

Dreams: The Fisher King: About The Filmmakers

Edited by Phil Stubbs

Director **Terry Gilliam** was the American member of Monty Python - and the one responsible for the group's unique animation. He became a director when Monty Python began to make films, co-directing *Monty Python and the Holy Grail* and directing the opening short film for *Monty Python's The Meaning of Life*. He also co-wrote and performed in all the Python films as well as designed *Life of Brian*.

As an individual, Gilliam co-wrote and directed *Jabberwocky*, *Time Bandits*, which he also produced and which grossed over \$50 million in North America, and *Brazil*, which was named one of the 10 best films of the decade by Time Magazine. Among its many honors, *Brazil* received best picture, best director and best screenplay awards from the Los Angeles Film Critics Association even before being released in the U.S. as well as two BAFTA Awards and two Oscar nominations.

Gilliam followed *Brazil* with the epic *The Adventures of Baron Munchausen*, which he directed and co-wrote, and which earned four Academy Award nominations.

Gilliam was born in Minneapolis, graduated from Occidental College in Los Angeles and spent three years in New York. There, he served as associate editor of Help! Magazine, the brainchild of Mad Magazine founder Harvey Kurtzman, while doing free-lance illustration for a number of publications, studying film and learning animation techniques.

In 1967, Gilliam moved to London, where he was an illustrator for various publications. He began to do animation for British television, and in 1969 he formed *Monty Python's Flying Circus* with John Cleese, Eric Idle, Graham Chapman, Terry Jones and Michael Palin.

Since then, like a tree, he has managed to add another ring of fat to his spreading girth. But, unlike a tree, he hasn't managed to grow any taller. He hopes to be survived by his wife, Maggie, their children, Amy, Holly and Harry - but not by their dog, Bryn.

Writer **Richard LaGravenese** worked side by side with Terry Gilliam and the cast throughout preproduction, rehearsals and filming. Constantly on the set to consult and make last minute script changes, LaGravenese collaborated on the making of the film in a way that is rare for screenwriters. *The Fisher King* is his first solo effort at an original screenplay.

LaGravenese was trained as an actor at New York University's Experimental Theatre Wing and began writing dialogue when he formed a comedy team. He has a passionate interest in mythology, an interest he shares with Gilliam.

LaGravenese lives in New York City with his wife, Anne, and daughter, Lily.

Debra Hill is a prominent film producer with extensive experience and film credits to her name. Hill began her film career in various capacities: as a script supervisor, film editor, assistant director and second-unit director before writing and producing the hit horror classic *Halloween*, with John Carpenter. She continued her collaboration with Carpenter for several more films, including the *Halloween* sequels as well as *The Fog* and *Escape From New York*.

Following her association with Carpenter, Hill produced the critically acclaimed film *The Dead Zone*. She followed that with the big business satire *Head Office*, the comedy mystery *Clue* and *Big Top Pee-wee*.

In 1985, Hill joined forces with longtime friend and colleague Lynda Obst to form the independent production company Hill/Obst Productions. Together they produced the movie *Adventures in Babysitting*, directed by Chris Columbus and written by David Simkins, as well as the CBS pilot based on the film. Hill/Obst also produced *Heartbreak Hotel*, written and directed by Chris Columbus.

In 1988, Hill signed an exclusive development and production deal at Walt Disney Pictures for her new company, Debra Hill Productions. She produced many short films for the Disney/MGM Studio Tour theme park in Orlando, Fla., as well as the feature *Gross Anatomy*, starring Matthew Modine and Christine Lahti, for Touchstone.

Hill executive produced, with John Carpenter, a western entitled *El Diablo*, starring Louis Gossett, Jr., and Anthony Edwards for HBO in association with Joe Wizan, which won two ACE Awards in 1990. A sequel is presently in development. She also produced *The Disneyland 35th Anniversary Special* for NBC-TV starring Tony Danza, Miss Piggy, Gonzo, and DJ Jazzy Jeff and the Fresh Prince.

In addition to her many film and TV projects in development, Hill completed her first directorial assignment - an episode of *Monsters* for Laurel Entertainment. She is currently in pre-production on two features: *Gone Fishin'*, written by Jeffrey Abrams (*Regarding Henry*) and Jill Mazursky to be directed by Stephen Herek (*Bill & Ted's Excellent Adventure*) for Hollywood Pictures and *First Step* (working title), a satirical comedy directed by 10 trop directors from around the world and financed by The Guber Peters Entertainment company. All proceeds from the film will be donated to The Friends of the Earth, the largest environmental organization in the world.

Hill is also an environmental activist presently serving on the board of ECO (Earth Communications Office).

Producer **Lynda Obst** began her professional career as editor/author of *The Rolling Stone History of the Sixties*, followed by three years as an editor of the New York Times magazine, where she covered subjects ranging from science to publishing to entertainment.

In 1979, she joined Casablanca/Polygram as a vice president of creative affairs where she developed a number of films, most notably *Flashdance*. Joining The David Geffen Company in 1982, Obst was involved in the development and production of its motion picture roster.

Three years later she formed the independent production company Hill/Obst Productions with longtime friend Debra Hill. Following an exclusive deal with Paramount, the team moved on to Touchstone to make *Adventures in Babysitting*, directed by Chris Columbus and written by David Simkins, and *Heartbreak Hotel*, written and directed by Columbus.

In November 1988, Obst struck her own producing deal with Columbia Pictures and established Lynda Obst Productions. She most recently completed producing Nora Ephron's directing debut, *This Is My Life*, written by Nora and Delia Ephron and based on the book *This Is Your Life*, by Meg Wolitzer, to be released by Twentieth Century Fox.

Obst is also the co-author of a novel about Hollywood and has written a number of satirical essays for periodicals such as *American Film*, *California Magazine*, *Harper's* and *Premiere*.

Director of Photography **Roger Pratt B.S.C.**, shot *Brazil* for Terry Gilliam and *The Crimson Permanent Assurance*, the short film that was shown with *Monty Pythons's The Meaning of Life*. He was also responsible for lighting the model work on *The Adventures of Baron Munchausen*. Solo credits include *Mona Lisa* and *Batman*. He is also director of photography of the upcoming release *The Year of the Comet*.

Mel Bourne, production designer for *The Fisher King*, received his first feature film credit in 1977 as the production designer on *Annie Hall*. That was the beginning of a long collaboration with Woody Allen that has included *Manhattan*, *Zelig*, *Broadway Danny Rose* and *Interiors*, for which he received his first Academy Award nomination. His second Oscar nomination came for *The Natural*.

Among his many other credits are *Reversal of Fortune*, *Thief*, *The Accused*, *Still of the Night*, *F/X*, *Manhunter*, *Fatal Attraction*, *Cocktail* and the debut episode of *Miami Vice*.

Bourne has just completed *Man Trouble* for PentAmerica Pictures starring Jack Nicholson and Ellen Barkin.

Film editor **LESLEY WALKER** has been winning recognition in her native England since 1979, when she cut the film adaptation of James Joyce's *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*. Her credits include the epic miniseries *Winston Churchill: The Wilderness Years* for British television and the films *Letter to Brezhnev*, *Mona Lisa*, *Cry Freedom*, *Buster* and *Shirley Valentine*.

Costume Designer **BEATRIX PASZTOR** earned a degree in medieval art in Hungary before beginning work on stage and in features. Her credits include *Drugstore Cowboy*, *My Own Private Idaho* and the upcoming release *American Heart*, starring Jeff Bridges.

Composer **GEORGE FENTON** has received Oscar nominations for the music of *Dangerous Liaisons*, *Cry Freedom* and *Gandhi*. In addition, he received an Oscar nomination for best song for the film *Cry Freedom*.

Fenton's other film scoring credits include *White Palace*, *Memphis Belle*, *We're No Angels*, *The Long Walk Home*, *The Dressmaker*, *High Spirits*, *84 Charing Cross Road*, *The White of the Eye*, *Clockwise* and *The Company of Wolves*.

Fenton also wrote the scores for two upcoming releases: *Final Analysis* and *China Moon*.

Dreams: The Fisher King: About The Cast

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Robin Williams starts as Parry, a street person who lives in a world of his own creation to insulate himself from a tragedy in his past.

Twice nominated for the best actor Oscar - for *Good Morning, Vietnam* and *Dead Poets Society*, Williams first gained widespread attention when he landed a guest-starring role on the TV series *Happy Days* as Mork, a manic extra-terrestrial. Viewer response to the episode was so great that Williams was signed to do the spinoff series *Mork & Mindy*. The show, which premiered in 1978, was a success and soon led the actor into motion pictures.

Williams made his film debut in 1980 playing the title role of *Popeye*. Other films he has starred in include *The World According to Garp* and *Moscow on the Hudson*. He also stars in the Peter Pan extravaganza *Hook*, with Dustin Hoffman, Julia Roberts, Bob Hoskins and Maggie Smith, which will be released by TriStar Pictures in December 1991. Steven Spielberg directs the film from a screenplay by Jim V. Hart and Malia Scotch Marmo, screen story by Jim V. Hart & Nick Castle, and based upon the original stageplay and books written by J.M. Barrie.

Williams has balanced his movie career with work in comedy clubs and workshops where, in front of live audiences, he can experiment with new material and hone his improvisational skills.

In 1986, Williams completed an SRO 23-city tour of America, including an evening at New York's Metropolitan Opera, the first time a solo comic has taken the stage of the renowned hall. The concerts were taped for the HBO special *Robin Williams Live at the Met*.

Born in Chicago in 1951, Williams saw much of the U.S. as a child during frequent family moves. After a brief stint at Claremont Men's College in Southern California, Williams studied theatre at Marin College before entering Juilliard in New York, where he spent three years under the tutelage of John Houseman and other noted professionals.

Returning to San Francisco after college, Williams joined a comedy workshop and began performing in small nightclubs. In 1976, he headed for Los Angeles and began appearing on a regular basis at the Comedy Store, where he was spotted by casting agents who thought his offbeat sensibilities might have a place in television, and his career took off.

Among his comic recordings are *Reality*, *What a Concept* for which he won his first Grammy Award, *Throbbing Python of Love* and *Evening at the Met*, for which he won his second Grammy Award. *Pecos Bill*, a children's album, also garnered a Grammy. He is the recipient of Emmys for appearances on *A Carol Burnett Special: Carol, Carl, Whoopi & Robin* and for *ABC presents a Royal Gala*.

Williams has also starred in an adaptation of Saul Bellow's *Seize the Day* on PBS and in Mike Nichols' stage production of Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot*, opposite Steve Martin, at New York's Lincoln Center.

Williams is involved with several humanitarian organisations and is a primary force in *Comic Relief*, an annual benefit to aid the homeless.

Jeff Bridges stars as Jack Lucas, an arrogant DJ whose life becomes both tragically and wonderfully intertwined with Parry's.

Bridges most recently starred in *Texasville*, in which he reprised the role of Duane Jackson from the 1971 film that earned him an Oscar nomination as best supporting actor: *The Last Picture Show*. Currently he is filming *American Heart* in Seattle. He both stars and serves as one of the producers.

Before making *Texasville*, Bridges was one half of *The Fabulous Baker Boys*, acting opposite his brother Beau, and Michelle Pfeiffer in the critically acclaimed hit, which garnered four Academy Award nominations. In the past few years he has also starred in *See You in the Morning* with Alice Krige and Farrah Fawcett; *Tucker: The Man and His Dream*, in which he plays Preston Tucker, the visionary car designer; the romantic comedy *Nadine*, with Kim Basinger; the thriller *The Morning After*, with Jane Fonda; and one of the highest grossing films of 1985, *Jagged Edge*, with Glenn Close.

Bridges made his first film appearance in 1950, at the age of four months, in the arms of Jane Greer in *The Company She Keeps*. He got the opportunity to re-team with Greer in the 1984 remake of *Out of the Past* called *Against All Odds* with Rachel Ward and James Woods.

Born in Los Angeles, Bridges attended University High School there and later journeyed east to study acting at the Berghoff Studio in New York City. In 1969, he made his feature film debut in *Halls of Anger*, followed by a role in *The Yin and Yang of Mr. Go*, written and directed by Burgess Meredith, and his Oscar-winning performance in *The Last Picture Show*. Bridges starred with Stacy Keach in *Fat City* and received another Oscar nomination for best supporting actor for his performance opposite Clint Eastwood in the 1974 release *Thunderbolt and Lightfoot*.

Among his other starring roles are *Hearts of the West*; the 1976 remake of *King Kong* with Jessica Lange; *Somebody Killed Her Husband* with Farrah Fawcett; two films opposite Sally Field, *Stay Hungry* and *Kiss Me Goodbye*; *The Last American Hero*; and *Bad Company*.

He was one of the principal characters in *Heaven's Gate*, played a young computer-game jockey in *Tron* and portrayed an ex-cop in *8 Million Ways to Die*, with Rosanna Arquette. In addition, Bridges has starred in some cult classics that continue to play in repertory houses across the country - *Cutter's Way*, *Winter Kills*, *Success* and *Rancho Deluxe* - and in the American Film Theatre's "filmization" of Eugene O'Neill's *The Iceman Cometh* with Robert Ryan, Fredric March and Lee Marvin.

His performance as the earthbound alien in *Starman* garnered Bridges his third Oscar nomination - his first as best actor - as well as a Golden Globe nomination in the same category.

In the course of his career, Bridges has worked with such distinguished directors as Peter Bogdanovich, Alan Pakula, Francis Ford Coppola, Robert Benton, Sidney Lumet, Taylor Hackford, John Huston, Michael Cimino, John Carpenter and Hal Ashby.

An accomplished musician and composer, Bridges has written more than 70 songs, one of which he sang for Quincy Jones' soundtrack to the film *John and Mary*. Bridges is also a painter and photographer and has had gallery exhibitions in Los Angeles and Montana.

Amanda Plummer stars as Lydia, the klutzy, lonely woman who has unknowingly captured Parry's chivalrous heart. The role reunites Plummer with Robin Williams, with whom she appeared in *The World According to Garp*. Plummer is best known for her work on the New York stage, where, for her performance in *Agnes of God*, she won a Tony, Drama Desk, Outer Critics Circle and Boston Critics Award. Other honours include Tony Award nominations for her Broadway debut, *A Taste of Honey*, and for *Pygmalion*.

She has also been acclaimed for her guest-starring roles on television, receiving an Emmy nomination for *L.A. Law* and an ACE nomination for *Tales From the Crypt*. In addition, Plummer starred in two PBS specials, *Gryphon* and *The Courtship*, and is starring in the upcoming Hallmark Hall of Fame presentation of *Miss Rose White*, with Maureen Stapleton and Miximilian Schell, which is based on the play *A Shayna Maidel*.

In feature films, Plummer has appeared in *Hotel New Hampshire*, *Made in Heaven*, *Daniel* and *Cattle Annie and Little Britches*. She stars with Buck Henry and Crispin Glover in the black comedy *L-Dopa*, an upcoming release, and recently completed a cameo role in *Freejack*, starring Emilio Estevez and Mick Jagger.

Plummer began her career as an apprentice at the Williamstown Theatre Festival and made her New York stage debut in *Artichoke* at the Manhattan Theatre Club in 1979. Her

other stage productions include the Broadway revival of *The Glass Menagerie*, opposite Jessica Tandy, and *A Lie of the Mind*.

Mercedes Ruehl stars as Anne Napolitano, the worldly video store owner who gives Jack love, a home and a job after his plummet into despair.

Ruehl won a Tony award as best actress this year for her starring role in Neil Simon's hit Broadway play *Lost in Yonkers* and has also won the American Film Critics Award as best supporting actress for her hilarious portrayal of Connie, the Mafioso housewife, in *Married to the Mob*.

Ruehl recently starred with Richard Pryor and Gene Wilder in *Another You*, for TriStar Pictures. Her other film credits include *Big*, *Heartburn*, *Radio Days*, *Crazy People*, *Warriors*, *Slaves of New York*, *The Secret of My Success*, *Leader of the Band* and *84 Charing Cross Road*.

Before her Broadway triumph in *Lost in Yonkers*, Ruehl appeared on the New York stage in *Other People's Money* (winning the Clarence Derwent Award), *The Marriage of Bette and Boo* at the New York Shakespeare Festival (receiving the Obie Award), *Coming of Age in Soho* and *American Notes*. She appeared both on and off-Broadway in Herb Gardner's Tony-Award winning play *I'm Not Rappaport*.

Ruehl has performed extensively in regional theatres around the country, starring in *Medea*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, *Misalliance*, *Androcles and the Lion*, *The Three Sisters*, *Tartuffe*, *Private Lives*, *Vanities*, *Monday After the Miracle* and *June Moon*.

On television, she was a guest lead on *The Cosby Show*, starred in the ABC After School Special *The Great Skinner Strike*, appeared in the ABC series *Our Family Honor* and was featured in the CBS pilot *Late Bloomer*.

Michael Jeter plays the homeless cabaret singer rescued in Central Park by Parry and Jack. He later repays their kindness with a unique display of his singing and dancing abilities.

Jeter received a 1990 Tony Award as best featured actor in a musical for his performance as Otto Kringelein in *Grand Hotel*, having already received the Clarence Derwent Award as the most promising male actor on the metropolitan theater scene as well as the Outer Critics Award and a Drama Desk Award.

A Tennessee native, Jeter began his professional acting career in New York City in the late 1970s, when he made his motion picture debut in *Hair* and won a Theatre World Award in 1979 for his first Broadway show, *G.R. Point*. His credits off-Broadway include *The Boys Next Door*, *Greater Tuna*, and *Cloud 9*.

Jeter's other film credits include *Zelig*, *The Money Pit*, *Soup for One*, *Tango & Cash* and *Dead-Bang*, and his appearances on TV range from the series *From Here to Eternity* to *Crime Story* to *Designing Women* to *Hot House*, on which he was a regular.

Most recently Jeter received an Emmy nomination for best supporting actor for his role as Herman Styles in *Evening Shade*.

TriStar Pictures presents a Hill/Obst Production of a Terry Gilliam Film starring Robin Williams and Jeff Bridges, *The Fisher King*. Also starring are Amanda Plummer and Mercedes Ruehl. Terry Gilliam is the director and Debra Hill and Lynda Obst are the producers of the film, which is written by Richard LaGravenese. Roger Pratt, B.S.C., is the director of photography, Mel Bourne is the production designer and Lesley Walker is the editor. The music is by George Fenton. <http://www.smart.co.uk/dreams/fklocatn.htm>