

Cast

Henri Guillaumet.....CRAIG SHEFFER
Noëlle Guillaumet.....ELIZABETH MCGOVERN
St. Exupery.....TOM HULCE
Jean Mermoz.....VAL KILMER
Pierre Deley.....KEN POGUE
Jean-Rene Lefebvre.....RON SAUVE

Crew

Producer/Director.....JEAN-JACQUES ANNAUD
Screenplay.....ALAIN GODARD & JEAN-JACQUES ANNAUD
Executive Producer.....ANTOINE COMPIN
Executive Producer.....CHARIS HORTON
Co-Producer.....RICHARD BRIGGS
Production Manager.....ROBERT GRAY

Production Designer.....IAN THOMAS
Director of Photography.....ROBERT FRAISSE
Editor.....LOUISE RUBACKY
Costume Designer.....AGGIE RODGERS
Make-Up.....STEPHAN DUPUIS
Stereographer.....ERNIE MCNABB

1st Assistant Director.....RICHARD COLEMAN
Solido Camera Operator.....ALLEN SMITH
Camera Operator.....ROGER VERNON
Gaffer.....BRUNO BITTNER
Key Grip.....RICK ALLEN

Casting Director (Los Angeles).....MARY-JO SLATER
Casting Director (Vancouver).....STUART AIKINS
Unit Publicist.....LARRY KAPLAN

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SYNOPSIS

A True Story

Buenos Aires, Argentina, 1930 -- two legendary French aviation pioneers Jean Mermoz (VAL KILMER) and Antoine de St. Exupery (TOM HULCE), head the Compagnie Générale Aéropostale, the first ever to fly mail between South American cities and France. Mermoz, a daredevil pilot, is a charismatic, astonishingly handsome, French cultural icon -- the future hero of the Atlantic South. St. Exupery, witty, eccentric, intellectual, is a famous writer who will later gain even greater fame as the author of the literary classic, *Le Petit Prince*.

Having heard of Henri Guillaumet's (CRAIG SHEFFER) flying exploits and needing another young pilot to cover the Santiago de Chile/Buenos Aires route, the two famous airmen recruit Henri to fly for them. Henri has two passions in life: flying and his beautiful wife Noëlle (ELIZABETH MCGOVERN). The night before Henri's first mail delivery, Mermoz tells him that the route he will be flying is a treacherous run across the Andes Cordillera range, where the mountains peak at 21,000 feet.

"If you drop, you'll never be found again," he says, "remember the local saying: 'the Andes don't give men back.'" Flying the Cordillera, Henri runs into weather problems from the start. On one flight, as St. Exupery is waiting for him to deliver the European mail in Buenos Aires, his biplane is badly damaged by a fierce hail storm. He is forced to turn back to Santiago. Taking Aeropostale's motto "the mail is more important than life" literally, he takes off again the next morning in a patched-up plane, against worse weather conditions.

Crossing the monumental range with lightning ripping through the clouds, Henri makes a brave attempt at getting through. Bashed by the storm, the plane plummets, and Henri is forced to crash-land on a frozen mountain lake, lost in the Andes, miles from civilization.

When a search plane passes by without seeing him, Henri buries the mail in the snow with a marker so it can be located later, and starts his walk through the desolate frozen landscape of the Cordillera. For five days and five nights, Henri courageously carries on his trek, struggling through waist-deep snow and freezing temperatures. The desire to rest by succumbing to death is strong, but proves no match for his love of Noëlle and devotion to duty. Henri keeps walking. At last, he is finally found by a group of Argentine Gauchos who contact St. Exupery and the rescue team.

Ten days later, Henri is back on duty for Aeropostale...flying the mail over the Andes.

A Conversation with Jean-Jacques Annaud

How did you become a pioneer involved in making the first dramatic film to be shot in IMAX® 3D and what attracted you to the project?

My collaboration with Sony has been the ideal meeting of two desires: Sony's desire to launch themselves into the production of dramatic features for the new IMAX® 3D technology and my own wish to tell the compelling story of Henri Guillaumet.

After having made **The Lover** I wanted to concentrate on a male protagonist and to expand my field of vision, I needed to feel the wind of wide open spaces again. I began to think about making a film about Henri Guillaumet, whose heroic story I had been interested in for many years. His historic flights in the Andes were made famous through press coverage and the book *Winds, Sand and Stars* written by his friend Antoine Saint-Exupery. What makes his story so compelling is its nature of gigantic disproportion: the way in which the seemingly invincible and gigantic Cordellera mountain range of the Andes is challenged by a single man. Henry Guillaumet is a mere insect when set against the Andes, but the flame of his honest heart defeats a winter blizzard, which is no mean destiny for a man who purports to have no ambition.

For many years now, questions have been bounced around Hollywood about how the motion picture industry is to develop if it is to continue to pull in the crowds, since home videos have become so sophisticated and now provide images of the highest visual quality. People in the industry have been trying to find a way to guarantee the superiority of the theater experience, to put the magic back in the temple as it were. Sony believes the answer lies in producing a high resolution image in IMAX® 3D on a giant screen. They approached me to direct their first project since they thought I was the only filmmaker mad enough to take this kind of risk!

Why did you choose the specific story of Henri Guillaumet for the first dramatic IMAX® 3D film?

Henri's adventure united several "obvious" elements generally associated with the pleasures of IMAX®; wide open spaces, aerial shots, a true story. But I was most excited by the iconoclastic feeling that this format would be adapted to a subject that is actually very intimate. I wanted to take the risk of believing that the third dimension was more an advantage than a handicap for getting closer to the only dimension that counts: emotion.

Why did you choose Val Kilmer, Craig Sheffer, Tom Hulce and Elizabeth McGovern to star in this film and what did they think about the challenge of working with cutting edge technology?

These actors have at least two things in common: they don't live in Los Angeles, and they read. I chose them for a third point: I had seen them give remarkable performances in films I had loved.

I feel a great deal of respect and friendship towards the actors I worked with WINGS OF COUARGE. They displayed untiring devotion and they generated a lot of enthusiasm on set. I hadn't been expecting so much courtesy - so much warmth - in the nonetheless, very chilly conditions of the shoot.

As the first feature film director to work in the IMAX® 3D format how would you describe the experience?

Directing a film means mastering the technique so it will cater to the needs of the story. The machine has to be dominated in much the same way as a wild animal has to be dominated by his trainer. Some people prefer dealing with poodles, while others go for Bengal Tigers, it really doesn't matter so long as the result is exciting and graceful. In this case, I was fighting more with some kind of cumbersome, prehistoric rhinoceros! I had already dabbled in working with the "wooly mammoth" for QUEST FOR FIRE. This was therefore a first.

There is no question that shooting WINGS OF COURAGE was a huge challenge to everyone involved and that includes the actors. Because it takes so long to set up every shot with the IMAX® camera and since the camera holds only 3 minutes of film at any one time, there was a huge amount of pressure on the actors to perform perfectly whenever we were ready to shoot. Furthermore, due to the extremely difficult weather conditions in the Andes, Murphy's Law was fully operational throughout the filming of WINGS OF COUARGE: everything that could go wrong, did. Of course, I am ready to do it all again.

What are the cinematic advantages of IMAX® 3D as opposed to 35 mm movies from the point of view of the film maker and the audience?

Traditional films, just like theater, painting and photography, offer their "representation" within a definitive framework. The use of a giant screen has changed this fundamental idea as the spectator is so close to the screen that he cannot discern the edges anymore. With IMAX® 2D he is no longer in front of an image, but *inside* that image. With IMAX® 3D he

is no longer inside an image but inside a *space*. He is on the set *with* the characters *in* the action. The incredible sharpness of the photographic resolution, the stereoscopic vision, the three dimensionality of watching a movie in IMAX® 3D make the boundaries between reality and illusion disappear. IMAX® 3D is, therefore, a more efficient tool, a more formidable weapon, placed at the disposal of the illusionists we filmmakers are.

Would you talk about some of the particular challenges you encountered when making the film?

Besides making sure the camera didn't fall on my foot! It was the kind of obstacle course faced by all people who deal with prototypes. There were financial obstacles: there was no ready made market, so no readily available money, even though I was working with a major company. There were also material obstacles: the available tools were poorly adapted to the new task. I felt like one of the first computer engineers needing twenty semitrailers of equipment to add up a three figure sum. The trouble was that I wasn't shooting on a highway, but at an altitude of 10,000 feet in the middle of winter in the Canadian Rockies. And then there's always the main question hanging over you throughout the venture: "Is the infernal object going to function or is it going to blow up in our faces?" But in some way all films are prototypes and all directors are confronted with the same question. This film is just a little more of a prototype than your average prototype.

How long did it take you to shoot the film and how did you pick the team of professionals with whom you worked?

I shot the film in fourteen six-day weeks, with an average of four set-ups per day, that is to say three or four times less than my usual quota.

I quickly understood that I had to choose technicians endowed with vast resources of patience. Considering the discomfort of the waiting rooms I had to offer - a snap hook attached to a rock face, a hole in the snow in the midst of a blizzard - I headed for people with a sturdy constitution. Robert Fraisse, the Director of Photography on WINGS OF COURAGE had suffered with me in the rice-fields of THE LOVER . He is a mountain enthusiast, he is highly sensitive artistically, he is good-natured and he has a rare level of technical proficiency. For the numerous interior scenes he had to achieve the impossible. The stereoscopic images require a very large depth of focus, however, due to the size of the negative (10 times the size of 35mm), the IMAX® camera uses very wide-angle lenses with ... very little depth of focus, particularly in weak light.

We had to make up for this by using *a lot* of lighting. But we could not

set up projectors, as they would have been constantly in the shot due to the wide-angle lenses. The IMAX® camera sees everything from the floor to the ceiling, including the legs of its own tripod. How can you do a movement without seeing the dolly rails? I dreamed of finding a steadycam operator who was a weight lifting world champion, with very short legs and tiny feet. As a substitute, I found two stereographers who had shot the IMAX® demonstration documentaries. They helped me to find solutions to suit each impossibility.

Most of my crew were from Canada, the birthplace of IMAX®, and homeland of the Rocky mountains were we were shooting. Many of them knew me; they had already shivered their way through British Columbia during the filming of Quest For Fire. I found their skills and good humor still intact.

As a cinematic pioneer, how do you see the future of IMAX® 3D feature film evolving?

Henri Guillaumet was often asked the same kind of questions. Do you think aeronauts have a commercial future? Are airplanes merely a technical curiosity? What's the point in gaining a few days to receive a letter, especially if it's a bill?

He risked his life every day to make his conviction a reality. He died because of it. I only risked two years, and I'm not French enough any more to demand a tragic artist's fate. But I am working on writing the two other episodes of the AEROPOSTALE trilogy, one about the pilot Mermoz the other about the aviator St. Exupery. Other companies, other directors, are waiting to know which mailboxes the users will put their mail into: "Regular Mail" or "Airmail." The improvement of the machines, their future and the configuration of the airports of the future will depend on this act.

PRODUCTION BACKGROUND

WINGS OF COURAGE, the first film from a major motion picture director filmed in IMAX®3D (but also available for distribution for IMAX®/OMNIMAX® and 8/70 theatres worldwide), stars Craig Sheffer, Tom Hulce, Elizabeth McGovern and Val Kilmer. WINGS OF COURAGE was directed and produced by Academy Award® winning filmmaker, Jean-Jacques Annaud, who co-wrote the script with Alain Godard.

The film tells the dramatic story of three legendary French aviators and the first historic airmail flights in the Andes. It combines a tale of high adventure and excitement with cutting-edge technology, and is the fulfillment of one of Annaud's long-held dreams.

"I have always had a fascination for people who were the first to do something, those who invent or innovate, and I have always wanted to do a movie about these particular pioneers, the people who invented the new technology -- meaning those crazy young men in the flying machines," the French director says.

"In the early days of aviation, people thought of airplanes primarily in terms of World War I: that they were useful for observation alone. But these early aviators had a dream. They were visionaries, the first to believe that airplanes could be used for carrying mail and people. Almost everyone thought they were mad. This is terribly interesting to me."

Annaud, one of the most respected and original directors working in films today, whose credits include *QUEST FOR FIRE*, *THE NAME OF THE ROSE*, *THE BEAR*, and *THE LOVER*, says, "As a child I read all of St. Exupery's works such as *The Little Prince* and *Wind, Sand and Stars*. Those books take a very romantic and idealistic view of airplanes and pilots. Most pilots, in fact, most people involved with airplanes, share this romantic view. I do too, and I believe it's men like Mermoz and St. Exupery who are responsible for the mystique attached to aviation that endures today."

Larger-than-life characters, Mermoz and St. Exupery are certainly crucial to WINGS OF COURAGE and continue to inspire Annaud's inspiration. But it is the miraculous and stirring story of a third man, Henri Guillaumet, less well-known but probably the greatest pilot of all three, that constitutes the heart and soul of the film.

Crash-landing his single-engine plane in the Andes, Guillaumet exerts superhuman courage and a profound will to survive as he walks for six days across the frozen, desolate mountain landscapes until, close to death, he is rescued by peasants who find him in the Argentine pampas.

“I love this story,” says Annaud. What drives him is his love for his wife and his sense of responsibility. He accepts Aeropostale’s philosophy, that the mail is more important than life. Fourteen thousand feet high in the snow-covered Andes, he understands that his body has not one chance in a billion of being found, so he stands up and resolves to walk as far as he can back to civilization.

“This is a man I admire,” Annaud continues. “Frankly, I am bored with the so-called Hollywood hero who does things for reasons that are gross and vulgar. I am tired of the anti-hero portrayed in most contemporary films, the man who does things for revenge or for monetary gain. This character is motivated by the most noble and honorable sentiments, and it is so moving. He has old-fashioned values, which are really contemporary.”

Annaud’s wife, Laurence, came upon Guillaumet’s story in an issue of *Icare*, an early French aviation magazine. Annaud sensed that this tale would make a great movie, and decided to do more research.

He flew to Argentina and proceeded to travel along the very route in the Andes that Henri walked along to safety, which the director calls “simply astounding.” Then, returning to France, he began writing the first draft of the screenplay, which he understood as he went along was really a self-contained tale and would make a film that ran only about an hour, perhaps even less.

Coincidentally, at the same time that Annaud began working on the first draft of the *WINGS OF COURAGE* screenplay, he also signed an exclusive three-picture agreement with Sony Pictures Britannia -- a Sony Pictures Entertainment company -- to write, produce and direct movies for SPE’s TriStar Pictures.

“I started to look into this new format, and traveled to Vancouver and Montreal to see demo reels that had been shot with IMAX® 3D from a frame that is ten times larger than the normal 35mm frame, transferred onto a screen that is some six to eight stories high.

“The quality of reproduction was extraordinary,” says Annaud. “I’d never seen anything like it. Here was a great tool with which to make a film,

and I was interested in becoming involved at once. But at first, I wasn't sure exactly what I could do because, for some reason, I didn't connect the new technology to the story I was working on about Guillaumet. But a few weeks later, it clicked, and I understood that this project was the *perfect* story to film in this format.

"There were three very distinct reasons: the first was that it's quite difficult to express the true dimension of nature in 35mm. Something gets lost, and a story like this one, which pits a lone man against nature's monumental forces, is especially hard to convey in two dimensions on a normal screen. IMAX® 3D is so spectacular because of the depth of perspective, and I really liked the idea of using a big format for what is essentially a very intimate story.

"How do you show a mountain in 2D? You get something flat. You don't get the harshness, the vertigo, the wind, the rain. There's a distance, a curtain between the viewer and the mountain. But in real life, you're on the mountain, in the wind and the rain. With IMAX®3D, we're able to do that."

"In a way, the most interesting reason for doing the film in ultra-wide 3D screen is that we're telling a story about a single man, his love for his wife and his emotional commitment to his job," Annaud says. "I believe that this new format is an excellent way to convey such feelings to an audience."

"The conventional wisdom is that the wide screen and IMAX® 3D screen is *not* needed for expressing emotions, but I believe quite the opposite, and I think the film will prove that. Everyone laughed at me when I told them I wanted to shoot a drama in 3D." Ironically, the IMAX® technicians were pessimistic about its chances for success.

In June 1993, the director conducted a week of tests, using the brand new IMAX® 3D Solido® camera, which had never been tested outside a laboratory and is the most sophisticated and complex camera in the world. In addition to the Solido, he took along the IMAX® rig, an IMAX® 2D camera, and a split 65 camera. He climbed to the top of a 16,000-foot mountain near Telluride, and started shooting.

"Not only did it work, but it worked so well that out of three days shooting I was able to edit together an eight-minute demo reel that included everything I needed -- action footage, regular dollying, and close-ups," he says. "It proved to me that it was a workable system."

Along with the new technology comes a very different kind of camera crew. In addition to Director of Photography Robert Fraisse, WINGS OF COURAGE utilized the talents of a stereographer, two camera operators and seven camera assistants. Noel Archambault, an IMAX® cinematographer and 3D expert in his own right, agreed to work as a camera assistant in order to participate in Annaud's experience.

WINGS OF COURAGE used four IMAX® cameras: the Solido, a single 3D camera that runs two film strips simultaneously; the IMAX® 3D rig, consisting of two IMAX® cameras mounted on a frame and run in sync electronically; the National Film Board of Canada (NFB) rig, so named because it was developed and built for TRANSITIONS, the first IMAX® 3D film (shown at EXPO '86 in Vancouver); and a 2D IMAX® camera, used primarily for distant vistas. All four cameras, particularly the double-camera 3D rigs, are very heavy and cumbersome. In fact, each rig had to be specially flown in by helicopter.

Archambault explains, "the 3D cameras use two strips of film with two lenses, so you're shooting two images at the same time, at 24fps, and the lenses are essentially spaced apart about the same distance as your eyes, so the camera just reproduces what you would see if you were standing in its place."

Annaud points out that for much of movie history people have turned their backs on new technology at first. For instance, in the beginning, everyone resisted the coming of sound and color. Now, Annaud is convinced that as with those former innovations, this new giant screen IMAX® 3D format will eventually become an accepted part of filmmaking.

"Who will be able to resist when they see this phenomenal quality of reproduction? It's practically virtual reality."

ABOUT THE PRODUCTION

Once Annaud decided to make *WINGS OF COURAGE* in the new process, he and his executive producers, Charis Horton and Antoine Compin, scouted locations in the Andes and in the Canadian Rockies. Horton and Compin, who have worked together as a production team since 1977 on such projects as *FROM TIME TO TIME*, a Circlevision 360 film for Disney, were as enthusiastic as Annaud about using the new technology to tell the story.

But when it became clear that the film would have to be shot in March and April to be ready for a spring 1995 release, a decision was taken to shoot in Canada. March and April are late summer in Argentina, and Henri's story called for a winter landscape. The Canadian Rockies, still frozen-over that time of year, could easily stand in for the Andes, so the arrangements for filming there were set in motion.

The next step was casting, which, according to Annaud, was one of the most important aspects of the production.

“Above all, we felt it was necessary to signal to the audience that this was going to be a real movie, not a demo reel or something made for an Expo. So we started thinking about using very big stars. That led us to consider people who were in their late 30's or 40's. But then it occurred to me that we really ought to cast the movie with actors who were the same age as the characters they were going to play, who were all under 30, and that became a guiding principle.”

“When I thought about it, I understood that the aspects of youth was all-important in this story. These people, despite their tender years, are among the most interesting characters who lived during the period between the two world wars. A lot of the glamour that is associated with pilots and with aeronautics today derives from the exploits of these men.”

“More than that, the very idea that a young person in his 20's like Henri who is imbued with such a sense of responsibility was crucial to the story's theme. So we decided to cast younger actors.”

“For the role of Henri Guillaumet, Annaud signed Craig Sheffer. Star of *A RIVER RUNS THROUGH IT*, Sheffer has also appeared in *THAT WAS THEN, THIS IS NOW* and *SOME KIND OF WONDERFUL*. On Broadway, he appeared in *TORCH SONG TRILOGY*.

“As soon as I saw Craig in *A RIVER RUNS THROUGH IT*, I decided that I wanted him to play Henri,” says Annaud. He’s a young man with a lot of intelligence, and I could see how well he understood the character of Henri.” “Henri is an inspiring man with a vision, who’s incredibly brave,” says Sheffer. “You have to call on a deep resource for that kind of courage, to portray that kind of person.”

For Henri’s wife, Annaud cast Elizabeth McGovern. McGovern made her film debut in *ORDINARY PEOPLE* and was nominated for an Academy Award® for her performance in *RAGTIME*. Recent credits include *KING OF THE HILL* and *THE FAVOR*.

Noëlle is a straightforward role, but there’s a lot of depth to her,” McGovern says. “Yes, she’s the loving wife, kind of passive, but her belief in her husband is so intense that it lights her up inside. She is strong.” Annaud believes that McGovern is perfect for the role because, as he puts it, she combines the qualities of intelligence, understanding and beauty. “She is lovely,” he says, “but it’s not the loveliness of an ingenue or a model but of a woman.”

The Character of Antoine de St. Exupery, perhaps the best-known of the real life personages in *WINGS OF COURAGE* is played by Tom Hulce. Hulce, renowned for his portrayal of the title role in the film *AMADEUS* for which he was nominated for a Best Actor Academy Award®, has been praised for performances in *DOMINICK AND EUGENE* and *PARENTHOOD*.

According to Annaud, St. Exupery is a poetic, intellectual, sensitive man with his eyes in the clouds -- very much, in fact, like the character of *The Little Prince*. He thinks that Hulce as St. Exupery is perfect casting. “St. Exupery is a man of real individuality,” says Hulce. “he’s a little eccentric, but he’s humane. He has a great deal of love and respect for Henri, and admires his relationship with his wife, as if he intuits that Henri is the more fulfilled man.”

Val Kilmer was cast in the role of Jean Mermoz, famous as much for his good looks and his charisma as for his flying. The character had the panache, and Annaud says, “I wanted an actor with this dimension.”

“I think Kilmer is a great actor and perfect for the part,” says Annaud. Kilmer, who first came to the attention of filmgoers in *TOPGUN*, starred as Jim Morrison, the legendary rock singer, in Oliver Stone’s *THE DOORS* and as the notorious gunfighter Doc Holliday in *TOMBSTONE*.

At the same time that casting was moving forward, Annaud, Horton and Compin also assembled their crew, a particularly important operation considering the technical nature of the giant screen IMAX® 3D process.

Robert Fraisse, who was nominated for an Academy Award® for his cinematography on Annaud's most recent film, *THE LOVER*, was signed as Director of Photography. Fraisse, who has photographed over 25 feature films including *LADY CHATTERLY'S LOVER*, *L'AMUSE GUEULE* and *THE LAST ROMANTIC LOVER*, has also shot over 600 television commercials.

The Production Designer is Ian Thomas, whose films include *CADENCE* and *ERNEST SAVES CHRISTMAS*. As Art Director, Thomas' credits include *THE GREY FOX* and several television pilots and movies of the week, including *THE COMMISH*, *COBRA* and *FOR THE LOVE OF AARON*.

Aggie Rogers designed the costumes. Rogers, whose career in Hollywood stretches from *AMERICAN GRAFFITI* and *ONE FLEW OVER THE CUCKOO'S NEST* to *THE COLOR PURPLE* and Lawrence Kasdan's *GRAND CANYON*, and worked on *THE FUGITIVE*. Additional costumes were created by Carla Hetland, who supervised the wardrobe on the Academy Award® winning, *UNFORGIVEN*.

Make-Up artist, Stephan Dupuis was also an essential member of the *WINGS OF COURAGE* technical crew. Dupuis, who won an Academy Award® for *THE FLY* and was nominated for *MRS. DOUBTFIRE*, had to devise four different elaborate make-ups for Craig Sheffer to show his deterioration over the six-day period as he descends the mountains.

ABOUT THE CAST

CRAIG SHEFFER stars as Henri Guillaumet, an idealistic young French aviator who crash-lands his biplane in the Andes and manages to survive by walking for six days before he is rescued.

SHEFFER scored a huge hit as Norman MacLean in the film version of MacLean's *A RIVER RUNS THROUGH IT*. MacLean and Guillaumet "both have a selfless air about them," SHEFFER says. "They're aware of other people, they're idealistic, and they are both good at what they do. Henri is an inspiring man who has a vision, and he's incredibly brave. But the remarkable thing is that he's humble. In a dream sequence in the film, he comes very close to death, and hallucinating, he cries out that he is not a hero -- he says he's an ordinary man. But let me tell you, he's a hero."

CRAIG SHEFFER was born and raised in York, Pennsylvania. He began acting in local theatrical productions as a child, and by the age of 15 he had entered local drama competitions and was making his own super-8 films. After high school, he attended East Stroudsburg College, not far from his birthplace in York. After Graduating, SHEFFER moved to Manhattan and held a series of temporary jobs, the most memorable being a stint as a valet to jazz great, Count Basie.

SHEFFER began his professional acting career with appearances on various daytime television dramas, including *ONE LIFE TO LIVE*, and appeared off-Broadway in the play *FRESH HORSES*. He made his film debut 1985 opposite Emilio Estevez in *THAT WAS THEN, THIS IS NOW*. The following year he appeared in *FIRE WITH FIRE*, opposite Virginia Madsen, and then played a rich kid in *SOME KIND OF WONDERFUL*.

SHEFFER also appeared in *SPLIT DECISIONS* as Gene Hackman's son, *NIGHTBREED* and three independent productions: *BLUE DESERT*, *FIRE ON THE AMAZON* and *EYES OF THE STORM*. Along the way, he appeared on Broadway as Alan in Harvey Fierstein's *TORCH SONG TRILOGY*. SHEFFER's television credits include *SUGARBABY*.

In addition to acting, SHEFFER writes prose, poetry and screenplays and is involved with S.A.N.E., which has taken him to the former Soviet Union, among other countries.

TOM HULCE plays Antoine de St. Exupery, the famed French aviator, intellectual and writer.

On screen HULCE's tour de force performance as Mozart in *AMADEUS* brought him an Academy Award® nomination as Best Actor as well as a Golden Globe nomination and the Donatello Award as Best Actor. On Broadway, he was also hailed for his performance in Aaron Sorkin's play, *A FEW GOOD MEN*, earning a Tony Nomination as the smart-aleck but brilliant young Navy Lawyer.

In Andrei Konchalovsky's *THE INNER CIRCLE*, HULCE played a young Russian, Ivan Sanshin, Stalin's blindly loyal film projectionist. For his acclaimed portrayal of Nicky in *DOMINICK AND EUGENE*, HULCE was nominated for a second Golden Globe Award.

He co-starred opposite Steve Martin in *PARENTHOOD* and played Michael Schwerner, a social worker murdered by police and Klansmen in 1964, in the NBC Movie of the Week, *MURDER IN MISSISSIPPI*. The TV film earned him an Emmy nomination and his third Golden Globe nomination. On Broadway, HULCE also played a major role in Richard Greenberg's *EASTERN STANDARDS*, one of the most talked-about plays in recent years.

HULCE is a native of Michigan. He studied at the North Carolina School of the Arts and worked in summer repertory before joining the Joseph Papp's New York Shakespeare Festival in 1974. Six weeks later, he was chosen to understudy Peter Firth as the disturbed young stable boy in *EQUUS*, the play Shaffer wrote before *AMADEUS*. Eventually, HULCE took over the role, starring opposite Anthony Perkins in New York and Anthony Hopkins in Los Angeles.

Following *EQUUS*, HULCE joined the Phoenix Theatre in a co-starring role opposite Meryl Streep and John Lithgow in Arthur Miller's *A MEMORY OF TWO MONDAYS*. That same year he made his feature debut in *SEPTEMBER 30, 1955*. Next came *NATIONAL LAMPOON'S ANIMAL HOUSE*, *THOSE LIPS*, *THOSE EYES*, a starring role in Hallmark Hall of Fame's *EMILY, EMILY*.

Alternating from stage to films to TV, HULCE worked frequently in regional theatre, including the Hartford Stage Company and New Haven's Long Wharf, where he starred in *FORGET-ME-NOT-LANE*. Other Long Wharf credits include *ROMEO AND JULIET*, *MOLLY* and *THE NORMAL HEART*, in which he made his London debut to rave reviews. Showing another side of his talent, HULCE directed the musical *SLEEP AROUND TOWN* for off-Broadway's Playwright's Horizon.

Hulk's other film credits *include ECHO PARK, SLAMDANCE, BLACK RAINBOW* and *SHADOW MAN*. He co-starred with Robert De Niro, Kenneth Brannagh and Helena Bonham Carter in TriStar's *MARY SHELLEY'S FRANKENSTEIN*.

ELIZABETH MCGOVERN plays Noëlle Guillaumet, Henri's selfless wife, a woman who never loses trust in her husband's moral fiber and his astounding abilities as an aviator.

MCGOVERN starred in *KING OF THE HILL* and *THE FAVOR*, opposite Brad Pitt and Ken Wahl.

Her career began in a high school production of Thornton Wilder's *THE SKIN OF OUR TEETH*, and she so impressed agent Joan Scott that she encouraged the teenage actress to spend a summer with the American Conservatory Theatre.

After that experience, MCGOVERN enrolled in New York's Juilliard School as a drama student, and it was while she was there that she won the role of Timothy Hutton's girlfriend in the Oscar-winning film, *ORDINARY PEOPLE*.

MCGOVERN followed that auspicious debut with one of the most coveted roles of the time when Milos Forman cast her as Evelyn Nest in *RAGTIME*. She won an Oscar nomination for her performance.

Soon thereafter, she co-starred with Dudley Moore in *LOVESICK*, with Sean Penn in *RACING THE MOON*, and opposite Robert De Niro in *ONCE UPON A TIME IN AMERICA*.

MCGOVERN's other credits include *NATIVE SON*, *THE BEDROOM WINDOW*, *SHE'S HAVING A BABY*, *JOHNNY HANDSOME*, *THE HANDMAID'S TALE* and *TUNE IN TOMORROW*. She also had a starring role in the acclaimed HBO showcase series *MEN AND WOMEN* and appeared opposite Patricia Wettig in the telefilm, *ME AND VERONICA*. Recently, she appeared in a television production of the Jacobean play, *THE CHANGELING*.

An accomplished stage actress with Broadway credits that include Tina Howe's *PAINTING CHURCHES* and David Hare's *A MAP OF THE WORLD*, she also appeared in Shakespeare's *TWO GENTLEMEN FROM VERONA*, and starred as Rosalind in the New York Shakespeare Festival's production of *AS YOU LIKE IT* at the Delacorte Theatre in Central Park.

VAL KILMER plays the charismatic pioneer aviator Jean Mermoz, a fabulously handsome man who became one of France's heroes. It is a role that comes naturally to the charismatic actor, who seems to specialize in creating larger-than-life figures - Jim Morrison, Doc Holiday- and now Jean Mermoz on the screen.

KILMER was born in Los Angeles and raised in the San Fernando Valley and Arizona. While training at the Juilliard School of music in New York, he appeared in a variety of classic dramas and also wrote two plays. One of them, *HOW IT ALL BEGAN*, was based on a true story about a radical terrorist and was staged by Des McAnuff (director of the hit Broadway musical *TOMMY*) at the Joseph Papp's Public Theatre in New York. Kilmer's second play was also produced at the Public Theatre.

KILMER made his screen debut in the 1984 comedy, *TOP SECRET*, subsequently he went on to star in *REAL GENIUS*, *TOP GUN*, *WILLOW*, *THUNDERHEART*, *KILL ME AGAIN* and *THE REAL MCCOY*. He also starred as the rock singer, Jim Morrison, in *THE DOORS* and recently appeared as the legendary Doc Holiday in the hit Western *TOMBSTONE*.

KILMER has appeared in a variety of stage productions throughout his career, including the New York Shakespeare Festival production of *HENRY IV, PART I* at the Delacorte Theatre and *AS YOU LIKE IT* at the Tyrone Guthrie Theatre in Minneapolis.

He made his Broadway debut in *SLAB BOYS* with Sean Penn and Kevin Bacon and also appeared in the role of hamlet with the Colorado Shakespeare Festival. In 1992, KILMER co-starred with Jean Tripplehorn in John Ford's classic play, *'TIS A PITY SHE'S A WHORE*, which was staged at the Public Theatre.

In addition to his acting talents, KILMER has written and published a book of poetry entitled, *MY EDEN AFTER BURNS*. As a songwriter and music publisher, his work is included on the recent Williams Brothers album on Warner Brothers records.

ABOUT THE FILMMAKERS

JEAN-JACQUES ANNAUD, **Director, Producer, Co-writer.**

Academy Award-winning filmmaker JEAN-JACQUES ANNAUD is the director, producer, and co-writer of *WINGS OF COURAGE*.

ANNAUD was born in Draveil, a suburb of Paris, in 1943. An only child, he knew from the age of seven that he wanted to make movies. A student of Greek, Latin and medieval art at La Sorbonne, he also attended France's most prestigious film school, Institut de Hautes Etudes Cinematographiques, and one week after graduation found work directing television commercials.

Upon completing his studies, ANNAUD spent a period away from France doing his national service in the African colony, Cameroon, a period that had formative influence on his life. In Africa, ANNAUD says, he found a new way to communicate.

"People didn't speak the same language, didn't have the same religion, didn't have the same values," he says, "so I had to use something else to communicate, something that was better than what I learned: my instincts and my emotions. I decided to revise my values."

During his career as a television commercial director, ANNAUD shot more than five-hundred TV spots, and was the recipient of numerous awards. His achievements in the field became well-known, and his work eventually caught the eye of filmmaker Francois Truffaut, who suggested that producer/director Claude Berri take a look at ANNAUD's demo reel. Impressed with what he saw, Berri offered to finance ANNAUD's first feature, *BLACK AND WHITE IN COLOR*, which was based on the director's experiences in Africa.

Shot on a minuscule budget (the cost of five television commercials), *BLACK AND WHITE IN COLOR* was critically acclaimed all over the world and won an Academy Award as Best Foreign film in 1977.

ANNAUD followed it with *HOT HEAD*, an inside look at the soccer industry. In 1982, he made *QUEST FOR FIRE*. A fable set in prehistoric society, this film is also a reflection of the years ANNAUD spent in Africa. ANNAUD won a French Cesar as Best Director for *QUEST FOR FIRE*, which was also named Best Picture of the Year.

In 1986, he directed *THE NAME OF THE ROSE*, which takes place in a medieval monastery and starred Sean Connery and Christian Slater. *THE NAME OF THE ROSE* also won a French Cesar as Best Foreign Film of the Year.

This was followed in 1988 by *THE BEAR*, a film about an orphaned bear cub's fight for survival, which shows that human and animal impulses are not at all different. Annaud won the Cesar in 1989 as Best Director for this film.

ANNAUD's most recent movie, *THE LOVER*, produced by Claude Berri, is an adaptation of the novel by Marguerite Duras set in Saigon and filmed on location in Vietnam. *THE LOVER* depicts the love affair between a 15-year-old girl and her Chinese lover, who is 12 years older.

ANNAUD and his wife Laurence, live in Paris.

ROBERT FRAISSE, Directory of Photography. ROBERT FRAISSE, previously worked with Jean-Jaques Annuaud on *The Lover*, for which Fraisse received an Academy Award nomination for Best Cinematographer.

FRAISSE has been the cinematographer of over twenty- five feature films during his long carrer, including *Lady Chatterly's Lover*, *L'Amuse Guele*, *The Last Romantic Lover*, *La Passerelle*, *Madame Cluade*, *Spirale*, *La Gitane* and many others.

In 1991, FRAISSE worked with several differebr directors, including Wayne Wang and Joan Tewksbury, to shoot a television series that was made in Fracne by HBO and Velvet Star Productions.

FRAISSE had served as Director of Photography on more than six hundred French television commercials, working with various French, American, and English directors such as Lee Lacey, Ridley Scott, Tony Scott, Adrien Lyne, Catherine Lefevre, Bob Brooks, and Patrick Kelly.

CHARIS HORTON and ANTOINE COMPIN, **Executive Producers.** HORTON and COMPIN had worked together as a production team since 1977, focusing on special venues and Large Format films. Some of their projects include *FROM TIME TO TIME*, a Circlevision 360 film for EuroDisney starring Michel Piccoli, Gerard Depardieu and Jeremy Irons, *AMERICAN JOURNEYS* for Disneyland, *MAGIC CARPET AROUND THE WORLD* for Tokyo Disneyland, *IMPRESSIONS OF FRANCE* for Epcot, and many others. They worked as well as production managers on *MIDNIGHT EXPRESS* (second unit), *RIVIERA*, and *THREE OF A KIND* for MTM.

HORTON was born in Tennessee and educated in anthropology at the University of California at Berkeley, directed *ITALIA VIVA ANCHE IN AMERICA*, a documentary on Italian-American culture produced by RAI and the Smithsonian. She was the Producer/Director of various television programs produced under a Rockefeller Foundation grant, including an Oral History series, a Rural Cultural series and an American Indian series.

She was also the researcher for the film *CHOREOMETRICS*, a study by Alan Lomax on cross-cultural movement patterns using ethnographic film as data.

COMPIN worked as Unit Manager on *BOBBY DEERFIELD* as well as several French features. He produced commercials for such eminent film directors as Jean-Jacques Annaud, Tony Scott, Ridley Scott and Hugh Hudson, and worked as an agency commercial producer for Young and Rubicam in Paris.

FILM FACTS

- Director:** Jean-Jacques Annaud (QUEST FOR FIRE, THE BEAR)
- Cast:** Craig Sheffer (A RIVER RUNS THROUGH IT)
Tom Hulce (AMADEUS, THE INNER CIRCLE)
Elizabeth McGovern (ORDINARY PEOPLE, RAGTIME)
Val Kilmer (THE DOORS, BATMAN FOREVER)
- Screenplay:** Alain Godard and Jean-Jacques Annaud
- Producers:** Antoine Compin, Charis Horton and Jean-Jacques Annaud
- Music:** Gabriel Yared
- Locations:** Exteriors shot in the Canadian Rockies, British Columbia, Canada
Interiors shot in studios in Vancouver, Canada
- Plane Information:** 2 full scale planes (only one of which could fly) and 1/4 scale model of the Potez 25 biplane were built for the film. The full-scale planes were built by Ezell Aviation based in Texas, which specializes in restoring World War II fighter planes. The 1/4 scale model was built in France by Finimodel.
- Distributor:** Sony Pictures Classics
- Length:** 40 minutes
- Format:** Filmed in IMAX®3D, exhibition in all IMAX®3D and IMAX®/OMNIMAX® theatres worldwide.
World Premiere: SONY IMAX® theatre at Sony Theatres, Lincoln Square, in New York featuring for the first time the audio magic of PSE Sound (Personal Sound Environment).
- MPAA Rating:** G: General Audiences