

# LITTLE WOMEN

## Production Information

SAOIRSE EMMA FLORENCE ELIZA LAURA TIMOTHÉE and MERYL  
RONAN WATSON PUGH SCANLEN DERN CHALAMET STREEP

# LITTLE WOMEN

FROM GRETA GERWIG  
THE WRITER AND DIRECTOR OF LADY BIRD



### About *Little Women*

Writer-director Greta Gerwig (*Lady Bird*) has crafted a *Little Women* that draws on both the classic novel and the writings of Louisa May Alcott, and unfolds as the author's alter ego, Jo March, reflects back and forth on her fictional life. In Gerwig's take, the beloved story of the March sisters—four young women each determined to live life on her own terms—is both timeless and timely. Portraying Jo, Meg, Amy, and Beth March, the film stars Saoirse Ronan, Emma Watson, Florence Pugh, and Eliza Scanlen, with Timothée Chalamet as their neighbor Laurie, Laura Dern as Marmee, and Meryl Streep as Aunt March.

Directed by Greta Gerwig. Screenplay by Greta Gerwig. Based on the Novel by Louisa May Alcott. Produced by Amy Pascal, Denise Di Novi and Robin Swicord. Executive Producers are Adam Merims, Evelyn O'Neill, Rachel O'Connor and Arnon Milchan. The film stars Saoirse Ronan, Emma Watson, Florence Pugh, Eliza Scanlen, Laura Dern, Timothée Chalamet, Tracy Letts, Bob Odenkirk, James Norton, Louis Garrel, with Chris Cooper and Meryl Streep.

The film will be released in theaters on ~~-insert local release date-~~

## About the Production

Across disparate countries and radically different eras, Louisa May Alcott's *Little Women* has come to life in a million different ways. It is a book that is unsparing in its depiction of the way the world is hard on ambitious girls, but also offers a comfort: that ambition – a vibrant inner life that breaks the bonds of the world – is its own reward. It is a book that we first encounter as children, when the world's possibilities are wide open and there is nothing in the world that can hold us back; we return as young adults, when the constraints of adulthood and society begin to shape who we are; and we return again, as older readers, with the bittersweet nostalgia of what it meant to be young and bold, joined with the exciting joy of seeing a new generation experience that daring for themselves. The insistent power of the book is its distinctly individual call to grapple with life's many clashing lures—with family, art, money, love, freedom, and the hope of being 100% who you are, creating your own unique story.

This deeply personal, fiercely alive idea of *Little Women* is the one writer-director Greta Gerwig wanted to transport to the screen. Gerwig approached the material with a determination to capture the sweeping, epic nature of the story that captures the enormity of what Alcott created, but also an honest, disarming emotional intimacy that brings the characters to life. As every reader brings her own personal interpretation and meaning to the story, Gerwig puts her own stamp on the story. The novel was originally published in two halves, the first focusing on the March sisters in auspicious girlhood, and the second covering the stark realities of adulthood. Gerwig pulls apart the novel, switchbacking between the two halves, with Jo's story of determination and spirit providing the natural through-line and reconstruction between its parts. With its fluid approach to time, the film immerses the audience in the memories, moments, accidents of fate and acts of will that form the March sisters—ink-stained, defiantly independent writer Jo; nurturing, principled, would-be actor Meg; fragile, open-hearted musician Beth; clever, aspirational painter Amy—into their full, complicated adult selves, each so different but united in an unswerving sisterhood.

The picture that emerges is of four women looking back with affection at how they became who they are. It is also one of a world where the dailiness of women's lives—their discoveries, sacrifices and anger, their financial, artistic and domestic concerns—deeply matters. What does it mean to take the reins of your life when so much that happens, from a crack in the ice to a mistimed letter, is out of your control? And how does that look to four sisters with four divergent dreams?

These are the questions Gerwig brings to the fore in a visually ravishing film with a look inspired by the bold artists who were changing the way people saw the world in Alcott's time. The questions feel modern, yet it was Alcott who latched onto these oppositions that still stop us in our tracks: money vs. art, love vs. personal satisfaction, ideals vs. real life, caring for family vs. finding your own voice.

Even before Gerwig demonstrated her powerful voice with *Lady Bird*, she told producer Amy Pascal she believed she was the right person to adapt *Little Women*. "I flung myself at it with everything I had," says Gerwig. "I had a very specific idea of what it was about: it's about women as artists and it's

about women and money. That is all there in the text, but it's an aspect of the story that hasn't been delved into before. For me, it was something that felt really, really close to the surface and even now, this movie feels more autobiographical than anything I've made."

Gerwig read *Little Women* so many times as a child, she doesn't remember the first time. Like a long list of fellow writers and artists, she felt such an intense identification with Jo March—tomboy, misfit and would-be novelist struggling against the status quo to become the woman she imagines—that Jo felt less like a made-up person and more like a charismatic mentor. She was the girl who knew what she wanted. To be freer. To create. To transcend all that was not allowed and yet to give of herself fully to her loved ones. That's part of why Gerwig wanted to plunge audiences into the fabric of Jo's world—its emotional oscillations and personal dynamics—in the most visceral way she could.

"*Little Women* has been part of who I am for as long as I can remember," Gerwig notes. "There was never a time when I didn't know who Jo March was, and she was always my girl, the person I wanted to be and the person who I hoped I was."

While Gerwig stays true to Alcott's original voice, she reconstructs the novel in an inherently cinematic way, unmooring the story from linear time, transforming the March's most unforgettable events into the stuff of memories and creative inspiration. This invites audiences to engage with the March sisters as something new: as adults looking back, and as the living source for Jo's writing.

"Every time I read the book, it became something different," observes Gerwig. "I first knew it in the coziness of childhood, and then as I got older, new parts of it jumped out at me. As I began writing the screenplay, the part of it that was in clear relief was how the sisters' lives as adults are so poignant and fascinating, because they're trying to figure out how to honor the fearless youth they had as grown-ups."

Gerwig also went deep into research, reading Alcott's letters and papers, to draw on aspects of Alcott's real life to give her adaptation a formidable, modern voice. For example, the real Alcott wrote, "I had lots of troubles, so I write jolly tales"; in the film, Marmee says, "I'm angry nearly every day of my life."

In drawing early inspiration from *Little Women*, Gerwig has a lot of company. The late sci-fi master Ursula K. Le Guin called Alcott "close as a sister." Novelist Erica Jong said *Little Women* sparked a belief that "women could become writers, intellectuals—and still have rich personal lives." The heroines of Elena Ferrante's masterwork [My Brilliant Friend](#) bond over a tattered copy of Alcott's book, vowing to write their own. Poet Gail Mazur thanked Alcott for helping writers "to live with, knowing we're not alone, the conflict between the writer's need for solitude and self-absorption and the yearning for the warmth of love." Harry Potter creator J.K. Rowling said of Jo March: "It is hard to overstate what she meant to a small, plain girl called Jo, who had a hot temper and a burning ambition to be a writer."

For women, carving out any individualistic path, particularly an artistic life, has been perilous in any era. But that's also why Jo hit home so hard with Gerwig. "There's a rebel spirit contained in Jo, and a hope for a life beyond what your gender dictates that is completely exciting to us still," says Gerwig.

“She’s this girl with a boy’s name who wants to write, and she’s ambitious and she’s angry and she’s so many different things that we identify with. It’s like she allowed us to be free.”

Gerwig also wanted to pay homage to Alcott’s unsung story of financial success. She wanted to highlight how Alcott’s time, rife as they were with war and inequality, were also lit up with new ideas, free-thinkers and the energy of change. In this atmosphere, Alcott crashed through social barriers and carved her own path to thriving self-sufficiency, taking control of her copyrights like the J.K. Rowling of her day and building then largely unheard-of name recognition outside of marriage or inheritance.

“These are things that are still coming up right now,” observes Gerwig, “which you see in Taylor Swift deciding to re-record her back catalogue so that she can own it.”

To Gerwig, Alcott clearly chose the scarcity of money and freedom as the unavoidable organizing fact of the March sister’s lives. At the same time, she wanted to celebrate the unapologetic domesticity of this story of four sisters and a devoted mother transforming a household into an indelible world unto itself. “An interesting analysis I read is that *Little Women* is one of the few books about childhood that isn’t about escape. There is bravery, but it’s a hero’s journey contained inside the home,” Gerwig says.

All of this magnetized an extraordinary group of women who shepherded the film to the screen, including Gerwig, producers Amy Pascal, Denise Di Novi and Robin Swicord and an ensemble led by Saoirse Ronan, Emma Watson, Eliza Scanlen, Florence Pugh, Laura Dern and Meryl Streep.

For the film’s multi-generational cast, the draw to this *Little Women* went beyond their private experiences with the book. What made it special was how of-this-moment Gerwig’s loving approach felt.

“I think the story feels more relevant than ever right now,” says Ronan, who plays Jo, “because it explores young women finding the confidence to take their own paths. It also is a story that changes depending on where you are in life. You could be an Amy for a few years, then suddenly you’re a Jo, then a Meg, then you’re a Marmee and maybe back to a Beth. You can find yourself in each one.”

“It’s a story about identity and there’s nothing more modern than that,” adds Dern, who plays Marmee. “We still struggle today with how to ask, ‘who am I, and how, despite everyone else’s opinion, am I going to stand true to that in my life?’—yet that’s what Louisa May Alcott wrote about 150 years ago. Part of the beauty of what Alcott did is that she established strength as independence, as art, as ambition but also as marriage and parenting, and Greta invites the audience to engage with all of that.”

Eliza Scanlen, who plays Beth, offers another take on the story’s continued resonance. “It affirms that the emotions you experience in childhood are just as complicated and important as the ones you experience later on in life, which has not often been done.”

Indeed, Gerwig approached the film as both a faithful retelling, drawing as much from the text as possible, and a postmodern one. She shakes up the story, telling it in two separate timelines, with the characters’ lives as adults living alongside the story of their childhoods. “I structured the film to begin the narrative when they are adults, and to enter into the story of childhood as we all do, which is as memory, as a yearning, as a key to understanding who you are and where you are going,” says Gerwig. “We are

always walking beside our younger selves. I wanted there to be a tension – is that what happened, or is that how you remember it? Is that what happened, or is that how you wrote it?”

Perhaps what most exhilarated the women participating the film was that this *Little Women* is unabashedly a story in which boys and men are certainly part of the picture—at times alluring, at times enervating to the sisters—but never at the center of the world. “What is so wonderful about what Alcott did is that these girls aren’t there to serve anyone’s stories other than their own and each other’s, and that idea comes through so strongly in Greta’s script,” say producer Amy Pascal.

“It’s the perfect time for this movie because women are talking more than ever about choices, about how to be, about money, about what power is and about how we get along with men,” Pascal continues. “Greta bring all this into the film by staying true to Alcott. She said, ‘I want to make a movie unlike any other. I want to make a movie from the book and if you go back to the book, it’s more controversial, funnier and darker than you think, and I want to make a movie that feels that real.’”

### **ADAPTING ALCOTT**

One of the fundamental truths of *Little Women* is that Louisa May Alcott almost didn’t write the book at all. She never saw herself as a writer of “girl’s stories,” at the time almost entirely dismissed as unimportant and certainly not economically viable. But when it was posed to her by her publisher, she could not resist the idea of attempting to rival the adventure tales for boys that were often significant bestsellers--and also considerable influences on their searching young readers.

Alcott noted that she never really knew any girls except her three sisters and mother. As it turned out, her own family held out incredible raw material. And in re-envisioning her family life as fiction, Alcott found herself expressing things about growing up as a girl with limited options but ceaseless aspiration that no one had said so clearly or with such relatability before.

Like the March family she would create, the Alcotts were a close-knit group. Their parents, the educator Bronson Alcott and the activist and social worker Abigail May, were idealists and Transcendentalists—members of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century movement that became the forerunner of the counterculture with its calls for self-reliance, civil disobedience, deep engagement with the arts, respect for the natural world, and being true to oneself as the basis of a happy life. Believers in equality and learning, the elder Alcotts encouraged Louisa and her siblings to pursue the things that mattered to them.

For Louisa, it was always writing. Coming of an age in an intellectually stimulating, if monetarily strapped, environment—her schoolteacher was Henry David Thoreau and her neighbor was Ralph Waldo Emerson—Louisa began writing at a young age. Yet, economics forced Alcott to work as a teacher, seamstress and governess even as she was writing her first book, *Flower Fables*, published when she was just 17. She would go on to write for *The Atlantic Monthly*, to publish a memoir of her time as a Civil War nurse (*Hospital Sketches*) and to pen action-packed spy stories under the pseudonym A.M. Bernard (which she sold for \$50 a piece, money it might take a year to earn doing seamstress work.)

There was a presumption when *Little Women* was published that men alone wrote enduring works of literature. With rare exceptions, books by women, and books *about* women, were light and passing entertainment, or so the theory went. But from the day it hit the shelves, *Little Women* was an instant smash hit, selling out its initial run in days. It soon became clear that women and girls had been thirsting for authentic, honest, emotional stories about their everyday lives. The first 23 chapters were so popular that Alcott's publisher implored her to write more, which led to the 47-chapter book that became the beloved classic. Since its release, *Little Women* has never been out of print and has been translated into at least 55 languages. It's been adapted for stage, television and movies, even as an opera and an anime.

Gerwig paid little attention to all that has come before and aimed to get back to the breathing soul of the book as she saw it. Re-reading the novel as an adult, she was especially struck by the very modern way Alcott so deftly captured the free-form, informal language of family.

"It was so clear that the language was fresh and exciting and needed almost nothing from me. I tried to make the script have as much word-for-word from the book as possible."

She could hear it unspooling in her head, which led in turn to her directorial approach. "I wanted the actors to say it all at the speed of life. I wanted them to run through the dialogue quickly and irreverently because that's how I heard it," Gerwig explains.

Gerwig continues: "So that's why I had the idea to start with them as adults, and then allow their childhoods to live alongside them not as flashbacks but as two separate timelines. It captures the reality that when we walk down the street, we're always walking with the younger versions of ourselves. We're always integrating the person we thought we were going to be with the person we are now. I was looking at constructing a narrative that incorporates what a whole life is."

Part of that narrative of a life is certainly romance, always a factor in *Little Women's* appeal. But here, Gerwig explores the idea that each March sister aims not just for love but her own version of love among equals. Readers have debated long and hard over Jo's choice of husband—or if it was right for her to have chosen a husband at all. Making things more complicated is that fact that Alcott, otherwise so much like Jo, took the opposite path of her character, remaining unmarried even after attaining fame. Gerwig took an unusual approach to the question in the climactic moments of *Little Women*.

"If Jo was the hero of my girlhood, Louisa May Alcott is the hero of my womanhood. So, it was important to me that she did not want to have Jo get married but did it because her publisher told her Jo had to marry. There's a letter she wrote where she said, 'I have made Jo a funny match out of spite.' So, I wanted to give her an ending she would like, the ending maybe she wanted, that celebrates the choice she wanted to make. I wanted to give us that rom-com moment at the end that Louisa gave us. But as it's happening, I also wanted to ask, 'Why do we want that? Why do we need Jo to have that moment?'"

Gerwig's naturalistic, overlapping dialogue especially excited the cast. "Greta allows the girls to talk over one another and bounce off each other, so it truly feels like four or five people in a room together," says Saoirse Ronan. "We had to work extra hard to make the dialogue really, really tight in

these scenes. But I haven't worked with another director who works like Greta does. She always knows when something is right by how it sounds. The rhythm and pace of the scenes makes the feeling so unique in her films. It feels like Greta is inviting you into the secret inner world of the March family."

Gerwig explains: "I didn't want the overlapping dialogue to feel like a cacophony, I wanted it to be very specifically overlapped, so it was almost like conducting an orchestra. We rehearsed for a couple of weeks, and, which was pretty essential because the script was so precise. I wanted it to feel like they were tumbling over each other with excitement, and I wanted it to sound like how sisters talk. I didn't want it sound like everybody waiting their turn, because that's not my experience of how a bunch of sisters are when they're together. Having such great actors, I could trust them because they make the language even more alive and deeper."

Capturing that full breadth of sisterhood—its beauty and unity but also its driving tensions—was key to Gerwig. "I saw each of the sisters as artists and I wanted to take each of their artistic pursuits seriously because they do. Between them is a lot of love and a deep bond, but they're also really competitive and can get under each other's skin. They can be mean and cutting and they can be loving and kind, and I just wanted to get all of that in the soup because to me that is what makes what happens to them that much more powerful. They are real people whose relationships are messy and wild."

The script also brought the book into fresh focus for Pascal, another accomplished woman who has had a lifelong relationship with *Little Women*, which even ties back to her given name, Amy Beth. "It's a film about the way you remember childhood, it's about the passage of time, it's about being an artist," she says. "But it's also a movie about becoming fiercely independent."

## THE WOMEN

### **Jo/Saoirse Ronan:**

Jo March stands as Louisa May Alcott's most influential creation—the rare fictional character who became a real-world heroine, inspiring generations of young dreamers aiming for lives of adventure and artistic expression. Lurking behind the character has always been the specter of Alcott herself. She was, like Jo, freed in large part by the expansiveness of her imagination, by her unmitigated workflow. Her writing became a path to attaining a vanishingly rare financial independence as a solo woman, and equally a way to capture in amber the free-spirited childhood that gave her the strength to defy the odds.

The role as envisioned by Gerwig needed an actor of near-supernatural transparency, and Gerwig already knew exactly who had that quality. Having seen Ronan utterly embody the adolescent tornado of emotions at the center of *Lady Bird*, Gerwig knew Ronan could let the audience into Jo's moods, her spirit, her thinking—and especially her "vortex of creativity" as Alcott called Jo's daily bouts of writing.

"I can't really talk about Saoirse," Gerwig demurs, "because she's just such a genius. I don't know how she does it exactly. But feel very blessed that she's worked with me twice."

Says Pascal: “Saoirse is unparalleled. Watching her perform, you are gob-smacked constantly. She’s the most naturalistic, intelligent and emotionally nuanced actor.”

Ronan says that stepping into a role so beloved and so personal to every reader was a thrill—and a serious challenge. The hard part was trying to get beyond a mere sketch of Jo’s iconic feistiness and bring to life a palpably real person as full of real doubts and confusion as she is of talent, independence and the hunger for change. That meant thinking of Jo as a contemporary, a woman verging on modernity before anyone understood how complex identities would become in the turbid century about to unfold.

“Jo to me is similar to girls that you would see in *this* day and age,” says Ronan. “And Greta felt she needed to be more modern than all the other girls that we see in the film in the way she moves and especially the way she speaks. Finding the way someone speaks, that’s my doorway into who the character is, and what we’ve done with Jo’s voice has a relaxed modernity to it.”

If there is any place where tradition moves Jo, it is in her inviolable devotion to family. The very impetus for her creative life is her desire to help ease the family’s financial woes by publishing stories. “Jo lives and dies by her family. Her sisters and her mother are her whole world, literally—they’ve created a sort of nest for themselves in their house—so they are her universe,” Ronan explains. “When she’s with them, she’s self-assured, outgoing and creative. When she’s with people she doesn’t know as well, she’s more reserved. Two things bring out her inner fire: writing and her sisters.”

Ronan especially enjoyed working the puzzle of how to play a writer whose most vividly felt joys, disappointments and breakthroughs often occur in the private space of her head. “Apart from her family, writing is the only way Jo makes sense out of the world,” Ronan observes. “She feels the need to write day and night. And even if she doesn’t necessarily see it as a career choice—because that just wouldn’t have been a reality for most girls like her—it’s something that is a huge part of who she is and that she always carries with her. It’s in writing where Jo finds her confidence.”

Creating the ambiance of the March household with her cast mates was another inspiration for Ronan. “I love that the Marches lead such a bohemian lifestyle, where they’re encouraged to create and be expressive in their work and with each other. They’re so incredibly open with each other,” she muses.

The insular beauty and unity of that time when it was just the four sisters and Marmee becomes something Jo realizes she will never replace as she begins her adult life. Jo’s oft-debated choice in love—between the besotted boy-next-door Laurie who has been her closest male friend, and the headier and colder professor Friedrich Bhaer— was also deliberated by Ronan.

“Jo’s got a very complicated relationship with love and romance,” Ronan notes. “With Laurie, I think what she most wants is just to stay forever in this very pure, platonic relationship they had created for themselves as children. Friedrich represents something else to her: a new life and acceptance into an intellectual world. Yet I don’t think Jo even thinks about having romantic feelings for Friedrich until after she returns home when Beth gets sick. Jo always vowed to never get married, to never give any part of herself up. We’re reminded that today we can celebrate that in a way you couldn’t in Jo’s time.”

Still, Ronan concludes: “I think really the greatest love story of all that Jo is a part of is the one she has with her sisters and her mother. The heartbeat of the story is these young women finding their way in the world, doing what we’ve always done as humans, trying to connect.”

### **Meg/Emma Watson:**

The eldest of the March sisters, Meg may be the most traditionally maternal of the sisters, but she also is a headstrong perfectionist who knows exactly who she is and what she wants. That’s what excited Emma Watson about the role. The English actress who came to the fore as Hermione in the *Harry Potter* series, Watson was most recently seen in the live-action *Beauty and The Beast*.

“What was really important to me about playing Meg is that I think her desire to be a mother and a wife is a feminist choice,” Watson explains. “There’s this idea that in order to be a feminist you need to reject marriage. But a union with a spouse is what Meg wants most in her heart. As she says to Jo on her wedding day: just because my dreams are not the same as yours does not make them unimportant.”

Adds Gerwig: “Meg wants to get married and have children, but that doesn’t mean she doesn’t have second thoughts about not marrying someone rich. Meg figuring out how to make her life choices work is something that really struck me in re-reading the book.”

Having the chance to go beyond Meg’s joyful nuptials with the hard-working tutor John Brooke was especially intriguing for Watson. “We’re used to seeing women get married and that’s where the story stops, so to actually see Meg navigate as a mother and wife, trying to figure out how you keep a relationship together under so many stresses, was refreshing,” says Watson. “The realities push Meg to her edge. They push her to ask: was everything I believed in real? Do happy endings exist? Can love last forever? You see her fight for her dream because good things in life have to be earned.”

Practical as she is, Watson sees Meg as being drawn to John’s more ineffable side—his generosity and compassion. “John continually steps into the breach when there is a crisis, doing the jobs that are unglamorous, and that’s what earns Meg’s respect. She chooses a man who is going to show up.”

James Norton, who plays Brooke, recalls how he and Watson bonded. “Greta was keen to excavate this marriage further than it has been before,” he says. “We decided collectively it would be a good idea to write our own wedding vows. It was exposing in the best possible way.”

Says Watson of her vows: “Meg’s reasons for why she wants to marry John are all about how he cared for her father when he was wounded and how he treats her mother and sisters as though they are his own. Those are things that truly matter to her and while Jo might look at John as dull, the way he is there for the family on a daily basis has an incredible value that Meg sees clearly.”

### **Beth/Eliza Scanlen:**

Beth March may be the most inward and perilously fragile of the March sisters—a gently passionate musician whose life is forever changed by a bout with Scarlet Fever—but she leaves a deep

mark on everyone who has ever read *Little Women*. Taking the role somewhere new is Eliza Scanlen, the young Australian who recently came to the fore as imperiled Amma Crelin on HBO's *Sharp Objects*.

Says Gerwig: "Beth has a hard life, but she's just as ambitious as the rest of them. Why wouldn't she be? She's a March sister. She has her own dreams of grandeur, and I wanted that to feel big. Beth to me has always been a very Emily Dickinson-like character, someone who comes to deeply understand things about the fabric of the world without ever leaving home."

"Beth is a very complex character," notes Scanlen. "Compared to her sisters, she's shy, but she has this quiet energy and power about her that I can really relate to. I think we can all be a mixture of introvert and extrovert, and hopefully this film will allow people to appreciate the introverts as having something to say. Nowadays we live in a very extroverted world where we reward being gregarious, loud and exciting. So, to be able to find strength in quietness, kindness and deep thought was exciting."

Scanlen credits Gerwig for bringing the cast so deeply into the March's lives. "Greta has a deep love for theatre that she used to create a very candid feeling of a family—one that includes fighting, shouting and getting angry. She has a respect for how childhood has informed the lives of these sisters and she isn't afraid to show the meanness sisters can have at times, even as they inspire each other."

One of the most stirring aspects of Beth's short life is that she brings the family back together in adulthood. "There's always a certain sadness about growing up and it's hard to see the March sisters go their own ways," says Scanlen. "But it's also beautiful to see how sisterhood brings them back together again. I have a twin sister—my love for her is infinite and that's what I feel the March sisters have."

### **Amy/Florence Pugh:**

The youngest March sister, Amy, has always been controversial among readers. Strident and at times mischievous, she gets her way far more than any other March, often eclipsing Jo. But notes Amy Pascal: "In this film, you see a very different portrait of Amy. You see her as someone certain of what she wants, who has the hope of being a great artist but has to reconcile with the idea that she's merely a good one. This Amy is still very head strong but also very smart and admirable."

Painting this more candid portrait of Amy is Florence Pugh—the rapidly rising star who has come to the fore with diverse roles in Park Chan Wook's *The Little Drummer Girl*, David Mackenzie's *The Outlaw King* and Ari Aster's *Midsommar*. Pugh found Amy alluring and psychologically complex.

"Amy is usually known merely as the spoiled youngster because she's cheeky and she fantasizes about love and riches," acknowledges Pugh. "But what interested me is that this Amy is an artist who is incredibly passionate about being the best version of herself—or she won't do it at all. What I fell in love with straight away with in Greta's script is that here you get to see Amy's quest for brilliance, and also how human she is in her failures. Perhaps we are all actually a lot more like Amy than Jo."

Amy's relationship with Jo is tinged with competitiveness and envy. But it also comes to involve a tricky a love triangle, as Amy falls in love with Laurie, who has always been smitten with Jo. Pugh

notes that Amy's longing for Laurie is utterly authentic. "We've all felt the pain of being in love with someone who doesn't know it, and that's Amy with Laurie. Marrying the man who loved her sister is definitely confusing and complicated—but maybe it's also the right thing."

It is this real and unconditional love that matures Laurie. His early infatuation with and proposal to Jo are the love of a child; his later relationship Amy is the love of an adult who has learned to love himself. The Laurie who returns from Europe is a different man from the boy who left.

The deepest draw for Pugh was, as for her cast mates, the sisterhood that endures through the eruptions of conflict. "The sisterly bond is everything in this story. At times the sisters support each other and at others they despise each other, but it all feels real," says Pugh.

For Ronan, Pugh's take on Amy changed the way she saw the character. "Florence has done something with Amy that I don't think anyone has done before—she's given her bite," she describes. "She's not simply a girly girl, she's got this fire to her that is very, very exciting."

### **Marmee/Laura Dern:**

The March matriarch, known to her children affectionately as Marmee, is unquestionably one of the most admired women in all of literature—a mother who, alone in wartime, gifted her daughters with something often missing from girls' lives: absolute trust and respect. Marmee has sometimes been read as an emblem of self-sacrificing domesticity. But Alcott actually modelled the character on her own notoriously activist and fiercely spirited mother, Abby May, who led the precise opposite of a quiet, accommodating life. An impassioned suffragette, abolitionist, reformer, and one of America's first social workers, Abby was a steadfast rebel who became for Louisa not only a mentor but a creative muse.

Abby infused her daughter with a thirst for ideas, with a confidence and a love for the world. But Abby also had no patience with the unfairness she saw around her or with the limitations placed on women. She wrote in her journal: "A woman may perform the most disinterested duties. She may 'die daily' in the cause of truth and righteousness. She lives neglected, dies forgotten. But a man who never performed in his whole life one self-denying act, but who has accidental gifts of genius, is celebrated."

Gerwig wanted to see that kind of driving fire simmering in Marmee, an anger and urge for change kept just under the surface but that also deeply informs the way she gives her daughters so much freedom to explore. That's why she turned to Laura Dern—whose depth and range have earned two Oscar® nominations—to create Marmee with a three-dimensional inner life.

"I always thought of the Marches as a family of geniuses, and it was Marmee who enabled that," Gerwig describes. "She gives her daughters this safe space to enact all their beautiful chaos. But I also knew the sainted character of Marmee was inspired by Abby May, who was a bit more complicated and had a much harder life, and so I wanted to give that kind of interiority to Marmee. We tend to think of Marmee as making the magic for these four girls, but I wanted to show the cost to that magic as well."

Dern's kinship with the character began in her own girlhood. "I was probably 13 when I read the book," she recalls. "I deeply remember Marmee's advice to Jo about honoring your anger—that really stayed with me. I'd read so many stories about shutting out things that weren't pretty. But Alcott wrote about embracing the messiness of life. She created a maternal character whose advice was radical. It felt radical to me even in the 1980s! So, I think *Little Women* is about something people of all generations still need to hear: that you can be your true, deep self—and don't let anyone talk you out of your sass, your anger, vulnerability, sensuality, humor or grace. That's who you are."

To grow even closer to Marmee, Dern focused on the remarkable life of Abby May. "It would be easy to read Marmee as having a compliant Victorian sensibility, but we show that while she is of her times, she is also a rule breaker," says Dern.

Dern's research sparked an even stronger appreciation of the story. "Reading the letters between Louisa and her mother, I sometimes thought, my God, it would be amazing for a mother and daughter even now to speak with such openness about what it is to be a woman and about one's goals in life. It was an incredible education to discover that this candidness was their *real* relationship."

Working closely with Gerwig, she loved how the director kept pushing to make every moment ever more dynamic and alive. "For example, in the scene by the fire when Marmee is giving Jo advice," Dern recalls, "Greta directed us to just be two equal women talking. You never see Marmee speak down to her children even when they fail. Being raised in that kind of energy is why Louisa had the boldness to become the writer she did, and Greta captures how that started with Marmee's respect."

For Ronan, the many shadings of Dern's performance were a constant pleasure. "Laura brings out in Marmee something incredibly maternal but she's also very much her own strong woman. There are moments you see in the film when Marmee is at the breaking point, about to fall apart but then she pulls it together and puts a smile on her face for her girls—and Laura has such incredible skill as an actor that she's able to show that entire emotional journey in a couple of seconds on screen."

### **Aunt March/Meryl Streep:**

As the March sisters grow up, they have a chance to see what wealth can bring to a woman—in the form of their paternal Aunt March, a widow whose riches have allowed her to avoid remarrying and just as importantly, to unreservedly and ceaselessly speak her mind.

Says Gerwig: "While Marmee is trying to create a kind of utopia for her family, Aunt March lives in the world. She is not a dreamer like Marmee is a dreamer. She's the one saying to the girls, 'you better figure out how to live in this world because it's hard and nobody cares about you.' Aunt March is right that the world can be different from how we want it to be and you have to figure out how to maneuver through it in a practical way but Marmee is also right that you can also try to change it."

Taking the role, tinged with both comedy and power, is screen legend Meryl Streep. "I just adore Meryl Streep as she is the queen of all and watching her articulate these ideas in this role was kind of the

thrill of my life,” Gerwig says. “She was so smart about how Aunt March functions as a ballast in the family. The character gained a lot more weight than I think I’d even known when I started writing it. She showed me how much Aunt March has a very valid position.”

Much like Aunt March, Streep made a big impact on the young cast. “It was very cool to be able to work with Meryl, and it meant so much to us to have her there,” says Ronan. “I had one scene alone with her that was just surreal for me. I just wanted to enjoy it and not mess it up for either of us.”

“Meryl is hysterical as Aunt March,” notes Emma Watson, “a comedic turn that you just don’t want to miss. She is unfiltered to the point of hilarity, which Meryl does brilliantly.”

### **Hannah/Jayne Houdyshell:**

The March’s long-time housekeeper Hannah is as much a friend to the sisters as a caretaker. Taking the role is Jayne Houdyshell, renown as a multiple Tony Award-nominated star of the stage. She, too, felt a very personal connection to the novel, which she first read at 10. “I grew up in a family of four girls, so to be introduced to this extraordinary family of sisters was very exciting,” she says. “I also lost a sister when I was 12 and the challenge of that kind of loss is so poignantly portrayed in the book.”

Houdyshell felt a connection with Hannah as well. “Hannah has been with the March family since the birth of all these wonderful girls and has seen them through all the challenges their lives,” notes Houdyshell. “She brings a different perspective to them than anyone else.”

“We rarely see the heroism of the women who’ve raised us,” notes Laura Dern. “It’s not an employee relationship between Marmee and Hannah. It’s two women in this home raising the girls. And it was such an amazing gift that Greta cast Jayne who is so pure, honest and hilarious. Her Hannah has a sass and a grace to her and a directness that holds the family together at the most painful moments.”

### **THE MEN OF LITTLE WOMEN**

Louisa May Alcott wrote about the lives of American girls as few had before. But she also populated her book with men—fathers, husbands, neighbors, teachers and friends—as extraordinary as the women they love and support. This became another core feature of Gerwig’s adaptation. “One of the great things Greta took from the book is how Alcott’s men respect women as individuals. Her men are partners, something we’re still working towards in our times,” says Pascal.

For the main cast of women, it was fantastic to see the men taking the supporting roles. Says Eliza Scanlen: “Greta depicts the men as observers of this magical connection the sisters share, wanting to be a part of it. The makes for a really interesting dynamic we don’t usually see.”

“One of the great things about *Little Women* is that the men *are* secondary,” adds Bob Odenkirk, who plays Father March. “They’re not meaningless, they’re just secondary, because the movie is centered on the women’s stories.”

**Laurie/Timothée Chalamet:**

When the March girls discover they have a dashing young neighbor, Theodore “Laurie” Laurence, he becomes both an honorary member of their circle and a disruptor who will ultimately fall in love with two of the sisters. Taking the role is Timothée Chalamet, who caught the global spotlight with his Oscar®-nominated role in *Call Me By Your Name*, as well as Gerwig’s *Lady Bird*.

For Gerwig, Laurie and Jo are mirror images. “Jo is a girl with a boy’s name and Laurie is a boy with a girl’s name,” she notes. “He is the gender-flipped twin of Jo. And what Timothée did with him was magical. As female viewers, we all have had this experience of imagining ourselves as boys, because so many main characters are boy, and we project ourselves into a boy’s journey. But through Timothée we see a boy projecting himself into a female world, which makes for something really special.”

Chalamet’s chemistry with Ronan reignited. “Timothée matches Saoirse in gorgeousness, talent and emotion, which was so necessary because Jo and Laurie are doppelgangers,” says Pascal.

For Chalamet, Laurie only comes into his own through meeting the March sisters. “Laurie didn’t have the most idyllic childhood,” he explains. “Financial holdings he *does* have but he never had friends as he was home-schooled and essentially locked up with his tutor Mr. Brooke. So, when he discovers such tantalizing and root-like relationships with these girls, it allows him to grow.”

As he grows, he also gets his heart shattered by Jo. She always seemed to be his unquestionable soulmate, but their friendship existed outside the rules—something Jo knows the formality of marriage would alter. Chalamet thinks perhaps Jo and Laurie might have worked out in a more perfect world. “There’s a case to be made that their friendship could have led into a great married life,” he says. “But an argument can equally be made that they’re so similar they might have torn each other apart.”

However, these rules of society do shape Laurie and Jo’s relationship, and later, Laurie and Amy’s. As they grow into adults, Laurie and Amy accept many of the constrictions imposed by society, but underlying these is a very real love. This is the fitting conclusion: where Laurie’s love for Jo was intense but ephemeral, the love he finds for Amy is abiding and deep.

Ronan loved reuniting with Chalamet in a whole other space and time from *Lady Bird*. “Having gotten to know each other on *Lady Bird* really helped us to settle straight into that brother-sister relationship,” she says. “There’s a level of security you get from working with the same actor. He’s also very brave as an actor, willing to take risk after risk, which made him so right for Laurie.”

**Friedrich/Louis Garrel:**

When Jo leaves home to teach in New York she meets a man she’d like to think of as a colleague: Professor Friedrich Bhaer who impresses with his expansive knowledge of literature and confounds Jo with his critiques of her work. Taking the role is French actor and filmmaker Louis Garrel, known for playing the lead in Bertolucci’s *The Dreamers*, who brings out Friedrich’s complicated appeal to Jo.

For Garrel, the oft-villainized Friedrich is not Jo's biggest mistake, but someone who lives in a heady realm Jo wants to be part of and has a very real pull on Jo's emotions. "He represents the world that she desires and the world that she dreams about: the world of books and intellectuals. But also, when two people meet and suddenly something happens, sometimes there is no explanation for it," he observes.

The scene in which Jo takes Friedrich's criticism like a gut punch is a favorite for Ronan. She sees Friedrich as not so much dismissing Jo as preparing her for the brutal subjective criticism and rejection that all young writers must overcome. "When Jo storms from the room, it was one of the most exhilarating scenes I've ever been part of," says Ronan. "I just loved doing it with Louis. He brought a humility to Friedrich. He took lines that could be so harsh and cold and instead made them very honest. You fall in love with his honesty, an honesty no one's ever given to Jo before. No one's ever pulled her down a peg or two and I think she's humbled by him in a way that affects her."

### **Mr. Laurence/Chris Cooper:**

The March's enigmatic and affluent neighbor, Mr. Laurence—Laurie's grandfather—might seem intimidating to the girls at first, but he reveals a delicate, wounded heart, especially to Beth. Taking the role is Oscar® winner Chris Cooper also seen this year in *A Beautiful Day In The Neighborhood*.

"Working with Chris was incredible," says Eliza Scanlen. "He has a gentle soul that becomes so palpable in this character. He and Beth seem like opposites, but they unite in their quietude. What I learned from watching him work is that you are in control of yourself and your environment. As a person, Chris has this quiet strength that really helped me be calm and to feel everything in these scenes. He is one of those very special people who only says something when they really feel the need, and you don't see that often. I feel very honored to have him influence me in such a way."

Jayne Houdyshell, who appeared on Broadway with Cooper in *A Doll's House Part 2*, says: "I don't think I've ever seen Chris play a character like Mr. Laurence. It was really fun to see him as this rather buttoned-up, shutdown gentleman who finds his heart through the charm of the March women."

### **Robert March/Bob Odenkirk:**

When the March sisters' father returns from the Civil War, his presence is a quietly philosophical one in the often-boisterous home, but he is definitely not the head of the household. Bob Odenkirk, known for his keen contemporary portraits in *Breaking Bad*, *Better Call Saul* and *Nebraska*, enjoyed taking on this period role so outside expectation.

Odenkirk notes that Alcott braided a lot of her own father, or at least her favorite parts, into Robert March's persona. Though Bronson Alcott never went to war, he was a teacher, Transcendental philosopher, abolitionist, reformer, friend of Ralph Waldo Emerson and radical thinker often engaged in grand projects. But he could also be a rash experimentalist, as when he whisked the Alcott family to a utopian vegan commune known as Fruitlands, where they barely had enough to eat.

After reading all he could about Bronson, Odenkirk brought in shadings of the historical man. “Bronson was an interesting guy, a very enlightened person and fighter for women and minorities. He was just on fire with new ways of looking at the world. But he could also be lost in his head,” he says.

Some scholars have surmised that Robert was the father Louisa May Alcott wished for, a less erratic version of her own. “Robert has all the most admirable qualities of Bronson Alcott,” observes Odenkirk. “He believes in women and believes they should be allowed to become what they want to be.”

Playing father to such an incredible group of personalities was especially gratifying. “My daughters in the film are some of the best actresses on earth right now and it was a joy just to be around them. I was inspired daily by their energy and their camaraderie,” Odenkirk says.

### **John Brooke/James Norton:**

First known to the March sisters as Laurie’s tutor, John Brooke becomes a pillar of support for the March family—and falls in love with Meg, though he knows she must sacrifice a lot to be with him.

“I always saw Mr. Brooke as a kind of quintessential self-made person, a man from the plains who came from nothing, a man who is brilliant enough to become self-educated but doesn’t have anything to fall back on,” says Gerwig.

Taking the role is James Norton, the English actor known for his award-winning work in British television. Norton describes John as “spiritual, serious and a deep romantic.” But rather than approach this scholarly man as stiff and reserved, Norton homes in on how Brooke is utterly overwhelmed by the sheer energy of the March sisters. “John is somewhat baffled when women arrive in his life, as many men were at that time,” Norton muses. “It’s an endearing kind of reaction that I found fun to play with.”

Norton also enjoyed playing second fiddle to the female cast. “I couldn’t have been more in awe of the women who drove this project forward and it was a privilege to be one of the men standing on the side-lines,” he says. “I remember one day the camera was tracking the four sisters while Louis, Timmy and I were in the background doing our thing and we just loved being there to facilitate their stories.”

### **THE MARCHES & THE WORLD: THE PHOTOGRAPHY & DESIGN**

From the start, Gerwig always knew she wanted to bring audiences directly into the *lived-in* world of the March sisters in all its chaotic beauty. It was vital to her that their private home life crackle with kinetic energy. Equally, as Jo and Amy venture into New York and Paris, she to immerse viewers in an era rife with radical thinkers, modern art movements, the birth of photography, the wages of war and changing fashions and social ideas.

Gerwig envisioned a look for the film that draws from paintings from the era—from the European Impressionists to American master Winslow Homer-- but then those paintings burst open into the raw, textured and unpredictable feelings of everyday life.

To achieve this, Gerwig recruited a crack team. “Greta surrounded herself with great department heads like our DP, Yorick Le Saux, who has done such beautiful work with Luca Guadagnino, production designer Jess Gonchor and costume designer Jacqueline Durran,” says Pascal. “She wanted to work with people who were going to elevate and challenge her, and then she also elevated and challenged them.”

Collaborating with Le Saux to turn her strong internal vision into imagery was a deep pleasure for Gerwig. “I knew I wanted it to feel kind of kinetic, and light on its feet, and I wanted it to be beautiful,” Gerwig recalls. “I wanted it to feel like it had this energy of youth, and the camera to be very swirly. I wanted it to feel like we’re responding to the sisters in real time, and I knew from Yorick’s previous work that he had this energy, and he operates the camera himself which makes it very personal.”

They agreed they had to shoot on celluloid. “I wanted that connection to the photochemical process of 1861,” Gerwig explains. “Yorick lit the film with a tenderness and shot it with an excitement that was exactly what I wanted. It felt like a painting, but one we were being completely irreverent with, that we’re not treating as if everything’s so precious, that we allow the characters to rip through.”

Gonchor, renowned for his highly detailed work for the Coen Brothers in such films as *No Country For Old Men*, *True Grit* (for which he was Oscar® nominated), *Inside Llewyn Davis* and *The Ballad of Buster Scruggs*, let the modernity of the characters be his guiding force. “Greta’s approach felt current, timely and relatable. I felt like you could take these characters into a 2019 setting and they would be as intriguing, but it just happens to be that they live in a house from the 1860s,” he explains.

The March home was the linchpin of his design. “The idea for the March house is that it’s run down on the outside but when you go inside, it’s like opening a velvet jewel box,” describes Gonchor. “Inside it is colorful and warm and the ambiance just makes you feel really good. We wanted everybody leaving the theatre to want to live in that house.”

Alcott never named the town where the family lives, but all signs point to her having loosely utilized her own hometown of Concord, Massachusetts, a place where past and future twined, home at once to Revolutionary War sites and to Thoreau’s Walden Pond. Gonchor did the same, using the entirety of Concord to give the film a dynamic life beyond the house.

“Greta and I wanted a feeling of scale you rarely have seen. We asked lots of questions: what was the geography, how close were the March’s neighbors, where was the train station? These things were important to us. Early on, I put together an entire map of that became our foundation,” he explains.

Ultimately, Gonchor’s team would build the exteriors of the March and Laurence houses side-by-side on the same property in Concord. (The property even included a pond for the much-anticipated moment when Jo and Laurie go skating and jealous Amy falls through the ice.) “I think this is the first time on screen that you actually can see the geography between the two houses and how these two families became friends,” notes Gonchor.

It took 12 weeks for Gonchor’s team to build the March house by hand. They used nearby Orchard House—Louisa May Alcott’s preserved historical home, which is now a popular museum—as a

constant reference. “You can see the original Alcott house in the siding, the paint and simplicity of our March house,” Gonchor explains. “I wanted it to be like a mushroom growing out of the land, almost camouflaged so it doesn’t stand out. Since we couldn’t bring in huge machines to level the land and put up the walls, it had to be done old style, like they would have built a house in the past. Luckily, for three weeks before production began, the house got to just sit in the rain and wind, acclimating itself to the environment. The grounds even got overgrown a little bit, which added to the feeling of life,” he muses.

Recalls the executive director of Orchard House, Jan Turnquist: “Jess spent a lot of time here carefully measuring and learning about every aspect of this house. I was so impressed by the film’s concern for starting with authenticity, because I think when you start there and then bring your own stamp into it, you can end up with something spectacular.”

The interiors of the March home—the warm and inviting downstairs, the girls’ bedrooms and the attic that becomes such fertile ground for the girls’ imaginations—came to life in a warehouse in Franklin, Massachusetts. Meanwhile, the more cavernous interiors of the fancier, if hauntingly quiet, Laurence house were found within a sprawling mansion in Lancaster, MA. “We found a gigantic, 50-room house with just two people living in it as caretakers, and that was just the right feeling,” recalls Gonchor. “That’s how I imagined Mr. Laurence and Laurie, in this vast and lonely space like a void.”

Though the Orchard House was too small to film inside, Gerwig did film on the premises, turning the structure Bronson Alcott built as the groundbreaking School of Philosophy and Literature (one of the first adult education programs in the country) into Amy’s childhood classroom.

To recreate downtown Concord, Gonchor used portions of the town of Harvard, about fifteen miles west of Concord. “There was already a church and a big general store from the late 1700s there and we built four additional buildings,” he explains. “Then we brought in 60 tons of snow for Christmas.”

Lawrence, Massachusetts, a former textile center and the home of poet Robert Frost, stands in for New York City, circa 1868. “That was a massive undertaking,” says Gonchor. “There were no buildings over 11 stories in New York at that time, so we were able to work with this small industrial city over a six-week build. It was exciting to have it come alive as New York in the 1860s.”

The New York boarding house where Jo comes to work as a governess was shot inside and outside Boston’s Gibson House Museum, a well-preserved 1860 rowhouse. Other historic Boston locations include Emerson Colonial Theater, which becomes the theater where Jo watches Friedrich watching a performance of *Twelfth Night*; the Romanesque-style Park Plaza Castle, which plays the German Beer Hall to which Jo follows Friedrich, and the 1896 Beaux Arts-style Steinert Building on “piano row” across from Boston Common, which portrays Mr. Dashwood’s publishing offices.

To replicate the 19<sup>th</sup> Century Paris that Amy explores, the filmmakers utilized The Crane Estate in coastal Ipswich, Massachusetts. “We couldn’t go to Europe,” says Gonchor, “so we found this opulent castle in Massachusetts where the gardens are rich, it’s on the ocean and the scale is amazing. It has a completely different palette, vibe, architecture and space from the Concord locations.”

For Aunt March and Amy's carriage ride along the Parisian promenade, a major coup came when the production secured the permissions to shoot in the never-before-filmed gardens at the Arnold Arboretum, Designed by Frederick Law Olmsted, and now owned and operated by Harvard University, the Arboretum is celebrated as one of Boston's greatest natural treasures.

"It was challenging trying to find 1860s Paris in Boston," admits supervising location manager Douglas Dresser. "Once we saw the Arnold Arboretum, we knew immediately that this was the place."

But it was not a slam dunk. At first the Arboretum was hesitant. They have denied filming requests for their entire existence. But it was the legacy of Alcott herself that made this request different.

"My initial reaction was how disruptive this might be and how it might alter a day in the life of the Arboretum," says William Friedman, director of the Arnold Arboretum. "But I started to think about *Little Women* and how it's part of a period of New England history that we share. At this moment to celebrate a story that's so deeply embedded in New England and has affected so many made it feel like the right thing to do. We also saw a chance to spark a broader discussion of what it means to have nature in the background, and how this institution was born along a European model of great public spaces."

Gerwig is grateful to Gonchor for his intensive attention to detail, right down to leaving scorch marks on the walls of all the candle-lit rooms. "Jess understood that what I wanted to do was build a world you can live inside of because it's that real," she says. "He understood that having a layer of dirt and grime settling over things would make the movie breathe. And he also understood how the house had to transform. There's this fire-lit warmth in childhood that in adulthood becomes just a little colder, a little dimmer."

### **CREATING THE COSTUMES**

Few stories hold out so much potential for costumes to unite character, persona and period as *Little Women*. That's why Gerwig brought aboard costume designer Jacqueline Durran, whose work has included both transporting costume dramas such as *Pride and Prejudice* and *Anna Karenina*, for which she won the Academy Award®, and paradoxically, the intimate, contemporary films of Mike Leigh. That combination was exactly what Gerwig was seeking for *Little Women*.

"Jacqueline completely understood that what I wanted was something strongly designed and authentic and tactile but also just to feel like the everyday clothing and not costumes, because that's part of what makes it feel modern," Gerwig says. "I wanted every piece of it to be researched and able to be footnoted as based in fact, but also to feel part of the March family's world."

Durran had read, and adored, the book as a child but she had never seen any previous adaptations. She decided to keep it that way. "My starting point really was Greta's script and Greta's vision," says Durran. "She had done so much research had completely absorbed the world of the Alcotts, this household of artists, free thinkers and radicals, so we had a very strong place from which to begin."

Soon, Durran was joining Gerwig in even deeper research for what would become one of her most costume-intensive projects to date. Together, they perused vast collections of Victorian

photography, including the work of Julia Margaret Cameron, the 19<sup>th</sup> century master photographer who brought her deep love for literature to her work, and focused the camera on children and families, allowing both to be seen in new ways. “The 1860s was the very beginning of photography so you had a lot of art photographers doing exciting work,” notes Durran.

Meanwhile Durran was also soaking in the painters of the era. “Of course, Impressionism, both European and American Impressionism which came a bit later, is a big influence on the film. But for me, Winslow Homer was a particular revelation,” Durran says of the enduring American painter known for his expressive portraits of seascapes, farmlands, and the primal relationship between humans and nature. “I felt his work was so appropriate to what we were trying to create. In fact, that unusual floppy hat that Jo wears on the beach is an ode to Winslow Homer’s *High Tide*.”

Durran began with some central principals. She divided the film into two contrasting arenas: one inside the March house in the bohemian atmosphere of freedom and creativity Marmee cultivates; and the other in the world-at-large with its bigger possibilities but more rigid rules and high costs. She also set out to constantly weave in bits of clothing passed from one sister to another, and one time period to another, to reflect a hand-me-down economy.

She delineated a very clear color palette for each of the sisters: Jo displays flashes of fiery red, Meg is in romantic shades of lilac and green, Beth in tender pinks, and Amy in fresh tones of light blue. Similarly, Meg and Amy are typically seen in “the crinoline cage” that defined women’s clothing of the era, whereas Jo eschews corsets and sickly Beth remains in the more easy-going dresses of childhood.

The most important thing to Durran was allowing each sister to be fully herself. “I felt it was important that each of their looks is a statement of something. They each have a different but equally valid position in the way they see the world,” she says.

Durran continues: “Jo is a tomboy. She wants the freedom of being a boy and she identifies so strongly with Laurie that they exchange clothing back and forth. She’s always in strong colors, if not red then she’s wearing a deep indigo blue or something that stands out.”

“Meg, who is romantic and loves theatre, dresses with a bit of fairy tale Medievalism, in the styles of the Gothic Revival that was very current at that time. Beth, on the other hand, is the most homebound and child-like of the sisters. She never really had the chance to grow up and see the outside world, so she remains in soft and gentle pinks.”

As for Amy, “She is absolutely the most fashionable of the sisters and even before she goes to Europe, there is always something youthful about her, something determined and smart.”

Marmee was in some ways the greatest of Durran’s challenges. “She has such different sides to her. On the one hand, she is so maternal and on the other, she is a radical. But I hope what comes across in her way of dressing is *practicality*: she dresses so can jump into action when she is needed at home and also go out into the world and help. The other thing was that we wanted there to be a subtle sense of Marmee’s influence on all of the girls, so that you see her style echoed in theirs.”

Meryl Streep's Aunt March sports the most historical look. "She has very accurate Victorian costumes without the leaps of imagination the sisters have," Durran notes. "She represents the more straight-ahead world that surrounds the March sisters and it works so well with Meryl's performance."

To her great pleasure, Durran had the chance to work with two legends of British costuming in creating the film's sprawling wardrobe: filmmaker Christine Edzard (*Little Dorrit*), who gave Durran access to the veritable time machine in her Sands Films Costumes wardrobe warehouse; and Jon Bright, an Academy Award® winner for *Room With A View* who also maintains a costume house full of original textiles.

"I was very inspired by Christine, who created the costumes for *Little Dorrit* without a single machine--that's what she's about in her approach. She has extraordinary knowledge about 19<sup>th</sup> Century fabrics and fashions and she worked on costumes for Jo, Beth and Laurie. John has a very different approach, but he is equally a passionate expert—and he made Aunt March's costumes. Having them both giving me advice was a great reminder that there isn't any one answer to making a period costume."

As production drew closer, Durran began adding the next layer: collaborating with the powerhouse cast. "Each costume emerged out of a mixture of references, imagination and then the character interpretation that each actor brings. That's how it comes alive," Durran observes.

The actors in turn were deeply grateful for how she helped spur and enhance their performances. "Jacqueline understands how an actor finds her character through what you put on," observes Watson. "Literally, the layers that you put on in the morning help you go deeper into who the person is, starting with the socks right through to the final piece of jewelry. She's an actor's costume designer."

When principal photography wrapped, Gerwig's work was just beginning. Much of the narrative structuring took place after, in the editing room, where she collaborated closely with Nick Houy who also edited *Lady Bird* with her. At the same time, she was convening with two-time Academy Award® winner Alexandre Desplat on the score.

"I wanted the music to feel classical, yet fresh in its classicism," says Gerwig. "Alexandre and I talked about being bold with melody, and not being scared of something lush. The music is more stripped down in their adulthood, so it's almost like a music box starting up, and then just the faint strains of it continue into adulthood. Alexandre knows how to use music to really create a world."

To "create a world" is perhaps an apt summation of what Gerwig set out to do with this *Little Women*. It is a world that reflects on what Alcott experienced in her own time, but that simultaneously taps into themes as rich and affecting for people right now as they've ever been. "I had this movie burning inside of me to make," Gerwig concludes. "I wanted to tell the story of women making art, women making money, women making choices and about the way you can bring the bravery of girlhood into adulthood. Sometimes when you follow a hunch about a story, then it feels like the world bears you out. This story speaks to us still because it's such a humanist work. It's a story of family and of human connection that's not gendered, which has allowed it to transcend place and time."

Sums up Amy Pascal: “I think part of what feels so right about *Little Women* right now is that it’s about the wish that women can be strong the way we want to be strong and at the same time be loved and respected. It’s about striving for that world where the power and art of women can come to the fore and all people can be OK with who they are.”

So much of what Alcott wrote in *Little Women* still stands in 2019, not least of all these hopeful words from the novel: “I want to do something splendid...something heroic or wonderful that won't be forgotten after I'm dead. I don't know what, but I'm on the watch for it and mean to astonish you all someday.”

### **ABOUT THE CAST**

Three-time Oscar® nominee **SAOIRSE RONAN** (Jo March) broke into Hollywood at just 13-years-old with her critically-acclaimed performance as Briony Tallis in *Atonement*, opposite Keira Knightley and James McAvoy. The role garnered her Golden Globe, BAFTA and Oscar® nominations.

This year, Ronan completed two projects: Wes Anderson’s *The French Dispatch*, in addition to the independent historical drama, *Ammonite*, alongside Kate Winslet. Written and directed by Francis Lee (*God’s Own Country*), and inspired by the life of fossil hunter Mary Anning (Winslet), the film will be set in 1840’s England, when Anning and a young woman sent to convalesce by the sea (Ronan) develop an intense relationship, altering both of their lives forever.

Last year, Ronan starred as the title character, *Mary Stuart*, in *Mary Queen of Scots*, directed by Josie Rourke and written by Beau Willimon. The film chronicles Mary’s life, before and after being condemned to years in prison and execution for allegedly attempting to overthrow her cousin Queen Elizabeth I (Margot Robbie). Focus Features released the film in the US on November 15<sup>th</sup>.

In 2018, Ronan won a Golden Globe award and earned Oscar®, Screen Actors Guild, BAFTA, Critics’ Choice and Independent Spirit award nominations for her performance in Greta Gerwig’s Golden Globe winning *Lady Bird*. The Scott Rudin produced A24 film earned 197 nominations, including Oscar and Screen Actors Guild.

In 2017, Ronan appeared in the Oscar® and Golden Globe nominated *Loving Vincent*, an illustrated feature film about the life and death of Vincent Van Gogh; Dominic Cooke’s *On Chesil Beach*, based on Ian McEwan’s novel by the same name; and an adaptation of Anton Chekhov’s *The Seagull*, directed by Michael Mayer.

In 2016, Ronan made her Broadway debut as Abigail Williams in Ivo van Hove's Tony nominated revival of Arthur Miller's "The Crucible," alongside Ben Whishaw, Sophie Okonedo, and Ciaran Hinds at the Walter Kerr Theater.

In 2015, Ronan starred as Eilis in Fox Searchlight's *Brooklyn*, directed by John Crowley and written by Nick Hornby. Her portrayal of a young Irish woman in the 1950s, forced to choose between two men and two countries, earned her Oscar®, Golden Globe, and BAFTA nominations in the Lead Actress category. The film was also nominated for Best Motion Picture of the Year.

In 2014, Ronan appeared in Wes Anderson's critically-acclaimed *The Grand Budapest Hotel*, which detailed the adventures of a legendary concierge at a famous European hotel between wars. The film also starred Ralph Fiennes, Adrien Brody, Jude Law, Bill Murray and Edward Norton.

Ronan's other credits include Joe Wright and Focus Features' action-thriller *Hanna*, in which she played the title character, a teenage girl trained from birth to be an assassin; *The Lovely Bones*, directed by Peter Jackson and based on the popular novel by the same name (honored by the Santa Barbara International Film Festival and nominated for a BAFTA Award in the Leading Actress category for her performance); *The Way Back*, directed by Peter Weir and starring Ed Harris, Colin Farrell and Jim Sturgess; *Lost River*, Ryan Gosling's directorial debut which premiered at the 2014 Cannes Film Festival; Open Road Films' *The Host*; *City of Ember*, starring Bill Murray, Tim Robbins, and Toby Jones; Amy Heckerling's *I Could Never Be Your Woman*, starring Michelle Pfeiffer and Paul Rudd; Bill Clark's *The Christmas Miracle of Jonathan Toomey*; Gillian Armstrong's *Death Defying Acts*, starring Catherine Zeta-Jones and Guy Pearce; and *Stockholm, Pennsylvania*, opposite Cynthia Nixon and directed by Nikole Beckwith. She lent her voice for *Justin and the Knights of Valour*.

**EMMA WATSON** (Meg March) is best known for playing the iconic character of Hermione Granger in the eight enormously successful *Harry Potter* films. Her performance in the first film of the series, *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*, won her a Young Artist Award for Best Leading Young Actress.

Watson also acquired two Critics' Choice Award nominations from the Broadcast Film Critics Association for her work in *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban* and *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*. The completion of the seventh and eighth movies saw Emma receive nominations in 2011 for a Nickelodeon Kids' Choice Award, and for Best Actress at the Jameson Empire Awards. The *Harry Potter* franchise won the BAFTA for Outstanding British Contribution to Cinema in February 2011.

2011 also saw Watson star in Simon Curtis's *My Week with Marilyn*, alongside a stellar cast of Oscar® nominees including Michelle Williams as Marilyn Monroe and Kenneth Branagh as Sir Laurence Olivier,

in addition to Eddie Redmayne, Dame Judi Dench, Dougray Scott, Zoe Wanamaker, Toby Jones and Dominic Cooper. Chronicling a week in Marilyn Monroe's life, the film featured Emma in the supporting role of Lucy, a costume assistant to Colin Clark (Redmayne). The film was nominated for a Golden Globe for Best Motion Picture – Comedy or Musical.

In 2012 Emma was seen in Stephen Chbosky's adaptation of his coming-of-age novel *The Perks of Being a Wallflower*, starring opposite Logan Lerman and Ezra Miller. This independent drama is centred around Charlie (Lerman), an introverted freshman who is taken under the wings of two seniors (Watson and Miller) who welcome him to the real world. The film premiered at the 2012 Toronto International Film Festival and received rave reviews. The film won the People's Choice Award for Favourite Dramatic Movie and Emma also picked up the People's Choice Award for Favourite Dramatic Movie Actress. Emma was awarded a second time for this role with the Best Supporting Actress Award at the San Diego Film Critics Society Awards where the film also won the Best Ensemble Performance Award.

In 2013, Emma starred in Sofia Coppola's American satirical black comedy crime film, *The Bling Ring*. The film took inspiration from real events and followed a group of teenagers who, obsessed with fashion and fame, burgled the homes of celebrities in Los Angeles. The film opened the Un Certain Regard section of the 2013 Cannes Film Festival. Emma also appeared in a cameo role as herself in Seth Rogen's apocalypse comedy *This is the End*. The film tells the story about what happens to some of Hollywood's best loved celebrities when the apocalypse strikes during a party at James Franco's house.

In 2012 Emma was honoured with the Calvin Klein Emerging Star Award at the ELLE Women in Hollywood Awards. In 2013, Emma was awarded the Trailblazer Award at the MTV Movie Awards in April and was honoured with the GQ Woman of the Year Award. In 2014 Emma was honoured as British Artist of the Year at the BAFTA/LA Britannia Awards.

In 2014, Emma was seen in Darren Aronofsky's *Noah* opposite Russell Crowe, Jennifer Connelly, Ray Winstone, Douglas Booth, Logan Lerman and Anthony Hopkins. The film told the epic, biblical tale of Noah and the ark. Emma played the role of Ila, a young woman who develops a close relationship with Noah's son, Shem (Booth).

Emma finished filming the live-action version of Disney's *Beauty and the Beast* in 2015, where she plays the iconic role of Belle. The film was released on 17<sup>th</sup> March 2017 and quickly became the 8<sup>th</sup> highest grossest film of all time in the US, and 10<sup>th</sup> worldwide. Emma won the MTV Movie & TV Award for Best Actor in a Movie, which was the first genderless acting award. *Beauty and the Beast* has also been nominated for two Academy Awards® and two BAFTA awards.

2017 also saw the release of a film adaptation of David Eggers' *The Circle*. Directed by James Ponsoldt, Emma starred alongside Tom Hanks and John Boyega.

British actress **FLORENCE PUGH** (Amy March), made her mark with her starring role as Katherine Lester in Roadside's *Lady Macbeth*. Directed by William Oldroyd, the film follows Katherine, who has been sold into marriage, as she discovers an unstoppable desire within herself when she enters into an affair with a worker on her estate. The film was named one of 2017's Top 10 Independent Films by the National Board of review and won Best British Independent Film at the 2017 British Independent Film Awards. Pugh won Best Actress at the 2017 British Film Awards and received the Malone Souliers Award for Breakthrough of the Year at the 2017 Evening Standard British Film Awards for her performance.

In May 2020, Pugh joins the Marvel Cinematic Universe in *Black Widow*. The film takes place immediately after the events of *Captain America: Civil War*. Pugh stars opposite Scarlett Johansson's Natasha Romanoff/Black Widow as Yelena Belova, a figure from Natasha's past. The film is directed by Cate Shortland and also stars David Harbour, Rachel Weisz, Ray Winstone, O-T Fagbenle, and William Hurt.

Most recently, Pugh was seen in A24's highly anticipated horror *Midsommar*, directed by Ari Aster. She starred in the film alongside Jack Reynor. The film followed a young American couple Dani (Pugh) and Christian (Reynor) on the brink of falling apart. After a family tragedy keeps them together, a grieving Dani invites herself to join Christian and his friends on a trip to a once-in-a-lifetime midsummer festival in a remote Swedish village. The visit soon takes a sinister turn when the villagers invite their guests to partake in festivities that render the pastoral paradise increasingly unnerving and viscerally disturbing.

In Spring 2019, Pugh was seen in MGM and WWE's studio's *Fighting With My Family*, based on the life of WWE wrestler Paige, written and directed by Stephen Merchant.

Pugh also starred in AMC's "Little Drummer Girl," which launched in October 2018 on BBC in the UK and November 2018 in the US. Based on the le Carré bestseller of the same name, the six-part drama is set in the 1970s as a young, brilliant actress prepares for her ultimate role in the theater of the real, and against the backdrop of rising tensions in the Middle East. Park Chan-Wook directs and Alexander Skarsgaard and Michael Shannon co-star.

Pugh was the female lead in director's David McKenzie's *Outlaw King* which premiered on Netflix in November 2018. *Outlaw King* tells the story of Robert The Bruce, the king who led his country to freedom from the oppressive rule of England during the First War of Scottish Independence. The film stars Chris Pine and Aaron Taylor-Johnson.

Pugh has also been seen in a starring role in ITV's critical-hit "Marcella", an 8-part crime-thriller from the creators of the Scandinavian hit series "The Bridge," the action film "The Commuter" opposite Liam Neeson, and as Cordelia opposite Anthony Hopkins and Emma Thompson in the BBC/Amazon television movie *King Lear*.

She made her stunning debut in Carol Morley's *The Falling* which earned her a Best Young Performer nomination at the London Critics' Circle Film Awards.

Australian actress, **ELIZA SCANLEN** (Beth March) previously starred as Amma Crellin opposite Amy Adams and Patricia Clarkson in the HBO's drama series, "Sharp Objects." Based off of the novel written by Gillian Flynn of the same name, the story centers on reporter Camille Preaker (Adams), fresh from a psychiatric hospital, who must return to her hometown to uncover the murders of two preteen girls. Directed by Jean-Marc Vallée and written by Marti Noxon, the eight-episode, limited series premiered on July 8, 2018. After receiving critical praise, the series has subsequently been nominated for an Emmy Award for Outstanding Limited Series, a Golden Globe Award for Best Television Limited Series or Motion Picture Made for Television, and a Critics' Choice Award for Best Limited Series.

In December 2017, Scanlen was included as one of The Hollywood Reporter's 10 Rising Television Stars slated to break out in 2018 for her up-and-coming role as Amma. Additionally, in November 2018, Scanlen was included as one of The Hollywood Reporter's Next Generation Talent for her standout role in "Sharp Objects."

Scanlen recently wrapped production on Antonio Campos' adaptation of *The Devil All the Time*, which Netflix officially acquired, and the cast also includes Tom Holland, Mia Wasikowska, Bill Skarsgard, and Robert Pattinson. Also, this year, she shot the Australian bittersweet comedy *Babyteeth*, in which she stars opposite Toby Wallace, Ben Mendelsohn, and Essie Davis. The film recently had its world premiere at this year's Venice International Film Festival and received high praise from critics.

In July 2019, Scanlen made her main stage debut in the Sydney Theatre Company's adaptation of "Lord of the Flies" alongside Mia Wasikowska. Next month, Scanlen will make her debut on Broadway in Aaron Sorkin's critically-acclaimed stage adaptation of "To Kill a Mockingbird." Based on the classic Harper Lee novel, Scanlen will star as Mayella Ewell and will perform alongside Ed Harris and Nick Robinson beginning on November 5.

Scanlen currently resides in Sydney, Australia.

Two-time Academy Award® nominee, Emmy and Golden Globe winner, **LAURA DERN** (Marmee) has touched audiences and critics alike with her moving and heartfelt performances. In addition to her two Oscar nominations, Dern has won four Golden Globe Awards with seven nominations, as well as earned a Primetime Emmy Award and seven Primetime Emmy Award nominations. On television, Dern was most recently seen as Renata in the second season of HBO's "Big Little Lies," which aired on HBO this past summer. On the big screen, Dern starred alongside Kristen Stewart in Justin Kelly's *JT LeRoy* and in Ed Zwick's *Trial by Fire*. She can now be seen in Noah Baumbach's *Marriage Story* for Netflix, released in theaters November 6<sup>th</sup>.

Additional film credits include *Star Wars: Episode VIII Wilson*, *The Founder*, *Certain Woman*, *Wild* for which she earned her second Academy Award® nomination, *99 Homes*, *The Fault in our Stars*, *The Master*, *Everything Must Go*, *Little Fockers*, *Year of the Dog*, *Inland Empire*, *Lonely Hearts*, *Happy Endings*, *We Don't Live Here Anymore*, *I Am Sam*, *Novocaine*, *Focus*, *Citizen Ruth*, *Jurassic Park*, *A Perfect World*, *Rambling Rose*, (Academy Award® nomination) *Smooth Talk* and *Mask*. *Blue Velvet*, *Wild at Heart*, *Dr. T and the Women*, *October Sky*, *Mask*, *Fat Man and Little Boy*, *Haunted Summer*, *Teachers*, *Foxes*, *Ladies and Gentleman*, and *The Fabulous Stains*.

Her television credits include HBO's "The Tale," which earned Dern her seventh Emmy nomination, and in "Big Little Lies" which earned her a Primetime Emmy Award and Golden Globe award for her role as Renata; "Enlightened," "Recount," "Damaged Care," "Within These Walls," "Daddy and Them," "The Baby Dance," "Afterburn." "Fallen Angels, Down Came a Blackbird." In 1997, Dern was nominated for an Emmy Award and won an American Comedy Award for her guest-starring role in the controversial 'puppy episode' of the ABC comedy, "Ellen."

In addition to her extensive film and television credits, Dern has been prolific in her producing career. In 2017 she established Jaywalker Pictures, a Los Angeles-based production company founded with partner Jayme Lemons with emphasis on great storytelling in film and television. They have a first-look TV Deal with Platform One Media, in which they have an hour-long series "Mr. and Mrs. American Pie" in development. In addition to the first-look TV deal with Platform One Media, Jaywalker Pictures will produce "The Dolls" for HBO, a limited series in which Dern is set to star alongside Issa Rae. On the feature side, the projects in development include the films *Candy & Mel* and *The Dog of the South*. Jaywalker Pictures is represented by CAA.

Out of appreciation and respect for the extraordinary gift the Dern family has brought to the big and small screen, The Hollywood Entertainment Museum honored Bruce, Diane and Laura with the Hollywood Legacy Award. In 2010, in celebration of their family legacy in film and television, Dern, her mother, Diane Ladd, and father, Bruce Dern, were awarded with the first ever "Family Star Ceremony" on the Hollywood Walk of Fame.

In 2016, she was also selected to serve on The Academy of Motion Pictures Arts and Sciences' Board of Governors.

**TIMOTHEE CHALAMET** (Laurie) was most recently seen in David Michod's *The King* opposite Joel Edgerton. Previously, Chalamet was seen opposite Steve Carell in Felix Van Groeningen's film *Beautiful Boy* which was released in the fall of 2018. He was nominated for a Golden Globe, SAG Award and BAFTA Award for his performance. In 2017, he starred in Luca Guadagnino's *Call Me By Your Name* opposite Armie Hammer and Michael Stuhlbarg. For this performance, he received Golden Globe, SAG Award, BAFTA Award and Academy Award® nominations (and was the youngest Best Actor Oscar® nominee since 1939); he won the Independent Spirit Award for Best actor and received Best Actor Awards from the New York Film Critics, the Los Angeles Film Critics, and numerous other critics groups. That same year, he was seen in Greta Gerwig's *Lady Bird* opposite Saoirse Ronan, which won the Golden Globe for Best Motion Picture Musical or Comedy, and in Scott Cooper's *Hostiles* opposite Christian Bale. Before that, he appeared in Christopher Nolan's *Interstellar* and starred in Julia Hart's *Miss Stevens*.

Later this year, Timothee will be seen, Wes Anderson's *The French Dispatch* opposite Frances McDormand. He recently finished filming the lead in Denis Villeneuve's film adaptation of Frank Herbert's novel *Dune* for Legendary/Warner Brothers. His television work includes a leading role on season two of the acclaimed series "Homeland" opposite Damian Lewis and Claire Danes which won the SAG Award that year for best ensemble in a drama series. His theatre credits include the off-Broadway production of John Patrick Shanley's "Prodigal Son" for which he won the Lucille Lortel Award and was nominated for Drama Desk and Clive Barnes Awards for Best Actor.

**TRACY LETTS** (Mr. Dashwood) is a multifaceted award-winning actor and playwright. Letts received the 2008 Pulitzer Prize for Drama for his play "August: Osage County" and a Tony Award for his portrayal of George in the revival of "Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?" He has written the screenplays of three films adapted from his own plays: *Bug* and *Killer Joe*, both directed by William Friedkin and *August: Osage County*, directed by John Wells. Letts recently penned the screenplay for the film adaptation of A.J. Finn's best-seller, *The Woman in the Window* which will be released in theaters on May 15, 2020.

Letts can currently be seen in James Mangold's racing drama *Ford v Ferrari*, which premiered at the Toronto International Film Festival and released in theaters on November 15<sup>th</sup>. In the film, Letts stars as

Henry Ford II, (grandson of the founder of Ford Motor Company) who is overseeing the mission at Ford to build an automobile from scratch that can defeat Ferrari at the Le Mans race in France.

Upcoming, Letts will star opposite Ana de Armas and Ben Affleck in the New Regency Thriller *Deep Water*. He will also be seen in the surreal comedy, *French Exit* directed by Azazel Jacobs alongside Michelle Pfeifer and Lucas Hedges.

As a playwright, Letts' play "The Minutes" will make its Broadway premiere next February. With the announcement of "The Minutes," Letts will have two plays set for Broadway engagements this season. His play "Linda Vista" is currently in a limited eight week run at Broadway's Hayes Theater. "Linda Vista" is a brutally comedic play about a 50-year-old divorcee in the throes of a mid-life spiral who starts on a path toward self-discovery—navigating blind dates, old friends, and new love. Also this January, Steppenwolf Theater in Chicago will feature a new production of his 1996 drama "Bug" starring Carrie Coon. The production will run from January 23<sup>rd</sup> through March 20<sup>th</sup>.

In 2017, Letts appeared in Steven Spielberg's *The Post* alongside Tom Hanks and Meryl Streep. The film was selected as the Best Film of 2017 by the National Board of Review and nominated for an Oscar® for Best Picture and for a Critics' Choice Award in the category of Best Acting Ensemble.

Also in 2017, Letts received critical acclaim for his performance opposite Saoirse Ronan in Greta Gerwig's *Lady Bird*. *Lady Bird* was selected as one of the Top Ten Films of 2017 by the National Board of Review, nominated for a Screen Actors Guild Award in the category of Best Ensemble and an Oscar in the category of Best Film.

Additional film credits include *The Lovers* with Debra Winger which was nominated for a 2018 Film Independent Spirit Award for Best Screenplay; Antoni Campos' biographical drama *Christine, Indignation*, James Schamus' directorial debut and the Oscar® nominated film *The Big Short* directed by Adam McKay.

On the small screen, Letts starred in the second season of HBO's "Divorce" alongside Sarah Jessica Parker, Thomas Haden Church, Molly Shannon and Talia Balsam. In 2013 and 2014, Letts played CIA Director Andrew Lockhart on Showtime's "Homeland." The cast was nominated for a SAG Award in the category of Best Drama Ensemble in 2013.

Tracy resides in Chicago with his wife, Carrie Coon and is an active member of the Steppenwolf Theatre Company.

In 2015, **BOB ODENKIRK** (Robert March) reprised the character he originated on the hit drama “Breaking Bad,” playing the title role in AMC's “Better Call Saul,” which has earned him three Critics' Choice TV Awards, four Emmy nominations and three Golden Globe and SAG Award nominations. Season 5 of “Better Call Saul” is slated to premiere in 2020. Odenkirk also serves as a producer.

For his work on Saturday Night Live, Odenkirk garnered an Emmy Award for Outstanding Writing in a Variety or Music Program in 1989. The “Motivational Speaker” sketch Odenkirk wrote for his friend Chris Farley, which originated at Second City in Chicago, was recently named by Rolling Stone magazine as the best SNL sketch of all time. In 1993, Odenkirk earned another Emmy Award for writing on The Ben Stiller Show.

Odenkirk co-created and starred in “Mr. Show with Bob and David,” which ran on HBO for four years (1985-1989). As an actor he has brought many film and television characters to life, including Stevie Grant in “The Larry Sanders Show,” ex-porn star Gil Bang in “Curb Your Enthusiasm,” Ross Grant in Alexander Payne's acclaimed feature *Nebraska*, and Bill Oswalt on the FX series “Fargo.”

Over the years Odenkirk has been instrumental in helping emerging comedy writer/performers get their work on the air. He was an executive producer of Tim Heidecker and Eric Wareheim's first Adult Swim series “Tom Goes to the Mayor” and was a consultant on their subsequent shows “Tim and Eric Awesome Show,” “Great Job!” and “Check it Out! with Dr. Steve Brule.” In 2013, Odenkirk teamed up with the young comedy group “The Birthday Boys” to executive produce their sketch show on IFC, which ran for two seasons.

In 2016, Odenkirk was seen in the 4-part sketch show “With Bob and David,” which he starred in and executive produced with David Cross. Recent credits include Charlize Theron and Seth Rogen's *Long Shot*; *Girlfriend's Day* for Netflix, which he also wrote; “No Activity” for CBS All Access; and Steven Spielberg's Oscar®-nominated *The Post* alongside Meryl Streep and Tom Hanks.

Odenkirk lent his voice to Disney Pixar's *Incredibles 2*, as Winston Deavor a telecommunications mogul who brings the Supers out of retirement.

Odenkirk is also teaming up with writer Derek Kolstad (*John Wick* film series) and director Ilya Naishuller (*Hardcore Henry*) to develop, produce and star in the action thriller *Nobody*, and is currently in development on the FX miniseries “Night of the Gun,” based on the memoirs of late New York Times columnist David Carr.

Odenkirk also co-wrote, along with David Cross and Brian Posehn, the New York Times bestseller [Hollywood Said No!](#) a collection of their unproduced screenplays. In October 2014, McSweeney's published a book of Odenkirk's comedy writing titled, [A Load of Hooey](#).

One of the most respected character actors of our time, **CHRIS COOPER** (Mr. Laurence) was recognized in 2003 with an Academy Award® and a Golden Globe Award for Best Supporting Actor for his portrayal of John Laroche in Columbia Pictures' *Adaptation*, written by Charlie Kauffman (*Being John Malkovich*) and directed by Spike Jonze. Cooper was also recognized for his performance in the film by numerous critics associations including the Broadcast Film Critics, the Los Angeles Film Critics Association and Toronto Film Critics Association.

Cooper stars in the Sony Pictures feature film *A Beautiful Day in the Neighborhood* alongside Tom Hanks and Matthew Rhys. The film is inspired by the friendship between Fred Rogers (Hanks), the famous children's television star Mr. Rogers, and award-winning journalist Tom Junod (Rhys). After a premiere at the Toronto International Film Festival, the film will release on November 22, 2019.

Cooper is currently in production on the second season of the critically acclaimed Amazon series "Homecoming." He will star in new season of this anthology series alongside Janelle Monae and Hong Chau. He will also star in Jon Stewart's upcoming political comedy, *Irresistible*, distributed by Focus Features.

In Spring of 2017, Cooper returned to the Broadway stage in a Tony-nominated performance in Lucas Hnath's original play "A Doll's House, Part 2." Cooper co-starred opposite Laurie Metcalf, Jayne Houdyshell and Condola Rashad in the play, which received a total of eight Tony Award nominations, including Best Play and individual acting nominations for all of the actors. Previous theater credits include "Of the Fields Lately" on Broadway, "The Ballad of Soapy Smith" and "A Different Moon."

Cooper gave notable film performances in several films, including John Wells' 2013 film adaptation of the hit Broadway play "August Osage County." Cooper co-starred opposite Meryl Streep, Julia Roberts and Ewan McGregor in the film, which was nominated for a SAG Award for Outstanding Performance by a Cast in a Motion Picture, as well as a Broadcast Film Critics' Choice Award for Best Acting Ensemble.

He also co-starred in the 2010 film *The Town* alongside Ben Affleck and Jeremy Renner. The film premiered at Toronto International Film Festival and was subsequently nominated for a Broadcast Film Critics' Choice Award, an AFI Award and a National Board of Review Award. The film was also honoured by numerous film societies.

In 2003, Cooper starred opposite Tobey Maguire and Jeff Bridges in the Gary Ross film *Seabiscuit*, based on the best-selling novel. Cooper was nominated for a Screen Actors Guild award for his portrayal of Seabiscuit's trainer, Tom Smith.

In 1999, Cooper received a Screen Actors Guild Award for his supporting performance alongside Kevin Spacey and Annette Bening in the Academy Award winning film, *American Beauty*. In a stunning and dramatic display, Cooper portrayed a stern ex-Marine Colonel who persistently monitored his son's every move.

Other film credits include *Live By Night*, *Coming Through the Rye*, *Demolition*, *The Company Men*, *The Amazing Spider-Man 2*, *The Bourne Identity*, *Capote*, *Breach*, *The Patriot*, *October Sky* and many more.

On the small screen, Cooper was most recently seen in the Emmy-nominated JJ Abrams's Hulu series "11.22.63," based on the book by Stephen King. He also gave a stunning performance in the HBO film *My House in Umbria*, for which he received an Emmy Award nomination. Other credits include the miniseries "Lonesome Dove" and "Return to Lonesome Dove," "Breast Men," "Alone," "One More Mountain," "Ned Blessing," "Bed of Lies," "Darrow," "In Broad Daylight," "A Little Piece of Sunshine," "Law and Order," and "Journey to Genius." Born in Kansas City, Missouri, Cooper attended the University Of Missouri School of Drama and started his professional career on the New York stage.

Cooper resides in Massachusetts with his wife.

For 45 years **MERYL STREEP** (Aunt March) continues to bring a varied and vivid array of characters to life in a career that has cut its own unique path from the theatre through film and television.

Educated in the New Jersey public school system through high school, Streep graduated cum laude from Vassar College and received her MFA with Honors from Yale University. Within three years of graduation, she made her Broadway debut, won an Emmy for "Holocaust," and received her first Oscar® nomination for *The Deerhunter*. She has won three Academy Awards®, and in 2018, in a record that is unsurpassed, she earned a 21st nomination for her role as Katharine Graham in *The Post*. Her recent projects include HBO's second season of "Big Little Lies," and Steven Soderbergh's subversive romp about offshore investment, "The Laundromat," for Netflix.

She is a member of the American Academy of Arts and Letters, and has been accorded a Commandeur de L'Ordre des Arts et Lettres by the French government. She received a Lifetime Achievement Award from the AMERICAN Film Institute, the same honor in 2008 from the Film Society of Lincoln Center, and the 2010 National Medal of Arts from President Obama. In 2011, Ms Streep received a Kennedy Center Honor, and in 2014 the Presidential Medal of Freedom. She holds honorary degrees from 10 colleges and universities.

Her husband, artist Don Gummer, and she are the parents of a son and three daughters.

## **ABOUT THE FILMMAKERS**

Academy Award®-nominated director, writer, playwright, and actor **GRETA GERWIG** (Written for the Screen and Directed by) continues to make a mark on the entertainment industry as a powerful storyteller.

In Spring 2020, Gerwig will appear on stage opposite Oscar Isaac in Sam Gold's Off-Broadway production of Anton Chekhov's "Three Sisters" at The New York Theatre Workshop. This will mark her second collaboration with Gold following "The Village Bike," for which she received an Outer Critics Circle nomination for Outstanding Actress in a Play in 2014.

Gerwig is perhaps best known for *Lady Bird*, her debut film as a solo writer and director. In 2018, Gerwig made history by being the fifth woman to be nominated for an Academy Award® in the Best Director category, and the first to be nominated for a debut film. The film also earned four additional Academy Award® nominations, including Best Picture, Best Original Screenplay, and acting nominations for stars Saoirse Ronan and Laurie Metcalf. The film received the Golden Globe Award for Best Motion Picture (Musical or Comedy) and garnered various guild and critics circle nominations including NBR, WGA, DGA, and BAFTA.

Previously, Gerwig has collaborated with director Noah Baumbach on several films, including *Greenberg*, *Mistress America*, and *Frances Ha*, for which she earned a Golden Globe nomination. Her additional acting credits include *Jackie*, *Maggie's Plan*, *20<sup>th</sup> Century Women*, *Lola Versus*, *Damsels in Distress*, *Arthur*, *No Strings Attached*, and most recently, the voice of Tracy Walker in Wes Anderson's *Isle of Dogs*.

**AMY PASCAL** (Producer) is the Founder and CEO of Pascal Pictures, a film and television production company based at Universal. Most recently, Pascal produced the global phenomenon *Spider-Man: Far From Home*, starring Tom Holland and Zendaya and directed by Jon Watts; the Academy Award®-winning animated film *Spider-Man: Into the Spider-Verse*, directed by Bob Persichetti, Peter Ramsey, and Rodney Rothman, and featuring the character of Miles Morales as Spider-Man; and *Spider-Man: Homecoming*, starring Tom Holland and Michael Keaton, also directed by Jon Watts. Pascal's other credits include Steven Spielberg's Golden Globe and Academy Award®-nominated *The Post*, starring Meryl Streep and Tom Hanks; Aaron Sorkin's Golden Globe and Academy Award®-nominated directorial debut, *Molly's Game*, starring Jessica Chastain and Idris Elba; Ruben Fleischer's *Venom*, starring Tom Hardy and Michelle Williams; and *The Girl in the Spider's Web*, the sequel to Stieg Larsson's successful *The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo* trilogy, starring Claire Foy.

In 2013, Pascal was elected to the Board of Governors of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences. She also serves on the Honorary Committee of the Epilepsy Foundation of Greater Los Angeles, and in 2008, received the Humanitarian Award from the Simon Wiesenthal Center.

**DENISE DI NOVI** (Producer) is an award-winning film and television producer, whose projects have grossed over a billion dollars worldwide. She has been a top producer for almost three decades and has made over 35 feature films, working over the years with such actors as Johnny Depp, Colin Firth, Sandra Bullock, Nicole Kidman, Julianne Moore, Emma Stone, Will Smith and Ryan Gosling. She has been instrumental in bringing to the screen the work of many of today's most imaginative filmmakers. Di Novi counts among her producing credits such diverse motion pictures as *Heathers*, *Little Women*, *Practical Magic*, *Crazy, Stupid, Love*, and a number of films during her producing association with Tim Burton, including *Edward Scissorhands*, *Batman Returns*, *Tim Burton's The Nightmare Before Christmas*, *Ed Wood*, and *James and the Giant Peach*. Her most recent releases are *Focus* starring Will Smith and Margot Robbie and *If I Stay* starring Chloe Moretz.

Denise Di Novi can now add the title of director to her long list of credits. As one of the industry's leading film and television producers, Di Novi's hands-on approach with filmmakers and actors over the years made this the next logical step in her career. Her directorial debut, the sexy, psychological action thriller *Unforgettable*, starring Rosario Dawson and Katherine Heigl, was released in April 2017. Di Novi has also turned her attention toward television, directing episodes of *Sneaky Pete*, *Outlander*, and *Ray Donovan*.

Di Novi began her career producing the cult favorite *Heathers*, starring Winona Ryder. Di Novi then headed Tim Burton Productions and was responsible for producing several of Burton's most successful films, including *Batman Returns* and *Edward Scissorhands*. She set up her own production company, Di Novi Pictures, in 1993 at Columbia Pictures, producing *Little Women*.

Di Novi has had a production deal at Warner Bros. Pictures for two decades. Her films include *What a Girl Wants*, *The Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants*, *Ramona*, *Life as We Know It*, and *Crazy, Stupid, Love* starring Steve Carell, Ryan Gosling, Julianne Moore and Emma Stone, five Nicholas Sparks adaptations, including *Message in a Bottle* starring Kevin Costner and Robin Wright and *Nights in Rodanthe* starring Richard Gere and Diane Lane. Her early credits include the 1994 remake of *Little Women*, as well as *Practical Magic*, which starred Sandra Bullock and Nicole Kidman.

In 2018, Di Novi joined with Nina Tassler, former chairwoman of CBS Entertainment, as a partner/co-founder of PatMa Productions. Under PatMa, the team is developing a variety of film, television and

theatre projects with an emphasis on female content and inclusion. They are developing *The Rules of Magic* with Melissa Rosenberg (*Jessica Jones*), *The World That We Knew*, the latest novel from bestselling author Alice Hoffman with the writer James Schamus (*The Ice Storm*) at Apple, and the Joyce Carol Oates novel *The Book of American Martyrs* with Winnie Holzman (*Wicked*). They are also developing features, such as *The Sky is Everywhere*, written by Jandy Nelson and directed by Josephine Decker at A24, *Gorge* at Amazon, as well as *The Selection*, an adaptation of the bestselling novel by Kiera Cass as a series of films at Netflix, written by Steven Knight.

Di Novi was the recipient of Women in Film's 2016 Crystal + Lucy Award for Excellence in Film.

**ROBIN SWICORD** (Producer) is primarily known for her work as a screenwriter for *Memoirs of a Geisha* (Satellite Award for best screenplay); *Little Women* (co-producer, Writers Guild award nomination); *Matilda* (co-written and co-produced with Nicholas Kazan); the cult comedy *Shag* (shared); *The Perez Family*; and *Practical Magic* (shared, co-produced). She has written two plays that were produced off-Broadway ("Last Days at the Dixie Girl Café" and "Criminal Minds," both published by Samuel French).

In 2009, Swicord received an Oscar® nomination for her contribution to *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button*, a project Swicord originated and worked on for more than a decade.

Swicord made her feature-directing debut with Sony Pictures Classics' *The Jane Austen Book Club*, produced by Julie Lynn and John Calley, for which Swicord also wrote the screenplay adaptation.

Swicord wrote and directed the feature film *Wakefield*, an adaptation of E.L. Doctorow's short story starring Bryan Cranston and Jennifer Garner, which had its international premiere at the Toronto International Film Festival after premiering at Telluride September 2016. *Wakefield* opened in theatres in May 2017 (IFC) and is currently streaming.

Swicord co-executive produced and wrote episodes of Ava DuVernay's Netflix Emmy Award-nominated mini-series "When They See Us," now streaming on Netflix. Currently, Swicord is writing to direct the independently financed feature *The Tempest Hotel*, a romantic comedy set in Bermuda during the impending crisis of climate change. For Apple TV+, with Endemol Shine and Ventanarosa, Swicord is developing a television series based on Laura Esquivel's novel [Like Water For Chocolate](#), to be directed by Rodrigo Garcia. For Fox and Warner Bros., in January 2020 Swicord will write "Sometimes I Lie," an

eight-part suspense-thriller starring Sarah Michelle Gellar, produced by Gellar and Jeff Kleeman for Ellen DeGeneres Productions.

Until July of 2019, Swicord was Governor for the Writers Branch of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts & Sciences and chaired the prestigious Nicholl Fellowship. She mentors for the Sundance Screenwriting Lab and often co-leads Film Independent's Writers Lab. In 2015, she helped create and launch the inaugural Hedgebrook Screenwriting Workshop for women writers, now in its fifth year. Swicord is married to screenwriter Nicholas Kazan; they have two daughters, actor-writer Zoe Kazan and actor-writer Maya Kazan.

**ADAM MERIMS** (Executive Producer) most recently served as executive producer on Academy Award®-winning director Damien Chazelle's *First Man*, which starred Ryan Gosling in the riveting story behind the first manned mission to the moon and the decade leading to the historic Apollo 11 flight. *First Man* went on to receive critical acclaim and numerous accolades including four Oscar® nominations, winning the Academy Award® for Visual Effects.

Merims's prior work as an executive producer include Edgar Wright's Oscar®-nominated *Baby Driver*, which starred Ansel Elgort, Jamie Foxx and Jon Hamm; F. Gary Gray's *Straight Outta Compton*, which starred Jason Mitchell, O'Shea Jackson, Jr., and Corey Hawkins; Daniel Espinosa's *Child 44*, which starred Tom Hardy, Noomi Rapace, and Gary Oldman; Lee Daniels's critically acclaimed historical drama *The Butler*, which starred Forest Whitaker, Oprah Winfrey, and David Oyelowo; Espinosa's *Safe House*, which starred Denzel Washington and Ryan Reynolds; *The Lucky Ones*, which starred Rachel McAdams, Tim Robbins, and Michael Peña; and *The Hunting Party*, which starred Richard Gere, Terrence Howard, and Jesse Eisenberg.

Earlier, Merims executive produced director Billy Ray's *Breach*, which starred Chris Cooper, Ryan Phillippe, and Laura Linney. He also executive produced Lasse Hallström's *Casanova*, which starred Heath Ledger, Sienna Miller, Oliver Platt, and Jeremy Irons; writer/director Richard Shepard's *The Matador*, which starred Pierce Brosnan, Greg Kinnear, and Hope Davis; and *House of D*, writer/director/actor David Duchovny's first feature, which starred Robin Williams, Téa Leoni, Erykah Badu, and Anton Yelchin.

Merims produced Billy Ray's critically acclaimed first feature *Shattered Glass*, which starred Hayden Christensen, Peter Sarsgaard, Chloë Sevigny, Steve Zahn, Rosario Dawson, and Hank Azaria. As producer, his other credits include Ed Solomon's *Levity*, which starred Billy Bob Thornton, Morgan

Freeman, Holly Hunter and Kirsten Dunst and opened the 2003 Sundance Film Festival; Jeff Franklin's *Love Stinks*, which starred French Stewart, Bridgette Wilson, Tyra Banks and Bill Bellamy; and John Ridley's *Cold Around the Heart*. He was co-producer on *Universal Soldier: The Return* and on the HBO premiere project "Freeway."

From 1993 through 1994, Merims was producer and served as head of West Coast operations for Nickelodeon Movies, where he ran the start-up of Nickelodeon-branded features office in Los Angeles and identified and developed projects to be produced in conjunction with 20th Century Fox and Paramount Pictures.

Prior to Nickelodeon, Merims was vice president of production at Lobell-Bergman Productions, where he was responsible for project development at the company. During his tenure at Lobell-Bergman, he served as associate producer on Andrew Bergman's *Honeymoon in Vegas* and *Undercover Blues* and Andrew Scheinman's *Little Big League*. From 1984-1989, Merims was a producer, production manager, and assistant director on a number of projects, including the miniseries "Lonesome Dove."

Merims has been a member of the Directors Guild of America since 1986. He graduated from Williams College with a Bachelor of Arts degree in both philosophy and economics and was also a graduate of the Collegiate School in New York City.

Merims currently resides in Los Angeles, California, with his wife and two children.

**EVELYN O'NEILL** (Executive Producer) is an American talent manager and film producer. She is best known for producing the critically acclaimed film *Lady Bird*, for which she was co-nominated for the Academy Award® for Best Picture at the 90<sup>th</sup> Academy Awards®. She is also a founding partner of Management 360 and the talent manager for Julianne Moore, Chadwick Boseman, Salma Hayek, Daniel Kaluuya, Bryce Dallas Howard and Greta Gerwig.

O'Neill graduated cum laude from Harvard University and went on to the Masters program in Film History, Theory and Criticism at the University of California, Los Angeles. She started her career in the late 1980s as an assistant to Suzan Bymel, with whom she founded the agency *Bymel O'Neill & Associates* in 1994.

In 2002, O'Neill and Bymel, together with Eric Kranzler, David Seltzer, Guymon Casady and Daniel Rappaport founded the Management 360 talent and literary management company. In 2009, The Hollywood Reporter named her the 90 in their #100 Most Influential Women in the Entertainment Industry.

**RACHEL O’CONNOR** (Executive Producer) is the President of Film and Television at Pascal Pictures, a production company based at Sony Pictures Entertainment. In addition to being a co-producer on *Spider-Man: Homecoming* and *Spider-Man: Far From Home*, O’Connor was a co-producer on Steven Spielberg’s Golden Globe and Academy Award®-nominated *The Post*, starring Meryl Streep and Tom Hanks; She has also been instrumental in developing Pascal Pictures’ impressive slate, which includes the feature adaptation of the Pulitzer Prizewinning book Blood In The Water and the television adaptation of Nathaniel Popper’s illuminating expose about the origins of cryptocurrency, Digital Gold. Before making the move to Pascal Pictures, O’Connor worked as an executive for Sony Pictures for over 15 years. O’Connor was raised in Los Angeles where she currently resides with her husband and son.

**YORICK LeSAUX** (Director of Photography) has collaborated with a diverse and acclaimed collection of directors, including Luca Guadagnino (*A Bigger Splash; I Am Love*), Claire Denis (*High Life*), Francois Ozon (*Swimming Pool, 5x2*), Olivier Assayas (*Clouds of Silas; Personal Shopper; Double Lives; Carlos; Boarding Gate*), Jim Jarmusch (*Only Lovers Left Alive*), Nicholas Jarecki (*Arbitrage*), and Eric Zonca (*Julia*). In 2011, he was awarded the ICS Award for Best Cinematography for his work on *I Am Love*, for which he also received nominations for the Chlotrudis and Satellite Awards. He lives in Paris.

**NICK HOUY** (Editor) was born and raised in Colorado, and now lives in Brooklyn, New York. Before editing *Little Women*, he collaborated with Greta Gerwig on the Oscar®-nominated *Lady Bird*, and edited Jonah Hill’s directorial debut, *Mid90s*. Houy garnered his first Emmy Award for editing HBO’s “The Night Of.”

British costume designer **JACQUELINE DURRAN** (Costume Designer) won an Academy Award® for her work on *Anna Karenina* and has been nominated six times for the award. She has also been nominated eight times for a BAFTA Award, winning for *Vera Drake* and *Anna Karenina*. In addition, she has received numerous nominations and awards for her work.

In 2018, she was the recipient of two Academy Award® nominations, for her work on Walt Disney’s *Beauty and the Beast* and Working Title’s *Darkest Hour*.

Durran has been a frequent collaborator with the directors Joe Wright and Mike Leigh. Most recently, she collaborated with Wright on *Darkest Hour* and Leigh on *Peterloo*.

She received considerable attention for her work on Wright's *Pride & Prejudice*, for which she received both an Academy Award® for Best Costume Design and BAFTA Award for Best Costume Design nominations. For Wright's *Pride & Prejudice* and *Atonement*, she earned Academy Award® and BAFTA Award nominations. For *Atonement*, she received a Costume Designers Guild Award nomination and an Evening Standard British Film Award for technical achievement (shared with the film's cinematographer and production designer). She also teamed with Wright on *Anna Karenina*, *Hanna*, *Pan*, and *The Soloist*.

Durran's other credits with Leigh include *Vera Drake*, for which she won the BAFTA Award for Best Costume Design, *Mr Turner*, *Happy-Go-Lucky*, *Another Year*, and *All or Nothing*.

Amongst her other credits are *Mary Magdalene*; *Macbeth* for director Justin Kurzel; *The Double*; *Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy* for Tomas Alfredson, for which she received a BAFTA Award nomination; *Nanny McPhee Returns*; *Young Adam*; and Sally Potter's *Yes*.

Durran's credits as assistant costume designer include Mike Leigh's Academy Award®-winning *Topsy-Turvy*, Simon West's *Lara Croft: Tomb Raider*, George Lucas' *Star Wars: Episode II – Attack of the Clones*, and Lee Tamahori's *Die Another Day*.

**JESS GONCHOR** (Production Designer) received his first Academy Award® nomination and an Art Director's Guild nomination for his work on the Coen Brothers' *True Grit*. He also collaborated with Joel and Ethan Coen on *No Country For Old Men* (for which he received an Art Director's Guild Award In Excellence in Production Design), *A Serious Man* (Art Director's Guild Nomination), *Burn After Reading*, *Inside Llewyn Davis* (the Hamilton Behind the Scenes Award), *Hail Caesar!* (his second Academy Award® nomination), and the 2018 release *The Ballad of Buster Scruggs*, marking his seventh film with the Coen Brothers.

He also worked with director Bennett Miller on the Academy Award®-nominated *Capote*, *Moneyball*, and *Foxcatcher* (on which he also served as 2<sup>nd</sup> unit director).

Other features include Gore Verbinski's *The Lone Ranger*, Sam Mendes' *Away We Go*, David Frankel's *The Devil Wears Prada*, and Ben Affleck's 1920s prohibition film *Live By Night*.

Gonchor received an ADG Award in 2015 for Best TV Design Short Format for Apple Music.

He is a member of both AMPAS and DGA and has directed numerous commercials. His passion for the art began in Mamaroneck High School's theater and lighting department.

Oscar®-winning composer **ALEXANDRE DESPLAT** (Composer) is one of the most coveted film composers in the world today. Desplat is noted for his collaborations with some of the world's top filmmakers: Wes Anderson, George Clooney, Stephen Daldry, David Fincher, Stephen Frears, Tom Hooper, Ang Lee, Terrence Malick, Roman Polanski and Angelina Jolie garnering nine Academy Award® nominations.

Desplat first captivated American ears with *The Girl With The Pearl Earring* and *Birth*. The two-time Golden Globe and Oscar® winner has since scored a range of incredible films, eight of which have been Oscar-nominated: *The Queen*, *The Curious Case Of Benjamin Button*, *Fantastic Mr. Fox*, *The King's Speech*, *Argo*, *Philomena*, *The Imitation Game* and Wes Anderson's *The Grand Budapest Hotel* which won the 2015 Oscar for Best Score. Desplat's thematic score to Guillermo Del Toro's film, *The Shape of Water* garnered a 2018 Golden Globe, a BAFTA, a 2019 Grammy nomination, and won the Academy Award for Best Original Score.

Desplat's work includes Angelina Jolie's *Unbroken*, his second collaboration with Tom Hooper (*The King's Speech*), *The Danish Girl*, Illumination Entertainment's recent box office smash hit, *The Secret Life Of Pets*, *Florence Foster Jenkins* starring Meryl Streep, Touchstone's *The Light Between Oceans* starring Michael Fassbender and Alicia Vikander, *The Shape of Water* directed by Guillermo Del Toro's, George Clooney's comedy crime feature, *Suburbicon* and Fox Searchlight's animation adventure-comedy, and *Isle of Dogs* directed by Wes Anderson, which received a Golden Globe nomination for Best Original Score and was recently nominated for a 2019 Academy Award for Best Original Score. Desplat's other recent work includes Jacques Audiard's *The Sisters Brothers* starring Joaquin Phoenix and Jake Gyllenhaal and MGM's *Operation Finale* directed by Chris Weitz.

Born to a Greek mother and French father, Desplat grew up in France with a budding love for Hollywood film music, and broke into the French film industry in the 1980s. With a penchant for lyricism, elegant orchestrations, and precise dramatization, Desplat has quickly joined the pantheon of all-time greats. "I was in a car with a friend who had offered me a double vinyl of Star Wars," Desplat remembers. "It might have been '78. He gave me this record, and I remember having said to him, "Hmm. 'Music composed and conducted by John Williams.' That's what I want to do." And that's what I'm doing."

**“Academy Award®” and “Oscar®” are the registered trademarks and service marks of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences.**

#####