

## 'THE CHRISTMAS SPIRIT'

### CAST BIOS

**NICOLLETTE SHERIDAN (Charlotte Hart)** – Nicollette Sheridan has won a worldwide audience with her past television and film roles. She has exploded on the small screen with her Golden Globe nominated role of Edie Britt, the hilarious and audacious bombshell of Wisteria Lane, on ABC's hit show "Desperate Housewives." Sheridan was honored in her native England, receiving the 2006 Glamour Women of the Year Award for Best U.S. TV Actress, adding to her back-to-back 2005-2006 Screen Actors Guild Awards.

Born and raised in England, Sheridan discovered a passion for ballet as a small child and studied furiously, broadening her love of the arts as a student at the Arts Educational School in London. In addition to theatre, she nurtured her talents as an avid equestrienne along with a rigorous thirst for reading and a love of Shakespeare.

Moving to Los Angeles and being courted to explore her talents was a natural progression. Sheridan became a household name portraying the beautiful, powerful and manipulative Paige Matheson on "Knots Landing." This led to a myriad of other roles including those in "The People Next Door" with Faye Dunaway, "A Time To Heal" opposite Gary Cole, "Indictment: The McMartin Trial" with James Woods and "Dead Husbands" with John Ritter, along with a special guest appearance on the season finale of "Will & Grace."

Sheridan was first introduced to film audiences in Rob Reiner's "The Sure Thing" opposite John Cusack, going on to appear in other film comedies such as "Noises Off" opposite Michael Caine, "Spy Hard" opposite Leslie Nielsen and "Beverly Hills Ninja" with Chris Farley and Chris Rock. With an affinity for the animated world, she has brought her English accent to the Disney animated series "Tarzan and Jane" and was also heard as a Russian fly in the animated feature "Fly Me to the Moon" with Tim Curry, Kelly Ripa, Christopher Lloyd and Buzz Aldrin. Sheridan starred in the Hallmark Channel Original Movie "Honeymoon for One" and the recently released "Jewtopia."

Additionally, Sheridan completed voicing the role of "Zenna" in Promenade Pictures' animated film "Noah's Arc: The New Beginning" in which she stars opposite Michael Keaton, Rob Schneider, Marcia Gay Harden and Sir Ben Kingsley.

Generous with her time, Sheridan has lent her devotion and star presence to philanthropic causes including those focused on cancer, women and children at risk, and natural disaster relief, as well as such entities as the Red Cross, Humane Society, Last Chance for Animals, Best Friends Animal Society and The Amanda Foundation. Sheridan teamed up with Natural Balance Pet Foods to raise money for National Guide Dog Awareness Month.

She currently resides in Los Angeles, California.

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**BART JOHNSON (Daniel Huntsman)** – Actor Bart Johnson, currently recurring on the TV series "The Client List," may still be best known for his role as Zac Efron's father, Coach Jack Bolton in Disney's "High School Musical" franchise. Johnson can also be seen in "The Saratov Approach," in theaters now.

Born in Hollywood, Johnson was exposed to the movie business at a very young age. At the age of 14 his family moved from Los Angeles to Midway, Utah. During high school Johnson got involved in theater and during college began his career in television. Before long he packed up his car with everything he owned and drove back to Hollywood.

In television, he starred on the WB's drama "Hyperion Bay" from creator Joseph Dougherty. Johnson has also guest starred and recurred in many TV shows and can be seen in the films, "Mi Familia," "Animals," "5 Nights in Hollywood," "Campus Killer," "A Green Story" and "Monster Mutt."

When not working, Johnson spends his time in the improv and writing program at the Upright Citizens Brigade.

Johnson recently debuted as a writer/director with his 18-minute short film entitled, "The Run." The film, shot entirely in Mexico on 35mm film, is a prelude to a feature length film of the same title. It was this film director Jack Angelo discovered online that lead to the casting of Johnson in the Hallmark Channel Original Movie, "The Christmas Spirit".

Johnson also works with long time collaborators, best friends and real life brothers, Adam and Brad Johnson. This year they produced a documentary entitled "\$6 and a Bottle of Water," the story of the brothers' journey hitchhiking across the Baja desert. They have several other projects under their banner "Good Brothers Entertainment."

Johnson owns a boutique hotel just outside of Park city called "The Johnson Mill Bed & Breakfast" in Midway, Utah. Redbook magazine recently named it "One of the 4 most romantic Inn's in the Country."

Johnson married actress Robyn Lively in 1999. The couple has three children (Baylen, Kate and Wyatt) and resides in their home in the Hollywood Hills.

You can follow Johnson on Twitter: @bart\_johnson

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**OLYMPIA DUKAKIS (Gwen Hollander)** – Long a vital, respected actor of the classic and contemporary stage and the epitome of Mediterranean-styled weariness, this grand lady did not become a household name and sought-after film actress until age 56 when she turned in an Oscar-winning performance as Cher's sardonic mother in the romantic comedy "Moonstruck" (1987). Since then movie and television fans have discovered an acting treasure. Her adaptability to various ethnicities (Greek, Italian, Jewish, Eastern European, etc.), as well her chameleon-like versatility in everything from cutting edge comedy to stark tragedy, has kept her in high demand for the past 30 years as of one of Hollywood's topnotch character players.

Dukakis was born on June 20, 1931, in Lowell, Massachusetts, the daughter of Greek immigrants (Constantine and Alexandra (née Christos) Dukakis). She majored in physical therapy at Boston University, where she graduated with a BA. Dukakis practiced as a physical therapist during the polio epidemic. She later returned to her alma mater and entered the graduate program in performing arts and earned a Master of Fine Arts degree.

Dukakis found early success by distinguishing herself first on stage performing in summer stock and with several repertory and Shakespearean companies throughout the county. She made her Broadway debut as an understudy in *The Aspern Papers* at age 30, followed by very short runs in the plays *Abraham Cochrane* (1964) and *Who's Who in Hell* (1974). In 1999, she premiered a one-woman play *Rose*, at the National Theatre in London and subsequently on Broadway in 2000. The play earned her an Outer Critics Circle Award and Drama Desk Award nomination and she continues to tour the country with it. Dukakis was seen on the New York stage in the Roundabout Theatre's production of *The Milktrain Doesn't Stop Here Anymore* (2011), in San Francisco in A.C.T.'s production of *Vigil* (2011) and as Prospera in *The Tempest* (2012) at Shakespeare & Co. She has performed in over 130 productions Off-Broadway and regionally at theatres including the Public Theatre, A.C.T., Shakespeare in the Park, Shakespeare & Co., and the Williamstown Summer Theatre Festival, where she also served as Associate Director.

Dukakis married Yugoslav-American actor Louis Zorich in 1962. The New York-based couple went on to co-found the Whole Theatre Company in Montclair, New Jersey, and ran the company for 19 years (1971-1990). As actress, director, producer and teacher, she still found the time to raise their three young children. She also became a master instructor at New York University for fourteen years. Dukakis scored theater triumphs in *A Man's a Man*, for which she won an Off-Broadway Obie Award in 1962; several productions of *The Cherry Orchard* and *Mother Courage, Six Characters in Search of an Author, The Rose Tattoo, The Seagull, The Marriage of Bette and Boo* (another Obie Award); and, more notably, her many performances as the title role in *Hecuba*. A good portion of her successes was launched within the walls of her own theater company, which encouraged the birth of new and untried plays. Dukakis' prolific directing credits include many of the classics: *Orpheus Descending, The House of Bernarda Alba, Uncle*

*Vanya*, and *A Touch of the Poet*, as well as the more contemporary (*One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* and *Kennedy's Children*). She also adapted such plays as *Mother Courage* and *The Trojan Women* for the theater company. Over the duration of their marriage, she and her husband have experienced shared successes, appearing together in *Long Day's Journey Into Night*, *Camino Real*, *The Three Sisters* and *The Seagull*, among many others. Both are master interpreters of Chekhovian plays and one of their more recent acting collaborations was in *The Chekhov Cycle* in 2003.

Making an inauspicious debut in a bit role as a mental patient in "Lilith" (1964), Dukakis tended to gravitate toward off-the-wall films with various offshoots of the ethnic mother. She played mom to such leads as Dustin Hoffman in "John and Mary" (1969), Joseph Bologna in the cult comedy "Made for Each Other" (1971) and Ray Sharkey in "The Idolmaker" (1980). Interestingly, it was her scene-stealing work on Broadway in the comedy *Social Security* (1986) that caught director Norman Jewison's eye and earned her the "Moonstruck" (1987) movie role. The Academy Award win for Best Supporting

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Actress was the last of a stream of awards she earned for that part, including the American Comedy Award, Los Angeles Film Critics Award, and Golden Globe Award. From then on, silver-haired Dukakis was first in line for a number of roles: "Steel Magnolias" (1989), "Dad" (1989), "Look Who's Talking" (1989), "The Cemetery Club" (1993), "Mr. Holland's Opus" (1995) and "Mother" (1995). Her most recent film, "Cloudburst" (2011), has been a critical and audience darling, winning her several Best Actress awards and over 40 awards for Best Film at various Film Festivals around the world.

On TV, Dukakis received high praise for her work especially for her sympathetic transgendered landlady in the acclaimed miniseries "Tales of the City" (1993) and its sequels "More Tales of the City" (1998) (Emmy Nominee) and "Further Tales of the City" (2001). Additionally, she was seen in episodes of "Bored to Death" (2011-2012), and TV movies "Last of the Blond Bombshells" (Judi Dench) (2000), "Sinatra" (Golden Globe Nominee) (1992), and "Joan of Arc" (Emmy Nominee) (1999). This work is among more than 40 other series, mini-series and guest starring roles she has accumulated over her long career.

An ardent liberal and Democrat, she is the cousin of one-time presidential candidate Michael Dukakis. Moreover, she is a strong advocate of women's rights and environmental causes. Dukakis published her best-selling autobiography "Ask Me Again Tomorrow: A Life in Progress" in 2003, an introspective chronicle full of her trademark candor and wry humor. She is also a figure on the lecture circuit covering topics as widespread as life in the theater to feminism, Alzheimer's, diabetes, and osteoporosis. A hardcore New Yorker, she still resides there with her husband. She has received the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Greek America Foundation and the National Arts Club Medal of Honor and received her star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame this year.

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