



F O C U S
F E A T U R E S

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**RANDOM HOUSE FILMS AND FOCUS FEATURES’
FIRST MOVIE, *RESERVATION ROAD*, TO SHOOT THIS FALL;
JOAQUIN PHOENIX, MARK RUFFALO TO STAR FOR
DIRECTOR TERRY GEORGE**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

New York, August 16, 2006 – *RESERVATION ROAD* will begin production this fall, marking the inaugural movie to be made in the filmmaking partnership between Focus Features and Random House Films that was first announced last November. James Schamus, President of Focus Features, part of NBC Universal, and Peter Gethers, President, Random House Films, a Random House, Inc. division, made the announcement today.

Based on the novel of the same name by John Burnham Schwartz, *Reservation Road* will be directed by Terry George, whose most recent film was the three-time Academy Award-nominated *Hotel Rwanda*. The screenplay is by Mr. Schwartz, with revisions by Mr. George. *Reservation Road* will star two-time Academy Award nominee Joaquin Phoenix and Mark Ruffalo.

Nick Wechsler will produce *RESERVATION ROAD*, with Volume One’s Dean Levitt and Gina Resnick executive-producing. Focus Creative Executive David Gerson will oversee the project for Focus President of Production John Lyons. Mr. Gethers will oversee the project for Random House Films.

Mr. Schwartz’ novel was published in hardcover in 1998 by Random House, Inc.’s Alfred A. Knopf imprint to critical acclaim. The *Los Angeles Times* praised it as “a dark and irresistible miracle: a heartbreaking thriller.” The novel was a *New York Times* Notable Book of the Year. The Vintage Books paperback edition was issued in 1999.

The drama revolves around two fathers whose families and lives tragically converge with the death of a child. In the aftermath, Ethan (to be played by Mr. Phoenix) and Dwight (Mr. Ruffalo) each react in unexpected ways as their families struggle to cope and an emotional reckoning looms.

Mr. Schamus said, “RESERVATION ROAD is a compelling story of character and chance. The quality and depth of the piece made it ideal for Focus Features and Random House Films. Terry George is the perfect filmmaker for this tale of the lure of revenge and the power of redemption.”

Mr. Gethers added, “We’re thrilled that this will be the first project from our partnership to begin filming. The novel’s strength and the excellence of the screenplay have attracted a superb director and two gifted actors, which is exactly what we hoped to accomplish in combining our source material with Focus’ filmmaking abilities. We believe these elements will make for a powerful drama.”

In the multi-year deal announced last November between the publisher and Focus Features, the companies will develop movies together and co-finance and co-produce a substantial slate of feature films for theatrical release, all based on books published by Random House imprints in North America and internationally. Random House Films and Focus jointly acquire film rights for the books and partner together on script development, director selection, all phases of production, and marketing and publicity. Films co-produced by Focus with Random House Films will be jointly owned, with Focus holding worldwide distribution and sales rights.

The joint venture acquired three projects for development earlier this year. They are films to be adapted from *THE ATTACK*, a contemporary Mideast-set novel by Yasmina Khadra that was published in May by Random House, Inc.’s Doubleday Broadway Publishing Group imprint Nan A. Talese/Doubleday in the U.S. and the Random House U.K. Group’s William Heinemann imprint in the U.K., with Zaid Doueiri directing and adapting (with Joelle Touma); the narrative nonfiction book *Curveball*, investigative reporter Bob Drogin’s look inside the advent of the Iraq war, due out from Random House in the fall of 2007; and Dean Koontz’ #1 bestselling novel *The Husband*, published in May in hardcover in the U.S. and Canada by the Bantam Books imprint of Random House, Inc., and soon in Germany by Heyne, an imprint of Verlagsgruppe Random House.

Focus Features (www.focusfeatures.com) is a motion picture production, financing, and worldwide distribution company committed to bringing moviegoers the most original stories from the world’s most innovative filmmakers.

In addition to *Reservation Road*, current and upcoming Focus Features releases include Woody Allen’s *Scoop*, starring Allen, Hugh Jackman, Scarlett Johansson, and Ian McShane; Allen Coulter’s *Hollywoodland*, starring Adrien Brody, Diane Lane, Ben Affleck, and Bob Hoskins; Phillip Noyce’s *Catch a Fire*, starring Tim Robbins, Derek Luke, and Bonnie Henna; Kasi Lemmons’ *Talk to Me*, starring Don Cheadle and Chiwetel Ejiofor; Shane Acker’s animated fantasy epic *9*, produced by Tim Burton and Timur Bekmambetov and Jim Lemley & Dana Ginsburg; Henry Selick’s stop-motion animated feature *Coraline*, starring Dakota Fanning and Teri Hatcher; Joe Wright’s *Atonement*, starring Keira Knightley, James McAvoy, and Romola Garai; David Cronenberg’s *Eastern Promises*, starring Viggo Mortensen and Naomi Watts; and *Lust, Caution*, the new film from Ang Lee, the Academy Award-winning director of Focus’ worldwide success *Brokeback Mountain*.

Focus Features is part of NBC Universal, one of the world’s leading media and entertainment companies in the development, production, and marketing of entertainment, news, and information to a global audience.

Formed in May 2004 through the combining of NBC and Vivendi Universal Entertainment, NBC Universal owns and operates a valuable portfolio of news and entertainment networks, a premier motion picture company, significant television production operations, a leading television stations group, and world-renowned theme parks. NBC Universal is 80% owned by General Electric and 20% owned by Vivendi.

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