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SCI FI Announces Casting On 6-Hour Frank Herbert's *CHILDREN OF DUNE* Epic Miniseries

Academy Award winner Susan Sarandon to Join Ensemble Cast

NEW YORK — SCI FI has announced the casting for the next six-hour miniseries based on Frank Herbert's *Dune* novels, *Frank Herbert's Children of Dune*. This epic adaptation will once again feature an ensemble cast, including returning players **Julie Cox** as Princess Irulan, **Barbara Kodetova** as Chani, **Ian McNeice** as Baron Harkonnen, **P.H. Moriarty** as Gurney Halleck and **Alec Newman** as Paul Atreides. New additions to the cast include **Alice Krige** (*Six Feet Under*, *Star Trek First Contact*) as Lady Jessica, **Edward Atterton** as Duncan Idaho, **Steven Berkoff** (*Beverly Hills Cop*, *Octopussy*) as Stilgar, **Jessica Brooks** as Ghanima, **Daniela Amavia** as Alia and **James McAvoy** (*Band of Brothers*) as Leto II. *Frank Herbert's Children of Dune* is scheduled to begin production on April 3 in Prague, with a four-month shooting schedule, and is slated to air in 2003 on SCI FI.

Joining the ensemble cast is Academy Award-winning actress **Susan Sarandon** in the role of Wensicia, a ruthless princess eager to restore her deposed family to the imperial throne. Sarandon's film credits include *The Rocky Horror Picture*

Show, Pretty Baby, Atlantic City, The Witches of Eastwick, A Dry White Season and *Bull Durham*, which earned Sarandon her first Academy Award nomination. She received additional Best Actress Oscar nominations for *Thelma & Louise*, *Lorenzo's Oil*, and *The Client* before receiving the Oscar for Best Actress in a Leading Role for her role as Sister Helen Prejean in *Dead Man Walking*.

Frank Herbert's Children of Dune is based on *Dune Messiah* and *Children of Dune*, the second and third novels in Herbert's award-winning, six-volume *Dune* saga. The project marks the first film or television adaptation of these novels. *Children of Dune* has been adapted for the screen by John Harrison (*Frank Herbert's Dune*), with Richard P. Rubinstein (*Frank Herbert's Dune, The Stand*) back on board as executive producer. David Kappes (*Frank Herbert's Dune, Anne Frank*) will return as producer. Greg Yaitanes (*Double Tap, The Invisible Man, Going to California*) will direct and Mike Messina will associate produce.

Academy Award winner Theodore Pistek (*Amadeus*) returns as costume designer, while Ernest Farino (*From the Earth to the Moon*) resumes his role as visual-effects supervisor; production designer Ondrej Nekvasil (*Anne Frank*) and Poland's Golden Frog-winning cinematographer Arthur Reinhart (*Wrony*) also will reprise their duties from the first miniseries.

The new miniseries continues the saga of the Atreides dynasty. Under Paul Muad'dib's rule as Emperor, the planet Arrakis has enjoyed a renaissance. However, the revolution Muad'dib has inspired has transformed into a brutal jihad and a conspiracy threatens to rob Muad'dib of his throne and his life. The future of all of humanity rests in the hands of Muad'dib's heirs — specifically his son, Leto II, who is destined to become a force for sweeping changes, both on Arrakis and in the universe at large. In the end, Leto II must risk sacrificing his own humanity for the sake of humanity itself.

SCI FI's premiere of the epic miniseries *Frank Herbert's Dune* virtually doubled all previous viewership records for the Channel, with a remarkable 4.4 rating (2,917,000 HHs) in December 2000. In addition to being the most-watched program in the history of the channel, the six-hour epic earned a place among the top 10 of all original basic-cable miniseries in the past five years. *Frank Herbert's Dune* also earned two Emmys in the fall of 2001 for its cinematography and special effects.

Children of Dune is a New Amsterdam Entertainment, Inc. production, in association with Blixa Film Produktion GmbH & Co. KG and Touchstone Television Productions, LLC. New Amsterdam Entertainment, Inc., is a New York City-based developer and producer of theatrical feature films and TV programming.