

NEWS RELEASE

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Contact: Daniel P. Aylward, 502/419-0172

Hart/Lunsford Pictures Finances Two Films: "Dedication," Starring Billy Crudup and Mandy Moore, and "Grace Is Gone," Starring John Cusack

LOUISVILLE, KY – Hart/Lunsford Pictures, L.L.C., established two years ago by Ed Hart and Bruce Lunsford primarily to finance films made in Louisville, has entered into an agreement with Plum Pictures, L.L.C. of New York to provide principal financing for independent films produced by Plum with budgets starting at \$2 million. As part of the agreement, Hart/Lunsford Pictures has become a partner in Plum Pictures.

Previously, Hart/Lunsford Pictures financed two low-budget, Louisville-based independent films: "Peoples" and "How You Look to Me." Now, the company is reaching out to opportunities beyond Louisville by becoming executive producer for two new Plum Pictures films.

The first is "Dedication," a romantic comedy filmed in New York City and directed by Justin Theroux (who played the villain and Drew Barrymore's love interest in "Charlie's Angels – Full Throttle") and starring Billy Crudup, Mandy Moore, Oscar nominee Tom Wilkinson, Oscar winner Dianne Wiest, Bob Balaban, and industry icon Peter Bogdanovich (director of "Paper Moon" and "The Last Picture Show"). Principal photography was recently completed and the film is now in post-production.

The second film, "Grace Is Gone," starring John Cusack, is about a father's road trip with his two young daughters after the heartbreaking death of his soldier wife during the Iraq War. The director, Jim Strouse, wrote the screenplay. Mr. Strouse also worked with Plum Pictures previously when he wrote the screenplay for the film "Lonesome Jim" (directed by Steve Buscemi and starring Casey Affleck and Liv Tyler), which had its New York premiere on March 21. "Grace Is Gone" is in pre-production in Chicago and will begin shooting shortly.

Hart and Lunsford have an extensive background in the entertainment industry. After purchasing the bankrupt Kentucky Kingdom in 1989, Hart led the turnaround of the "kiddie" amusement park into a successful regional theme park with major-league thrill rides. The park was sold to Six Flags in 1997.

In 1999, Hart purchased the Magic Springs theme park in Hot Springs, Arkansas, which was also, like Kentucky Kingdom, in the throes of bankruptcy. Today, Magic Springs is a thriving and successful theme and water park, one of Arkansas' top tourist attractions, and has enjoyed the highest rate of attendance growth over the past three years of any theme park in North America. Magic Springs is also home to the Timberwood Amphitheatre, one of the largest outdoor entertainment venues in Arkansas, which hosts a summertime concert series.

Recognized as one of Louisville's foremost businesspersons, Lunsford has financed and mentored a number of local business start-ups through his venture capital firm, Lunsford Capital, L.L.C. He also owns a respected stable of thoroughbreds. His outstanding three-year old "First Samurai" is a candidate for this year's Kentucky Derby. Lunsford has also participated in the Kentucky Kingdom and Magic Springs investments with Hart.

"With our experience in theme parks, concerts, and the thoroughbred racing industry," said Lunsford, "it is a natural fit for us to expand our stake in the entertainment business – and it is always exciting to invest in something you personally enjoy. With Hart/Lunsford Pictures, I focus on the business side and Ed Hart concentrates on the creative aspects." Ed visits the sets and production offices and carefully monitors the progress of each film.

"Together, Bruce and I weigh in on which scripts should be produced and get involved with the principal casting of each film," Hart added. "We also participate in decisions concerning the sale of each film. Of course, filmmaking is a high-risk business and you have to be prepared to lose your money. On the other hand, the industry has changed in that there are now so many more avenues for selling a film. In addition to the normal theatrical release, we can pursue video-on-demand, video and DVD rentals, pay-per-view, pay cable, basic cable, and TV networks, not to mention European, Asian, and other foreign sales." Hart continued, "If you have a good product, you should be able at least to recoup your investment, if not make a satisfactory return."

"Finally - and this is perhaps the most important factor - we have talented and ambitious partners in Plum Pictures," Hart said. "These three young women have incredible energy and drive. I would not be surprised to see these women achieve their goal of building an independent studio that turns out six to 10 independent films per year."

Plum Pictures has three principals: Galt Niederhoffer, Celine Rattray, and Daniela Taplin Lundberg. Although all three are barely into their 30's, they have extensive experience in the film industry. Niederhoffer is a graduate of Harvard University, Rattray of Oxford University in England, and Taplin Lundberg of Princeton University. In 1997, "Hurricane Streets," a film that Ms. Niederhoffer, at the age of only nineteen, helped produce, received awards for best director, best screenplay, and best cinematography at the Sundance Film Festival. Ms. Niederhoffer recently completed a critically acclaimed novel, "A Taxonomy of Barnacles," which was published in December, 2005 and has already been optioned by Revolution Pictures.

Celine Rattray, who specializes in media deal making, previously worked for McKinsey & Company, a worldwide leader in management consulting, where she was responsible for strategic projects for media and entertainment companies, and also for HBO.

Daniela Taplin Lundberg comes from a show business family. Her father, Jonathan Taplin, was a pioneering independent producer who produced, among many other films, Martin Scorsese's "Mean Streets" and "Last Waltz."

Hart remarked, "Whether you're dealing with roller coasters, concerts, racehorses, or movies, you need good product that performs well and appeals to its audience. But you also need a strong team of dedicated professionals who understand the mission."

He ended by saying, "We are proud to be associated with Plum Pictures. Celine, Daniela, and Galt have forged their credentials over many long hours on numerous production sets, and their experience and commitment, combined with our business acumen, should give us more than a fighting chance to be successful in one of the most unpredictable, challenging, and competitive industries around."

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