

# NEWS

## 'THE WILD GIRL'

### PRODUCTION BIOS

**JOEL RICE (Executive Producer)** – Since the early 90s, Joel S. Rice has been producing films for television that do more than just tell a story – they make a difference. After receiving his Bachelor's degree in Psychology and Theater from Wesleyan University in Connecticut in the late 80s, Rice moved to Los Angeles and began acting in a variety of films before returning to school. He earned his Master's Degree in Social Work from UCLA and worked as a Licensed Clinical Social Worker from 1988 to 1992.

In the early 90s, Rice decided to return to entertainment, forming a production company, WildRice Productions, which immediately began producing films for television which focused on social or personal issues that affect families, relationships or the public as a whole. His 1993 film for CBS, "Bonds of Love," starred Treat Williams and Kelly McGillis in a love story between a man who is mentally retarded and a woman who is not. WildRice's "Cries From the Heart" (1994) starred Patty Duke and Melissa Gilbert in a courtroom drama about a mother whose seven-year-old autistic son reveals he's been abused by a guardian at his school, though it's unclear if he's telling the truth.

1998's "About Sarah" for CBS starred Mary Steenburgen as a retarded mother of a teenage girl (Kellie Martin), which tackled the issues of role reversal between children and adult parents with physical or emotional handicaps. The film received a Christopher Award, as well as "Best of the Fest" at the Breckenridge Festival of Film, and Steenburgen received a Screen Actors Guild Award nomination for her performance.

In 2000, Rice executive produced Showtime's "One Kill," starring Anne Heche, Sam Shepard and Eric Stoltz. Most recently he was executive producer for the 2007 Nickelodeon comedy "Shredderman Rules," and the critically praised Hallmark Channel Original Movie, "The Note."

Rice is married to his wife of 19 years, Ronni. The couple live in Los Angeles with their two daughters, ages six and nine.

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**MICHAEL PRUPAS (Executive Producer)** – Michael Prupas, President and CEO of Muse Entertainment Enterprises, is a 28-year veteran of the film and television industries. He practiced entertainment law for 20 years, including 15 years as a senior partner at the law firm Heenan Blaikie. Prupas was the head of the firm's entertainment law practice, which is the largest in Canada.

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With his extensive experience in international production financing as well as legal and business affairs, Prupas launched Muse Entertainment Enterprises in June 1998, which has quickly become one of the major independent production companies in Canada. In 2000, he set up Muse Distribution International, which represents Muse Entertainment and other independent Canadian producers at major markets and brings Canadian programs to audiences worldwide.

In 2005, Prupas executive produced two award-winning television mini-series: "Human Trafficking," about the global reach of sex slavery directed by Christian Duguay and starring Donald Sutherland, Mira Sorvino, Robert Carlyle and Rémy Girard, as well as "Answered by Fire," about the violent creation of East Timor. Prupas also executive produced three seasons worth of episodes of the award-winning dramatic series "This is Wonderland," which has been sold for broadcast in over 100 territories.

In 2007, he produced the feature film "The Deal," starring William H. Macy and Meg Ryan, which premiered at the Sundance Film Festival. Other TV movies he has produced or executive produced include "Too Young to Marry," "I Me Wed," "Dr. Jekyll & Mr. Hyde," "Girl's Best Friend," "Swamp Devil" and "Infected." He has worked with a myriad of successful actors, including Tom Skeritt, Erica Durance, Bruce Dern, Isabella Rossellini, Bill Pullman, Linda Hamilton and Bob Hoskins.

Prupas established the first entertainment law course at McGill University, which he taught from 1997-2002. He coached a minor league baseball team for five years, served on the Board of Trustees of the Banff Television Festival and sits on the Board of Advisors of the Just for Laughs comedy festival and on the finance committee of the Association des Producteurs de Film et de Télévision du Québec.

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**JESSE PRUPAS (Executive Producer)** – As Vice-President, Development & Distribution at Muse Entertainment, Jesse Prupas produced four TV movies in 2007: "The Watch," "Too Young To Marry," "I Me Wed" and "Girl's Best Friend." That same year he served as associate producer on four other TV movies: "Dr. Jekyll & Mr. Hyde," "Black Swarm," "Swamp Devil" and "Infected." In 2006, he produced three TV movies: "Proof of Lies," "House Sitter" and "Tipping Point," and was associate producer of the critically acclaimed series "Durham County."

In 2005, Prupas produced the TV movies "Mind Over Murder" and "Black Widower." In 2008, Prupas produced the teen comedy series "Family Biz" for YTV. He is also developing a new slate of TV movies, mini-series and feature films for Canadian, US and international markets and is responsible for Muse Entertainment's new media projects.

Prupas oversees Muse Distribution International and is responsible for selling television content in Canada, the United States and around the world.

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He got his break in the industry as a writer on the animated series "Mona the Vampire" (Cinar/YTV/France 2). Prupas is a graduate of Columbia University and the United World College of the Atlantic. He is an avid computer gamer, skier and yoga practitioner.

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**IRENE LITINSKY (Executive Producer)** – Irene Litinsky joined Muse Entertainment in 2000 as the head of the Montreal Production Center, bringing more than 20 years of production experience with her.

Throughout her career, Litinsky has collaborated with some of the industry's top producers including Jodi Foster, Robert Greenwald, Daniel Blatt, Ivan Reitman, Linda Reisman, Iain Smith, Robert Halmi Sr. and Robert Altman. She has worked with such distinguished directors as Steven Schachter, Robert Dornhelm, Vincent Ward, Darren Aronofsky, John Smith, Christian Duguay, Paolo Barzman, Alan Rudolph, and Steven Spielberg.

Litinsky was the Canadian Production Supervisor of Steven Spielberg's "The Terminal" and "Catch Me if You Can," "Blades of Glory," and Darren Aronofsky's "The Fountain." Her other feature film credits include "The Deal," "Map of the Human Heart," "Waking the Dead," "Levity" and "Jackknife."

Among her numerous television producer credits are the Golden Globe nominated mini-series "Human Trafficking," the Emmy and Golden Globe nominated movie "The Wool Cap," "The Last Templar," "Dead Like Me," "WarGames: The Dead Code," "The Cutting Edge: Going for the Gold," "Baby for Sale," "When Angels Come to Town," "The Hound of the Baskervilles," "The Audrey Hepburn Story," "The Sleep Room," "Million Dollar Babies" and "Redeemer."

Litinsky is married to Francois Ouimet, a commercial director. They live in Montreal and have two sons.

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**WILLIAM STUART (Executive Producer)** – William Stuart is the President and Chief Executive Officer of Aurora Productions, where he supervises the day-to-day operations of the company. Aurora Productions, under Stuart's guidance, is currently developing several motion pictures, including "Stealth," also known as "Deep Blue," for New Line Cinema, "Graduation Day" for Castle Rock Productions, and "Immortals" for Universal Pictures. Additionally, Aurora currently has an active development slate of approximately 10-15 independent feature films.

Among many other films, Stuart executive produced "The Rock" for Walt Disney Pictures with Simpson-Bruckheimer Productions. This high-budget action film, which stars Sean Connery, Nicolas Cage and Ed Harris, was one of the blockbuster movies of 1996.

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From 1982 to 1984, Stuart served as Vice President for Columbia Pictures International, supervising production and distribution throughout Europe and the Middle East. From 1978 to 1982, he was a Vice President with MGM/UA, serving as Executive Director of United Artists Classics, Executive Assistant to the President, and also supervised film distribution operations in Europe, the Middle East and Africa.

In the early 70s, Stuart was with 20<sup>th</sup> Century Fox. During that period, he served in Sydney as Managing Director for film distribution and merchandising for Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific Territories; in Madrid as Managing Director of distribution for Spain and Portugal; and in Paris as Assistant Sales Manager for Europe, the Near East and the Middle East.

Stuart is currently a member of the Producer's Guild of America and Vice-Chairman of the Guild's International Committee.

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**DAVID HELPERN (Executive Producer)** – David Helpern, originally from Boston, began his career writing about film and politics for two weekly newspapers. In 1974, he directed and co-produced the feature length documentary about film director Nicholas Ray, "I'm A Stranger Here Myself," featuring appearances by Francois Truffaut, Natalie Wood and producer John Houseman. In 1976, Helpern was nominated for an Academy Award when he produced and directed the feature length documentary about the Hollywood blacklist, "Hollywood On Trial," narrated by John Huston.

While continuing to write about film and politics, Helpern co-authored the story for the film "Between The Lines," a comedy about working on an alternative newspaper in Boston. Helpern then produced and directed the film, "Something Short of Paradise," starring Susan Sarandon and David Steinberg.

After moving to Los Angeles in 1982, Helpern produced or executive produced the films "Dead Heat" with Treat Williams and Joe Piscopo, "Something Special" with John Glover and Patty Duke Astin and "Hidden II: The Spawning." He also was a creative consultant on the long running half-hour syndicated TV series, "Kids Inc."

In 1992 Helpern was hired to head Film and Television development for a new family entertainment division of Sony, Sony Wonder. He left Sony in 1995 to return to producing; and served as executive producer on "Leave It To Beaver" for Universal in 1998.

In 1999 Helpern became interim CEO of New York-based footwear and fashion company, Joan and David. Most recently, Helpern executive produced "Trophy Wife," for Lifetime Television. He is currently developing a number of projects for film and television including "Walter Reed," for HBO, based on the Pulitzer Prize winning Washington Post series of articles about Walter

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Reed Medical Center, "Sinbad...The Lost Voyage," for Columbia with Adam Shankman attached to direct and "Military Ballet" for New Line.

David and his wife, Ann, live in Los Angeles with their three children.

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**DON MCBREARTY (Director)** – Don McBrearty's directing resume goes back more than 20 years, with nearly 50 TV movies and episodic programs to his credit. A prolific director, he has been nominated for several Directors Guild of Canada awards and Gemini Awards, the Canadian equivalent of the Emmys.

Recent credits include directing several episodes of the Canadian series "Murdoch Mysteries" and "Heartland." McBrearty has also directed episodes of "21 Jump Street," "Road to Avonlea" and "Wind at my Back." In 2008, he directed Chandra Wilson's Emmy-nominated performance in the Hallmark Channel Original Movie "Accidental Friendship." McBrearty's other credits include "Sex and the Single Mom," "Luna: Spirit of the Whale," "Chasing Freedom" and the 2009 TV movie, "Unstable."

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**RON PARKER (Writer)** – Ronald Parker graduated from the University of Kansas in 1972 with a degree in journalism. During his final semester, he was recruited by a Hollywood talent agency, Creative Management Associates (now known as ICM). Upon graduation, he moved to Los Angeles.

At CMA, Parker represented actors and writers and handled the West Coast theatre department. He left two years later to work in the Story Department at United Artists Studio.

In 1975, a prominent theatre and film producer, Robert Fryer, hired Parker to run his New York production office and help produce the original Broadway productions of Bob Fosse's musical *Chicago* and Alan Ayckbourn's play *The Norman Conquests*.

The following year, Parker returned to Los Angeles to be Director of Development for the film company The Producer Circle. Among his projects there were "The Shining" and "The Boys from Brazil."

This led to his becoming Vice President of Creative Affairs at the Hollywood studio of London-based Marble Arch Productions, where Parker was the supervising creative executive on a dozen feature films, including "On Golden Pond," "Sophie's Choice" and "The Muppet Movie."

In 1983, he began producing his own films, ranging from prestigious TV dramas such as

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Hallmark Hall of Fame's "Thursday's Child" starring Gena Rowlands and Rob Lowe, to the sci-fi comedy feature "My Stepmother is an Alien," starring Dan Aykroyd and Kim Basinger.

In 1998-99, Parker took a sabbatical from filmmaking to be on the faculty of the USC School of Cinema, teaching screenwriting. Since then, Parker's career has focused primarily on writing.

In the past 15 years, Parker has had over 50 writing assignments, nearly all in the area of long-form television. These include the mini-series "Joan of Arc," starring Leelee Sobieski and Peter O'Toole; the mini-series "Nuremburg," starring Alec Baldwin; the Hallmark Hall of Fame movie "Night Ride Home," starring Ellen Burstyn and Rebecca DeMornay; and the A&E miniseries "Napoleon," starring John Malkovich and Isabella Rossellini.

Most recently, he was a producer on the Emmy-winning miniseries "Broken Trail," starring Robert Duvall and Thomas Haden Church, directed by Walter Hill.

--HALLMARK MOVIE CHANNEL--

