

we worked it in," Schaefer says. "Terrell comes out of the Port Authority [Bus Terminal] in the snow with neon in the background, and that looks really good." Also in the cast are Melissa Leo (*21 Grams*), William Sadler (*The Shawshank Redemption*) and Glenn Fitzgerald (*Series 7*). The filmmakers will launch the Web site c-o-n-f-e-s-s.com by the time they hit the festival circuit. "We're assembling raw material for postings now — we were shooting footage for that even before we started shooting the movie," Schaefer says. "The Web site will be online with no explanation that it's related to a film. The idea is to let word-of-mouth build."

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### THE DYING GAUL

Campbell Scott and Patricia Clarkson play dirty tricks with Peter Sarsgaard in *The Dying Gaul*, Craig Lucas's adaptation of his 1996 play and his first turn directing for the screen. Sarsgaard plays a gay screenwriter too wrecked by his lover's recent death to resist the advances of a bisexual producer (Scott), whose wife retaliates anonymously through an Internet chat room. "It's about somebody whose grief is so powerful he's disabled," Lucas says. "It's a human tragedy about self-delusion. The lies they tell themselves are all quite small, but a lot of little lies can add up to tragedy."

Lucas's previous film adaptations of his plays include *Reckless* and *Prelude to a Kiss* and the original screenplay *Longtime Companion*, all of which were directed by Norman René, who died in 1996. Lucas wrote the screenplay for *The Secret Lives of Dentists* for Holedigger Films in 2002 and was fine-tuning the *Gaul* script when Holedigger said they would make the film if he directed it. "I threw away the play and told the story with a fresh eye," he says. "I know the material in a way I might not if it had been written directly for the screen."

*Gaul's* late-fall 35mm shoot with Bobby Bukowski (*Saved*) as d.p. ranged over L.A. from the Paramount lot to Malibu. The film is set in 1995, when studios routinely balked at putting gay characters in big-budget films. "It's interesting how quickly we forget things," Lucas says. "It's been only nine years, but [the behavior in the film] looks like it's from the '20s."

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*The Woodcutter.*

PHOTO: CAROLE SEGAL

### THE WOODCUTTER

Gabrielle Savage Dockterman's first feature, *The Woodcutter*, stars Danny Glover as a haunted Vietnam veteran living alone in the Pacific Northwest woods until a war buddy (David Strathairn) shows up and leaves him with his 10-year-old daughter. "I liked the idea of a man who had never reintegrated into society after the war being transformed by the love of a child," Dockterman says. "It's powerfully moving with some surprises that will get people talking." She found Ken Miller's script through an online writers' forum and developed it with him and writer Nancy L. Babine.

Dockterman graduated from Harvard University in 1983 with an engineering degree and then spent 15 years creating interactive educational media. "I never considered film as an occupation," she says, "but we were developing cutting-edge software and, as the technology progressed, we shot actors and used story to engage viewers. Without realizing it, I

was learning film." *Woodcutter* was jump-started when Dockterman went to Sundance and met producers Isen Robbins and Aimee Schoof (*Brother to Brother*). "They introduced me to [casting director] Adrienne Stern, and she got it to Danny's agent. He was our first choice, and he said yes as soon as he read the script." Linda Hamilton (*The Terminator*) and Ron Perlman (*Hellboy*) co-star with 12-year-old Zoë Weizenbaum in her debut.

The 35mm *Woodcutter* shot for five weeks in the Vancouver woods with Ken Kelsch (*Big Night*) as d.p. and moved to Washington, D.C., for the film's final scene at the Vietnam War memorial. Emmy nominee Sheldon Mirowitz is composing an original score.

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### HAVOC

Add Barbara Kopple to the list of esteemed documentary filmmakers transitioning to narrative. Kopple makes the switch with *Havoc*, a tough teen drama about hip-hop-loving L.A. rich kids looking to juice up their lives with gangsta posturing until a drug deal with Latino gang members lands them in real trouble.

"It brings two cultures together in a volatile way through drugs and sex and teaches that the most innocent intentions can have consequences," Kopple says. The script, by *Traffic* writer Stephen Gaghan, is a reworking of a spec that made headlines in 1995 when 17-year-old first-timer Jessica Kaplan sold it to New Line for \$150,000. Media 8 — the people who made *Monster* — assumed the option several years back. Anne Hathaway (*The Princess Diaries*) and Bijou Phillips (*The Door in the Floor*) star.

Kopple won Best Documentary Oscars for *Harlan County, U.S.A.* in 1976 and *American Dream* in 1991. She has directed episodes of *Homicide* and *Oz* and developed several dra-



*Havoc.*

matic features before Media 8 tapped her for *Havoc*. "I was familiar with her work and felt that if she could do with narrative what she did with nonfiction it would be incredible," says producer Stewart Hall. "It's a tough movie that deals with real issues, so who better to direct than someone who deals with hard issues in her other films?" *Havoc's* other producers are Jack F. Murphy and John Morrissey (*American History X*).

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