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## **Daniel Craig to Star as Lord Asriel in New Line Cinema's The Golden Compass**

LOS ANGELES (Aug. 18, 2006) – Daniel Craig has joined the cast of New Line Cinema's *The Golden Compass*, the highly anticipated adaptation of the first installment in author Philip Pullman's bestselling *His Dark Materials* trilogy, it was announced today by New Line Production President Toby Emmerich. The film is scheduled for a Sept. 4 production start in the UK.

Craig, who will star as James Bond in the upcoming *Casino Royale*, will play Lord Asriel – a ruthless adventurer with a mysterious past – in *The Golden Compass*. He joins the film's ensemble cast which includes Nicole Kidman, Eva Green and newcomer Dakota Blue Richards.

“Daniel is an extremely versatile actor who is a tremendous addition to the cast of *The Golden Compass*,” says director Chris Weitz. “We are looking forward to seeing how he will breathe life into the fascinating character of Lord Asriel.”

Based on author Philip Pullman's bestselling and award-winning novel, *The Golden Compass* tells the first story in Pullman's *His Dark Materials* trilogy. It revolves around a young girl who travels to the far north to save her best friend. Along the way she encounters shape-shifting creatures, witches, and a variety of otherworldly characters in parallel universes. *The Golden Compass* is written and directed by Chris Weitz (*About a Boy*, *Antz*) and produced by Deborah Forte of Scholastic (the U.K. publisher of the *His Dark Materials* books). Paul Weitz and Andrew Miano of *Depth of Field* (In Good Company) are executive producing. *The Golden Compass* is scheduled for a November 16, 2007 release.

*The Golden Compass* also features an all-star production team that includes Academy Award-winning production designer Dennis Gassner (*Road to Perdition*, *Big Fish*), Academy Award-nominated costume designer Ruth Myers (*L.A. Confidential*, *Emma*), and Academy Award-nominated visual effects supervisor Mike Fink (*X-Men*, *X2*, *Road to Perdition*).

#### About New Line Cinema Corporation:

Founded almost 40 years ago, New Line Cinema is the most successful independent film company in the world. Its mission is to produce innovative, popular and profitable entertainment in the best creative environment. In addition to the production, marketing and distribution of theatrical motion pictures, the fully-integrated studio has divisions devoted to home entertainment, television, music, theater, merchandising and an international unit. In 2005, New Line partnered with HBO to form Picturehouse, a new theatrical distribution company to release independent films. A pioneer in franchise filmmaking, New Line's Oscar-winning *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy is one of the most successful film franchises in history. New Line is a division of Time Warner, Inc. (TWX).