

Press release: Immediate

UK FILM COUNCIL BACKS NEW BRIT COMEDY FROM NUMBER 9 FILMS STARRING SIMON PEGG

Toby Young's best-seller *How to Lose Friends and Alienate People* comes to the big screen, developed and produced by Number 9 Films, with financing from Aramid, the UK Film Council and Film4

LONDON – Wednesday 11 July 2007. *How to Lose Friends and Alienate People*, the film adaptation of the best-selling comic biography by journalist Toby Young, is being backed by the Aramid Entertainment Fund, the UK Film Council's Premiere Fund and Film4 with a budget of over £13.5 million. Shooting on the film, a project from independent British production company Number 9 Films, started this month in the UK and US with the majority taking place in London, including 3 Mills Studios.

The film is inspired by the international best-seller by Young, about his rise and fall at *Vanity Fair* in New York and the celebrity world surrounding that magazine. British star Simon Pegg (*Hot Fuzz*, *Shaun of the Dead*) will play Young's character, with award-winning actors Jeff Bridges (*K-Pax*, *Seabiscuit*), Kirsten Dunst (*Spiderman*, *Marie Antoinette*) Danny Huston (*The Constant Gardener*, *The Proposition*), Gillian Anderson (*The Last King of Scotland*, *The House of Mirth*) and rising star Megan Fox (*Transformers*), also heading up the film's strong cast.

The driving force of the project from its inception Number 9 Films developed the project with Tessa Ross (Film4 had originally optioned the book), together they commissioned Peter Straughn to write the script. Subsequently, at an advanced stage, the project was introduced into slate funding, to receive support via the Number 9 slate consortium consisting of Number 9 Films, Film4, Intandem Films and the Irish Film Board and backed by the UK Film Council.

Following *And When Did You Last See Your Father?*, starring Colin Firth and Jim Broadbent, which will be released by Buena Vista in the UK and Sony Pictures Classics in North America, this is the consortium's second film to go into production.

Oscar® nominee **Bob Weide** (*Lenny Bruce: Swear to Tell the Truth*), co-creator and director of award-winning television series *Curb Your Enthusiasm* is to direct. **Stephen Woolley** (*Interview with the Vampire*, *The End of the Affair*, *The Crying Game*) and **Elizabeth Karlsen** (*Ladies in Lavender*, *Little Voice*, *The Crying Game*) are producing for Number 9 Films.

Intandem Films arranged the financing for the film and is handling worldwide sales securing Paramount Pictures International for the UK, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa.

Producer Stephen Woolley, of Number 9 Films, says, “Elizabeth and I are indebted to the support and trust invested in us during the initial development phase by Tessa Ross and Toby Young. The wonderful Peter Straughn script has become an asset firstly attracting Bob Weide and then the fabulous cast.”

Tessa Ross, head of Film4 says, “All of us at Film4 are really excited that Toby’s hilarious book is being bought to the screen by such a great team and such a perfect cast.”

Sally Caplan, Head of the UK Film Council’s Premiere Fund, says: “This is an exciting independent British film, encompassing an excellent script, and a director and cast with a strong comic vision. The project has great potential in the international marketplace, to raise the profile of both British film and of rising star Simon Pegg.”

Simon Fawcett, CEO of Aramid Capital Partners, says: “We believe this to be an exciting opportunity for the Fund to provide finance, in conjunction with the UK Film Council and Film4, to a project with an excellent script, a strong cast and producing team and one we feel showcases some of the best creative talent in the UK film industry today.”

Gary Smith, CEO of Intandem Films PLC, says: “*How to Lose Friends and Alienate People* represents exactly the type of film that we like to bring to distributors; a strong commercial project with a high level of cast and crew. Every project needs to be at the top of its genre and with the comic and creative minds on this, we believe it will be a huge hit.”

UK Film Council award

How to Lose Friends and Alienate People £1,344,000

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Notes to editors

Number 9 Films

Number 9 Films is a independent feature film company run by Stephen Woolley and Elizabeth Karlsen. It is one of seven companies awarded a development slate deal with the UK Film Council with partners Film4, Intandem and the Irish Film Board.

Stephen Woolley has produced more than 20 films, and executive produced a further 20 including *Breakfast on Pluto*, *Intermission*, *The End of the Affair*, *Michael Collins*, *Interview with the Vampire*, *Backbeat*, *The Crying Game*, *Scandal*, *Mona Lisa* and *The Company of Wolves*. He also directed *Stoned*.

Elizabeth Karlsen's credits include *Sixty Six*, *Mrs. Harris* (executive producer), *Ladies in Lavender*, *Purely Belter*, *Little Voice*, *Neon Bible*, and *The Crying Game* (co-producer).

Films in development include: Julian Schabel's *The Lonely Doll*; Ian Fitzgibbon's *Perrier's Bounty*; Miguel Arteta's *Together*; *The Sound of No Hands Clapping*; Bill Ivory's *We Want Sex*; and *Milk of the Revolution* written by Guy Hibbert (*Omagh*, *Prime Suspect*).

Film4

Film4, Channel 4 Television's feature film division, is headed by Tessa Ross. The company develops and co-finances films and is known for working with the most innovative talent in the UK, whether new or established. Channel 4's film department has built an enviable reputation for developing and financing the defining British films of the last quarter of a century – films like *My Beautiful Launderette*, *Trainspotting*, *Shallow Grave*, *East is East*, *Motorcycle Diaries*, *Touching the Void*, *Road to Guantanamo*, *Venus*, and *The Last King of Scotland*.

Film4's recent releases include Shane Meadows' *This is England*, Julien Temple's *Joe Strummer: The Future is Unwritten*, and David Mackenzie's *Hallam Foe*. Currently in production or post production are: Sarah Gavron's *Brick Lane*, Anand Tucker's *And When Did You Last See Your Father?*, Sharon Maguire's *Incendiary*, Asif Kapadia's *Far North*, Fabrice de Welz's *Vinyan*, Martin McDonagh's *In Bruges*, and Duane Hopkins' *Better Things*, Michael Winterbottom's *Genova*, Olly Blackburn's *Donkey Punch*, the new Mike Leigh film and Ken Loach's next project *These Times*

Aramid Entertainment

Aramid Entertainment provides short and medium term loan finance to the film and television industry. Aramid Capital Partners sources potential investment opportunities for the Aramid Entertainment Fund, focusing on discounting tax credits, bridge and mezzanine gap financing. Aramid Capital Partners comprises Future Films, Screen Capital International and Stonehenge Capital.

Aramid Capital Partners is headed by Simon Fawcett, Chief Executive, Tim Levy, founder of Future Films, David Molner, founder of Screen Capital and Thomas Adamek, President of Stonehenge Capital.

The UK Film Council

The UK Film Council is the lead agency for film in the UK ensuring that the economic, cultural and educational aspects of film are effectively represented at home and abroad. We invest Government grant-in-aid and Lottery money in film development and production; training; international development and export promotion; distribution and exhibition; and education

The UK Film Council's Premiere Fund invests public funding in mainstream, commercially-driven films, encouraging the involvement of British creative talent in a range of films. The fund has a budget of £24 million of Lottery money over three years (£8 million a year). New and recent productions include: *Brideshead Revisited* directed by Julian Jarrold; *St Trinian's* co-directed by Oliver Parker and Barnaby Thompson; *The Cottage* directed by Paul Andrew Williams; *The Escapist* directed by Anand Tucker; *Untitled 06*, the new Mike Leigh film; *Miss Potter* directed by Chris Noonan; *Becoming Jane* directed by Julian Jarrold; *Venus* directed by Roger Michell; *WAZ*, a feature film debut for director Tom Shankland and *Death Defying Acts* directed by Gillian Armstrong.

Intandem Films

Intandem Films is an AIM-listed, international film finance, sales and marketing company and is an integral member and the sales company for the Number 9 Films, a consortium with Film4, the UK Film Council and the Irish Film Board. Other projects in which Intandem is involved through the consortium include: *The Lonely Doll* from Cannes-winning director Julian Schnabel and written by Caroline Thompson (*The Nightmare Before Christmas*). Other films being sold internationally include Andrew Goth's *Gallow Walker* starring Wesley Snipes (*Blade* franchise); *Hounddog* starring Dakota Fanning and Robin Wright Penn and Julie Delpy's *The Countess*, starring Julie Delpy, Ethan Hawke, Radha Mitchell and Daniel Brühl.

3 Mills Studios

3 Mills Studios is London's largest studio complex. Based close to central London, the Studios' are set on an historical and secure 20-acre island site. Facilities include 16 stages, rehearsal rooms, 200 + production offices, locations, period buildings, prop stores, workshops, dressing and make up rooms and much more. Within a short space of time, this unique niche studio has been discovered by some of the industry's most successful independent filmmakers, including Danny Boyle, Tim Burton, David Cronenberg, Ken Loach, Mike Leigh and Michael Winterbottom. Credits include Tim Burton's *Corpse Bride*, *Eastern Promises*, *Sunshine*, *Brick Lane*, *It's A Free World*, *28 Weeks Later*, *Enduring Love*, *Green Street*, *28 Days Later*, *Code 46*, *Topsy-Turvy* and *Lock, Stock and Two Smoking Barrels*. Other clients include theatre, advertising and music.