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2 men and half-pints in Rodriguez's latest

TV's Cryer, Spader in family-targeted 'Shorts'

By Borys Kit

Jon Cryer and James Spader are returning to the big screen, signing to star in Robert Rodriguez's "Shorts," a family adventure film that also stars William H. Macy and Leslie Mann.

Rodriguez, who also wrote the screenplay, is producing the film with Elizabeth Avellan under their Troublemaker Studios banner. Rodriguez is serving as his own director of photography, editor and visual effects supervisor.

Also among the cast are Jimmy Bennett ("Star Trek"), Kat Dennings ("The 40-Year-Old Virgin"), Trevor Gagnon ("The New Adventures of Old Christine"), Leo Howard ("G.I. Joe"), Devon Gearhart ("Changeling"), Rebel Rodriguez ("Planet Terror"), Jake Short and Jolie Vanier.

"Shorts" is set in fictional Black Falls, a suburb where everyone works for Black Box Unlimited Worldwide Industries Inc., whose communication gadget is sweeping the country. A boy (Bennett) discovers a rainbow-colored rock that grants wishes to anyone who holds it. First it causes havoc among the kid population, but things get turned up several notches when adults get their hands on it.

Cryer and Mann play the boy's parents, Dennings is the boy's older sister, Spader is Mr. Black and Macy is the father of a germophobic genius.

Dan Lin, Hunt Lowry and Stacy Cohen are serving as executive producers on the film, which is being filmed entirely on location in Austin.

"Shorts" is a presentation of Warner Bros. in association with Abu Dhabi Media Co. and Media Rights Capital.

Cryer is repped by UTA and Forward Entertainment.

Spader is repped by ICM.

Macy and Mann are repped by CAA.