios

Filmed with Kodak Motion Picture Film
Camera & Lenses by PS Production Services

Stock Footage courtesy of

Film & Video Stock Shots

Corbis Motion

Streamline Films

Historic Films

Getty/The Image Bank

Producers Film Library

Saul Zaentz Company

Carson Footage supplied courtesy of Carson Entertainment Group

Special Thanks

Ontario Media Development Corporation

The Toronto Film and Television Office

The City of Hamilton

The City of Toronto

The Toronto Terminal Railway Company

University of Toronto

Thrifty Canada

Fashion Fair

MAC Cosmetics

Dental Distortions

Rockefeller Center

Radio City Music Hall

Cinespace Studios Toronto

Jeff Sotzing

MPAA Rating: R (for pervasive language and some sexual content)

Dolby SR/SRD/DTS, in selected theaters

Aspect Ratio: 2:35/1 [Scope]

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