**PELE: Birth of a Legend**

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**SHORT SYNOPSIS**

PELÉ tells the miraculous story of the legendary soccer player’s rise to glory from a young boy, to the 17 year old who scored the winning goal in Brazil’s first ever World Cup victory in 1958. From a life full of disadvantages and an impoverished youth in Brazil, Pelé used his unorthodox yet authentic style of play and his unbeatable spirit to overcome all odds, find greatness and inspire a country that he changed forever.

**LONG SYNOPSIS**

Born EDSON ARANTES DO NASCIMENTO, but nicknamed DICO by his parents, the man that football fans around the world would forever come to know as PELÉ grows up in the poor Brazilian village of Bauru.  After Brazil’s devastating loss in the 1950 World Cup final, a devastated nine-year-old young Dico makes the bold and unlikely promise to his father that someday he will go on to win a World Cup for Brazil.  Dico grows up helping his father in his janitorial duties at the local clinic every day after school to help his family get by.  One day Dico joins his mother to work cleaning the house of a wealthy factory owner, and overhears their son JOSÉ and his friends discussing a local youth football tournament and a famous professional scout that will be in attendance. When Dico mispronounces the name of a locally known goalkeeper, José and his friends make fun of him, nicknaming him “PELÉ”, a name he initially loathes.  Dico convinces his friends to enter the tournament, where they do well and make it to the final game, only to face Jose and his friends.  They lose the final, but only after a dramatic comeback to almost tie the game thanks to Dico’s showcase of incredible skill and embrace of Ginga: the joy and spirit of the Brazilian people.  After the tournament, the professional scout makes Dico an offer to try out for Santos FC, a professional soccer club.  The Pelé name follows him as he travels to Santos, Brazil, where he moves up through the youth squad to the reserve squad and eventually works his way up to the professional level team. His unorthodox Ginga style of play is of great concern to his coaches, but they can’t argue with results as he leads the team to several victories. At age 16, Dico gets a most unlikely call to join the Brazilian national team for the 1958 World Cup, where he learns that he’ll have to compete for a starting position with a new hotshot player - non other than his childhood rival José.  Competition for starting positions and style of play is intense, and Dico injures his knee during a practice, with everyone fearing that he will have to be sidelined from the entire tournament.  But it is too late to replace him, and he travels with the team to Sweden for the 1958 World Cup.  José is chosen to start while Dico undergoes treatment for his knee injury, and Brazil just barely progresses on from the elimination group stage. Just as Dico is cleared to play, José suffers an injury, and Dico replaces him in the starting team. Brazil barely makes it past the USSR and onto the semifinal with France. At halftime, with the game tied, José reveals to Dico that he is in fact not injured, but that he took himself out of the game so that Dico could play, having finally realized that the Brazilian team must be proud of who they are and embrace the “Ginga” style of play, reminding Dico of the way he displayed a few years earlier at the youth tournament. Bolstered by José’s support, an inspired Dico scores three goals and leads Brazil past France and onto the World Cup final. In spite of overwhelming odds against them, Brazil rallies behind Dico and the Ginga style, and beats home team favorite Sweden in a stunning upset. Playing this unique and breathtaking style, for which football would forever become known as “the beautiful game”, and led by Dico, now known as Pelé, Brazil wins it’s first ever World Cup and becomes the first nation to ever win a World Cup while playing outside of its own continent. A legend is born!

**ABOUT PELÉ: Edson Arantes do Nascimento**

On October 23, 1940 in Três Corações, a city in the Minas Gerais state of Brazil, a legend was born. Today, in a world of 7 billion people, soccer is the foremost sport and Pelé (Edson Arantes do Nascimento) remains at the center of “the beautiful game” — where he is universally recognized, respected and revered in every corner of the globe.

Pelé started his professional career at the age of 16 for Santos Futebol Clube, a club he stayed with for nearly two decades. In 1958, he won his first World Cup for Brazil at age 17 – the youngest winner ever, which still stands to this day. He went on to win another two World Cups in 1962 and 1970, making him the only person in the world with three Jules Rimet trophies to his name. Not only is Pelé the all-time leading scorer of Santos FC and the Brazil National Team, but he is the all-time leading scorer in the history of the sport (1283 goals in 1366 matches).

In 1974, Pelé came out of semi-retirement to sign with the New York Cosmos for the 1975-1977 seasons and led his team to the 1977 NASL championship.  Not only did he help introduce the sport to the United States, but he also won the hearts of American sports fans with this style and grace both on and off the pitch.  After his final career match on October 1, 1977 in front of more than 75,000 fans at Giants Stadium, Pelé shouted, “Love! Love! Love!” and urged his audience to pay attention to the youth of the world.

Pelé will never forget where he came from and has a never-ending desire to give back.

From his humble beginnings, to his unmatched athletic feats, to his post-career influence and impact on every continent – Pelé lives with great honor and pride of his birthplace (Três Corações means Three Hearts) in that, “Where I was born, where I grew up and where I played football – they have given me three hearts too.”

Named one of the “Top 20 Most Important People of the 20th Century” (Time Magazine), “Football Player of the Century” (FIFA), and recipient of the Ballon d'Or Prix d'Honneur trophy which was specifically created for him - Pelé today maintains his commitment to the sport and to society by fulfilling various roles as spokesperson, ambassador and philanthropist.

**CAST & CREW BIOGRAPHIES**

**Jeff and Mike Zimbalist, Director & Writer**

Jeff and Michael are Emmy Award nominated writers, directors, andeditors whose films have been broadcast on HBO, MTV, PBS, ESPN, Channel4 UK, the BBC and BET, as well as theatrically distributed worldwide.the brothers co-directed, co-produced, and co-wrote THE TWO ESCOBARS.This film was part of the series 'ESPN 30 for 30' and has played togreat responses at the Cannes, Tribeca, and LA Film Festivals. The film was released in theatres and broadcast in North America by Disney/ESPN Films and was sold internationally by Wild Bunch. Jeff previouslydirected the critically acclaimed documentary FAVELA RISING. Currently,the Zimbalists are directing PELE, the story of the Brazilian soccerlegend, in Rio. This feature film is being produced with Imagine.

**Matthew Libatique, Director of Photography**

MATTHEW LIBATIQUE, ASC studied at the prestigious American Film Institute, where he earned an MFA in cinematography. Libatique’s career began as a cinematographer in the music video industry.  His work has appeared on MTV for artists such as The Cure, Usher, Death in Vegas, Erykah Badu, Incubus, Tupac, Moby, Snoop Dogg, Jay-Z and The Fray.  Libatique earned the Music Video Production Association Award for Best Cinematography in 2002, for Matchbox 20’s “Mad Season.”

Libatique is a frequent collaborator with some of the world’s most esteemed commercial and feature directors. Working in the commercial and music video industry, he has combined forces with talented directors such as Floria Sigismondi, Dante Ariola, Brian Beletic, Phil Harder, Terry Richardson, Mark Pellington, Traktor, Kinka Usher, Stylewar and Noam Murro.

He began a career-long collaboration with Darren Aronofsky on the short film *Protozoa* (1993). This collaborative relationship with Aronofsky has led to Libatique’s work on such films as: *Pi* (1998), *Requiem for a Dream* (2000), *The Fountain* (2006)*, Noah* (2014) and *Black Swan* (2010), for which Libatique was nominated for an Academy Award.  Prior to *Black Swan*,Libatique shot director Jon Favreau’s *Iron Man 2* (2010), the sequel to the box-office hit *Iron Man* (2008), on which he also served as cinematographer

Libatique has also collaborated with director Spike Lee on four films: *She Hate Me* (2004)*,* *Inside Man* (2006) *Miracle at St. Anna* (2008), and most recently *Chi-Raq* (2015). Libatique recently shot Universal’s hit film *Straight Outta Compton* (2015)for longtime friend F. Gary Gray.

Throughout his career, Libatique received nominations from the Academy Awards®, the BAFTAs, the American Society of Cinematographers, the Broadcast Film Critics Association and the Film Independent Spirit Awards, to name a few. Libatique is a member of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences and the American Society of Cinematographers.

**AR Rahman, Composer**

Popularly known by TIME Magazine as the man who redefined contemporary Indian music, two-time Academy Award® winner and five-time nominee, A.R. RAHMAN, is an internationally renowned musician and composer.  In a notable career spanning two decades, Rahman has sold more than 150 million albums comprising of music from more than 100 film soundtracks and albums across over half a dozen languages, including landmark scores such as Roja, Bombay, Dilse, Taal, Lagaan, Vandemataram, Jodhaa Akbar, Delhi 6, Slumdog Millionaire, 127 Hours, Rockstar, Couples Retreat, People Like Us, Highway, Million Dollar Arm, and The Hundred-Foot Journey.  He is currently working on a composition for the forthcoming film Pele, a biopic chronicling the legendary Brazilian soccer player’s life. To date, his accolades include winning two Academy Awards®, two Grammy Awards®, a BAFTA Award, a Golden Globe®, four National Film Awards, twenty nine Filmfare awards and countless others. He has also been awarded six honorary doctorates, the most recent being from the prestigious Berklee College of music, Boston, USA. Rahman’s non-film projects include orchestrations for athletic and other big events, including the Commonwealth Games in 2010 and the London Olympics opening ceremony in 2012. A.R. Rahman is also the subject of a new documentary called Jai Ho that will premiere at The Museum of The Moving Image in New York on February 25. Jai Ho is directed by Umesh Aggarwal and traces the journey of Mr Rahman's professional and personal life. It explores the evolution of his style of music-a fusion of Eastern sensibilities and Western technology and includes concert footage and interviews with the music maestro himself as well as director Danny Boyle, Shekhar Kapur, Mani Ratnam. The film celebrates an Indian icon who is no less than a global phenomenon. Most recently, A.R. Rahman toured throughout North America.  JBL Presents “A.R. Rahman: The Intimate Concert Tour” will kicked off May 21, 2015 in Huntington, NY at The Paramount before traveling to major cities across the U.S. including the Beacon Theatre in New York City, Bass Concert Hall in Austin, The Auditorium Theatre in Chicago and the Nokia Theatre at L.A. Live in Los Angeles. Rahman is a notable humanitarian and philanthropist, donating and raising money for beneficial causes and supporting charities.  Rahman set up the A. R. Rahman Foundation to help underprivileged children and released his first English single, “Pray for me Brother,” in 2007, with proceeds from the sales going to the foundation.

**Brian Grazer, Producer**

Academy Award® and Emmy® award-winning producer and *New York Times* bestselling author BRIAN GRAZER**,** has been making movies and television programs for more than 25 years.  As both a writer and producer, he has been personally nominated for four Academy Awards®, and in 2002 he won the Best Picture Oscar® for *A Beautiful Mind*.  He has produced many Emmy® and Golden Globe®-winning television shows including the drama series *24,* which ran for 9 seasons and the comedy series *Arrested Development.*  His latest production, *Empire,* is this year’s breakout hit.

Over the years, Grazer's films and TV shows have been nominated for a total of 43 Oscars® and 158 Emmys.  At the same time, his movies have generated more than $13.7 billion in worldwide theatrical, music and video grosses.  Reflecting this combination of commercial and artistic achievement, the Producers Guild of America honored Grazer with the David O. Selznick Lifetime Achievement Award in 2001.  His accomplishments have also been recognized by the Hollywood Chamber of Commerce, which in 1998 added Grazer to the short list of producers with a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame. On March 6th, 2003. ShoWest celebrated Grazer’s success by honoring him with its Lifetime Achievement Award. In May 2007, Grazer was chosen by Time Magazine as one of the “100 Most Influential People in the World.” In January 2009 Grazer and his creative partner, Ron Howard, were honored by the Producers Guild of America with the Milestone Award. In November 2009, New York University’s Tisch School of the Arts honored them with the Big Apple Award, and in May 2010, they were honored by the Simon Wiesenthal Center with its Humanitarian Award. In February 2011, Grazer was the Motion Picture Sound Editors 2011 Filmmaker Award recipient. In 2012, Grazer was awarded the Innovation and Vision award by the Alfred Mann Foundation for his charitable humanitarian efforts. In 2013, Grazer was awarded the Abe Burrows Entertainment Award by the Alzheimer’s Association and was awarded the Lifetime Achievement Award by PromaxBDA.In addition to *A Beautiful Mind*, Grazer's films include *Apollo 13*, for which Grazer won the Producers Guild's Daryl F. Zanuck Motion Picture Producer of the Year Award as well as an Oscar® nomination for Best Picture of 1995; and *Splash*, which he co-wrote as well as produced and for which he received an Oscar® nomination for Best Original Screenplay of 1984. Grazer released his first book “A Curious Mind: The Secret to a Bigger Life”, a *New York Times Bestseller* in April 2015. For decades, Grazer scheduled “curiosity conversations” with notable experts from scientists to spies, and adventurers to business leaders. The book offers a peek into some of these conversations and inspires readers to unleash their own curiosity.Grazer is currently in post production on the film *Inferno*, the third installment of the Robert Langdon’s franchise staring Tom Hanks, and is in production on *American Made,* staring Tom Cruise. He is also in production on the second season of *Empire* for Fox*,* and Kurt Sutter’s new show *The Bastard Executioner* for FX.

Along with *Empire*, *24* and Arrested *Developmen*t, Grazer's television productions include NatGeo’s *Breakthrough* series, NBC’s *Parenthood* based on his 1989 film, and NBC’s Peabody Award winning series *Friday Night Lights*. Additional television credits include Fox's hit Golden Globe and Emmy award winning Best Drama Series *24*, Fox’s Emmy award winning Best Comedy *Arrested Development,* TNT’s *Great Escape,* Fox’s *Lie To Me*, staring Tim Roth, CBS’*s Shark,* NBC’s *Miss Match,* WB's *Felicity*, ABC's *SportsNight*, as well as HBO's *From the Earth to the Moon*, for which he won the Emmy® for Outstanding Mini-Series. In 2012, Grazer produced the 84th Academy Awards hosted by Billy Crystal. Grazer’s most recent film releases include the critically acclaimed films *GET ON UP* about the “Godfather of Soul” James Brown and the Formula One drama *RUSH*, staring Chris Hemsworth and Daniel Brüel, directed by Ron Howard. Grazer’s other films include the film adaptation of Peter Morgan’s critically acclaimed play *Frost / Nixon* directed by Ron Howard. The film, was nominated for five Academy Awards including Best Picture, and was also nominated for The Darryl F. Zanuck Producer of the Year Award in Theatrical Motion Pictures by the PGA.

Other films include *Made In America,* a music documentary staring Jay Z for Showtime; *J. Edgar,* directed by Clint Eastwood and staring Leonardo DiCaprio; *Tower Heist,* staring Ben Stiller and Eddie Murphy; the drama *Robin Hood*, directed by Ridley Scott and staring Russell Crowe and Cate Blanchett; the adaptation of Dan Brown’s best selling novel *Angels & Demons*, staring Tom Hanks, and directed by Oscar®-winner Ron Howard which opened in May 2009; the drama *Changeling*, directed by Clint Eastwood and starring Angelina Jolie; the Ridley Scott directed drama *American Gangster*, staring Russell Crowe and Denzel Washington; the big screen adaptation of the international bestseller *The Da Vinci Code*; the tense drama *The Inside Man*, directed by Spike Lee and starring Denzel Washington, Clive Owen and Jodie Foster; *Flightplan*; *Cinderella Man;* the Sundance acclaimed documentary *INSIDE Deep Throat*; *Friday Night Lights; 8 Mile; Blue Crush; Intolerable Cruelty; Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas; The Nutty Professor; Liar, Liar; Ransom; My Girl; Backdraft; Kindergarten Cop; Parenthood; Clean and Sober;* and *Spies Like Us.* Grazer began his career as a producer developing television projects.  It was while he was executive-producing TV pilots for Paramount Pictures in the early 1980s that Grazer first met his longtime friend and business partner Ron Howard.  Their collaboration began in 1985 with the hit comedies Night Shift and Splash, and in 1986 the two founded Imagine Entertainment, which they continue to run together as chairmen.

**Ivan Orlic, Producer**

IVAN ORLICserves as President, Chief Executive Officer, and majority Member of Seine Pictures, where he recently oversaw the production, and is currently negotiating worldwide distribution of the feature film *Murder of a Cat* (starring Greg Kinnear, Nikki Reed, Fran Kranz, Blythe Danner, and J.K. Simmons), an off-beat detective comedy that premiered at the 2014 Tribeca Film Festival produced with Sam Raimi of Raimi Productions, Inc. (director of *Oz the Great and Powerful, Spider- Man 3*). Mr. Orlic also oversaw development, packaging and production of *Pele: Birth of a Legend*, the official biopic about legendary Brazilian footballer Pelé. Mr. Orlic has managed a large investment portfolio, and currently serves as Director of Investments for two significant investment funds. A graduate of the Second City Hollywood improv and sketch comedy Conservatory, he is also active in the live performance community in Los Angeles. A published author in two college-level science textbooks, Mr. Orlic originally studied science and holds a B.S. degree in Zoology, and an M.S. degree in Fisheries Oceanography from Michigan State University, in addition to a professional certificate in film production from UCLA.Mr. Orlic was also a featured speaker at the first Winston Baker Film Finance Forum Latin America held in Rio de Janeiro in 2013, and has been a featured gust lecturer at UCLA Extension’s Film Finance course since 2014.

**Colin Wilson, Producer**

Colin Wilson is one of the industry’s leading line producers, and is returning to Warner Brothers on the new David Ayer Film SUICIDE SQUAD.  Colin previously worked for Warner Brothers on the film TROY, directed by Wolfgang Peterson.  Colin formed an important relationship with filmmaker Steven Spielberg, and worked with him extensively on a number of films starting with HOOK, and then JURASSIC PARK, THE LOST WORLD, AMISTAD, WAR OF THE WORLDS, and MUNICH.  After MUNICH, Colin joined James Cameron and was the producer on the Oscar winning film AVATAR.  Colin then did JOHN CARTER with Andrew Stanton for Pixar.  He then joined Kathryn Bigelow on the powerful ZERO DARK THIRTY, which received an Oscar nomination for Best Picture.

**Kim Roth, Producer**

KIM ROTH is President of Production at MACRO, a multiplatform media company founded by Charles King, which creates universally-themed premium content for the African American, Latino and multicultural market. Prior to joining MACRO, Kim spent the past 16 years as President of Production of Imagine Entertainment. She is a member of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts & Sciences and a board member for Inner-City Filmmakers. Kim is currently a Producer on “Mena”, a Universal Pictures film directed by Doug Liman, starring Tom Cruise and produced by Imagine, as well as “Lowriders,” directed by Ricardo De Montreuil, a Blumhouse co-production with Imagine about lowriding culture in east Los Angeles.  During her sixteen year tenure at Imagine, Roth also produced “Tower Heist,” directed by Brett Ratner and starring Ben Stiller and Eddie Murphy, and executive produced the films “The Good Lie” starring Reese Witherspoon; “The Dilemma”, directed by Ron Howard and starring Vince Vaughn and Kevin James; “Inside Man”, directed by Spike Lee and starring Denzel Washington, Clive Owen and Chiwetel Ejiofor; “Inside Deep Throat”, a World of Wonder/HBO documentary directed by Fenton Bailey and Randy Barbato, and “Undercover Brother”, a Universal Pictures film directed by Malcolm D. Lee. Previously, Roth was an executive producer on “Insomnia,” a Warner Bros./Witt-Thomas film, directed by Christopher Nolan and starring Al Pacino and Robin Williams, and co-produced “Fun With Dick & Jane” starring Jim Carrey and “Three Kings,” directed by David O. Russell and starring George Clooney, Ice Cube, and Mark Wahlberg.

**Michael Rosenberg, Executive Producer**

Michael Rosenberg is Co-Chairman of Imagine Entertainment, founded by Oscar winning producer Brian Grazer and Oscar winning director Ron Howard. Imagine Entertainment’s films have grossed over $13.6 billion in worldwide theatrical, dvd, and videogame grosses and has been honored with more that 60 prestigious awards including 10 Academy Awards and 36 Emmy® awards. Rosenberg joined Imagine Entertainment in 1988 as Vice President of Marketing and Distribution and guided the release of many critically acclaimed films like *Parenthood, Backdraft, Apollo 13, Ransom* and *The Nutty Professor.*In 1998, Rosenberg was promoted to President of Imagine Entertainment. He continued to oversee the marketing, publicity and distribution of the company’s films including Best Picture Oscar winner *A Beautiful Mind,* as well as *8 Mile, Friday Night Lights, Inside Man, The Da Vinci Code, American Gangster, Frost / Nixon, J. Edgar, Rush,* and *Get On Up* and television programs including Fox's breakout hit *Empire,* and Fox’s Golden Globe and Emmy award winning Best Drama Series *24*, Fox’s Emmy award winning Best Comedy *Arrested Development,* WB's *Felicity*, ABC's *SportsNight*, as well as HBO's *From the Earth to the Moon*, which won the Emmy® for Outstanding Mini-Series. In 2012, Rosenberg co-produced the 84th Annual Academy Awards show for ABC, and produced *Katy Perry: Part of Me.* Rosenberg has been actively involved with multiple philanthropic organizations including The Fulfillment Fund, UCLA Medical School, USC Film School, The American Film Institute, The Help Group, Best Buddies, and the Sloan Kettering Cancer Research.Prior to joining Imagine, Michael was President of the Saul Zaentz Production Company and Fantasy Films in Berkeley, California. During his ten years at the company he was involved in- *One Flew* *Over the Cuckoo’s Nest*, *Amadeus*, and *The English Patient*.

**Seu Jorge, Dondinho**

As a singer, Seu Jorge was part of the band Farofa Carioca, writing most of the songs of their 1998 debut album Moro no Brasil. In 2001 he released Samba Esporte Fino, a pop album influenced by musicians Jorge Ben Jor, Gilberto Gil, and Milton Nascimento. It was released outside Brazil under the name Carolina in 2003. His second album, the critically acclaimed Cru ("Raw"), was released in 2005. Seu Jorge also recorded the live duo album "Ana & Jorge" with Brazilian singer Ana Carolina, released in Brazil in 2005, Seu Jorge has gained exposure through his work as an actor and soundtrack composer. He appeared in the critically acclaimed 2002 film City of God as Mané Galinha, directed by filmmaker Fernando Meirelles, and then played Pelé dos Santos in Wes Anderson's The Life Aquatic with Steve Zissou, for which he provided much of the soundtrack in the form of Portuguese language cover versions of David Bowie classics. Bowie later went on to say about his cover album, The Life Aquatic Studio Sessions, that "had Seu Jorge not recorded my songs in Portuguese I would never have heard this new level of beauty which he has imbued them with." In June 2006, he performed at Bonnaroo music festival in Tennessee and at the Festival Sudoeste TMN in Portugal. He has also performed in 2006 at the Bluesfest in Ottawa and performed at the Harbourfront in Toronto. Jorge's performances are known for their excitement as well as for getting the crowd moving. In January 2010 he performed with Thievery Corporation at the Austin City Limits, which was later broadcast on PBS. His album 'América Brasil' had a limited Brazilian release in 2007 under his label Cafuné Gravadora, distributed in the UK by Proper Music Distribution. In May 2010, Now-Again Records announced that Jorge's new album, Seu Jorge & Almaz ,a collaboration with drummer Pupillo and guitarist Lucio Maia and bassist and composer Antonio Pinto would be released in North America, Japan, Australia and New Zealand on July 27 and in Europe on September 14. The album has been described as "how powerful Brazilian soul music can be." In 2011, he collaborated with Beck on the Mario C. remix of "Tropicália" for the Red Hot Organization's most recent charitable album "Red Hot+Rio 2." The album is a follow-up to the 1996 "Red Hot+Rio." Proceeds from the sales will be donated to raise awareness and money to fight AIDS/HIV and related health and social issues. In 2012, he collaborated with American fashion designer Rachel Roy on a line of sportswear, footwear, jewelry and handbags. The collaboration is part of Macy's new campaign spotlighting Brazil and its culture and is available exclusively at Macy's and on Rachel Roy's website. On August 12, 2012, Seu Jorge performed in the 2012 Summer Olympics closing ceremony in London during the Handover section of the ceremony which was an eight-minute segment that introduced Rio to the world. He performed with Marisa Monte and concluded with a surprise appearance by Pelé. Seu Jorge appeared on rapper Talib Kweli's May, 2013 album, Prisoner of Conscious, on the song "Favela Love". On January 10 2015, Seu Jorge appeared as a headline act as part of the Sydney Festival, playing a free, live show in The Domain with a capacity of up to 60,000 people. He currently lives with his wife and children in Los Angeles, California. In 2015, he was nominated for the 16th Latin Grammy Awards in the Best Brazilian Contemporary Pop Album category.

**Mariana Nunes, Celeste**

Mariana Nunes was born in Brasília in 1980. She graduated from the Faculdade de Artes Dulcina de Moraes, with a B.A. in Acting (Theatrical Interpretation).In Brasilia, she collaborated with several directors of the capital, including the brothers Adriano and Fernando Guimarães. With them she acted in plays by authors such as Shakespeare, Nelson Rodrigues and Samuel Beckett, throughout Brazil and abroad.On television, she worked on the soap "Mulheres Apaixonadas" by Carioca author Manuel Carlos and in the miniseries "A Cura", "O Brado Retumbante" and "Dupla Identidade". The latter by Gloria Perez. In 2007, Mariana studied acting for film and television at the "Instituto del Cine de Madrid" and also in Spain, she acted in the short films "Última Estación: Tú" by German director Anton Wenzel and "Con Nombre de Tango" by Brazilian director Guilherme Aguilar. Back in Brazil, she worked in the feature film "O Homem Mau Dorme Bem" by Geraldo Moraes. For this work, Mariana won two prizes: the Kalunga award for "Best Supporting Actress" in Cine PE 2010 and the Beto Leão Award for "Best Supporting Actress" in Annapolis III Festival Film. She also joined the cast of another feature film “Febre do Rato” by Claudio Assis in 2011, This work garnered her the Award “Ver ou não ver” for "Best Actress" at the Iberian-American Movie Festival of Sergipe (Curta + SE 12). She starred the feature movie "Alemão" by José Eduardo Belmonte, "Trinta" by Paul Machiline and "Pele: The Birth of The Legend", directed by Mike and Jeff Zimbalist. In 2015, she acted in the Portuguese film “São Jorge” by the director Marco Martins, "Zama", directed by Argentinean Lucrecia Martel and “O Último Trago”, directed by Luis Pretti, Ricardo Pretti and Pedro Diógenes.

**Diego Boneta, Jose**

DIEGO BONETA most recently wrapped production starring as the lead of Ryan Murphy’s highly anticipated new series on Fox, SCREAM QUEENS, opposite Emma Roberts.  He can next be seen starring in Brian Grazer and Imagine’s PELE. He co-stars as the legendary Brazilian soccer player “Jose Altafini” opposite Rodrigo Santoro and Vincent D’Onofrio.

He will next shoot TITAN opposite Sam Worthington and Tom Wilkinson which is being produced by Brian Kavanaugh-Jones.He can recently be seen starring as the male lead in CBS’s Mark Burnett and Roma Downey produced event series THE DOVEKEEPERS which had over 9 Million viewer.He was named one of the LA Times’ “Faces to Watch in 2014” and featured in Bruce Weber’s new “Rising Star” campaign.  Diego is most know for starring in ROCK OF AGES as “Drew” for Adam Shankman and New Line Cinema, which was distributed through Warner Brother.. The film’s cast included Julianne Hough, Tom Cruise, Russell Brand, Mary J Blige, Catherine Zeta Jones and Paul Giamatti.   For his performance Diego was named  for Cinemacon’s rising star of the year and won the Alma Award for best actor.

**Vincent D’Onofrio, Coach Feola**

VINCENT D’ONOFRIO had a big summer starring in “Jurassic World”, while also appearing as Wilson Fisk aka Kingpin in the Netflix series “Daredevil,” opposite Charlie Cox.  He just wrapped “The Magnificent Seven,” as one of the Magnificent Seven along with Chris Pratt and Denzel Washington. Prior to that he starred with Bryan Cranston and Robert Duvall in the upcoming “In Dubious Battle,” directed by James Franco. Next up Vincent will star in the film adaption of “CHiPs”, alongside Michael Pena, Dax Shepard (who will direct) and Kristen Bell. D’Onofrio will also be directing and starring in “The Kid”, alongside James Franco and Ethan Hawke. D’Onofrio was born in Brooklyn, New York, and grew up in Hawaii, Colorado, and Florida.  He eventually returned to New York to study acting at the American Stanislavsky Theatre with Sharon Chatten of the Actors Studio.  While honing his craft, he appeared in several films at New York University and worked as a bouncer at dance clubs in the city.

In 1984, he became a full-fledged member of the American Stanislavsky Theatre, appearing in “The Petrified Forest,” “Of Mice and Men,” “Sexual Perversity in Chicago” and “The Indian Wants the Bronx.”  That same year, he made his Broadway debut in “Open Admissions.”  He recently starred off-Broadway in Sam Shepard’s “Tooth of Crime (Second Dance).”

D’Onofrio gained attention for his intense and compelling talent on the screen in 1987 with a haunting portrayal of an unstable Vietnam War recruit in Stanley Kubrick’s gritty “Full Metal Jacket.”  His other early film appearances include “Mystic Pizza” and “Adventures in Babysitting.”  He also executive produced and portrayed 1960s counterculture icon Abbie Hoffman in the film “Steal This Movie,” opposite Janeane Garofalo, and starred opposite Jennifer Lopez and Vince Vaughn in the science-fiction noir film “The Cell.”

His other film credits include "The Judge,” opposite Robert Downey Jr. and Robert Duvall. “The Dangerous Lives of Altar Boys,” opposite Jodie Foster; “The Salton Sea,” opposite Val Kilmer; “Imposter,” with Gary Sinise; “Chelsea Walls,” directed by Ethan Hawke; “Happy Accidents,” co-starring Marisa Tomei; Robert Altman’s “The Player”; Joel Schumacher’s “Dying Young”; Tim Burton’s “Ed Wood”; Kathryn Bigelow’s “Strange Days,” opposite Ralph Fiennes and Angela Bassett; Harold Ramis’ “Stuart Saves His Family”; Barry Sonnenfeld’s “Men In Black,” opposite Will Smith and Tommy Lee Jones; “The Thirteenth Floor,” opposite Craig Bierko; “The Whole Wide World,” which he produced and starred in, opposite Renée Zellweger; and Oliver Stone’s “JFK.”  More recently, D’Onofrio appeared in the sci-fi thriller “The Tomb,” featuring Sylvester Stallone and Arnold Schwarzenegger, and also recently finished “Fire with Fire,” opposite Bruce Willis and Josh Duhamel. Forthcoming film appearances also include the independent feature “Chained,” from writer-director Jennifer Chambers Lynch.

On television, D’Onofrio starred as Detective Robert Goren in over 100 episodes of the series “Law & Order: Criminal Intent.”  He received an Emmy Award nomination in 1998 for his riveting guest appearance in the “Homicide: Life on the Street” episode “The Subway.”  D’Onofrio directed, produced and starred in the short film, “Five Minutes, Mr. Welles,” and recently appeared in the Academy Award-winning short “The New Tenants.”

**Rodrigo Santoro, Associate Producer, and Brazilian Announcer**

Rodrigo can currently be seen in THE 33 starring alongside Antonio Banderas, Juliette Binoche, James Brolin, and Gabriel Bryne. Earlier this year, Rodrigo co-starred in the Warner Brothers feature FOCUS, alongside Will Smith and Margot Robbie. The film debuted at $18.6M domestic on opening weekend and was #1 at the box office, currently FOCUS has generated over $153.9 Million Worldwide.  Rodrigo can next be seen starring alongside Academy Award Winner Anthony Hopkins, Evan Rachel Wood, and Geoffrey Wright,  in the HBO series WESTWORLD directed by Jonah Nolan with JJ Abrams producing. Rodrigo also wrapped shooting the MGM remake of BEN HUR for Timur Bekmambetov, starring alongside Morgan Freeman, Sofia Black-D’Elia, and Toby Kebbell. Rodrigo can be seen in the Independent feature DOMINION co-starring alongside John Malkovich, Rhys Ifans, Tony Hale, and Romola Garai. Rodrigo is also associate producing PELE with Brian Grazer. Early next year, Rodrigo can be seen starring alongside Natalie Portman, Bradley Cooper, and Joel Edgerton, in the Independent Feature JANE GOT A GUN, which Gavin O’Connor directed. Rodrigo can also be seen reprising his iconic role of ‘*Xerxes*’ in 300: RISE OF AN EMPIRE opposite Eva Green and Sullivan Stapleton for Warner Brothers which opened #1 in the world and is currently at $330 Million World Wide. Rodrigo also returned as the voice of “Tuilo” in RIO 2 which was released April 11th 2014 and has currently grossed $340 Million World Wide. Rodrigo will also be seen in the Stephan Elliott directed RIO, I LOVE YOU starring alongside Emily Mortimer and Jason Isaacs. Most recently he was seen in the Lionsgate feature THE LAST STAND opposite Forrest Whitaker, Arnold Schwarzenegger, and produced by Lorenzo Di Bonaventura. He starred in the Lionsgate feature WHAT TO EXPECT WHEN YOU’RE EXPECTING opposite Cameron Diaz, Jennifer Lopez, and Elizabeth Banks.  Rodrigo also starred in HEMINGWAY AND GELHORN opposite Nicole Kidman and Clive Owen, which premiered on HBO.  HELENO, the fascinating true life story of Brazilian soccer star Heleno de Frietas in which Rodrigo stars and also produced, recently sold to HBO for U.S. distribution after its premiere at the 2011 Toronto Film Festival.  He was awarded the Best Actor award for this film at the 2012 LIMA INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL.  He also received the Best Actor award at the 2011 HAVANA FILM FESTIVAL. The movie had its U.S. premiere at the Miami Film Festival. Rodrigo starred in the world wide smash animated Fox feature hit RIO that had a box office gross of $486,000,000 worldwide. He also appeared on the December 2011 cover of VOGUE- the first male in the history of the magazine to do so.

**INTERVIEWS**

Select clips from interviews with the following key people are being included in our delivery of EPK materials: **Pelé, Mariana Nunes, Ivan Orlic, Diego Boneta, Vincent D’Onofrio, Colm Meaney, Rodrigo Santoro, Kevin de Paula, Jeff and Mike Zimbalist**

**PRODUCTION INFORMATION**

It is rare for two legends from two different worlds to join forces in the telling of a single story. In 2012, the greatest soccer player in history tapped one of Hollywood’s most iconic and celebrated producers to tell his story. Brian Grazer’s Imagine Entertainment has long been responsible for crowd-pleasing and award winning films, including, as it turns out, several of Pelé’s all-time favorite films. So when Pelé and his team at Legends 10 looked to add a feature film of his life story to his legacy project (which also includes the re-launch of the documentary *Pele Eterno*, as well as the publication of his autobiographical book *Why Soccer Matters)*, Pelé immediately approached Imagine Entertainment. Brian Grazer and his team at Imagine had long felt that Pele’s story, one of the most inspiring sports stories of all time, deserved a life on the big screen. Once the two modern icons connected, there was no question that this would result in a great storytelling adventure!

In partnership with Legends 10, Imagine Entertainment recruited the young writer/director team, Jeffrey and Michael Zimbalist to scribe the screenplay and helm the film project. Their successful background in documentary films where they previously had explored soccer as well as Brazil and Brazilian culture, would ensure the film would have a unique perspective and truthful tone. After months of interviews with Pelé and his close friends and family, the first draft of a screenplay emerged.

The partnership grew with the addition of Peruvian producer Ivan Orlic. Originally from Peru, Orlic grew up playing, living and breathing soccer, and of course surrounded by stories about the legendary soccer player. The opportunity to be a part of the telling of his idol’s story was as irresistible as the opportunity to work with Imagine Entertainment, the company responsible for many of his favorite films and television series. After a few weeks in additional development in collaboration with Orlic’s Seine Pictures, the final screenplay was approved and embraced unanimously, and Orlic was able to arrange for the film to be financed and “green-lit”.

Grazer, Pelé, Orlic and the filmmakers met in Cannes to announce the project to the global marketplace in partnership with international sales agent Exclusive Media. The project was met with great enthusiasm, and the filmmaking team quickly proceed to the next phase: to build the production and creative team charged with telling the Pele story.

An incredibly experienced and accomplished creative team was assembled, including Academy Award nominee Matthew Libatique as director of photography, renowned production designer and art director Dominic Watkins, award-winning casting director Mary Vernieu, PGA Award winning line producer Colin Wilson, some of Hollywood’s most exciting editors in Luis Carballar and Glen Scantlebury, and Academy Award winning composer A.R. Rahman, who’s musical score truly brings the film to life.

Casting the role of Pelé would require two actors (one to play him at age 9 and a second to play him at ages 16-17), who would not only have a similar physical appearance to the legendary player, but also possessed extraordinary natural talents for both soccer and performance. In addition to being English speakers, of course! This casting effort proved to every bit the challenge that one would expect it to be, and to rise up to that challenge the producers and casting directors organized one of the largest casting endeavors in recent film history. Production set up casting offices in London as well as in several cities in the United States, South Africa, and of course, Brazil. Actors were brought in from all walks of life, whether they be trained actors, experienced soccer players, or charismatic school kids. First to be cast was a young boy from Brazil to play 9-year old Pelé: Leonardo Lima Carvalho, whose magnetic on-camera presence and natural charisma were immediately reminiscent of the legend himself.

The search for a 16-year-old Pelé for the character of “Older Dico”, however, was even more difficult. Where some actors had the requisite resemblance, they were often lacking either the soccer ball or the language skills, and conversely those who had the necessary skills lacked the resemblance. Desperate to find the perfect actor for this role, the filmmakers and casting directors took to the streets and even beaches of Rio, where locals are known to regularly demonstrate their soccer skills, tricks and elaborate juggling techniques. One day, when reviewing a video of several young men playing soccer near the beach, the directors a young man in the background of the clips with a strong resemblance to Pelé. He had not been the intended subject of the video clip, but the uncanny resemblance and demonstrated soccer skills were undeniable.

Immediately, they set out to the beaches, but only to find that the group of young men had already dispersed and left. Believing that they had found the perfect actor to play Pele, the directors returned to the beach the following day to discover a semi-professional team playing a match on a field near the beach. As they watched the game, they noticed something amazing—the young man they had seen in the yesterday’s video was playing on the semi-pro team! After the game, they approached the young man and asked him to audition for the role, Kevin de Paula gave a phenomenal audition despite having no previous acting experience: he possessed Pelé’s energy, heart, and playing skills. The filmmakers had found their Pelé!

Both the producers and the filmmakers describe the film as a love-letter not just to the legendary player and his legacy, but also to his home country and culture. In order to maintain the integrity and authenticity of the story, it was decided that the film would be shot entirely in Brazil, which also offered the filmmaker the opportunity to showcase the natural beauty of the country, its people, and their culture. This decision also presented the team with the challenges of a language barrier, a different industry culture, and different local laws and regulations, in addition to the challenges of producing a period piece, with the intellectual property issues of a film based on a true story, and the added complications of both crowds and choreographies for the soccer sequences. To navigate the process, producers Ivan Orlic and Colin Wilson traveled to Brazil several months in advance of principal photography to begin to assemble the local partners and crew that would be necessary to overcome all the challenges ahead. Inspired at every turn by the story they were making possible to be told, they were able to do just that.

Perhaps the most impressive aspect of working in Brazil was the dedication of the local people. And as production moved forward, the Brazilian crew’s talent became undeniable. Hundreds of people joined the effort, with local hiring and local casting. Casting locally also gives the film an authentic feel and was one of the great ways in which this film serves as a love letter to the people of Brazil. The dedication of the cast and crew to this film and this story is what truly allowed the artists to elevate the film in service of the legacy of the legend whose story it tells.

**CAST CREDITS**

(In Order of Appearance)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Dico (15-17 years old)Dico (9 years old) Thiago (9 years old)Yuri (10 years old)Fofinho (10 years old)Bodega OwnerZoca (6 years old)CelesteMaria (toddler)DondinhoJose Altofini “Mazzola” (14 years old)José’s Friend #1 (14 years old)José’s Friend #2 (14 years old)José’s Friend #3Baurú Youth Cup AnnouncerRailroad ForemanWaldemar De BritoBaurú Youth Cup PhotographerMaria (4-6 years old)Zoca (11-13 years old)Santos FC CoachSantos FC Assistant CoachZitoMoving ManYuri (15-17 years old)GarrinchaVaváCastilhoMauroDidiJose Altofini “Mazzola”(20 years old)Coach Vicente FeolaBelliniBrazilian Reporter #1Feola’s Assistant CoachFofinho (17 years old)Mario AmericoDoctor GoslingSkoglund (Swedish Player)European Reporter #1European Reporter #2European Reporter #3European Reporter #4Coach George RaynorDjalma SantosSwedish Midfielder Sigge ParlingThiago’s MotherBrazilian Reporter #2European Reporter #5British Announcer #1British Announcer #2French AnnouncerItalian AnnouncerGerman AnnouncerDutch AnnouncerChina AnnouncerSpanish AnnouncerBrazilian Announcer | KEVIN DE PAULA ROSALEONARDO LIMA CARVALHONATHAN ALVES ROSSETORAFAEL HENRIQUE DE SOUZA REUTHERMARCUS VINICIUS CERQUEIRA DE SOUZAJULIO LEVYTHEO RODRIGUES COELHO LIMAMARIANA NUNESJOVANASEU JORGERAPHAEL BENÍCIO THOMÉDANIEL DE ARAUJOANTONIO KARABACHIANJOSÉ VICTOR PIRES DA FONSECABRUCE GOMLEVSKILUI MENDESMILTON GONÇALVESTARCISO ROSSICAREY STRELLAGABRIEL VINICIUS REIS DE OLIVEIRAANDRÉ MATTOSÁLVARO DINIZFERNANDO CARUSOJORGE XAVIERÍCARO AMADOFELIPE SIMASGUILHERME MARTINSARTHUR MACEDOMAILSON MOURAMILSON FERREIRADIEGO BONETAVINCENT D’ONOFRIOFERNANDO PITTDUDA MONTEIRO DOS SANTOSGARCIA JUNIORGUSTAVO MASCARENHAS RIBASSERGIO MENEZESCHARLES MYARARAFFAELE CASUCCIOAlex BilbaoCarlos SatoNicola LamaMARCOS RUBIOCOLM MEANEYFABIANO BANDEIRATHIAGO ROCHACINARA LEALAugusto MadeiraEmmanuel PasqualiniJON COTERILLARTHUR MURPHYJEROME FRANZRICARDO ACCOLAROGER HAAGARTHUR JANSENLIN MO SHIIVAN ORLICRODRIGO SANTORO |

**SONG CUES**

“Vai muleki vai”

Written By: Mauricio Torres

Peformed By: Mauricio Torres, Hugo Bravo, Homero Chinchay and Leyla Parra

Courtesy of International Media Licensing

“Futebol das ruas”

Written By: Pepe Torres

Performed By: Pepe Torres, Hugo Bravo, Leyla Parra, Homero Chinchay and Mauricio Torres

Courtesy of International Media Licensing

“Voce sabe danzar”

Written By: Alex Torres

Performed By: Alex Torres, Hugo Bravo, Leyla Parra and Mauricio Torres

Courtesy of International Media Licensing

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