



ACADEMY AWARD-WINNING ACTOR GEOFFREY RUSH TO STAR AS ALBERT EINSTEIN IN *GENIUS* FROM NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC CHANNEL, IMAGINE TELEVISION AND FOX 21 TELEVISION STUDIOS

NEWCOMER JOHNNY FLYNN SET TO STAR AS YOUNG EINSTEIN

PRODUCTION BEGINS NEXT MONTH ON 10-EPIISODE ANTHOLOGY SERIES WITH ACADEMY AWARD-WINNER RON HOWARD TO DIRECT FIRST EPISODE

Academy Award-, Golden Globe-, Emmy- and Tony-winning actor **Geoffrey Rush** (“The Kings Speech,” “Pirates of the Caribbean,” “Shine”) has been cast in National Geographic Channel’s upcoming global anthology series **GENIUS**, from Fox 21 Television Studios (“Homeland,” “The People v. O.J. Simpson”), Imagine Television (“24,” “Empire”), OddLot Entertainment and EUE/Sokolow. Rush will star as Albert Einstein in the first-ever scripted series for the network. The story is based on Walter Isaacson’s critically acclaimed biography of the celebrated scientist, and the first episode will be directed by Imagine’s Ron Howard, his first time directing a scripted prime-time drama. Production begins next month in Prague, and will air in 2017 on National Geographic Channel in 171 countries and 45 languages.

Joining Rush in the cast is **Johnny Flynn** (“Clouds of Sils Maria,” “Song One,” “Lovesick”), who will play Einstein in the years before he rose to international attention and acclaim. Through ten episodes, **GENIUS** will chart how an imaginative, rebellious patent clerk, who could not get a teaching job or a doctorate, unlocked the mysteries of the atom and the universe. Each episode will explore Einstein’s extraordinary scientific achievements, along with his volatile, passionate and complex personal relationships.

“The calibre of the **GENIUS** cast lives up to the show’s title,” said Carolyn Bernstein, executive vice president and head of global scripted development and production, National Geographic Channel. “The supremely talented Geoffrey Rush is dream casting for the role of Albert Einstein, and Johnny Flynn not only is an incredible talent but also bears more than a passing resemblance to Rush. We could not be more excited to get them to work with Ron and the rest of the team.”

“It is a testament to Ron, our team of creative partners and this fantastic material that we have put together such a powerhouse cast, led by the great Geoffrey Rush,” commented Bert Salke, president of Fox 21 Television Studios. “This truly has all the ingredients to be a special series.”

“National Geographic’s unwavering commitment to excellence and their support and passion for this project has helped us attract talent such as Geoffrey and Johnny. My excitement for this project grows every day, and I cannot wait to get started,” added Howard.

After more than two decades as a stage and film actor, Australian-born Geoffrey Rush burst into the mainstream with the role of a lifetime as piano prodigy David Helfgott in “Shine,” for which he received an Academy Award, Golden Globe award, BAFTA award and Australian Film Institute Award. Since then he has become one of Hollywood’s most reliable talents, with critically acclaimed roles in “Shakespeare in Love,” “Quills,” “The Kings Speech” and the “Pirates of Caribbean” franchise. He also won an Emmy award for his performance in the titular role of the television movie “The Life and Death of Peter Sellers,” and a Tony Award for lead actor in a play for Broadway’s “Exit the King.”

British actor and musician Johnny Flynn was nominated as the London Newcomer of the Year at the 2012 What's On Stage Awards for his performance in "The Heretic" (Royal Court) and went on to gain his first Olivier Award nomination for "Jerusalem" (West End) that year. More recently, Johnny starred in Martin McDonagh's huge hit "Hangmen" originating at the Royal Court and transferring to the West End. Other theater credits include "TWELFTH NIGHT/RICHARD III" with Mark Rylance (Globe/West End) and "THE LOW ROAD" (Royal Court). He co-starred with Anne Hathaway in the feature film "Song One," for which The Hollywood Reporter called his performance "captivating" when it premiered at Sundance in 2014, and also appeared in the features "Clouds of Sils Maria" and "Love Is Thicker Than Water." Flynn has had roles on several British television series, including "Lovesick" and "Brotherhood." He is also the lead singer of the English folk band Johnny Flynn and the Sussex Wit, which has released three albums.

Each season of **GENIUS** will dramatise the fascinating stories of the world's most brilliant innovators. The first season will be based on Walter Isaacson's critically acclaimed book "Einstein: His Life and Universe," adapted by writer Noah Pink. The series will be executive produced by Imagine's Brian Grazer, Ron Howard and Francie Calfo, and co-produced by Anna Culp; from OddLot Entertainment, Gigi Pritzker and Rachel Shane will executive produce and Melissa Rucker will co-produce; and Sam Sokolow and Jeff Cooney from EUE/Sokolow will also executive produce. Pink will also co-executive produce alongside showrunner Ken Biller. For National Geographic Channels, Carolyn G. Bernstein is executive vice president and head of global scripted development and production.

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About National Geographic Channel

The National Geographic Channels (The Channels) form the television and production arm of National Geographic Partners, a joint venture between 21st Century Fox and the National Geographic Society. As a global leader in premium science, adventure and exploration programming, the Channels include: National Geographic Channel (NGC), Nat Geo WILD, Nat Geo People and Nat Geo MUNDO. Additionally, the Channels also run the in-house television production unit, National Geographic Studios. The Channels contribute to the National Geographic Society's commitment to exploration, conservation and education with entertaining, innovative programming from A-level talent around the world, and with profits that help support the society's mission. Globally, NGC is available in more than 440 million homes in 171 countries and 45 languages, and Nat Geo WILD is available in 131 countries and 38 languages. National Geographic Partners is also a leader in social media, with a fan base of 250 million people across all of its social pages. NGC contributes over 55 million social media fans globally on Facebook alone. For more information, visit www.natgeotv.com and www.natgeowild.com.

About Fox 21 Television Studios

Fox 21 Television Studios is a production unit housed within Fox Television Group devoted to making creatively ambitious scripted and unscripted series for all distribution platforms. Fox 21 Television Studios is responsible for the sensation from Ryan Murphy, Nina Jacobson and Brad Simpson, "The People v. O.J. Simpson: American Crime Story" (with FX Productions); the Emmy- and Golden Globe-winning "Homeland" starring Claire Danes and Mandy Patinkin; the critically acclaimed "The Americans" (with FX Productions) starring Matthew Rhys and Keri Russell; Brannon Braga and Adam Simon's "Salem"; and Howard Gordon's "Tyrant." New series include Fox 21 TV's "Dice," from Scot Armstrong, Sean Furst, Bryan Furst, Richard Shepard, Bruce Rubenstein and Andrew Dice Clay; "Queen of the South," from M.A. Fortin, Joshua John Miller, David T. Friendly and Pancho Mansfield; and "Chance" from Kem Nunn, Alexandra Cunningham, Lenny Abrahamson, Michael London and Brian Grazer.

About OddLot Entertainment

OddLot Entertainment is a Los Angeles-based film and television production company that develops, produces, finances and arranges distribution for quality commercial properties for the U.S. and international markets. In addition, OddLot CEO Gigi Pritzker is part of a consortium that launched the next-generation film studio STX Entertainment founded by producer Robert Simonds. OddLot has produced the Academy Award-nominated drama "Rabbit Hole" starring Nicole Kidman; "The Way, Way Back" starring Steve Carell; "Drive" starring Ryan Gosling; the futuristic sci-fi film "Ender's Game"; and Jon Stewart's directorial debut, "Rosewater."

MEDIA CONTACT:

Lori Killesteyn, National Geographic Channel
(02) 8668 2987 | 0404 881 687 | lori.killesteyn@fox.com