**SHE’S FUNNY THAT WAY**

**(Production Notes)**

SHE’S FUNNY THAT WAY marks the long-awaited return to the big screen of Peter Bogdanovich, one of the most acclaimed filmmakers of his generation. After a twelve year absence, during which time he directed three films for television, and the Grammy-winning documentary “Runnin’ Down A Dream: Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers,” as well as a completely revised and expanded version of his highly-praised documentary “Directed by John Ford.” He also acted as a regular on “The Sopranos” and in several features, and published two more books about the movies, including the best-selling “Who The Hell’s In It.” With SHE’S FUNNY THAT WAY, Bogdanovich returns to the comedy genre, at which he was so adept with his early classics, the critical and box office hits “What’s Up, Doc?” and “Paper Moon,” as well as the cult favorites, “They All Laughed” and “Noises Off.”

Like “They All Laughed,” SHE’S FUNNY THAT WAY was lovingly filmed entirely in his hometown, New York, at its romantic best. Known for his exemplary work with actors--from his award-winning breakout film “The Last Picture Show” to his last feature “The Cat’s Meow”-- for SHE’S FUNNY THAT WAY, Bogdanovich has assembled a stellar ensemble cast, headed by Owen Wilson, Imogen Poots, Jennifer Aniston, Will Forte, Kathryn Hahn and Rhys Ifans, all working together at the top of their form.

SHE’S FUNNY THAT WAY is a classic style romantic comedy, with touches of the equally classic screwball comedy, in the best sense of those words. Although completely modern in its characters, situations, and settings, it’s a film that harkens back to the landmarks of the genre from Hollywood’s heyday of the ‘30s and ‘40s, with sparkling wit, charm, and sophistication amidst the craziest and zaniest of premises and situations.

The film centers around Isabella “Izzy” Patterson (Imogen Poots), a Brooklyn-born call girl with aspirations to be an actress, who, during an assignation at the Barclay Hotel in Manhattan with Arnold Albertson (Owen Wilson), a successful theatre and film director about to do a new play on Broadway, is offered $30,000 to do something else with her life. As Arnold explains to her, there are those people who go to the park and feed nuts to the squirrels. But why not sometimes feed squirrels to the nuts? It turns out this isn’t the first time Arnold has said that to a call girl. Isabella isn’t his first squirrel and `squirrels to the nuts’ is a line that reverberates throughout the film to great comic effect.

Although Isabella is clearly stunned, she accepts the offer. But when she does, it starts a chain of events which also changes the lives of everyone she encounters: Arnold’s wife and star of his play, Delta Simmons (Kathryn Hahn); Delta’s co-star Seth Gilbert (Rhys Ifans), who is Arnold’s rival for Delta’s affections; the playwright Joshua Fleet (Will Forte) who falls in love with Isabella; her therapist, Jane (Jennifer Aniston), who turns out to be Joshua’s girlfriend; and the distinguished and esteemed Judge Pendergast (Austin Pendleton), a former client of Isabella’s, who is obsessed with her. Added to the mix are Isabella’s parents (Cybill Shepherd and Richard Lewis) and a mysterious detective (George Morforgen), hired by the judge, and who turns out to be the playwright Joshua Fleet’s father. By the end of the film, through a series of comedic encounters, twists and turns, nothing is the same for any of them.

The story unfolds with a wraparound structure, as Isabella sits with a cynical interviewer (Illeana Douglas), down the block from Hollywood and Vine in Los Angeles, and relates how she, a girl from Brooklyn, working as a call girl, became a movie star. And through the course of the interview we see how all of that happened, how her love of the movies and her dreams of Hollywood, turned into a reality, just like some kind of cock-eyed fairy tale.

Peter Bogdanovich and his now ex-wife Louise Stratten originally conceived the story for the film, and wrote the screenplay 15 years ago. At that time, Stratten was going to play the Isabella Patterson role, now played by Imogen Poots, and John Ritter, the role of Arnold, now played by Owen Wilson. But after John Ritter’s tragic and untimely death, Bogdanovich and Stratten decided to put the script and project aside for a while.

Years later, when Bogdanovich became friends with Owen Wilson, he discussed the role of Arnold and the script with Wilson while binge-watching “Breaking Bad” and “Mad Men” at Wilson’s Malibu home, and then decided to resurrect the project, with Wilson attached as Arnold. And so began SHE’S FUNNY THAT WAY’s journey to the big screen.

Stratten suggested that Bogdanovich go to two friends of his, the acclaimed filmmakers Wes Anderson and Noah Baumbach, and ask them to get involved as executive producers. “They read it, and said they’d like to help me get it made,” recalls Bogdanovich. “They’re both fans and I’m a fan of theirs. We’re all very friendly. They call me Pop, and I call them my sons -- Son Noah and Son Wes. We’re very close and they were extremely helpful in getting the picture off the ground. By having them aboard, we were able to get Owen and Jennifer Aniston attached. Quentin Tarantino read the script a long time ago when it was going to star John Ritter, and loved it then. So when I called him during the filming and said, `Can you do this cameo?’ – I told him what it was and he laughed and said, `Sure, I’ll do that. It would be a kick to be in a Bogdanovich picture.’ And I said, `Well, can you do it day after tomorrow?’”

Producers Holly Wiersma and Logan Levy became involved with SHE’S FUNNY THAT WAY when they were told about the project by friends Christa Campbell and Lati Grobman, who had heard about it from friends of Bogdanovich’s daughter, Antonia. Wiersma and Levy heard that Bogdanovich was looking for someone to produce and put the financing together for the movie,

“I read the script and liked it a lot” says Holly Wiersma. “I’d always been a huge Peter Bogdanovich fan; I grew up watching his movies. And I’m also a big fan of Owen Wilson and Jennifer Aniston, who were already attached.”

“What I particularly liked about the screenplay,” continues Wiersma, “is that it reminded me of the classic, old-time Hollywood movies that you don’t see anymore. I think the closest any filmmaker today comes to making movies like that is Woody Allen. But otherwise, there just aren’t movies like that anymore. They don’t get made; I don’t think they even get written. So the script for SHE’S FUNNY THAT WAY, with Owen and Jennifer attached, was very exciting to me. Logan and I decided to come on board the film as producers.”

How did Bogdanovich originally conceive the project? “It started with two things,” Bogdanovich explains, “the title at the time, ‘Squirrels to the Nuts,’ which has now been changed, and the notion of someone giving money to a hooker in order to help her stop being a hooker. I did that a couple of times in Singapore when I was there directing ‘Saint Jack.’ During the casting and prep of that film, which starred Ben Gazarra as a small time hustler and pimp in 1970s Singapore, who dreams of being a brothel owner, we met with a number of working prostitutes for the film. I felt sorry for two of them who I thought didn’t really want to do that kind of work and I gave each of them some money to start turning their lives around. That was sort of the impetus for the script,” continues Bogdanovich. “And I liked the phrase ‘squirrels to the nuts,’ because I always liked the Lubitsch film that it comes from, ‘Cluny Brown,’ Lubitsch’s last film. He’s one of my all time favorite directors.”

“And that’s how it started,” recalls Bogdanovich. “Louise Stratten and I were talking about writing a script together. It was a rather difficult time in our lives, so we decided to write a comedy to cheer ourselves up.”

“We subsequently changed the title,” continues Bogdanovich, “because during the production process, the picture went from being more of a screwball comedy, with romantic overtones, to being more of a romantic comedy, with screwball overtones. And so ‘Squirrels to the Nuts’ didn’t seem to go with this particular version of the film. SHE’S FUNNY THAT WAY, from a 1930s song, seemed more appropriate. I’m partial to songs from the 30s in general.”

Owen Wilson was the first person cast in the film. As Bogdanovich relates, “He’s one of the few actors today who’s a movie star in the sense that he has a very appealing personality which comes across in everything he does. I love talking with him, I love being his friend. So I said, ‘Would you like to do this comedy?’ He read it and thought there was a bit too much slapstick for him. So I took most of that out because the slapstick had been written for John Ritter, whose specialty it was. Owen, on the other hand, comes up with great lines. He ad-libbed quite a number of lines in the picture that are very funny. Don’t forget, he started out as a writer on Wes Anderson’s first three films.”

Both Bogdanovich and Wiersma believe that Owen Wilson was the perfect actor for the role of Arnold and few actors could have made the character come across so likeable or sympathetic. “I think Owen Wilson has three things about him that make Arnold work,” explains Wiersma. “Owen is the everyman; there’s that star quality that shines through; and he’s likeable. There aren’t many actors who could play the role of Arnold where at the end of the day you’d still like him. When we tested the movie, Owen was one of the actors in the film who tested the highest. How many actors could pull that off? Arnold is a guy who’s cheating on his wife and calling hookers on the phone while his children are on the other line. He’s doing some things that most people would view as despicable. Yet at the same time you never hate this guy, it just never goes through your mind, which not many actors could have pulled off.”

According to Bogdanovich, “You forgive him because you like him. So you don’t hold it against him. Owen also is very attractive, but he’s not threateningly attractive like Errol Flynn or Cary Grant was. He’s more boyish. He’s not a sexpot, so that helps too. You feel like he’s helping the women, not exploiting them. He’s helping the women in his own way.”

When Jennifer Aniston was approached to do the film, it was with the idea of her playing the role of Delta, Arnold’s actress wife. But as Bogdanovich relates, “She just had no interest in playing the wife, but said she’d love to play Jane, the therapist. I tried to convince her that maybe the part of Delta was more central to the story, but she had her heart set on playing Jane. So finally I said, ‘Okay, play Jane.’

“And she’s very good at it, she’s excellent in the part,” continues Bogdanovich. “She wears a wig which she insisted upon for the role and which I liked. And everything she did was fine with me. I think she did a great job. It was very much a stretch for her with the performance. She’s never played anything quite like that before. She basically played a complete bitch. And audiences laugh when they see her in the part because they know she’s not like that. That’s one of the reasons the dynamic works.”

In addition, a lot of Aniston’s dialogue has a sped-up tempo as in classic Hollywood comedies of the 30s. “It’s a comedy tempo to build a certain pace,” explains Bogdanovich. “She’s good at that and we worked at it. I kept saying ‘faster.’ Joanna Lumley, who was one of the cameos in this, did a picture with me called ‘The Cat’s Meow’ and when they interviewed her and she was asked, ‘How did Peter direct you?’ she replied, ‘Pedro? Mainly, he just said ‘Faster, Darling.’

“Frank Capra told me an interesting thing,” relates Bogdanovich, referring to the legendary director: “He said he didn’t know why, but ‘films slow things down,’ so if you play something at a normal speed it’ll seem slow, but if you play it at a somewhat faster than normal speed it’ll seem normal. Then if you really want to go faster than that you’ve got to speed up. And he’s right, absolutely right. That’s maybe because film is bigger than life. I remember when we did `What’s Up Doc?’ Barbra Streisand said, `Can we take a moment here?’ And I said, `There will be no moments in the entire picture.’”

“I think the reason Jennifer Aniston works so well in the role of Jane is that it’s so different from anything she’s ever done,” says Wiersma. “I think the closest would be `Horrible Bosses.’ But I feel even with that she played a sexier role, whereas in SHE’S FUNNY THAT WAY, she really went for it, with the wig, as well as her whole demeanor. She said that `What’s Up Doc?’ was her favorite movie so when she got this script it was one of those things she really wanted to do. She wanted to work with Peter Bogdanovich and she knew Owen Wilson. She was the second person cast in the film and she stayed with it and stuck with it for a year as the project was put together for filming. And she was great to work with.”

“I’m really pleased with Imogen Poots as ‘Isabella,’ says Bogdanovich. “She’s an extraordinary actress. And I’d never seen her in anything before I met with her. There was a list of up-and-coming girls that was given to me. I saw four of them in L.A., then came to New York and Imogen heard that we wanted to see her. She was shooting a picture in Atlanta and she flew up to see me. We met at the Palm Court at the Plaza Hotel, a kind of old-fashioned place to meet, and within five minutes I knew she was the girl. She didn’t audition, we just talked. She was quirky, just quirky as a person, but not trying to be quirky. She wasn’t pretentious or putting on airs or being cutesy pie – none of that. She was just being herself, but herself was quirky. And I recognized that quickly. So after about 20 minutes I said, ‘Look, I’m not supposed to do this, but when you leave here, just know you’ve got the part. I’ll work out the details.’ So that was it.

“And she’s really good. She’s very, very, very good. And she’s very original. She’s just herself, she’s not like anybody. The Brooklyn accent was always in the script because the girl that the character is slightly based on is a girl from Brooklyn who had that accent. So I just told Imogen that she had to do a Brooklyn accent – and she worked hard at it. She had a vocal coach; she took it seriously and did it very well, particularly given that she’s British! But the British are superb actors, generally speaking. They’re trained well, they have a culture and a tradition which we don’t have and they’re just dynamite. And she’s one of them.

“I knew Imogen would bring a genuine quality to the role of Isabella, very real, not actory,” says Bogdanovich. “Her being quirky without trying to be quirky really works for the character. And she’s enormously appealing and likeable. She’s also attractive without being Ava Gardner. She’s just really attractive and looks different every time you look at her. “And she does everything superbly. She’s a great actress who dominates the screen. The camera likes her, as they used to say.

“I think it’s a tricky role to pull off,” adds Bogdanovich, “but Imogen made it seem easy. She never gave me a hard time. At one point in the film when she auditions for the play, they were playing it sort of for comedy, and I said, ‘No, we have to play this audition scene real.’ I told her she had to cry because audiences equate crying with good acting. If you can cry, you must be a good actor. So I said, `We haven’t got a lot of time, so cry.’ So she did it and was crying at the end of the scene and did it very well. Then I came over to her and whispered, ‘It was very good, darling, but you screwed up your face. I want you to cry and still be attractive.’ And she said, `Jesus, Peter!’ And I told her ‘You can do it. Cry with your eyes, don’t make faces. And she did it.”

“I think what’s so interesting about Imogen is that there’s a toughness to her, but also something about her that’s very fragile,” adds Wiersma. “She has both innocence and toughness. And to have that combined is something you don’t see often. Most actresses could do one of the two parts of her character’s story. But in the movie you have to believe Isabella as both a movie star and a hooker. And that she is from Brooklyn. And Imogen is beautiful, but not in a classic way. She’s so interesting to watch. And she always kind of looks a little bit different from scene to scene.”

Obviously, one of the things Bogdanovich also had to consider was how Imogen Poots would play opposite Owen Wilson. “They were great together,” says Bogdanovich. “They really liked each other and worked very well together. And their chemistry shows on screen. But Imogen worked well with everybody in the cast. She’s a pro. And everybody liked her and got along with her. There really wasn’t any temperament on the picture in front of the camera.”

As for the casting of Kathryn Hahn as Arnold’s wife Delta and Will Forte as Joshua Fleet, the playwright, Bogdanovich couldn’t be more pleased with having selected them for those roles. “I wasn’t familiar with Kathryn Hahn’s work, but she’s a close friend of Jennifer’s, “explains Bogdanovich. “And when Jennifer said she wanted to play Jane she said, ‘I know who should play Delta: Kathryn Hahn.’ They both have the same agent and manager. So I met with Kathryn, I liked her, saw some stuff she was in and that was it.

“Kathryn Hahn was wonderful,” adds Bogdanovich. “And I don’t think she’s ever looked as good in a picture. She said it herself, she said, `I look good.’ And I said, `Well, you should. You’re playing a leading lady, and you look like a leading lady.’ We shot her that way. She’s very good. She has a natural flair for comedy and she’s very real. And again, I didn’t have to direct her much. She had it. She played it much more down to earth than like a prima donna. She played it like herself; she is very down to earth.

“And I thought she and Owen were really believable as a married couple; I was very torn as to whether or not to break them up at the end,” says Bogdanovich. “They worked well together. They were excellent playing off each other. Their relationship came across as very warm and that helps the story too. They seem to get along very well. You buy that they’re married. And the cab scene in which they’re talking over each other worked so well, it was really perfect. And that was all ad-libbed-- it was all Owen and Kathryn. They just did it and wonderfully so. I didn’t even rehearse it. If you have really good actors you’re way ahead of the game. I once said to Orson Welles, `I thought it was a pretty good picture, but it wasn’t very well acted.’ And he roared, ‘How could it be a good picture if it’s not well acted?! What else is there? Who cares about the camerawork, it’s the acting.’ And he’s right, really.”

“We’re so glad that Jennifer Aniston did a little bit of casting for us by recommending Kathryn Hahn for the character of Delta,” says Wiersma. “We met with Kathryn and thought she was perfect for the role. And she really is fabulous in the movie. It’s funny, but although Kathryn’s done so many different roles in so many movies for years, you’ve never seen her in a role like this. I feel, in a weird way, this is probably the role she’s most like in real life. She’s so cool and she’s so pretty. And she never gets to play pretty in movies. So it was fun to see her in this and she was a joy to have on set. Everyone’s favorite.”

What did Kathryn Hahn bring to the role of Delta? “I think what was great about Kathryn’s performance is that she just played it very straight,” says Holly Wiersma. “She didn’t try to play it as an over the top, dramatic actress. She played it like everywoman. Lots of women you know have in some way been cheated on and she never played it as the victim and yet also never played it as the cad. And I thought that was really interesting.”

“With Will Forte, we had a number of possibilities for that part,” recalls Bogdanovich, “and I liked him best. He’s kind of a leading man, pretty straight, easy going – and looks like a playwright. He looks intelligent. Orson Welles used to say, ‘It’s very hard to believe that an American actor is a writer or an intellectual.’ That’s why we often cast English people to play those kinds of parts. Orson, himself, looks like a man who thinks and reads. But there aren’t that many. Cary Grant did, so he could play professors and doctors. But it’s not common with American actors. I remember when Bob Redford made ‘Quiz Show’ he had to get two Englishmen to play the intellectual American Van Doren father and son.

“Will Forte’s role is not really a comedy part; it’s more of a straight role. And I thought he was very appealing. He has a gentleness about him and there’s an intellectual part to him as well. You believe that he could write a play. And he was just easy to work with, a joy. None of the actors on this film were difficult to work with.”

“Will Forte is another person whom Jennifer Aniston had recommended,” adds Wiersma. “She and he had worked together on another independent film before us. She loved working with Will on that film, so she told us about him and suggested him for the part of Joshua Fleet. And when we met him, we thought he’d be perfect for the role and they would be the perfect combination for the playwright and his therapist girlfriend. He was just coming off `Nebraska’ and he was amazing. He’s a writer, intelligent, a great straight man, the good guy.”

Rhys Ifans, who plays Seth Gilbert, the actor who stars opposite Arnold’s wife Delta in the play, was: “One of the last people we cast,” recalls Bogdanovich. “I think we cast him the day before he appeared in the film. We had been thinking of using more of a romantic, matinee-idol type.

But George Drakoulias, one of our producers, (who was also a producer on my documentary about Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers) had worked with Rhys on Noah Baumbach’s picture, ‘Greenberg,’ and suggested him not as a matinee-idol type, but more of a rock star type movie star. And when I met him I thought he’d be terrific, and he worked the next day!”

“He was superb in the role of Seth,” says Bogdanovich. “And he was wonderful to work with. He loved the script, loved the part, and most importantly, understood it completely. I didn’t have to direct him much, he just got it. The looks he gives to Owen are absolutely perfect. He’s very witty in the part.”

“Austin Pendleton I’ve wanted to work with again since we did ‘What’s Up, Doc?’ Bogdanovich says enthusiastically. “We wrote the Judge for him and the detective for George Morforgen. When we wrote it they were a bit younger, but we wrote it for them and didn’t want to cast anybody else. George has been a friend of mine since I was 18. We met at Shakespeare in the Park, Joe Papp’s production of ‘Othello.’ We were both in it. I was a spear carrier and George was the understudy for Iago. We worked together numerous times and he’s also worked behind the camera with me. He was co-producer with me on ‘Saint Jack,’ ‘They All Laughed’ and ‘Mask.’ He acted in ‘They All Laughed,’ too.”

Rounding out the cast in cameo roles are Cybill Shepherd and Richard Lewis as Isabella’s parents, Nettie and Al. Shepherd and Bogdanovich, of course, have known each other for many years and worked on various films together, beginning with Shepherd’s film debut in “The Last Picture Show.” Comedian/actor Lewis and Bogdanovich are longtime friends, although this is the first time they’ve worked together. Both Shepherd and Lewis really liked the script and eagerly joined the cast to work with Bogdanovich and help get the film made.

Half-way into filming Bogdanovich and the producers decided that instead of just using narration that the audience would want to see Isabella (Imogen Poots) and what better way than to use an interview as the device for the narration. A few years after the story depicted in the film, Isabella had now moved to Hollywood, was on the verge of making it and was giving her first interview. You come to figure out that the narrator may be an unreliable one.  While everyone was coming up with ideas, Wiersma suggested Illeana Douglas whom she had worked with previously.  Peter had also acted with Illeana years ago.  Peter said yes and Illeana Douglas joined the cast.

“The story of SHE’S FUNNY THAT WAY is a bit complicated for me to explain,” says Bogdanovich. “But basically, it’s about a girl who’s an escort and how she evolves into being a movie star through a series of odd circumstances. That’s what it’s about. And all the people in the movie are sort of involved in getting her to that place, inadvertently or not. And it’s about the accidental nature of things. Things just happen to her through a bunch of strange coincidences. Robert Graves, who’s my favorite writer, said there were so many chains of coincidence in his life that he’d come to think of them as a habit!”

Producer Holly Wiersma says that what she loves about the movie most is that it is a true “throwback to old Hollywood.” The Hollywood she wishes she could have gotten to be a part of. Wiersma says, “Peter Bogdanovich is paying homage to the Hollywood he knew and all of icons that he worked with and spent time with over the years. There is a scene in the movie where Isabella is talking about Audrey Hepburn and quoting Audrey. Peter directed Audrey 33 years ago in `They All Laughed’ and now he’s directing Imogen talking about Audrey.” In addition to Audrey, Isabella refers to Marilyn Monroe, Lana Turner, Fred Astaire, Ginger Rogers and Bogart and Bacall. Bacall was the first person to give Peter clearance to use her photo in the film (less than 2 months before she died).

“And the story is about a girl who is sitting with an interviewer and telling her about incidents that occurred in New York a few years before and how she got to where she is today,” explains Wiersma. “It’s kind of a classic rags to riches story. As people say, it’s a small world. And in this movie, Isabella and all the people she meets through unlikely encounters find their lives changed in the process. Is it coincidence or is it fate?”

Although Bogdanovich is very pleased with the way the film turned out, he admits that a lot of things changed in the journey from script to screen. “One significant change,” relates Bogdanovich, “is that it got less screwball. But I kind of liked the idea of the Isabella interview because we did something similar in ‘Noises Off,’” continues Bogdanovich, mentioning his well-received adaptation of the hit Broadway farce. “When we did ‘Noises Off,’ we needed something to tie it together, because the play it was based on it didn’t have a good movie beginning or end. It was fine for the theatre because you have curtain calls and people come out on stage so you see they’re still alive, but not for the film. So we did a wrap-around and I thought Michael Caine did it well and it helped the picture. With Imogen doing it, the new picture just became warmer.”

The use of music has always been integral to Bogdanovich’s films. “We tried so many different types of music,” explains Bogdanovich, “but none of it was quite right. Then, we finally decided to use a composer. We chose Ed Shearmur, and he did a superb job. And it’s the first picture of mine that has a real score all the way through, rather than primarily using records. I never did that before. And I really think Ed did great work. He understood the picture. He saw the picture, he liked the picture, he got what it needed, and he did a very good job. We only used a couple of records, songs for the beginning and end of the film”

There are also numerous cameos sprinkled throughout SHE’S FUNNY THAT WAY, including actors who have had significant roles in previous Bogdanovich films, such as Tatum O’Neal, Colleen Camp and Joanna Lumley. Michael Shannon and filmmaker Quentin Tarantino, both of whom Bogdanovich knows, also make short appearances.

“The cameos in the film are really terrific,” says Wiersma. “We were in New York and we wanted SHE’S FUNNY THAT WAY to really be a New York movie, so it was great to call people the day of or the day before and say, `Hey, come be in our movie. Help us sell New York.’ This is a movie about Broadway and famous people so we decided to use that to our advantage and put fun people into the cameos, even if they don’t say anything on screen. We started with Graydon Carter (editor of Vanity Fair) as Owen Wilson’s limo driver, who’s one of the first people you see when we flashback from Isabella’s interview to New York a few years earlier. With Graydon, it doesn’t get any more New York than that. And then Owen Wilson walks into the hotel and there’s a friend of mine, an actor who lives in California and New York – Jake Hoffman, Dustin Hoffman’s son. We ran into him in the Bowery and said, `Come, be in the movie.’ And then Owen Wilson walks to the hotel desk and there’s the amazing artist and designer, Scott Campbell, who’s walking by. And the one who is walking with him is Erin Heatherton, the Victoria Secret supermodel. We wanted to open the first New York scene with famous New York faces.

“And then we used cameos again a couple of other times,” adds Wiersma. “We wanted all of Arnold’s former squirrels to be recognizable: Anna O’Reilly, a gifted actress whom I love and have known forever, found out she was going to be in New York so we asked her to be the first ‘squirrel’ in the airport scene. Jennifer Esposito, who lives in New York, is another ‘squirrel.’ Other cameos were Susan Miller, who has the famous astrology website astrologyzone.com, who is in the audience of the play, as well as Will Forte’s mother and Roger Friedman, the reviewer. It was a fun touch to have all these cameos in the film.”

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