

Hopscotch

PRODUCTION NOTES

The Boys Are Back

**Directed by Scott Hicks
Starring Clive Owen**

Release date: November 12, 2009
Running time: 100 minutes
Rated: M

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From director Scott Hicks:
"A household of boys in the absence of women, but as a unit:
Very unusual, very irregular, but somehow it works...
Is it all going to be easy? Is it all going to be straightforward?
I don't think so. But that's life."

The Boys Are Back is a moving and humorous love story between journalist Joe Warr and his two sons, from different marriages, who find themselves living in a boys-only household following the death of Joe's second wife.

SYNOPSIS

Based on a memoir, The Boys Are Back is a character driven film about family relationships. The film is a unique take on a modern family that sees Joe Warr, a top flight UK sports writer, fumbling his way through fatherhood when he becomes responsible for two sons following the tragic loss of his wife.

Joe (Clive Owen) moved to Australia when he fell in love with Australian equestrian Katy (Laura Fraser). Together they enjoy an idyllic family life with their young son, Artie (Nicolas McAnulty), living in a home in a gully near the coast.

Joe is erudite, opinionated, chauvinistic, funny, self-obsessed, likes a drink and, as he sometimes remembers, is also a father. His life is suddenly turned upside down when Katy dies tragically of cancer, leaving him devastated, and with a grieving six-year-old Artie, whom he barely knows.

Uncertain of six-year-old Artie's needs, Joe fears the prospect of his ever-capable mother-in-law Barbara (Julia Blake) taking over. Joe chooses to go it alone and, throwing the rulebook out the window, devises a new philosophy: Just Say Yes.

This parenting approach leads to many humorous moments which are complicated further when Joe's 14-year-old son from his previous marriage, Harry (George MacKay), decides to rejoin his dad in Australia. Joe's 'no rules' world swiftly moves from the charm of *The Lost Boys* to a semi-feral hog heaven.

Joe's attempt at paradise is met by numerous obstacles: Harry has abandonment issues to settle with him, Barbara is appalled by the lack of structure and discipline in Artie's life...and then there's Laura (Emma Booth).

Laura is mum to little Lucy from Artie's school and although she likes Joe, she begins to suspect his philosophy might be an irresponsible disguise for laziness. Joe readily relies on Laura's help, but has never so much as asked her on a date. Although Laura hides her disappointment, the frozen chicken defrosting in the family bathtub is the last straw...

Events finally get out of hand when Joe gambles on leaving his sons for a weekend work commitment. In his absence, local teenagers invade the house. Joe's newfound family is shattered and he is forced to confront his own inadequacies in his efforts to reunite the boys.

The result: A new social unit – a father and two sons living in a household without women. Like an experiment in a satellite, free from earthly influences.

THE BOYS ARE BACK charts Joe's moving and humorous journey from part time dad to full-on fatherhood; teaching him how to deal with his own grief and, for the first time, tune in to the needs of his sons Artie and Harry.

**MIRAMAX FILMS PRESENT
IN ASSOCIATION WITH
BBC FILMS
AND
SCREEN AUSTRALIA
AND
SOUTH AUSTRALIAN FILMCORPORATION
AND
HOPSCOTCH FILMS**

**A TIGER ASPECT PICTURES PRODUCTION
IN ASSOCIATION WITH SOUTHERN LIGHT FILMS**

A Scott Hicks Film

**Clive Owen
Emma Booth
Laura Fraser
George MacKay
Nicholas McAuliffe
Julia Blake
Chris Haywood
Erik Thomson
Natasha Little**

Directed by Scott Hicks

Produced by Greg Brenman and Tim White

Screenplay by Allan Cubitt

Based on the book "The Boys Are Back In Town" by Simon Carr

**EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS
Peter Bennett-Jones
Clive Owen
David Thompson
Jane Wright**

Co-Producer – Bella Wright

Director of Photography – Greig Fraser

**Editor – Scott Gray
Production Designer – Melinda Doring
Composer – Hal Lindes
Also featuring music by Sigur Rós**

Costume Designer – Emily Seresin
Casting – Nikki Barrett and Nina Gold

ABOUT THE PRODUCTION

It all started when a true story became a book.

Simon Carr's memoir about his wife's death and his subsequent challenge raising two sons was published in 2001 with the title *The Boys Are Back in Town* and received critical acclaim:

"Achingly funny and almost unbearably moving." – *Daily Mail*

"Compulsive." – *Guardian*

"Carr's brilliantly written account of life as a single parent should become a required manual on parenting." – *Sunday Times*

Carr, author and parliamentary sketch writer for UK's *The Independent*, contacted Peter Bennett-Jones, chairman of Tiger Aspect Productions, to seek advice on optioning the book.

Carr says he was "chatting" to Bennett-Jones about the book: Should it become a TV series? Or possibly a sitcom? And when Bennett-Jones suggested the book should be a film, Carr said, "the trouble with that is films never get made."

Six years later on a chilly winter's morning, Simon Carr visited the film set of *The Boys Are Back*. It was shoot day 47 of 51 and Carr stood on a platform at **London's** Paddington Station watching Scott Hicks direct and Clive Owen act in a scene taken from his very own life.

Carr conceded: "My pessimism has, so far, been utterly confounded by Peter's determination to get this project out and by the amazing job that's been done with it."

Carr explains that the memoir was written originally "to tell what it was like for a single father to bring up two boys in an all-male household."

Carr believes fathers are "rather undervalued". He says, "And I'm not sure that our role in the family has been well explored by novelists and filmmakers over the last 25 years and I think this is going to go quite a long way to make up for that. We do have feelings too!"

The project was enthusiastically received at Tiger Aspect from the earliest days of development. Co-chairman and producer of the film Greg Brenman says the story had appeal due to its "wildness of spirit and that sort of semi-feral way that men would bring up kids."

Brenman explains that a comprehensive story had to be written to create a workable film from the memoir, but that the script has remained faithful to the essence of Carr's life.

"He's such a larger than life, outrageous, intentionally contentious and provocative, charming, seductive guy that we tried to wrap up a lot of that spirit and essence and put it into the film," said Brenman.

WRITER ALLAN CUBITT JOINS

Scriptwriter Allan Cubitt was brought onto the project to adapt the memoir.

During early drafts the story was relocated from New Zealand to Australia, and the occupation of Joe Warr was changed from political journalist to sports writer.

Cubitt felt that if Joe were a political writer, the script would need to address the nature of Australian politics, which he thought was an “unnecessary sort of challenge”.

For inspiration, Cubitt met with UK journalist Richard Williams who had started out in music press and later moved into sports journalism.

Despite the changes Cubitt says, “I’ve used Simon’s lines and dialogue wherever I could” and that he had often gone back to the book to find moments he thought he needed in the film.

Cubitt says that at the heart of the film is the question, “How does this man relate to these boys?” and says that for him the film is really about fathering sons: “How do you bring up boys? How do you parent boys?”

Cubitt felt a “great sympathy and empathy” with the character of Joe from the beginning. He says it was an emotional experience writing the film, particularly the scenes where Joe’s wife is dying.

“One of the tricks of being a writer of drama is to empathize with those characters and feel their feelings, their joy and pain and so on, so I am frequently in tears when writing,” he explains. “In fact, if I am not actually crying while I’m writing then I worry it’s probably not working.”

Cubitt found the casting of Clive Owen most appropriate.

“There has to be an element of playfulness in the character so he is not just a bore and not just a kind of unreconstructed man, but that there is an intelligence, an emotional intelligence at work as well and so I think Clive captures that perfectly,” he says.

DIRECTOR SCOTT HICKS JOINS

Tiger Aspect Pictures had Scott Hicks in mind as the director from the outset, says producer Greg Brenman.

“One of the reasons we went for Scott Hicks once we had the script was because of *Shine*. Scott conveyed to the world that he is a master at working with actors and a master at working with complicated chamber pieces - which is family life,” he said.

Hicks first read the script about five years prior to production and was “thrilled by the material”.

He said, “Allan Cubitt did an extraordinary job in adapting the story into a screenplay, I love the combination of emotion and humor ... It happens that those sort of things engage me.

“Often in our darkest moments it is humor that gets us through. I think it a national characteristic of Australians and it is something of a feature of my work in the sense that *Shine* was a film that, in addition to being very emotional, was also quite funny.”

Scott was “intrigued” and worked closely with Tiger Aspect and Cubitt over the intervening years developing the material and planning the casting.

PRODUCER TIM WHITE JOINS

Brenman had been producing *Billy Elliot* when he first met Tim White, who at the time was producing for Working Title Films. They had discussed the possibility of working together on a project in Australia or New Zealand at some point in the future.

When White sat down late one night to read *The Boys Are Back* he says he couldn’t put it down.

“It was something that kind of insidiously got me in its grip. It’s quite a restrained story and certainly told in a very insightful way, but without any great hi-jinks; no complex plot or sensational elements that would keep me awake at night.”

White explains, “It was really the central character that got under my skin. I had a real connection with Joe Warr.”

White says he emailed Brenman back immediately and made a “big play” to get connected to the film.

Hicks says that White, along with co-producer Bella Wright, was “absolutely instrumental” in pulling the financial package together, “often having to reassemble it over the period of time that Clive and I were jockeying to get together on the film.”

CLIVE OWEN JOINS

When Clive Owen read a draft of the script he was immediately interested. After meeting with Hicks to discuss the film he committed to the project. “I knew instinctively that Scott was the perfect guy for this movie,” explains Owen.

“A very intimate family drama like this needs very delicate handling. It’s about directors who can handle people and characters sensitively,” said Owen. “It’s very clear when you meet (Scott) that he’s got that sensitivity and that patience and that understanding.

“I also knew instinctively that he wouldn’t do the really obvious well-placed little cute family drama. And that it would be mature and smart and the perception and the perspectives of the movie would be very intelligent and smart because you see his films and you know that’s what he’s like as a director”.

Hicks says, “Once Clive Owen got involved, his schedule and my schedule refused to align, so it took several years while each of us were completing various projects before we could get to this passage of time where we were both available.”

But Hicks says he has a “very Zen approach” and that “these things do seem to have their own time.” And in this case the intervening years provided an opportunity for the writer, director and actor to meet and work together developing the story.

Owen says he often gets involved working on a script “once the thing gets going” but says that on *The Boys Are Back* he spent a “serious amount of time” working in London with Cubitt and Hicks during development.

Hicks said: “I spent longer with Clive going through this script than any other actor I’ve ever worked with. His attention to detail is painstaking.”

Cubitt recalls one such meeting: “We all had a very good day together going through the script and listening specifically to Clive’s take on the character and the drama and that’s been really useful I think, arriving at a script that everyone feels represents the material well and is shoot-able.”

CASTING ARTIE, Joe’s six-year-old son

Hicks cites the protracted development time as beneficial to the casting of Nicholas McNulty as young Artie, stating that, “Nicholas would have been about a year old around the time I got interested in the film.”

The intervening five years development time was necessary “to allow Nicholas McNulty to be born and achieve the age of six so that we could actually work with him.”

Nikki Barrett, the Australian casting director, conducted a nation-wide search for Artie, looking at approximately a thousand boys, then screen testing about one hundred and short-listing about twenty.

Scott Hicks recalls his experience: “Nicholas really intrigued me from the outset, from the first time I met him, he presented in such a forthright way for a six-year-old. He had apparently no shyness and no inhibition about him.”

“He was very direct and struck up a conversation with me like any adult might and I found that very intriguing as many of the other children were quite shy and retiring and he clearly had the ability to put himself into the moment in believing what it was he was doing.”

Hicks recalls: “When I made the choice of Nicholas the next step was presenting him to Clive for his response because that was going to be so vital to the success of the film: the connection between those two characters.”

Hicks says that Clive was ecstatic when he saw Nicholas’s audition. “We were in a hotel room in London, I showed Clive the quick time on my computer and he bounded with excitement.”

Hicks says he understood that playing the part of Artie was an enormous task for a child to fulfill: “The last thing I was looking for was a child ‘actor’. I didn’t want any acting, I just wanted someone who could believe in a situation.”

Owen agrees and says the casting choice felt right for the character and the heart of the movie.

Producer Greg Brenman comments on the believability of Nicholas as Clive's son:

"If you put them together as a family, you can see what a great job Scott and the casting directors have done. They are spookily alike. We are really, really pleased with the way the family has shaped up."

CASTING HARRY, Joe's 14-year-old son

When Hicks started looking for Harry he saw a number of boys in London and says when George MacKay came in and auditioned for Harry, "His reading was so touching and so subtle that it stuck in my mind."

Hicks recalls: "I just gravitated towards that. I found that if somebody could, with no appearance of acting, touch me emotionally so strongly that he had to be worth exploring."

George had astounded the director, casting director and producers with his audition piece.

Tim White says, "I recall looking at these casting tapes when Scott came back from the UK and sitting down with Scott and Nikki Barrett looking at this lad... there's a scene at the end of the film where he really tells it as it is to his father and there's a moment where he really challenges the Joe War character and I know I was in tears just watching George's performance."

When Hicks showed George's audition to Clive he says, "Clive just flipped out and said 'he's fantastic!' and so we were both very excited about the idea of the two of them working together."

THE WOMEN

Although *The Boys Are Back* focuses on a father's relationship with his two sons, the story is also told through the women in his life, "these rather vivid characters," says White.

Brenman agrees: "On one level this film is all about boys, it's all about men. And I think some of the ways we understand the men is through the women's eyes. And so Joe has an incredibly important relationship with his wife Katy, his mother-in-law Barbara and with Laura played by Emma Booth".

Brenman says that one of the important aspects of the Laura character is that she challenges Joe.

CASTING LAURA, Joe's newfound friend; mother of Artie's school friend

Australian model Emma Booth drew attention as an actor in the 2007 feature film *Clubland* (USA title *Introducing the Dwights*).

When she was called in to audition for a minor role in *The Boys Are Back* she was busy preparing for a Vogue interview and says she “kind of rushed in there” and put something down on tape.

“The next day they said ‘Scott would love for you to come in and read for Laura’ and I was like, ‘I’m too busy today’. They said, ‘he’s actually going to stay the night to see you especially tomorrow’.”

Emma says she “freaked out” at the thought of meeting Hicks. “I’ve always loved his work and admired everything he’s done and so I went in there, very shaky and nervous and put down a test for Laura.”

Emma says that although she and Hicks “hit it off and got talking and went through the scenes” she didn’t think she was going to get the part. “I really thought that I’d be a bit too young but the producer saw it and Scott loved what I did and I got offered it two days later.”

Scott says that when he met Emma Booth she was “so compelling” that he “set about tailoring the character with Al Cubitt to fit Emma’s persona.”

CASTING KATY, Joe’s wife and Artie’s mum

Hicks said that when Laura Fraser auditioned in London for the part of Katy she did a reading that was “so immediate - it was as if someone had just walked into the room and were talking to me as if they were that character. There was no sense of acting and no sense of artifice about it.”

However, Hicks was completely taken aback when Laura finished the reading and started speaking in a broad Scottish accent.

“She had just delivered herself in this scene with a really excellent version of an Australian accent ... Basically, with 24 hours notice she was able to front up looking as though it was the easiest thing in the world and just do this scene and neutralize her own accent at the same time.”

Hicks said he found “all of those things very compelling” and cast the Scottish actor as an Australian equestrian.

Fraser (who picked up her Aussie accent watching *Neighbours* and *Home and Away* five days a week instead of doing homework) loved the script for *The Boys Are Back*.

“I cried,” she says. “But I liked that it wasn’t too sentimental. It could really go down that path and it doesn’t, I don’t think. So I liked having a good weep but without feeling manipulated into it. I loved it.”

Julia Blake, who plays Katy’s mother Barbara says Fraser is “absolutely scrumptious”. She said, “You couldn’t help but bond with Laura because she is such a delightful, unpretentious, beautiful girl. And I was quite flattered, physically, to be picked as her mother!”

CASTING BARBARA, Joe’s mother-in-law, Katy’s mother

“I don’t think Barbara would have picked someone like Joe... Her daughter was so marvelous, such a wonderful girl– everyone’s idea of the perfect daughter – that this is not what she would have chosen for her daughter at all,” says Julia Blake, with no uncertainty as to the opinions of Barbara.

Blake was thrilled to win the important role of Barbara, Joe’s disapproving mother-in-law, and to be working with Scott Hicks.

“When I met him, I suppose because of the kind of person he is, it was easy to open up to him and he is very spontaneous, he is very open himself. And I mean it’s the track record of his work as well but I think he’s fantastic and I feel very, very comfortable.”

LOCATION - FINDING PARADISE

Although the memoir on which the film was based was set in New Zealand, the film was set up as a UK Australian co-production and the shoot was scheduled to take place primarily in Australia. As such, Hicks and the producers were scouting Australian locations with something of the feel of a “paradise”.

Hicks says, “Joe’s character abandons his first family and follows another woman to literally the other end of the earth, so where they chose to live had to be somewhere extraordinary.”

During preproduction, locations were being considered in Queensland, but when the South Australian Government offered close to AUD \$1million as incentive to shoot the film in South Australia, the focus shifted.

The opportunity to be based in SA while working on *The Boys Are Back* came as a “wonderful surprise” for Hicks, who has spent the majority of his life based in South Australia and usually post produces his films “whether they are studio pictures or whatever” in his home town of Adelaide.

Hicks’ acclaimed feature *Shine* was primarily filmed in South Australia, and with *The Boys Are Back*, Scott was returning to direct after over a decade of shooting abroad.

“It is wonderful actually working from home again, I have not done that for 10 or 12 years now. There is a real sense of being at home. It has brought, for me, a much calmer element to the process of preparation and then ultimately shooting as well,” Hicks said.

By shooting back in Australia Hicks took the opportunity to work with crew and HODs (heads of department) with whom he had no prior experience.

“I wasn’t quite sure how adaptable I’d be to coming back to work in this environment but I found this crew and the creative people: Greig Fraser (DOP) with Melinda Doring (production designer), Emily Seresin (costume designer) and the editor I am working with, Scott Gray – these are people who are so talented and so enthusiastic and so full of energy and enthusiasm for what they’re doing that it re-energizes me and I am thoroughly enjoying that.”

MYPONGA: HILLS, GULLYS, and OCEAN

Hicks says, “One of the things I found appealing about the story is that there was a real sense of contrast between life in Australia and life in England. I have real experience of that myself, I came to Australia when I was the age of the character Harry from England and from a boarding school in England so I was very conscious of that and conscious of what the elements were that would strike somebody when they first arrived in this country.”

Scott worked with the location scouts trying to find the perfect combination of elements – the perfect house with the perfect landscape - and as always, he says, could find one but not necessarily the other at the same time. “Until we found this gully,” he says.

“I was so captivated by the ancient red gum trees, the rounded hills of Myponga Beach and Willunga and also the vales of McLaren Vale, the vineyards. The Fleurieu Peninsula is a place that is very dear to my heart and I felt that there was some real magic here in this valley.”

Scott was confident that production designer Melinda Doring would imbue the house with idyllic characteristics, and that the result would be a perfect combination of landscape and house.

THE HOUSE

“I love it. It’s idyllic, isn’t it? It’s pretty much the perfect house!” Laura Fraser (Katy)

“The house is just incredible.” George MacKay (Harry)

“I am still not exhausted with the possibilities that the house has to offer.” Scott Hicks

“It has worked fantastically well.” Greg Brenman, Producer

“I want to move in! It’s better than my house!” Melinda Doring, Production Designer

Production Designer Melinda Doring reveled in the opportunity to develop the house. “It is like a character in the film - it’s where a lot of things happen and it’s been fantastic to be able to do that,” says Doring.

Art director Janie Parker worked side by side with Doring to create a stylish and desirable environment that typifies an easy-going Australian lifestyle.

Doring says her objective was to create “A uniquely Australian, relaxed summertime feel” and that she worked with a palette of colors taken from the surrounding landscape.

Galvanized iron and glass, among other building materials, were sourced from salvage yards and incorporated into the house. “We tried to use as much existing materials as we could just so that it helps with the authenticity of the look.”

Hicks requested a model version of the house during preproduction “so that he could get a lipstick camera in and actually work out if the house was going to give him the interesting angles that he wanted,” Doring explained.

“It’s a combination of Scott’s ideas, my ideas looking at research and then I had a set designer to work with me and we had a very short period of time to get the house together.”

It was an anxious time for producer Tim White when the work began on the house as the finance was not fully in place.

“It was something of a nightmare to actually go, “I’m pressing the green button now - get the carpenters in”. It would often take a journey back (to the house), to feel momentarily satisfied and excited by the prospect that this would one day be the magical element that we needed.”

And by all accounts, the house became that and more. The cast and crew spent five weeks at the hero location, in and around the house and garden. At the end of the shoot, when the set dressings were dispersed, many took the opportunity to purchase a memento to remind them of the time spent in this heavenly environment.

COSTUME DESIGN

Costume Designer Emily Seresin says her approach to dressing the cast was “to really collaborate and really draw people in to the conversation in terms of getting responses and work-shopping.”

She also takes ideas from day-to-day observations. “Artie wears his track-pants inside out at one stage, and that’s something I saw on my neighbors’ child... with the pockets just sort of flapping around looking ridiculous and he was completely oblivious to it.”

Seresin says that a pair of Target tracksuit pants and a singlet was a key Artie look.

“The reason that it jumped out at me is that the singlet looks like he might have owned it since he was two and I love that it only comes up just to the middle of his belly...it’s really soft and interesting but it’s very, very simple.”

Seresin says, “Scott has brought a lot of ideas and he’d come across a child that loved wearing these oversized shirts and the boots and he said that was the whole summer attire for this person.”

Seresin says it was “fun” dressing Clive. “He’s great, you know he was very much into working out what’s right for Joe.”

A lot of emphasis was put into copying one of Clive’s existing linen suits. “We wanted something that was going to crush that was going to be able to look pretty ragged, says Seresin.

The fabric was flown from Paris directly to a tailor in Sydney. “The tailors ended up with two days to make it. We had to be really grateful to them - they did us a huge favor.”

Seresin had worked with Emma Booth on *Clubland* and says “She looks terrific in basically everything so that’s always a wonderful thing because you can really play.”

An objective with Booth’s wardrobe was that she didn’t look too young. “She’s got very slender arms and legs. What we’ve had to do is keep her in jeans and long sleeves so we don’t see that, because it makes her look very girlish.”

For the Harry wardrobe, Seresin was dressing George MacKay to look like a British teenager, so she decided to dye many of the garments. “We really went out of our way to try and find colors that seemed somehow not Australian,” she explains

The result was a palette which was really different. “There are a lot of colors that I just don’t think you’d see here and vice versa. It’s nice to have that opportunity to try and make a statement about different worlds even though we’re so sort of joined up these days.”

SHOOTING THE FILM

Principal photography began on *The Boys Are Back* on September 29 2008 with director of photography Greig Fraser behind the camera.

The 34-year-old former stills photographer had quickly risen to acclaim through his work on short films and he had built a substantial reputation through his music videos and TVCs.

Fraser had recently worked with Tim White on the New Zealand film *Out of the Blue* in 2006, but had not worked with Scott Hicks prior to *The Boys Are Back*.

“There is a dance that you do with a cinematographer,” explains Hicks, “And the wonderful thing is when someone can get in tune with the way you’re thinking.”

Scott says that despite all the discussions in preproduction, the proof is always in the doing. Hicks says he will always know by “lunchtime on day one” if a relationship is going to work.

“And the minute I started working with Greig, the moment he started shooting, I knew this was going to be good because he completely found a way into my head and I felt I could absolutely trust his judgments and his input as well.”

Fraser says his first impression of the film was a feeling of freedom: “Freedom of style, freedom of imagery, freedom of lighting so that hopefully nothing feels overly lit or overly controlled,” he says.

“I thought it was a really, really lively film. I thought it had a lot of character and a lot of joy and sadness and humor and loss. I thought it was a kind of free-flowing film.”

Fraser adds that “When you have a six-year-old child running around unable to stand on marks and in the light then the visual style becomes obvious. You have to work to that. You can’t force a child to work to what you want to do, they force you to work to what they want to do.”

Fraser held a lot of enthusiasm for the casting choices and said that when Clive Owen steps in front of the camera, “Instantly you’ve got a frame that’s better than the frame that you had when he wasn’t there. He’s a great face, a character face.”

Fraser also cited Emma Booth as being exciting to photograph: “She’s amazing. Her face emanates light... which is a bonus for my job because it makes me look good if I photograph her well.”

Laura Fraser appears throughout the film as an apparition of Katy, who has died early in the story. Greig Fraser explains his approach to communicating that visually:

“We’re not making a ghost story and we’re not doing anything that makes her look like she’s otherworldly or in any way a ghost. We’re actually trying to be very simple with it. When we film her, we’ll film her in the reality of the space that she’s in with the lighting that she’s in so we’re not going to change that all.

“The only difference that there’ll be is that when Katy’s alive, the house is a lot brighter and a lot more lively and a lot more homely so therefore the lighting has to reflect that which means we have to have a brighter space, which with the help of the art department, will be cleaner and neater with flowers.”

Hicks’ creative approach of using reflections is made use of during the Katy sequences and can be seen throughout the film.

“So much of the image is about enriching the experience of what you are looking at. And a great deal of that either comes from looking through things – windows, doors, frames, obscurities, sometimes hiding elements of the frame using light, using shadow to obscure someone’s face as much as to reveal it – all those elements are part of the delight of trying to make a visual statement and reflections are a huge part of that.

“It’s like another world – a mirror on a wall is a window into another world which is behind you. And so you can tell the story with a lot of depth and a lot of visual intrigue by simply using the elements that you assemble. And when I talk to a designer I always say, ‘Where are my mirrors? Give me some mirrors.’”

JUST SAY YES!

Following the sad scenes of Katy dying, Joe decides to re-approach family life from a different angle. Moving away from an emphasis on mundane tasks, such as housework, Joe creates a note using fridge magnets that reads: “Just Say Yes”.

Owen explains that Joe “tries to keep a loose atmosphere around the place and give his little boy the freedom to drop everything and do crazy things.”

The crazy things involve: riding a bike through the house, hanging from a flying fox, dive-bombing into a spa bath and riding on the bonnet of a car... plus other shenanigans which kept the safety supervisor and stunt coordinators working hard on set.

These scenes are loose, energetic, unconventional... as is Nicholas, who was cast for his many characteristics including his rambunctious personality.

Clive Owen says, "With Nick we sort of gambled on a very unpredictable energy and it kind of puts everyone on their toes. Everybody. Scott, me, everybody. Because the heart of the film is trying to capture that unpredictability. You can't try to control that too much because that's kind of what the film should be."

Actor Alexandra Schepisi was contracted to work one-on-one with Nicholas throughout the shoot as his drama coach, to help with lines and talk through the scenes.

Schepisi says there was a genuine effort keep Nicholas removed from the process of the filmmaking and discourage him from having too much interaction with the crew and the equipment.

However, before long Nicholas picked up the vernacular of the set and decided he was going to be an AD. He happily and easily befriended each department and availed himself of the stills camera, headphones and any other equipment on offer and ran around shouting, "Check the gate."

Owen worked with Nicholas in most of his scenes and says, "It's interesting for someone like me to play so much opposite a kid because they really test you because the kid's not acting really."

"You have the raw, real thing coming back at you. And if you try and be too placed and too clever about it, you look very obviously like you're acting. So it was a very exciting challenge for me working with him."

Owen says he trusted Hicks implicitly in all his choices including the casting of Nicholas. "I felt that even though we were dealing with young Nicholas, who was very unpredictable, there was a very solid base to everything because I knew Scott was in charge."

Laura Fraser had her own interesting experience working with Nicholas, her onscreen son. "He came up to me the first time we met and he was like: 'Mommy, mommy, mommy' and I'm like 'Whoa, he's really method'."

When Scott was interviewed on set during the shoot he spoke with confidence and enthusiasm about his cast at work.

On Nicholas he said: "To take on a leading role in a big film like this, opposite an actor of the caliber of Clive Owen and with a cast as experienced as the one that we have so, you know, it has been a big challenge for him and every day he surprises me with something."

On Clive Owen: "He has a tremendous strength on screen, a great stillness about him that speaks of unexpressed emotions, often. He is enormously subtle in his expressiveness and that I find fascinating because when I'm working, although at times I have to watch the monitors because it's too tight to get in where the camera is, I usually like to watch actors from right under the lens or next to the lens as I like to see their eyes, which is what you really read on screen and with Clive, so much of that performance emanates from his eyes and the thought that radiates out of them so I find him really compelling to watch as an actor."

On Emma Booth: "To see her working with Clive where her immediacy and her spontaneity just seemed to mesh with his precision and that emotional subtlety that he has... it was actually very enjoyable to watch them working together and I like the feeling that exists between them as characters."

The producers were pleased with the way the film progressed throughout the shoot. Brenman said, "The combination of Scott and the wonderful work he's doing with the actors - the humor and the pathos he's bringing out - along side Greig Fraser our DOP, who is making it look absolutely wonderful, is that combination of talents that we are always looking for."

Young Nicholas McAnulty is also a fan of Scott Hicks. According to his mother Sharon, the six-year-old would like to continue his acting work, but is only prepared to audition for a film if Scott Hicks is directing.

FILMING IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Crikey! Although squawking Galahs interfered with sound, the house filled with flies and midges, and the safety supervisor was kept busy watching for snakes in the long grass... the locations beautifully lived up to their film potential.

The highlight for many was filming the opening scene, where Clive Owen is driving the picture vehicle along a beach.

Owen explains: "It's a scene where Artie, the young boy, is on the bonnet of the car and all the parents on the beach are getting very upset and it's just a strong, instant impact of the unpredictability of our relationship and the way we do things as this strange family."

Filming conditions for such a scene were perfect. It was a hot November day; the makeup department were busy applying sun block and trying stop sand from sticking to arms and faces. The ocean was so inviting that some of the crew chose a swim over a meal at lunchtime.

Owen recalls, "It was a beautiful beach and it was a sunny day and I don't think I've filmed in a place that is as beautiful as some of these South Australian locations and that was an especially beautiful beach."

Many of the visiting cast and filmmakers found the Australian lifestyle enviable. Laura Fraser was excited that while staying in the country, her toddler had learned to swim.

"I was nearly in tears when I saw her doing it because she couldn't swim a stroke 'til she came here and she's been swimming every day and that's just unreal," said Fraser.

Greg Brenman said, "We are out here as a family and I'm loving South Australia". He said it had the "feel of a wonderful sort of paradise that, with the birds you can hear, we certainly don't get in Britain."

Brenman said he'd had a fixed idea that Australia was either red outback or tropical Queensland. Yet instead he had found: "The rolling hills of South Australia and the

vineyards... this kind of wonderful place with the great Eucalyptus trees and gum trees around us.”

Brenman explains that this contrast between Australia and the UK was integral in the telling of the story.

“Joe had come to the other side of the world... to somewhere that was so unlike Britain, not only in terms of the countryside but in terms of the weather and the people, that go-getter attitude that people have.”

Filming wrapped the South Australia locations on schedule on November 28, 2008. The principal cast and crew packed their woollies and headed right into the midst of the UK winter for the final six-day shoot.

SHOOTING IN LONDON

The UK shoot began on December 13 2008 and covered scenes which play toward the end of the film when circumstances have driven Harry back to England. Joe decides to take Artie to England to find Harry and to bring him home to Australia.

The first two days of shooting took place on the train platforms at Paddington Station. The crew and equipment had been scaled down to resemble a guerilla unit and the camera rolled to capture the real trains as they came and went from the station.

The steel and stone surfaces of the station along with the opaque white skylights offered a cold, yet beautiful, monochromatic environment with ample glass and reflective surfaces to create stunning photography.

Scott Hicks and the producers were impressed by the London crew who, although new to the production, approached their work with the dedication of a crew who had been working throughout the shoot.

The second day of the shoot was less hectic and covered a scene where Harry says goodbye to his mother and joins Joe and Artie on a train headed for Heathrow.

Midway through this day, in an absolutely profound behind-the-scenes moment, Simon Carr arrived on set with his sons Hugo and Alexander, now grown up young men.

Carr explains the moment: “The boys looked into the eyes of the people who were representing them and found that to be a very peculiar experience. And Alexander looked at Nicholas, who is a striking personality, and took a bit of cheek from him, and then suddenly picked him up and turned him upside down”.

Hicks said that what was so astonishing is that “On some sort of psychological level they seemed to be completely connected. Alex grabbed Nicholas and they both just screamed in the most astonishing way while Hugo and George stood off to the side and were more reserved and very polite and well mannered and more English.”

Scott says, “I found that very interesting, that it should just happen because I didn’t cast them specifically knowing those sorts of details about the real people, they just

seemed appropriate to the characters as I saw them and we seemed to tune into something that was quite real.”

Hicks invited Simon and his boys to join him for lunch. It was a lively hour of conversation and questions about the film, the house, and how the events had unfolded in real life. Not surprisingly, Alexander had a knack for making everyone laugh. He inadvertently confessed to having a “thing” for Laura Fraser, and was then completely taken aback when told she was playing his screen mother.

The personalities gelled particularly well, and the impromptu meeting was a pleasure for all involved. Carr recalls: “We sort of just expected to be standing in the background and pointing and saying ‘Oh look, there’s Clive Owen’. But we were treated absolutely marvelously, I have to say, it was really nice. And to meet Scott was a revelation. I didn’t know people at his level of the film industry could be so nice.”

Other UK locations took the film to a pub in Beaconsfield, and to the historic boys’ school Charterhouse in Surrey for the final two days of shooting.

Hicks recalls shooting the rugby scene at Charterhouse: “It was a wonderfully sunny day. But it still felt wintry – the sun was very low in the sky, everybody’s breath is visible and all those wonderful things that just remind you that you are on the other side of the world.”

The Boys Are Back wrapped principal photography on December 19 2008.

POST PRODUCTION

Scott Hicks had not worked with editor Scott Gray before, but says, “Scott has very good instincts, he brings a very good eye to performance and other things that are very crucial to me.”

Hicks said he looked forward to each day “knowing the challenges that we’ve got, but knowing that we have a way of resolving them.”

The first assembly was completed in Adelaide, and Hicks was interviewed the day following the screening:

“It was terrific. It is often a very dispiriting thing to see the first cut of a film because you know it’s in there but it’s never totally apparent at first screening... But I found looking at that assembly yesterday was probably the best experience I’ve had of that because what happened that took me by surprise is that it actually caught me emotionally.”

“About half way through the film I suddenly realized that I was deeply into it. And that’s a very unusual experience when you are directing because you are so familiar with the material and the various stages of it that it can be quite hard to separate yourself from that knowledge and just be like a member of the audience. But I suddenly found yesterday that it caught me and I thought: Gosh I hope other people find the same experience.”

Post-production was moved to the UK for the completion sound mix, final cutting and

ADR.

MUSIC

During the edit Scott Hicks was introduced to the idea of working with the Icelandic band Sigur Rós for the music.

“Initially their songs were used as a temporary score, but it was working so perfectly that I decided I wanted to approach the band directly to see if we could license the music,” says Hicks.

“I was forewarned that they were extremely picky about what they would allow their music to be used for,” said Hicks who flew to Reykjavik to meet with the four-member band and show them the film.

“What really thrilled me was they simply loved the film. And Georg the base player said ‘there is an Icelandic word which I can’t translate which perfectly describes the experience of seeing this film’. I said, ‘well have a try’ he said ‘the word means you feel better for being alive having seen this film’, which I found was a profoundly moving thing to say.”

Hal Lindes, formerly of Dire Straits, is composing a significant part of the score.

“The relationship with Hal came through our music supervisor Ian Neil who had worked with a lot of frontline British directors.”

Scott explained to Neil the kind of music he was looking for - an acoustic based sound, probably guitar driven - to be the feel of the film. “Ian made several suggestions, one of whom was Hal Lindes.”

When Hicks heard samples of Lindes’ film work he says, “I thought it was the exact sort of tonality I was looking for.”

In addition to Sigur Rós and Hal Lindes, Scott has focused on a selection of Australian music from some classic artists, and also from emerging Australian grunge band “Mayfield”.

AUDIENCE

During the early preview days *The Boys Are Back* was enthusiastically received by test audiences with positive scores well above industry norms.

Brenman believes *The Boys Are Back* will have a long life “because it’s got universal themes and emotions. It is essentially about everything that we all have an experience of, which is being in a family, being in a functioning and at times dysfunctional family.”

Clive Owen said, “Ultimately, it’s a very moving story and I think that people - parents - will really relate to it “

The filmmakers are united in their curiosity to see how the audience will respond to the themes of the film, the representation of the mother/ father parenting techniques, the exploration of family life.

Scott Hicks explains: "It is not a high concept, big, heavily plotted film. It's a very intimate, personal story about people trying to reconnect with each another and about all the things which encompass life – love, loss, humor – all these ingredients which make up part of our everyday lives.

"The stuff of great drama, really, is to do with people's vulnerabilities and I just found Joe's story very touching - that he should be so traumatized by the sudden death of his wife as to really wake up emotionally and realize that he was failing in a lot of areas... that he had to pay attention or he wouldn't have a relationship with either of his sons.

"I think parents everywhere these days have those sorts of feelings. We all live such busy lives and everything seems more hectic than ever before – I'm still waiting for all that leisure we were promised in the 60s – well, hang on a minute, where is it?

"People's lives are frenetic and raising children is hugely time-consuming and attention-consuming... so that often gets sacrificed along the way. And that's a dilemma that so many people face: How do I balance my work with my life with my family? I think that's at the heart of this story."

ABOUT THE CAST

CLIVE OWEN (Joe Warr)

Clive Owen made a name for himself around the world in 2005 when he won a Golden Globe and picked up an Academy Award nomination for his role as Larry in Mike Nichols' *Closer*.

Owen's most recent leading roles include *The International* (2008) as an Interpol agent opposite Naomi Watts and Tony Gilroy's *Duplicity* (2009) in which he reunited with *Closer* star Julia Roberts.

The British born actor made his film debut in Beeban Kidron's *Vroom* in 1988. He starred in Stephen Poliakoff's *Close My Eyes* and as a reckless homosexual in corrupt pre-war Germany in Sean Mathias' *Bent*.

Owen's numerous British and American telefilms include *Chancer*, and *The Return of the Native* starring opposite Catherine Zeta-Jones. More recently, he starred as detective Ross Tanner in the BBC mini-movie, *Second Sight*, which aired on PBS's Mystery! Owen's other U.K. telefilm credits include Andrew Grieve's *Lorna Doone*, Andy Wilson's *An Evening with Gary Lineker*, Diarmuid Lawrence's *The Echo*, and David Blair's *Split Second*.

In 2001 and 2002 respectively, Owen starred in Joel Hershman's offbeat British comedy, *Greenfingers* and Robert Altman's star studded *Gosford Park*.

Owen's next films added to his already brilliant and diverse choice of film credits. He chose *Beyond Borders* (2003), a romantic war drama co-starring Angelina Jolie, Mike Hodges thriller, *I'll Sleep When I Am Dead* (2003), the action war drama, *King Arthur* (2004) and *Sin City* (2005), which co-starred Bruce Willis, Benicio Del Toro, Rosario Dawson and Jessica Alba.

Owen worked opposite Jennifer Aniston in *Derailed* (2005) and went on to star in Spike Lee's *Inside Man* (2006) opposite Denzel Washington and Jodie Foster and Alfonso Cuarón's action-packed film *Children of Men* (2006) opposite Julianne Moore and Michael Caine.

In 2007 Owen starred in Michael Davis's *Shoot Em Up*, and followed this performance with a period piece *Elizabeth: The Golden Age*, portraying Sir Walter Raleigh, the love interest opposite Cate Blanchett as Elizabeth.

Owen is also an acclaimed stage actor. His stage work includes portraying Romeo at the Young Vic, starring in Sean Mathias' staging of Noel Coward's *Design for Living*, and playing the lead role in Patrick Marber's original production of *Closer* at the Royal National Theater in 1997. In the fall of 2001, he starred in London in Lawrence Boswell's staging of Peter Nichols' *A Day in the Death of Joe Egg*.

Owen also starred as "the driver" in the series of BMW internet short features entitled "The Hire," each directed by John Frankenheimer, Ang Lee, Wong Kar-wai, Guy Ritchie, and Alejandro Gonzalez Inarritu.

EMMA BOOTH (Laura)

Emma Booth is an Australian model-turned-actress. Hailing from Perth in Western Australia, the former teen model and TV star achieved international stardom in 2007 with a lead role in the film *Clubland* ((USA Title: *Introducing the Dwrights*).

Frequently referred to as the "next big thing" from Australia, Booth was offered numerous roles following the screening of *Clubland* at the Sundance Film Festival including *Town Creek* (2009) directed by Joel Schumacher.

In the soon to be released *Hippie Hippie Shake* Booth plays Germaine Greer opposite Cillian Murphy and Sienna Miller, an account of the Schoolkids OZ obscenity trials in Great Britain.

Booth has recently completed production in the UK on *Pelican Blood* directed by Karl Golden for Icon Entertainment International.

LAURA FRASER (Katy)

Laura Fraser was born in 1976 and brought up in Glasgow. Following high school Fraser took a drama foundation course at Glasgow's Langside College, and then went to the prestigious Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama.

During her time there, she won a supporting role in Gillies MacKinnon's film *Small Faces*. She landed the starring female role in the BBC adaptation of Neil Gaiman's *Neverwhere* (1996) mini series, and then moved to several film roles including *Cousin Bettte* and *Man in the Iron Mask* as well as a lead in the short film *Paris Brixton*.

Fraser appeared as a supporting character in TV dramas, such as *The Investigator* and *The Tribe*. Her role in the movie *Left Luggage* led to her getting one of the main character roles in the black comedy *Divorcing Jack* (1998).

Her highest profile performance as the lead female in the comedy *Virtual Sexuality* in 1999. From there she has worked on numerous films including *The Match*, *Whatever Happened to Harold Smith? Kevin & Perry Go Large*, *A Knight's Tale*, *Vanilla Sky*, *That Old One*, *Devil's Gate*, *Coney Island Baby*, *Den of Lions*, *16 Years of Alcohol*, *Iron Jawed Angels*, *Land of the Blind*, *The Flying Scotsman*, *The Passion*.

Numerous television roles include six episodes of *Conviction*, three episodes of *Casanova*, *Reichenbach Falls*, *Talk to Me* and as Florence Nightingale in the television drama *Florence Nightingale*.

In 2009 Fraser will be seen in the lead role of the UK film *Cuckoo* with Richard E Grant.

GEORGE MacKAY (Harry)

George MacKay was born in London in 1992. Aged five he staged *Peter and the Wolf*, casting his friends in various roles, and himself in the lead role of 'The Wolf'.

In 2002 George was spotted at his school by an acting scout, who asked the then ten-year-old if he would like to audition for a role in *Peter Pan*. He attended a workshop, quickly landing the part of one of the Lost Boys, Curly, in what was to be his big break.

Soon after, he had small roles in an episode of *Rose and Maloney* and television drama *Footprints in the Snow*.

In 2005 aged thirteen, MacKay won the role of Riccio in *The Thief Lord*, the film adaptation of Cornelia Funke's best selling children's novel. Later in the same year, he also was cast in the lead role of *Johnny and the Bomb*, a BBC drama adapted from Terry Pratchett's novel of the same name.

NICHOLAS McANULTY (Artie)

Nicholas McAnulty was born in Sydney in 2002 and was two and a half when he began acting workshops at the highly regarded NIDA (National Institute of Dramatic Art). Initially his classes involved creative play, but by the time he was four, Nicholas was learning acting skills.

Aged four and a half Nicholas began classes with Tap Pups, a junior division of Tap Dogs, and has toured with the dance troupe.

Nicholas has auditioned for acting and commercial work since he was four, but his first professional engagement was at the age of six when he was selected from 1000 boys for the role of 'Artie' opposite Clive Owen in the Scott Hicks' feature *The Boys Are Back*.

Nicholas also studies drumming and martial arts and enjoys the beach and swimming in his spare time.

ABOUT THE FILMMAKERS

SCOTT HICKS, Director

Scott Hicks is an internationally acclaimed film director, producer and screenwriter who has been nominated for and won many prestigious awards for his work.

His 1996 film *Shine* was an international box office sensation and was nominated for seven Academy Awards, including Best Director and Best Original Screenplay, with Geoffrey Rush winning Best Actor. *Shine* also received BAFTA and AFI awards and nominations from the Golden Globes, the Directors Guild of America and the Writers Guild of America.

Hicks received an Emmy in 1994 for his direction of the documentary series *Submarines: Sharks of Steel*, and his film *Sebastian and the Sparrow* (1988) won awards at three international film festivals for children.

Hicks' first studio film *Snow Falling on Cedars* (1999) starring Ethan Hawke, Max von Sydow and Sam Shepard, was also nominated for an Academy Award. This was followed in 2001 by the adaptation of Stephen King's novel *Hearts in Atlantis* starring Anthony Hopkins.

Hicks' latest Hollywood project *No Reservations* starring Catherine Zeta-Jones, grossed \$100 million world-wide, and was Village Roadshow's most profitable film for 2007.

Following this, Hicks embarked on a more personal project, shooting a feature length documentary about the iconic composer Philip Glass. *GLASS: a portrait of Philip in Twelve Parts* premiered at the 2007 Toronto International Festival, to great acclaim, and has since been released theatrically in the U.S. and at film festivals around the world.

Hicks has also enjoyed success in the world of American television commercials, one of which was inducted into the permanent collection of the Museum of Modern Art in New York.

Hicks is a member of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences. He lives with his wife and collaborator/producer Kerry Heysen in Adelaide, South Australia where they maintain their own Yacca Paddock Vineyard on the Fleurieu Peninsula.

Also an accomplished photographer, Hicks has had three exhibitions of his work, which can be viewed at www.scotthickspix.com.

GREG BRENMAN, Producer

Greg Brenman is the head of drama at Tiger Aspect Productions and co-chairman of Tiger Aspect Pictures.

Since creating the drama department at Tiger Aspect, Greg has overseen and/or originated a range of mainstream and award winning successes such as *Robin Hood* (three seasons) *Secret Diary Of A Call Girl* (two seasons) *Murphy's Law* (five seasons) *Recovery*, *Coming Down The Mountain*, *Hound of the Baskervilles*, *My Fragile Heart*, *Playing The Field* (five seasons) and *Fat Friends* (four seasons).

For the more critically orientated BBC2 and C4, he developed and produced *White Girl* (BAFTA winner 2008), *Murder (Births, Marriages and Deaths, Omagh, Low Winter Sun, Bodily Harm* and four seasons of the channel defining show *Teachers*.

Since Tiger Aspect Productions acquisition by IMG, Greg has begun developing a strong range of formats that can work as primetime UK/US co-productions.

Brenman is also co-chairman of Tiger Aspect Pictures through which he produced one of the UK's most successful films, *Billy Elliot*, winning over 50 awards and nominations worldwide including three BAFTAs, three Oscar Nominations and a Golden Globe nomination for Best Picture.

Greg's belief in nurturing and supporting talent means he continues to have a strong relationship with UK's leading writers and directors including Paul Greengrass, Stephen Daldry, Joe Wright, Beeban Kidron, Abi Morgan, Peter Bowker, Tony Marchant, Lucy Prebble Simon Donald and Allan Cubitt.

TIM WHITE, Producer

Tim White has been producing feature films since graduating from the University of Canterbury in New Zealand in the late 1970s.

Early credits include *Malcolm* (Australian Film Institute's Best Film in 1986); *Spotswood* starring Anthony Hopkins, Russell Crowe and Toni Collette; *Death in Brunswick* starring Sam Neill; *Map of the Human Heart* (produced with Tim Bevan/Working Title Films); *Angel Baby* (AFI Best Film in 1995) and Gillian Armstrong's *Oscar & Lucinda* starring Ralph Fiennes and Cate Blanchett in her first major role.

During the mid-90s White also worked as a production executive for Miramax Films, with producer credits on *Robinson Crusoe* starring Pierce Brosnan and *Cosi* starring Toni Collette and Rachel Griffiths.

In 1997 White became chief executive of Fox Icon, a joint venture between Twentieth Century Fox and Mel Gibson's company Icon Entertainment. During this period he was executive producer on Gregor Jordan's *Two Hands* (AFI Best Film 1999) starring Heath Ledger and Bryan Brown. White also produced *The Three Stooges* starring Michael Chiklis.

From 2000-2004 White headed up Working Title Australia, a production and development company linked to UK's powerhouse production company Working Title Films. Under this banner White produced *Gettin' Square* starring David Wenham and executive produced Gregor Jordan's *Ned Kelly*, starring Heath Ledger, Orlando Bloom, Geoffrey Rush and Naomi Watts.

In 2004 White set up a his independent production company Southern Light Films to produce Toa Fraser's debut feature *No.2* starring veteran US actress Ruby Dee. The film premiered at Sundance where it won the World Cinema Audience Prize.

In 2006 White produced Robert Sarkies' *Out of the Blue*, starring Karl Urban. The film premiered at the Toronto Film Festival and was released by The Weinstein Company in North America.

Most recently Tim executive produced *Laundry Warrior*, a Korean/US production that filmed in New Zealand and starred Kate Bosworth, Jang Dong Gun, Geoffrey Rush and Danny Huston.

PETER BENNETT-JONES, Executive Producer

Peter Bennett-Jones is founder and chairman of the Tiger Aspect Group and of PBJ Management. Prior to setting these companies up in 1988, he was managing director of Corporate Communications Consultants, TalkBack Productions and a director of theatrical producers Pola Jones Associates.

Tiger Aspect (an IMG Company) is one of the UK's leading television and film production companies, producing comedy, drama, entertainment, animation, adventure, wildlife and factual programming. Award winning credits include *Mr Bean*, *The Catherine Tate Show*, *The Vicar of Dibley*, *Murphy's Law*, *Robin Hood*, *Omagh*, *Charlie and Lola*, *Howard Goodall*, *Benidorm*, *Ross Kemp in Afghanistan*, the film *Billy Elliot* and the musical *Our House*.

PBJ Management represents the cream of UK comedic talent including Rowan Atkinson, Armando Iannucci, Lenny Henry, Eddie Izzard, Ross Noble, Harry Enfield, The Mighty Boosh, Dylan Moran, Barry Humphries, Chris Morris and Dom Joly.

Sister company KBJ Management represents leading television presenters.

Peter is also co-chair of the recently formed United Agents, the UK's largest talent agency.

Peter is Chair of Trustees of Comic Relief and Sport Relief and is a council member of RADA.

ALLAN CUBITT, Writer

Cubitt is well-known for his adaptations, including *Anna Karenina*, for which he also had an executive producer credit, *The Hound of Baskervilles* and now the feature film *The Boys are Back*, directed by double Academy Award nominee Scott Hicks.

Allan has spent the majority of his career writing for television. His adaptation of *Prime Suspect* advanced actress Helen Mirren to international stardom and won a BAFTA TV Award for Best Drama Serial.

GREIG FRASER, Director of Photography

Greig began his career as a stills photographer, where he worked with director Garth Davis on his award winning documentary P.I.N.S. He then worked with Exit Films in

Melbourne, where he was DoP on both national and international TVCs, music film clips and experimental photography.

In 2002 Greig shot Glendyn Ivin's acclaimed short film *Crackerbag*, which won the Palm D'or in the 2003 Cannes Film Festival, 2003 AFI short film award and St Kilda Festival short film award.

In 2005 Fraser won an Australian Film Industry award for Best Cinematography in a non-feature with *Jewboy*. In 2006 he shot critically acclaimed feature film *Caterpillar Wish* and also *Out of the Blue*, earning him a New Zealand Film and TV Award for Achievement in Cinematography.

In 2009, he has worked on three projects – Glendyn Ivin's *Last Ride*, starring Hugo Weaving, *Bright Star*, directed by Jane Campion and *The Boys are Back*.

MELINDA DORING, Production Designer

Melinda Doring studied Fine Arts at East Sydney Technical College and completed an MA at the Australian Film Television and Radio School. She has since worked in both Costume and Production Design in both Film and Television.

Melinda has worked for Catherine Martin on *Moulin Rouge* and also as her assistant designer on the Bazmark Live themes park. She won an AFI award for Best Production Design for internationally acclaimed film *Somersault* and most recently for *The Home Song Stories*. She was also nominated for two AFI awards in costume design for *Suburban Mayhem* and *Little Fish*.

Most recently, Doring has worked on the animated feature film *\$9.99*, written by Etgar Keret and starring Geoffrey Rush (voice).

EMILY SERESIN, Costume Designer

Emily began her career working in the UK as an assistant costume designer. She continued her career in Australia as costume designer, working with directors such as John Curran, Gregor Jordan and Samantha Lang. In 1993 she served as costume supervisor on Stephan Elliot's internationally acclaimed film *Priscilla Queen of the Desert*. In 1999 she was nominated for two AFI Awards in best costume design for *Praise*, and *Two Hands*.

In 2003, Seresin was again nominated for *The Night We Called It A Day*. In 2004 she won the AFI Award in Best Costume Design for *Somersault* and was again nominated in 2007 for *Clubland*. She has since worked on AFI and Logie winning series *Love my Way*.

SCOTT GRAY, Editor

Scott Gray studied theatrical lighting design at the Queensland University of Technology and graduated with a Diploma of Arts in 1987.

Early in the 1990s he joined post-production house Guillotine as assistant editor during which time he edited several short films including three Dendy Award winning films: *The Existentialist Cowboy's Last Stand*, *Pentuphouse* and *Flowergirl*.

In 1996 he won an MTV Award for best editing for the music video to Alanis Morissette's song *Ironic*.

In 2004, he won an AFI Award in Best Editing for *Somersault*, and he was again nominated in 2007 for *Clubland*.