

# Appaloosa

## PRODUCTION STARTS ON WESTERN APPALOOSA

SANTA FE, NM (October 15, 2007)—New Line Cinema and Groundswell Productions announce the start of production on the feature film *Appaloosa*, starring Ed Harris, Viggo Mortensen, Renée Zellweger, and Jeremy Irons. Harris is directing the film, and co-wrote the screenplay with Robert Knott. Producers are Harris, Knott, and Ginger Sledge (*Miss Congeniality*, *Lords of Dogtown*). Executive producers are Michael London (*Sideways*, *The Illusionist*) and Cotty Chubb (*Eve's Bayou*, *The Crow*) through London's Groundswell Productions, which is co-financing with New Line. The western is based on the novel Appaloosa by Robert B. Parker (author of the Spenser detective series).

*Appaloosa* is the second film directed by Harris, following his directorial debut on *Pollock*, which won actress Marcia Gay Harden a Best Supporting Actress Oscar and earned Harris a nomination for Best Actor.

Principal photography began October 1 on locations in and around Santa Fe, New Mexico. The talented behind-the-scenes team includes cinematographer Dean Semler (*Dances with Wolves*, *The Road Warrior*, *Apocalypto*); production designer Waldemar Kalinowski (*Leaving Las Vegas*); editor Kathryn Himoff (*Pollock*, *The Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants*); costume designer David Robinson (*Pollock*); and casting director Jeanne McCarthy (*Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind*, *The Three Burials of Melquiades Estrada*).

Appaloosa, a town miles from anywhere, is struggling to survive so its copper mines can reopen. It's 1882, and lawmen Virgil Cole (Ed Harris) and Everett Hitch (Viggo Mortensen) are hired to bring order to the community—and to stop renegade rancher Randall Bragg (Jeremy Irons) and his string of violent men from terrorizing townsfolk. The two infamous lawmen quickly bring order to the struggling town. But when the bold, beguiling widow Allison French (Renée Zellweger) steps off the train in Appaloosa, complications arise.

Issues of love, trust, and self-identity come to the fore as Cole and Hitch fight for the town's future, each other, and the woman who comes between them, in this humanistic western. Humor, action, and romance add to the multi-layered relationships.

Says Harris, who found the novel and optioned it, "The reason I wanted to do *Appaloosa* is to make something that's beautiful and human, and reflects my deep appreciation of being alive. It's about friendship."

*Appaloosa* is filming in remote locations surrounding Santa Fe, including the multi-hued sandstone cliffs of Abiquiu that Georgia O'Keeffe painted, along the Chama River where the autumn cottonwoods are turning golden, crossing the

Rio Grande, and on Tom Ford's Cerro Pelon Ranch in Galisteo. The production then moves to Austin, Texas, for a climactic shootout. Principal photography is scheduled to wrap in late November. The movie is being overseen at New Line Cinema by Toby Emmerich and production executives Sam Brown and Michael Disco.

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