



For Immediate Release

Donald Sutherland All Aboard as Producer, Screenwriter and Star of *Pirate's Passage*!

Production Begins on Animated Movie Based on Award-Winning Adventure Novel

— High seas, historical adventure to air on CBC Television —

Toronto, ON (November 4, 2013) — Donald Sutherland's production company, Martin's River Ink, Inc., announces start of production of a new, animated movie, *Pirate's Passage*, with animation work by PIP Animation Services Inc. in Ottawa. Upon completion it will air on CBC Television.

"*Pirate's Passage* is a thrillingly exhilarating adventure, a glorious coming-of-age-story, rich in both imagination and history, in perception and truth," said producer, screenwriter and star Donald Sutherland. "I couldn't put the book down. It resonated with the clearest image of the man inside every boy's being that I could imagine. It was life writ true and I knew Jim and Captain Johnson's marvelous journey had to be seen on screen."

Pirate's Passage is based on William Gilkerson's critically acclaimed novel, which won Canada's Governor General's Award for Children's Literature in 2006. Hollywood icon Donald Sutherland (*Crossing Lines*, *The Hunger Games*, *Pride & Prejudice*) and his partner and co-writer, Brad Peyton (*Journey 2: The Mysterious Island*, *Cats & Dogs: The Revenge of Kitty Galore*), will produce the film. Sutherland will voice the lead character, Captain Johnson. Peyton will co-direct alongside Mike Barth of PIP Animation.

Cast alongside Sutherland is Gage Munroe (*The Immortals, One Week*), as the young hero Jim Hawkins; Carrie-Anne Moss (*The Matrix, Memento*) as his hard-luck mother Kerstin Hawkins; Kim Coates (*Black Hawk Down, Sons of Anarchy*) as ruthless local businessman; Roy Moehner; Rossif Sutherland (*King, Reign*) as his bullying son Klaus Moehner; Colm Feore (*The Borgias, 24*) as Jim's Uncle Robin; Megan Follows (*Reign, Anne of Green Gables*) as Meg, the Hawkins' employee and overprotective friend; veteran Canadian actors Paul Gross and Gordon Pinsent as, respectively, the pirate Calico Jack and local barber Harry Freelove; and Terry Haig (*The Aviator*) as Jim's teacher Mr. Herkes.

Voice work will take place in Toronto and at POP Sound in Santa Monica, CA.

Tandem Communications is the worldwide distributor of *Pirate's Passage* (except Canada).

Pirate's Passage is set in 1952 in Grey Rocks, Nova Scotia, a centuries old town on the south shore that was famous 250 years ago as a favoured port of pirates. The chief protagonist is 12-year-old Jim, a lad who suffers daily the death of his father and the schoolyard bullying of Roy Moehner's son Todd, but carries on, buoyed by an optimistic imagination fueled with a vivid sense of adventure. His widowed mother is struggling to keep their livelihood — the Admiral Anson Inn — from falling into the hands of Moehner. It is an ongoing battle until the sudden arrival of Captain Johnson, whose small sailboat has been thrown off course by a storm, changes the family's life. The Captain rents a room at the Inn and with cash up front, and the mother's financial burden is temporarily eased. The Captain, under the distrustful eye of Meg, the Inn's housekeeper, quickly inserts himself as a mentor and friend to Jim, helping him with his essay for school on Pirates and, while he's at it, giving him extraordinary lessons in self-reliance and determination until Jim turns the tables, developing a liberating self-assurance all his own that so deeply touches the Captain that he allows Jim to see evidence that the Captain may be more than meets the eye. Is Captain Johnson the same Charles Johnson who was a pirate there two hundred years ago? What does he mean when he talks about the "Pirates" of today? The lad goes with him on a literal journey into the past to find out.

The young man who comes back from that trip has well learned the Captain's mantra: '*listen, think, respond!*' Listen Think Respond informs his brain, his heart, his nerves and his muscles. He sets his sails, he determines his ship, he is now able to deal with every storm he and his family will encounter. How he came to discover the course he sets for his life is the story of *Pirate's Passage*.

The Governor General's Award jury commended *Pirate's Passage* for taking "a maverick approach to history," calling it "a challenging children's novel

with a dangerous edge" and "a work of genius, a benchmark in Canadian Literature."

Eric Birnberg and Thomas Walden serve as Executive Producers of *Pirate's Passage*, and Merle-Anne Ridley is Voice Director.

Both the Canada Media Fund and COGECO Program Development Fund provided financing.

About CBC/Radio-Canada

CBC/Radio-Canada is Canada's national public broadcaster and one of its largest cultural institutions. The Corporation is a leader in reaching Canadians on new platforms and delivers a comprehensive range of radio, television, internet, and satellite-based services. Deeply rooted in the regions, CBC/Radio-Canada is the only domestic broadcaster to offer diverse regional and cultural perspectives in English, French and eight Aboriginal languages.

About TANDEM COMMUNICATIONS

TANDEM COMMUNICATIONS is located in Munich, Germany and was started in 1999 by Rola Bauer and Tim Halkin. Jonas Bauer became a partner in the company in 2007. Since opening its doors, TANDEM has established itself as a leading provider of high-end, scripted TV Event programs.

The end of 2011 marked a new chapter in TANDEM's history with STUDIOCANAL taking a majority stake in the company, effectively making TANDEM the television production and distribution arm of the European studio.

TANDEM develops, finances, produces and distributes primetime programs for the worldwide market. Emmy® & Gemini Award-winning and Golden Globe®-nominated, *The Pillars of the Earth* and *World Without End* are just two examples of TANDEM's award-winning and critically acclaimed productions. In addition to distributing its own programs worldwide, TANDEM also distributes high-end, third party productions.

STUDIOCANAL's involvement enabled TANDEM to strengthen its one-hour series strategy, leading to Tandem's most recent production of the one-hour procedural crime series, *Crossing Lines*, which was created by Edward Allen Bernero (*Criminal Minds*) and stars William Fichtner, Marc Lavoine and Donald Sutherland.