

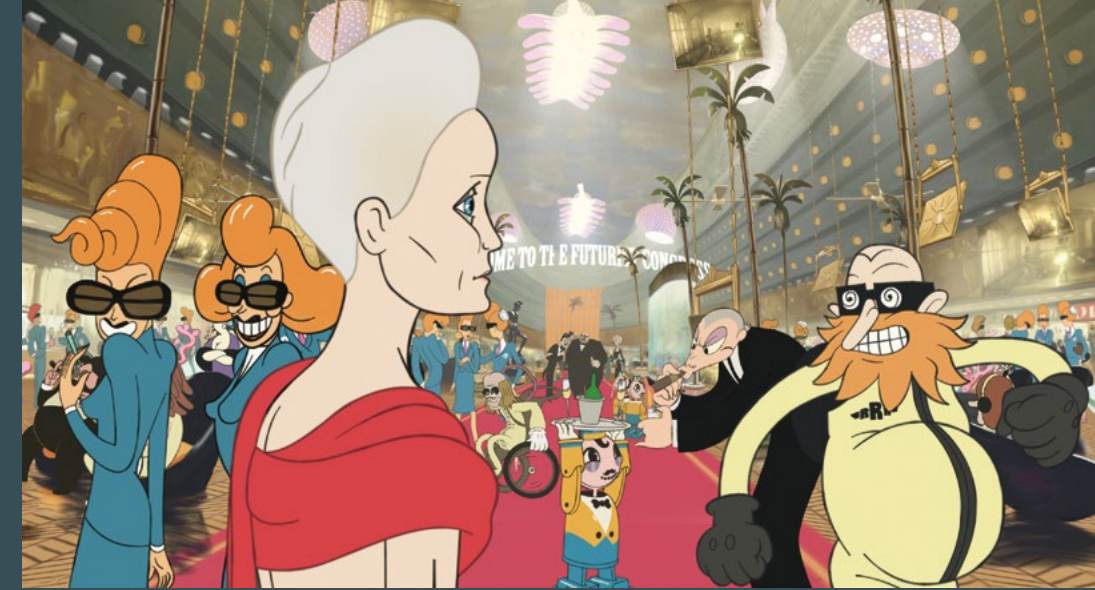
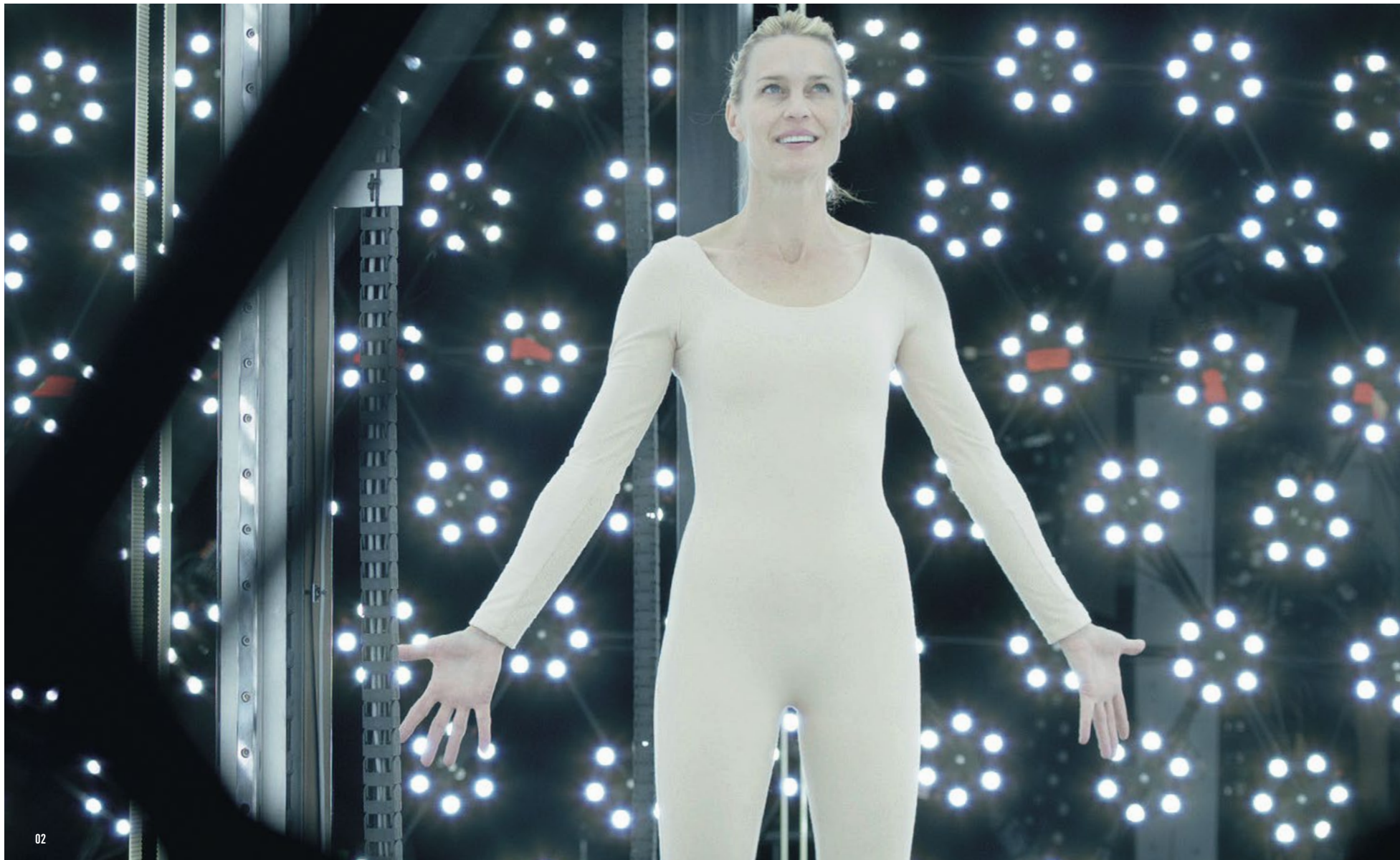
QUINZAINÉ
DIRECTORS' FORTNIGHT
CANNES 2013

ROBIN WRIGHT
AT

THE CONGRESS

AN
ARI FOLMAN FILM





SYNOPSIS

Robin Wright, playing the role of herself, gets an offer from a major studio to sell her cinematic identity: she'll be numerically scanned and sampled so that her alias can be used with no restrictions in all kinds of Hollywood films – even the most commercial ones that she previously refused. In exchange she receives loads of money, but more importantly, the studio agrees to keep her digitalized character forever young – for all eternity – in all of their films. The contract is valid for 20 years.

The Congress follows Robin as she makes her comeback after the contract expires, straight into the world of future fantasy cinema.



INTERVIEW WITH ARI FOLMAN

***THE CONGRESS* was years in the making - can you tell us how you first came to the project and the journey of adapting Stanislaw Lem's cult science fiction novel?**

The first time I read Lem's novel I was 16 years old, a sci-fi buff, I fell in love with it. The second time was during film school, where I decided for the first time I want to do something cinematic with the text, only after digging deep into animation while making *Waltz With Bashir*, I had the view of how I plan to adapt. Took me one whole year to write the script, I went far away from the novel, but always came back to it while getting lost during the writing process.

I think the spirit of the novel is a huge part of the final picture, and for sure it is very present in the animated part.

The novel's hero Ijon Tichy was an explorer and scientist, so how did you decide to make the main character of your adaptation an actress?

Basically I feel, that if you're adapting a classic, you need the courage to feel free, and not get caged in the original text.

I was looking for new dimension for the text, the allegory of the communist era in the book had to be transformed into our current life, and the chemical dictatorship in the novel turned during writing into dealing with dictatorship within the entertainment business, and especially in the film industry controlled by big studios. From there, the theme of an aging actress involved in the story was just a matter of a process.

Why did you finally settle on Robin Wright to incarnate your hero? Tell us about the relationship between her real life career/persona and her fictional alter-ego in THE CONGRESS.

Since thinking about the film, I always had the opening shot in my mind, where the actress is being crucified by her long time agent. During the winter of 2009, while attending a ceremony in LA, I set by chance across Robin Wright the entire evening, and I couldn't resist the image of her in that opening shot. It was perfect. The next day I pitched her the project, already with the illustrations of her made by

David Polonsky on the same evening. Robin committed herself on the spot and we started together a 4 years journey.

THE CONGRESS presents a strongly dystopic vision of Hollywood and big studio movies - is that also how you view that part of the industry? Does your film reflect a fear for the future of cinema?

While searching for a scanning room in LA for the shoot of the scanning scene, I was shocked to learn that a room with NASA style performance already exists, and actors are being scanned for a few years now, so the technology of scanned actors is already here. Basically, flesh and blood actors are not really needed for the "post Avatar era". I guess its about economics now, whether the next generation of films will be with scanned actors, or with completely new generation of "built from scratch" actors. As an optimist, I think the human actor will win that war, and I hope *The Congress* is our small contribution.

So many details in THE CONGRESS are "futuristic" yet still very current - do you see any positive aspects of living in another reality, behind an online avatar for example? Do you think it approaches the film's idea of choosing your own reality?



I think the chemical world exposed in Lem's novel, and in the film, is a fantasy and at the same time a major fear for of us travelers of imagination and dreams. I always have the feeling that everybody, everywhere live in a parallel universe, one is were we function in real time, and the other is the universe where our mind takes them with or without control in any given moment. Combining the two worlds into a one, is for me the biggest goal of being a film maker.

The film is unique but features what seems like an encyclopedia of significant references in terms of cinema and otherwise. Were there key films or other influences that served as guides or inspirations as you made this movie?

The animated part is a tribute to the great Fleischer Brothers work from the 30's. Its hand drawn, made in 8 different countries and it took two and a half years to create 55 minutes of animation. It was by far the toughest mission of my life. The team back home, led by director of animation were working shifts 24/7 to conduct the complete animation from all those studios into one look with consistency of the characters from scene to scene. During the process we discovered that sleep is for mortals and animation for the insane. Elsewhere in the movie I try to tribute my idol

Stanley Kubrick twice, one with *Dr. Strange-love* and the other with 2001 Space Odysee, still my favorite sci-fi movie ever.

Age, free will and mortality are among the deep philosophical questions running through THE CONGRESS - what do you want your audiences to take away from the film?

I think this is the beauty of film making – Once you finished your work, its not up to you any more, its up to the audience, all you need to do know, is sit back and listen to them, maybe you'll have a chance to learn what you really did.





ARI FOLMAN



In the mid 1980s, after completing his military service, Ari Folman ventured out on his dream trip to circle the world with a backpack. Just two weeks and two countries into the trip, Ari realized traveling was not for him, so he settled into small guesthouses in Southeast Asia and wrote letters to his friends at home, letters in which he totally fabricated the perfect trip. One whole year of being in one place and writing down the fruits of his fantastical imagination convinced him to return home and study cinema.

His graduate film, *Comfortably Numb* (1991) documented Ari's close friends taking cover on the verge of anxiety attacks during the first Gulf war while Iraqi missiles landed all over Tel Aviv. The result was comical and absurd and the film won the Israeli Academy award for Best Documentary. Between 1991-1996 Ari directed documentary specials for TV, mainly

in the occupied territories. In 1996 he wrote and directed *Saint Clara*, a feature film based on a novel by Czech author Pavel Kohout. The film won seven Israeli Academy awards, including Best Director and Best Film. *Saint Clara* opened the Berlin Film Festival's Panorama and won the People's Choice Award. The film was screened throughout America and Europe to critical acclaim. Ari continued directing successful documentary series and took time off for his second feature in 2001. *Made in Israel* is a futuristic fantasy that centers upon the pursuit of the world's only remaining Nazi. Ari has written for several successful Israeli TV series, including the award-winning *In Treatment (Be Tipul)*, which was the basis for the new HBO series of the same name.

Ari made his initial attempt at animation in his series *The Material that Love is made of* – each episode opens with five minutes of documentary animation which depicts scientists presenting their theories on the evolution of love. This successful attempt at documentary animation propelled Ari to develop the unique format of *Waltz with Bashir*. Based on a true story, the film is a quest into the director's memory for the missing pieces from the days of the Lebanon War in the mid 80s. As far as Ari was concerned, it was only natural to transform the quest into animation, full of imagination and fantasy.

FEATURE FILMS

2008 *Waltz with Bashir* – Writer Director & Producer. Winner – Golden Globe for best foreign film. Winner – Cesar for best foreign film, Nominated for an Academy award for best foreign film and winner of another 26 awards around the world.

2001 *Made In Israel* – Writer and Director. Winner 2 Israeli Academy awards.

1996 *Saint Clara* – Co-Director and Writer. Winner 7 Israeli academy awards, including "Best Director" and "Best Picture", Winner jury prize at the Karlovy Vary festival. Opened the Panorama at the 1996 Berlinale Film Festival.

1991 *Comfortably Numb* – Co-Director and Writer. A documentary shot in Tel-Aviv during the Gulf War. Winner of the Israeli Oscar for "Best Documentary" 1991. Winner Wolgin Prize at the Jerusalem Film Festival.

TV Work

2009 *In Treatment* – writer – 3 Episodes.

2005-2009 *On Any Saturday* – TV Dramatic Series. Writer – 16 episodes. Winner – Israeli Academy award for best TV series 2008.

2000–2004 *Saturdays & Holidays* – TV Dramatic series, Writer, 13 episodes. Winner Israeli Academy award for best drama series 2002.

1993–2000 Directed over 20 short documentaries (up to 25 minutes long) for Israel's "Channel 2".



ROBIN WRIGHT

Robin Wright continues to make an indelible mark in Hollywood. She can currently be seen in the highly acclaimed *House of Cards*, alongside Kevin Spacey, produced by David Fincher. Robin has received outstanding reviews for her portrayal as the formidable Claire Underwood. The first season of the series is now available exclusively on Netflix, and production has currently begun on the second season. Most recently she completed filming *A Most Wanted Man* with Phillip Seymour Hoffman. Wright will soon be seen in *The Congress*, Ari Folman's adaptation of Stanislaw Lem's novel, *The Futurological Congress*. The film will

have its world premiere in Cannes this May. She was last seen on the big screen in David Fincher's highly acclaimed *The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo* as journalist Erika Berger and is committed to continue her role in the remaining two parts of the trilogy. She will also be seen in *Two Mothers* starring opposite Naomi Watts.

Robin consistently receives glowing reviews for the various characters she plays. In 2010, Wright received critical acclaim as Mary Surratt in Robert Redford's riveting courtroom drama, *The Conspirator*. Also, last year, Wright starred alongside Woody Harrelson in Oren Moverman's *Rampart*. Wright received praise for her portrayal in 2009 as 'Pippa Lee' in Rebecca Miller's *The Private Lives of Pippa Lee*. The same year, Wright was also seen in the Christmas classic, *A Christmas Carol*, directed by Robert Zemeckis.

Wright has been recognized for her outstanding performances over the years. She was honored with a career tribute at the 35th Annual Deauville American Film Festival. Her first two nominations, a Golden Globe and Screen Actors Guild for Best Supporting Actress, came as early as 1995 for her unforgettable role as 'Jenny' in Robert Zemeckis' Best Picture Oscar winner, *Forrest Gump*. Wright

earned her second Screen Actors Guild nomination for Best Lead Actress in Nick Cassavetes' *She's So Lovely*, and her third nomination for Best Actress in a Television Movie or Miniseries in Fred Schepisi's *Empire Falls*. She has received three Independent Spirit nominations for her performances in Erin Dignam's *Loved*; Rodrigo Garcia's *Nine Lives*; and Jeff Stanzler's *Sorry, Haters*. Additionally, Wright starred in and served as an executive producer on Deborah Kampmeier's *Virgin*, which received an Independent Spirit nomination for Best First Feature also known as the "John Cassavetes Award."

Other film credits include: Bennett Miller's *Moneyball*, starring Brad Pitt and Jonah Hill, Rob Reiner's cult classic *The Princess Bride*, Barry Levinson's *What Just Happened* and Deborah Kampmeier's *Hounddog*, which Wright also executive produced; Kevin Macdonald's *State of Play*; Anthony Minghella's *Breaking and Entering*; Robert Zemeckis' *Beowulf*; Keith Gordon's *The Singing Detective*; Peter Kosminsky's *White Oleander*; Anthony Drazan's *Hurlyburly*; Sean Penn's *The Pledge*; Luis Mandoki's *Message in a Bottle*; M. Night Shyamalan's *Unbreakable*; Pen Densham's *Moll Flanders*; Barry Levinson's *Toys* and *Room 10* for GLAMOUR magazine's "Reel Women Film Series."



HARVEY KEITEL

To pigeonhole Harvey Keitel as a master of edgy degenerates and killers would have dismissed the actor's many successes with surly husbands, benign cops and intrepid detectives. His prolific but slow-to-ignite career began with memorably unlikable supporting roles in Martin Scorsese character studies *Taxi Driver* and *Alice Doesn't Live Here Anymo-*

re. An Academy Award-nominated supporting role in *Bugsy* heralded a new beginning for Keitel, and he became a favorite on the indie film scene of the 1990s through his association with Quentin Tarantino cult classics *Reservoir Dogs* and *Pulp Fiction*. He also had several successes when he chose to tap his inner soft side in Jane Campion's *The Piano*, but by far, he was the go-to guy for potentially explosive everymen, grizzled police force veterans and G-men in both subtle indies and gun-blazing big budget adventures alike.

Keitel was raised in Brooklyn, NY where he joined the Marines at age 16 and served overseas in the Middle East. When he returned home, he began to pursue an interest in acting, training at the famed Actors Studio before eventually landing stage roles in summer stock, repertory, and the fringes of off-off Broadway and Community Theater. He made his off Broadway debut in Sam Shepard's *Up to Thursday* in 1965 and two years later began his association with Scorsese when he answered a newspaper ad placed by the then-NYU student director. Scorsese cast him in *Who's That Knocking at My Door?*, which evolved from a student short to Scorsese's well-received feature debut. Keitel went on to make a strong impression with a breakout role as the director's alter ego in *Mean Streets*.

Keitel's long list of additional films include *Apocalypse Now*, *The Duellists*, *Fingers*, *Blue Collar*, *Eagle's Wing*, *Deathwatch*, *The Border*, *Wise Guys*, *The Pick-Up Artist*, *The Last Temptation of Christ*, *The Two Jakes*, *Thelma & Louise*, *Bugsy*, *Bad Lieutenant*, *Smoke*, *Clockers*, *From Dusk Till Dawn*, *Cop Land*, *Three Seasons*, *Holy Smoke*, *U-571*, *Little Nicky*, *The Grey Zone*, *Red Dragon*, *National Treasure*, *Be Cool*, *National Treasure: Book of Secrets*, *Inglourious Basterds*, *Little Fockers*, and most recently, Wes Anderson's *Moonrise Kingdom*, which opened the 65th Cannes Film Festival. Keitel resides in New York, NY.





JON HAMM

Jon Hamm's nuanced portrayal of the high-powered, philandering advertising executive Don Draper on AMC's award-winning drama series *Mad Men* has firmly established him as one of Hollywood's most talented and versatile actors, and has earned him numerous accolades, including a Golden Globe Award, Television Critics Association Award and a Critics' Choice Television Award, as well as multiple Emmy and Screen Actors Guild nominations. He has also joined with the entire cast to win the Screen Actors Guild Award for Best Ensemble in a Drama Series.

On the big screen, Hamm is attached to star in the baseball drama *Million Dollar Arm*, based on a script by Thomas McCarthy, about a sports agent who discovers professional pitchers through a reality show he staged in India with cricket players. Hamm most recently starred in *Friends With Kids* (which he also produced), for writer/director/star Jennifer Westfeldt, opposite Adam Scott, Kristen Wiig, Maya Rudolph and Megan Fox. His previous film credits include *Bridesmaids* with Kristen Wiig, Ben Affleck's *The Town*, Zack Snyder's fantasy thriller *Sucker Punch*, *Howl* with James Franco, *Shrek Forever After*, in which he voiced the character 'Brogan,' *The Day The Earth Stood Still* with Keanu Reeves, Jennifer Westfeldt's *Ira & Abby*, *Kissing Jessica Stein*, and *We Were Soldiers*.

Hamm will next begin production on an untitled Larry David comedy for director Greg Mottola and HBO and completed work on *A Young Doctor's Notebook*, a BBC miniseries in which he stars opposite Daniel Radcliffe and also executive produced. Hamm's appearances on the Emmy-winning comedy, *30 Rock*, have earned him three Emmy nominations for Outstanding Guest Actor in a Comedy Series, and he has hosted *Saturday Night Live* three times to critical-acclaim. His additional television credits include IFC's *The Increasingly*

Poor Decisions of Todd Margaret, *The Division*, *What About Brian*, *The Unit*, *Numb3rs* and *CSI Miami*, as well as voice work on *Metacalypse*, *The Simpsons*, *Bob's Burgers* and more. Hamm first came to audience's attention in the NBC series *Providence*. Signed for a cameo role, he impressed the producers so much that he ended up with an 18-episode run on the series.

A native of St. Louis, Missouri, Hamm received his Bachelor of Arts in English at the University of Missouri-Columbia and currently resides in Los Angeles.



KODI SMIT-MCPHEE

Kodi Smit-McPhee is currently filming Twentieth Century Fox's *Dawn Of The Planet Of The Apes* opposite Andy Serkis, Jason Clarke, Gary Oldman, and Keri Russell. The project reunites him with director Matt Reeves with whom he previously worked with on the film *Let Me In*.

Kodi recently finished filming *The Young Ones* (dir: Jake Paltrow), starring opposite Nicholas Hoult, Elle Fanning and Michael Shannon. In 2012, Kodi filmed *The Congress* (dir. Ari Folman) opposite Robin Wright, Paul Giamatti and Harvey Keitel. The film will premiere at

the Directors' Fortnight at the 2013 Cannes Film Festival.

In addition, Kodi filmed the independent film, *The Wilderness Of James* (dir: Michael J. Johnson) as the title role of 'James', opposite Isabel Furman, Virginia Madsen, and Evan Ross.

He also filmed the lead role in *A Birder's Guide To Everything* (dir: Rob Meyer), opposite Ben Kingsley which premiered at the 2013 TriBeCa Film Festival. Kodi played "Benvolio" in *Romeo & Juliet* (dir. Carlo Carlei) opposite Hailee Steinfeld, Douglas Booth, Ed Westwick, and Paul Giamatti.

Kodi starred in Laika Entertainment / Focus Features' *Paranorman*, in which he lends his voice as the lead role of "Norman". The film was nominated for "Best Animated Feature" for the 2013 Academy Awards, and also received a 2013 BAFTA Awards nomination for "Best Animated Film." The cast includes Anna Kendrick, Christopher Mintz-Plasse, Casey Affleck, Leslie Mann, and Jeff Garlin. Kodi previously starred in *Let Me In* (dir. Matt Reeves), opposite Chloe Grace Moretz and Richard Jenkins, for which he received a 2010 Critics Choice Nomination for "Best Young Actor" for his performance in the film; *The Road* (dir. John Hillcoat) opposite Viggo Mor-

tenson, Charlize Theron and Robert Duvall, for which he received a 2009 Broadcast Critics Nomination for "Best Young Actor" and a 2010 Australian Film Institute (AFI) Nomination for "Best International Actor"; *Romulus, MY FATHER* (dir. Richard Roxburgh) with Eric Bana and Franka Potente, garnered him the 2007 AFI Award for "Best Young Actor" as well as a "Best Actor" Nomination; the Australian film *Matching Jack* (dir. Nadia Tass) for which he received a 2010 AFI Nomination for "Best Supporting Actor" and also *Dead Europe* (dir. by Tony Krawitz) opposite Ewen Leslie and Marton Csokas which premiered at the 2012 Toronto International Film Festival.



DANNY HUSTON

Award-winning actor and director, Danny Huston is known for his versatility and dramatic screen presence. True to Huston form, Danny has a storied career both in front of and behind the camera.

This summer, Huston will return in the role of "Ben Diamond", on his first television series helmed by Mitch Glazer, *Magic City*. The Starz original series averages three million viewers per week and will return for a second season on June 14, 2013. He was honored for his role with a "Best Performance by an Actor

in a Supporting Role in a Series, Mini-Series or Motion Picture Made for Television" nomination at the Golden Globe Awards in 2013.

Huston's next film, *The Congress* will open the 45th Director's Fortnight sidebar at the Cannes Film Festival on May 16, 2013. Ari Folman's *The Congress* is a half live action/half animation science fiction film inspired by Stanislaw Lem's novel "The Futurological Congress." The film is set in a dystopian society and explores the ramifications of technology. Huston is in the role of 'Jeff Green' where he convinces actress Robin Wright to sell her image to star in movies of the future.

In July 2012, Huston wrapped production on *Libertador*, due in 2013, for director Alberto Arvel Mendoza in Madrid. *Libertador*, a Spanish/Venezuelan coproduction, is a sweeping epic that follows the life of Simon Bolivar and his ultimate victory over the formidable forces of the Spanish Empire. One of the key leaders in the colonial struggle for independence of Latin America, Bolivar is one of the region's most inspirational and influential figures to this day. Huston plays the fictional character of British financier "Martin Torkington", and early ally who is instrumental in bankrolling some of Bolivar's military campaigns.

Most recently, Huston starred as "Whitfield Cook" in Fox Searchlight's *Hitchcock*. The film followed Alfred Hitchcock's (Hopkins) struggles during the filmmaking of his horror classic *Psycho*. Huston starred alongside Anthony Hopkins, Helen Mirren, Jessica Biel and Scarlett Johansson. This film was released on November 23, 2012.

Also in 2012, Huston starred in Jonathan Liebesman's *Wrath Of The Titans*, reprising his role as "Poseidon" opposite Ralph Fiennes and Liam Neeson. Warner Bros. released the film on March 30, 2012. Huston also appeared in Simon West's *Stolen*, with Nicholas Cage, Malin Akerman and Josh Lucas. This film was released by Millennium Entertainment on September 14, 2012. 2012 also showcased Huston in two Bernard Rose projects: *Two Jacks* opposite Sienna Miller and his nephew, Jack Huston and *Boxing Day*. Both films are based on works of Tolstoy.

Known as a writer, director and producer, Huston got his start directing *Mr. North* starring Anthony Edwards, Robert Mitchum and his sister, Anjelica Huston. Later, Huston gave his breakthrough acting performance in the independent film *Ivansxtc* and was nominated for Best Male Performance at the Independent Spirit Awards in 2003.

Huston's other film credits include *Birth* (directed by Jonathan Glazer) opposite Nicole Kidman; *Silver City* (directed by John Sayles); Martin Scorsese's *The Aviator* starring Leonardo DiCaprio, for which the ensemble cast was nominated for a 2004 Screen Actors Guild Award. The following year, Huston received the Golden Satellite Award for Best Supporting Actor for his performance as 'Sandy Woodrow' in Fernando Meirelles' *The Constant Gardener* and starred in the critically acclaimed Australian Western *The Proposition* (directed by John Hillcoat), alongside Guy Pearce and Emily Watson. *Marie Antoinette* (directed by Sofia Coppola), *Children Of Men* (director Alfonso Cuarón), *Fade To Black*, in which he played Orson Welles directed by Oliver Parker, *The Number 23* (directed by Joel Schumacher), *The Kingdom* (directed by Peter Berg), *30 Days Of Night* (directed by David Slade), *The Kreutzer Sonata* (directed by Bernard Rose), the comedy *How To Lose Friends And Alienate People* (directed by Robert Weide), and he portrayed Samuel Adams in the award-winning HBO miniseries *John Adams* and FOX blockbuster franchise *X-Men Origins: Wolverine*.

Released in 2011, Robert Redford's *The Conspirator*, with James McAvoy, Robin Wright and Kevin Kline, *A Monster In Paris* animation di-

rected by Bibo Bergeron, and *Playoff* directed by Eran Riklis based on the life of Ralph Klein, infamous Israeli basketball coach which garnered him the 2011 Best Male Lead Performance Award at the Montreal Film Festival.

Released in 2010, films included Martin Campbell's thriller *Edge Of Darkness* opposite Mel Gibson, and Ridley Scott's *Robin Hood* starring Russell Crowe and Cate Blanchett, and the fantasy-action Sngmoo Lee's *The Warrior's Way* with Kate Bosworth and Geoffrey Rush. In Barry Levinson's HBO critically acclaimed award-winning *You Don't Know Jack*, Huston portrayed "Geoffrey Feiger," Kevorkian's lawyer, opposite Al Pacino. Huston currently resides in Los Angeles.



SAMI GAYLE

Sami Gayle began her acting career as Baby June in the Off-Broadway production of *Gypsy* starring Patti LuPone. Gayle reprised her role when the show transferred to Broadway a few months later. After working Off-Broadway in plays such as *Oohrah!* at the Atlantic Theater Company and *Family Week* under the direction of Academy-Award winner Jonathan Demme, Gayle was cast opposite Academy-Award winner Adrien Brody in the 2012 film *Detachment*. Gayle is a series regular on the CBS television drama *Blue Bloods*, which starts filming its fourth season in July. Gayle played Nicolas Cage's daughter in the 2012 action film *Stolen*. Upcoming film credits include: *The Congress* with Robin Wright and Paul Giamatti, *Hate-ship*, *Friendship* with Kristen Wiig and *Noah* with Russell Crowe and Anthony Hopkins.



PAUL GIAMATTI

With a diverse roster of finely etched, award-winning and critically acclaimed performances, Paul Giamatti has established himself as one of the most versatile actors of his generation.

Next up for Giamatti is Phil Morrison's *Almost Christmas*, which he also produced and stars alongside Paul Rudd. The comedy centers around two French Canadian Christmas tree salesmen who devise a get-rich-quick scheme and travel to New York to sell trees. The film premiered at the 2013 Tribeca Film Festival. The actor will also begin filming the

highly anticipated sequel, *The Amazing Spider-Man 2*, directed by Marc Webb in which he stars as "Aleksei Sytsevich / The Rhino," opposite Emma Stone, Shailene Woodley, Jamie Foxx, Sally Field and Andrew Garfield.

Recently, Giamatti wrapped production on Steve McQueen's *Twelve Years a Slave* where he stars opposite Brad Pitt, Michael Fassbender, and Chiwetel Ejiofor; as well as John Lee Hancock's *Saving Mr. Banks* co-starring Tom Hanks and Emma Thompson.

Other recent credits for him include *Rock of Ages*, David Cronenberg's *Cosmopolis*, *The Ides of March*, Curtis Hanson's HBO movie *Too Big To Fail*, in which his performance earned him his third SAG Award for Outstanding Performance by a Male Actor in a Television Movie or Miniseries as well as an Emmy® and Golden Globe® nomination. Giamatti also starred in the critically praised *Win Win*, a film written and directed by Oscar® nominee Tom McCarthy.

His performance in 2010's *Barney's Version* earned him his second Golden Globe® Award. Based on the best-selling novel of the same name by Mordechai Richler, the film was directed by Richard J. Lewis and co-starred Dustin Hoffman, Rosamund Pike and Minnie Driver.

In 2008, Giamatti won an Emmy®, SAG and Golden Globe® Award for Best Actor in a Miniseries for his portrayal of the title character in the HBO 7 Part Emmy® Award Winning Mini-Series *John Adams*. Directed by Emmy® Award Winning director Tom Hooper, Giamatti played President John Adams in a cast that also included award-winning actors Laura Linney, Tom Wilkinson, David Morse and Stephen Dillane.

In 2006, Giamatti's performance in Ron Howard's *Cinderella Man* earned him his first SAG Award and a Broadcast Film Critics' Award for Best Supporting Actor, as well as Academy Award and Golden Globe® nominations in the same category.

For his role in Alexander Payne's critically-lauded *Sideways*, Giamatti earned several accolades for his performance including Best Actor from the Independent Spirit Awards, New York Film Critics Circle as well as a Golden Globe® and SAG Award nomination.

In 2004, Giamatti garnered outstanding reviews and commendations (Independent Spirit Award nomination for Best Actor, National Board of Review Breakthrough performance of the Year) for his portrayal of Harvey Pekar in Shari Springer Berman and Robert Pulcini's *American Splendor*.

Giamatti first captured the eyes of America in Betty Thomas' hit comedy *Private Parts*. His extensive list of film credits also includes Jonathan English's *Ironclad*, Todd Phillips' *The Hangover 2*, *The Last Station* opposite Christopher Plummer and Helen Mirren, Tony Gilroy's *Duplicity*, *Cold Souls* which Giamatti also Executive Produced, David Dobkin's *Fred Claus*, *Shoot Em' Up* opposite Clive Owen, Shari Springer Berman and Roger Pulcini's *The Nanny Diaries*, M. Night Shyamalan's *Lady in the Water*, *The Illusionist*, directed by Neil Burger, Milos Forman's *Man on the Moon*, Julian Goldberger's *The Hawk is Dying*, Tim Robbins' *The Cradle Will Rock*, F. Gary Gray's *The Negotiator*, Steven Spielberg's *Saving Private Ryan*, Peter Weir's *The Truman Show*, Mike Newell's *Donnie Brasco*, Todd Solondz' *Storytelling*, Tim Burton's *Planet of the Apes*, *Duets*, opposite Gwyneth Paltrow, the animated film *Robots* and *Big Momma's House*, co-starring Martin Lawrence. Giamatti also appeared in James Foley's *Confidence* and John Woo's *Paycheck*.

As an accomplished stage actor, Giamatti received a Drama Desk nomination for Best Supporting Actor as "Jimmy Tomorrow" in Kevin Spacey's Broadway revival of *The Iceman Cometh*. His other Broadway credits include *The Three Sisters* directed by Scott Elliot; *Racing Demon* directed by Richard Eyre; and *Ar-*

cadia directed by Trevor Nunn. He was also seen Off-Broadway in the ensemble cast of *The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui* with Al Pacino.

For television, Giamatti appeared in *The Pentagon Papers* with James Spader, HBO's *Winchell* opposite Stanley Tucci and Jane Anderson's *If These Walls Could Talk 2*. He resides in Brooklyn, NY.





LIST OF CHARACTERS

ROBIN WRIGHT: A wonderful American actress who was a great promise in her twenties, star of such films as *The Princess Bride* and *Forest Gump*. In *The Congress*, Robin plays herself in quasi-documentary fashion. She must contend with Miramount Studios' surprising offer to purchase her cinematic identity. According to the deal, Miramount will have exclusive ownership of the character known as "Robin Wright" and will continue to create her forever in their movies as a 3-D computer-generated character. Robin, in turn, will remain an eternal thirty-something in the Miramount films, but will be forbidden to act on any stage anywhere in the world, forever. The contract is valid for 20 years. Robin eventually signs the deal because she is an actress, and in the new economy of scanned actors, it's her only way to survive. In addition to that, she must care for her son, Aaron, who suffers from a rare disorder named Usher's syndrome, a disease that manifests in adolescence with loss of hearing and balance, and usually ends with total blindness and deafness. Twenty years later, Robin is an anonymous elderly woman in her sixties, faced with the cinematic character invented by Miramount's computers, now an idolized goddess. But Robin goes through yet another ordeal

when Miramount transitions to the chemical method, whereby she will no longer be a computerized image, but a chemical formula that anyone can consume. The Robin Wright of *The Congress* is an animated tragic figure: she will be forced to give up not only her identity, but also her son and her only love, in order to attain the film's final catharsis.

AARON WRIGHT: The movie begins with the emergence of his rare condition, Usher's syndrome, which causes partial hearing loss that will gradually deteriorate into total deafness and blindness. Aaron is convinced that he is the heir to the Wright Brothers, and compulsively builds huge kites. He dreams of smashing a kite into a real passenger plane: the day this happens, he believes, he will get better. His disease forces his mother, Robin, to give up her acting career, and the entire family has to live in a distant, unreal spot in California, near a large airport. Aaron's condition worsens as the movie unfolds, and his mother gives up everything to stay with him until the inevitably tragic end.

JEFF GREEN: CEO of Miramount Studios, a cold, cynical, evil and frighteningly sharp money man. He is the executive who induces Robin Wright to sign the contract in which she sells her identity and her soul to the studio.

Jeff reappears twenty years later, both in dreams and in reality, in an attempt to extend Robin's contract with the studio and turn her into a fantasy that can be consumed through chemical means, in return for a fair price.

DYLAN TRULINER: The animator who invents Robin on Miramount's computers. He is head of the "Robin department," and for twenty years has manipulated her computerized image to make the "Triple R" movies, a sci-fi series starring Robin, which has become a huge cash-cow for the studio. Over the years, Dylan has fallen in love with Robin's animated character, his own creation, and he now attempts to save her life within the chemical-chaotic world of Miramount Nagasaki. Dylan fulfills his dream (and what we all dream of): he meets his fantasy, falls in love with her, and makes her fall in love with him. But ultimately he pays a high price for this love, and becomes closely bound with Robin's tragic life course.

AL: Robin's agent. Aging, old-school, he is the man who has been with Robin through thick and thin for twenty-five years. He is her agent, her best friend, the father she never had, the man who has secretly loved her for years, and now he will be the one to lead her from the bygone era into the illusory world that results from the sale of her image to the studio.



NOTES ON THE PRODUCTION (LITERAL TRANSLATION OF TITLE WOULD BE TRADE SECRETS)

The making of *The Congress* brought together several countries: Germany, France, the UK, Poland, Belgium, Luxembourg, and Israel.

The live action shoot took place in the Mojave desert in California, as well as in Los Angeles, Berlin and North Rhine-Westphalia.

The animation in the film is a tribute to the amazing work of the Fleischer brothers, who in the 1930's created such classics as Popeye, Betty Boop and the original Superman.

This method of animation, which is completely hand-crafted, required 1200 drawings per minute – which came out to over 60 000 drawings in total for the animated portion of the movie.

The animated storyboard was executed in Israel, Luxembourg, Brussels, Berlin, Hamburg and Poland.

The gouache coloring and intervals were done in Poland, the Phillipines, Ukraine, India and Turkey.

Post-production for both live action and animation was carried out in Israel, Luxembourg and Liège, Belgium.

In total over 200 animators in eight different countries collaborated to give birth to over 55 minutes of animation.





CAST

Robin Wright – *Robin Wright* · Al – *Harvey Keitel* · Dylan – *Jon Hamm* · Dr. Barker – *Paul Giamatti* · Aaron – *Kodi Smit-McPhee*
 Jeff – *Danny Huston* · Sarah – *Sami Gayle* · Steve – *Michael Stahi-David* · Maxi – *Michael Landes* · Michelle – *Sarah Shahi*

CREW

Director – *Ari Folman* · Writer – *Ari Folman* · based on the book "The Futurological Congress" by *Stanislaw Lem* · Production Designer – *David Polonsky* ·
 Director of Animation – *Yoni Goodman* · Director of Photography – *Michal Englert* · Editor – *Nili Feller* · Original Music – *Max Richter*
 Supervising sound editor – *Aviv Aldema* · Visual Effects Supervision – *Roly Nitzan* · Script Editor – *Ori Sivan*
 Casting – *Deborah Aquila, C.S.A, Tricia Wood, C.S.A, Erin Toner* · Costume Designer – *Mandi Line*
 A coproduction – *Bridgit Folman Film Gang, Pandora Film, Opus Film, Paul Thiltges Distribution, ARP, Entre Chien et Loup*

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TECHNICAL DETAILS

length – 120 minutes
format – DCP
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