

Hopscotch

**PRODUCTION NOTES**

**MICHAEL CAINE**

**Is Anybody There?**

Bill Milner Anne-Marie Duff David Morrissey  
Leslie Phillips Rosemary Harris

Directed By John Crowley

Release date: June 4, 2009  
Running time: 94 minutes  
Rated: TBC

For more information contact Jillian Heggie at Hopscotch Films on:  
02) 8303 3800 or email: [jillian@hopscotchfilms.com.au](mailto:jillian@hopscotchfilms.com.au)

Hopscotch

Hopscotch Films  
Suite 1, 28-30 Queen Street  
Chippendale, NSW 2008 Australia  
Phone +61 2 8303 3800  
Fax +61 2 9690 1433  
[www.hopscotchfilms.com.au](http://www.hopscotchfilms.com.au)

## THE CAST

Michael Caine  
Anne-Marie Duff  
David Morrissey  
Rosemary Harris  
Elizabeth Spriggs  
Bill Milner  
Leslie Phillips  
Peter Vaughan  
Linzey Cocker  
Michael Keogh  
Ralph Ineson  
Sylvia Syms  
Garrick Hagon  
Miles Jupp  
Thelma Barlow  
Ralph Riach  
Angie Inwards

CLARENCE  
MUM  
DAD  
ELSIE  
PRUDENCE  
EDWARD  
REG  
BOB  
TANYA  
PARAMEDIC  
MR. KELLY  
LILIAN  
DOUGLAS  
VICAR  
ENA  
CLIVE  
MAVIS

## THE FILMMAKERS

Directed by  
Screenwriter  
Producers

Executive Producers  
Production Designer  
Edited by  
Cinematography by  
Costume Designer  
Music by  
Co-Producer  
Line Producer  
Casting by  
Hair & Make-up

JOHN CROWLEY  
PETER HARNESS  
DAVID HEYMAN  
PETER SARAF  
MARC TURTLETAUB  
DAVID M. THOMPSON  
KAVE QUINN  
TREVOR WAITE  
ROB HARDY  
JANE PETRIE  
JOBY TALBOT  
ROSIE ALISON  
MARK HUBBARD  
FIONA WEIR  
FAE HAMMOND

## SHORT SYNOPSIS

Set in a sleepy British seaside town in the 1980s, *Is Anybody There?* tells the story of a morbid, bookish 10-year-old boy whose parents have turned their house into a retirement home. While his mother (Duff) struggles to keep the business afloat and his father (Morrissey) copes with the onset of a mid-life crisis, Edward (Milner) becomes increasingly obsessed with the afterlives of the home's elderly residents, following them around with a tape-recorder to capture the sound of the soul as it escapes the mortal coil... But Edward's macabre behaviour is cut short by the arrival of "The Amazing" Clarence (Michael Caine), an anarchic retired magician and grieving widower who is determined to age disgracefully. As an unlikely friendship blossoms between them, the old man comes to terms with his past, the child masters his fear of the future, and both learn to seize the day.

## LONG SYNOPSIS

It's 1987 and this is the story of Edward, a somewhat unusual ten year old boy growing up in Lark Hall, a retirement home run by his parents. Whilst his mother struggles to keep the family business afloat, and his father copes with the onset of a mid-life crisis, Edward is left to his own devices amongst the unlikely cast of characters who populate the home. There's Bob, a frantically twitching and shell-shocked World War One veteran; Ena, a kindly kleptomaniac convinced she's still a housemaid in the Royal household; Elsie with her prosthetic leg, and the very dapper Reg, an ageing philanderer who still fancies his chances as a ladies' man. But besides taking rides on the stair lift, Edward has little interest in the home or its frail, senile residents save for a somewhat morbid fascination with ghosts and the afterlife: he is secretly tape-recording the old people to see if he can capture on tape the sounds of their souls escaping as they die.

But Edward's lonely and unhealthy existence is about to be rudely interrupted by the latest recruit to the home, Clarence - a peppery retired magician with a liberating streak of anarchy. A grieving widower who is gradually sliding into senility, Clarence has been sent to Lark Hall by Social Services and arrives at the home chronically depressed. Fiercely skeptical about being thrown together with a random group of old people, Clarence is equally resistant to the questionable charms of a ten year old boy. Clarence and Edward's relationship gets off to a rocky start, with Edward resenting the interloper who has stolen his bedroom, and Clarence refusing to believe that he should be there at all.

Feeling ignored by his parents, and slightly fearful of the aging residents, Edward decides to step up his ghost hunt, setting off the fire alarm and locking himself into the home to set up ghost traps (with talcum powder on the floor to capture ghost prints). Neither Edward's Mum nor the Fire Department are pleased, and when his mother disciplines him in front of the residents shivering on the gravel drive, Edward decides to run away.

But just as he is making his escape, he notices fumes coming from Clarence's van. Curious, he opens the door to find a semi-conscious Clarence near death from carbon monoxide poisoning. Edward's intervention saves Clarence's life, and while he is recuperating in hospital, Edward explores his room, finding photographs of Clarence as a young magician, tracing his career and his relationship with his assistant - and wife - Annie. Edward is moved by this treasure trove of memories, and begins to realize that Clarence, like the other residents in the home, was once young like him. He begins to feel penitent about his behaviour.

Edward goes to visit Clarence in hospital, and starts to warm to this irascible old man. Meanwhile, Edward's father is increasingly preoccupied with the cheerful, attractive young nurse (Tanya) who is helping around the house. His parents are drifting apart.

But Edward begins to view life at Lark Hall in a different way as his friendship with Clarence develops. Soon enough Clarence is picking Edward up from school and they begin to form an unexpected friendship. Knowing Edward's ghost-hunting hobby, Clarence even tries to engage Edward's interest by staging a séance on the workbench in the cellar one night.

On the day of Edward's birthday, one of the residents, Lilian, suddenly drops dead. Worse, she dies at the exact moment that her daughter from Canada arrives for a visit. This understandably scuppers Edward's birthday plans as his parents have to relocate Lilian's body and calm her relatives. While his parents are with Lilian's daughter, Edward charges into her room with his tape recorder, desperate to trace any evidence of ghost activity. But this morbid instinct evaporates the moment he touches the cold body - the corpse exhales one final breath of air, terrifying Edward. To make matters worse, his mother comes in and catches him hiding in Lilian's room with his tape recorder, and is furious with him for being so disrespectful to the dead.

Distraught at his mother's anger, and believing that he's finally heard a ghost, Edward goes up onto the roof to console himself. His friend Clarence comes out to join him, and pulls out a few magic tricks to try and distract the boy. It seems to work and Clarence finally understands that if he's really to bring Edward out of his morbid fixation with death, he needs to give him something to focus on. So Clarence persuades him to forget his birthday debacle by giving a party for his school friends, at which he will perform a magic show.

In preparation for the big day the duo head to an old lock-up garage full to the rafters with Clarence's old magical regalia - sequined costumes, flags, trick apparatus, and a small guillotine. It is a neglected but very magical place. On their way home it is clear Clarence's age and incipient senility is catching up with him as he grows disorientated and crashes the van. Uninjured but shaken, the pair struggles to shift the van. Edward can tell his old friend is losing his bearings and shares his thoughts on reincarnation. Clarence suddenly loses his temper with him and breaks down, telling Edward how he ruined his marriage to Annie by cheating on her, so she divorced him. He has never even seen her grave.

When they get home things go from bad to worse. Edward heads up to his room to listen to his tape recording from Lilian's room only to find himself eavesdropping on a taped conversation in which his father declares his love for Tanya, the attractive 18 year old student who helps around the home. It's all on the tape and Edward's not really sure what to do about it.

Soon after, Edward has his bizarre birthday party - a group of eleven year olds playing musical statues in the main lounge at Lark Hall, surrounded by elderly residents. Clarence is all dressed up to do the magic show, but his star guillotine act turns into a disaster when - owing to his Alzheimer's - he accidentally cuts off old Bob's finger. Ambulances and paramedics arrive. Upset and traumatized, Edward has a showdown with his parents and plays the tape recording of his father and Tanya. All his fears are coming out now - his loneliness, the potential death of his friend, his distance from his parents. Worse, when his mother hears her husband's infidelity on the tape recording, there follows a serious rupture between his parents.

The next day Edward runs away with Clarence, determined to take his friend to visit his wife Annie's grave. Clarence by now is entering a twilight world of intermittent lucidity and Alzheimer's, and follows along with Edward. After a long journey by train and bus, they find the grave but Clarence is confused and cannot make sense of his wife's name on the gravestone. Defeated and demoralized, they are collected by Edward's parents who realize that they have neglected their son and need to reorder their family priorities.

During the car journey home, a minor miracle of reconciliation occurs, as Clarence wakes up and mistakes Mum for his dead wife, Annie. When he makes an emotional apology to her, and asks her forgiveness, Mum complies, and Clarence's buried regrets seem to ease away. The whole family drives on home feeling somehow touched and closer to one another.

From here starts a new and stronger relationship between them all. Edward's parents are giving it another go, with new efforts at courtship between them, and the atmosphere at home is decidedly more upbeat. And when Clarence finally and peacefully passes away, Edward finds the last tape recording of the two talking about a magic card trick, which Clarence has been teaching him and which he has finally learned.

*Is Anybody There?* tells the surprising, touching story of how an odd couple – a boy and an old man - help each other face the ordinary catastrophes which daily life brings.

## THE GENESIS OF *IS ANYBODY THERE?*

*Is Anybody There?* is an original script by a young British writer Peter Harness, who mined his own childhood in East Yorkshire for the script.

The project began in 2004 when Peter Harness came to meet Rosie Alison (the film's co-producer) at Heyday Films, after his Dennis Potter Award-winning script caught her eye. During the meeting it emerged that Harness had been raised in an old people's home run by his parents. Producer David Heyman and director Crowley immediately leapt at the notion of a boy living in a retirement home, so Peter Harness began excavating his somewhat unusual childhood to come up with a script which dramatised the unique world of Lark Hall.

John Crowley worked on the script development very closely with Peter Harness, and it took two years for the script to reach its final form. Harness drew from the elderly residents he had grown up with, but the creation of the anarchic retired magician Clarence B. Parkinson was entirely original.

Michael Caine was the first choice for the role of Clarence, and he responded at once to the script. But his filming commitments meant that production had to be delayed until the autumn of 2007.

The role of Edward was the other major casting challenge, but the remarkable young actor Bill Milner (who had already shown his talent in *SON OF RAMBOW*) quickly emerged as the ideal choice.

BBC Films were the first backers and were soon joined by Big Beach in financing the project. Big Beach's Marc Turteltaub and Peter Saraf also came on board as producers alongside David Heyman.

Production began in October 2007, and ran for nine weeks, at Elstree Studios and on location. The house which acted as Lark Hall was found at Chalfont St Giles near London, and the coastal locations were filmed in Kent, doubling for the East Yorkshire coast.

## ABOUT THE PRODUCTION

When producer David Heyman, told the premise of *Is Anybody There?* to director John Crowley, 2005 Tony® Award Best Director nominee for “The Pillowman”, Crowley was immediately intrigued. “Peter Harness, the screenwriter, mentioned that he grew up in a retirement home and was thinking of writing something based on that. I had been wanting to make a film through the eyes of a younger protagonist. It sounded like the just kind of thing I was looking for.”

“I’ve long wanted to work with John”, says Heyman. “He is an exceptional and exciting talent, and I was delighted that he immediately saw the potential in Peter’s story.” Eager to put together a project with both men, Heyman commissioned Harness to write a treatment outlining the idea. “He did and I loved it”, says Crowley. “There’s a sort of happy-sad quality and a slightly mordant dry wit. I thought it was quite truthful and unusual.”

Harness delivered a full screenplay, and after reading it, producer Peter Saraf and his partner Marc Turteltaub agreed to finance and produce the picture with Heyman and his Heyday Films production company. “Peter Harness’ screenplay is beautifully written,” says Saraf. “The central relationship between Clarence and Edward spoke very strongly to us. Every person in the movie is looking for some kind of connection with other people. The relationships mirror each other and the story is told in a very humorous, yet emotionally satisfying way.”

The film’s quirky humour and sometimes macabre subject matter drew the director to the material. “I’m very comfortable working with humour coming out of darkness,” he says. “It tends to turn up often in my work. I knew if we got the right actors, it would work effortlessly.”

The film reflects Crowley’s obvious empathy for Edward and his unusual fixation. “I think every kid goes through a phase where they are obsessed with the supernatural,” he says. “I went through that and I loved the idea of a kid in a retirement home with a tape recorder under the bed trying to capture a ghost.”

Producer Saraf is quick to praise Crowley’s skill at shaping the film’s narrative. “John’s background as a stage director informs everything he does,” says Saraf. “I think as a theatre director, he takes a cinematic approach to his stage work. Conversely, as a film director, he brings a keen sense of storytelling and a real attention to character from his work in the stage.”

Crowley’s theatre experience also benefited the casting process. To play the residents of the retirement home, the filmmakers were able to assemble a who’s who of veteran British actors. Rosemary Harris (Elsie, in the film), a Tony® Award winning and Oscar® nominated actress, is well known to younger audiences as May Parker in the *Spiderman* trilogy. Leslie Phillips (Reg), whose voice is familiar to *Harry Potter* fans as that of the Sorting Hat, has worked extensively with London’s Royal Shakespeare Company. Sylvia Syms has three BAFTA Award nominations and played the Queen Mother opposite Oscar winner Helen Mirren in Stephen Frears’ acclaimed biopic *The Queen*. In fact, it’s difficult to name an actor in the ensemble without a host of accolades and decades of work behind them.

“We were extremely fortunate that actors of the calibre of David Morrissey and Anne-Marie Duff, who play Edward’s Father and Mother, supported this film from the outset,” says

Heyman. “It was a joy to build up such a brilliant ensemble of veteran British acting talent alongside them, with Leslie Phillips, Rosemary Harris, Peter Vaughan, Sylvia Syms, Thelma Barlow, Ralph Riach and the late Elizabeth Spriggs playing the ageing residents of Lark Hall.”

“Working with such a remarkable ensemble in front of and behind the camera, John Crowley has made a fresh, original film,” Heyman continues. “It is at once hysterically funny and deeply affecting.”

Saraf credits Crowley’s ongoing relationships with actors for attracting such a distinguished cast. “In England, working on the stage is very much a part of any actor’s career,” he says. “It was surprisingly easy to get these legendary British actors who were thrilled to be working with John. We feel really fortunate that so many of them agreed to appear in the film.”

For Crowley, just being around actors is part of what makes his job enjoyable. “These actors were particularly fun for me; I loved watching them at work,” the director says. “You never get to cast this many great older actors in one project. A lot of them had worked together years and years ago. It was quite jolly and eccentric. There was a lot of reminiscing. They were a delightful bunch to work with.”

Finding the right actor to play Clarence was crucial, according to the director. The part required both gravitas and a sense of battered humanity. “We thought long and hard about who should play the part,” says Crowley. “Our casting director Fiona Weir suggested Michael, and the second she said it, we all realized that was a blindingly good idea.”

After reading the script and meeting with the director, Caine readily agreed to make the film, but only if it could be done around his already existing commitments. “The problem was he had to go away and do *The Dark Knight*, so we had to wait 8 or 9 months until he was available.”

All involved agreed Caine’s performance was well worth the wait. Heyman says, “We were blessed that Michael Caine responded with such enthusiasm to the central role of Clarence, and he has delivered one of his most memorable performances, sparking off Bill Milner’s very moving and truthful performance as Edward.”

It is hard for the filmmakers to imagine anyone else in the role after seeing Caine’s masterful, touching performance. “Michael is a legendary and beloved actor throughout the world for very good reason,” Saraf points out. “He’s a movie star and great actor. He always delivers what you want from Michael Caine. But in this film, even more than I’ve seen in the past, he brings a real emotional vulnerability to the part that is touching and beautiful.”

Saraf was proud to learn that filming *Is Anybody There?* was an especially memorable experience for Caine as well. “Michael was on a talk show right after we wrapped. He said it was the best filmmaking experience of his career—and he’s made over 100 movies!”

With Clarence cast, the filmmakers turned their attention to finding a young actor to play Edward. More than 75 boys auditioned for the role of Edward. Eventually, the filmmakers narrowed the field to two contenders. “It was between Bill and another boy who had no acting experience,” says Crowley. “The other kid was from the North of England, like the

character, which Bill isn't. But Bill was able to master the accent very quickly, which is really astounding."

Milner had attracted considerable attention for his touching and funny performance in the offbeat comedy, *Son of Rambow*. "He captured the right degree of humour, but also a melancholy," says Crowley. "Bill seems a bit of an old soul, and for the character of Edward we needed someone who was young, but infected with old age. He was perfect."

"Directing him is like working with an adult," Crowley adds. "His facility is exceptional. I found he was often way ahead of me in the process."

*Is Anybody There?* is only Milner's second film and the prospect of working with Michael Caine was understandably intimidating for the youngster. "He was nervous at first because of Michael's stature," says Crowley. "But Michael was brilliant with him. He was very gentle and taught him a great deal. It was wonderful to watch them working together."

Professional magician Scott Penrose was brought in to school the actors in the magic tricks they would perform in *Is Anybody There?* Milner picked up the tricks quickly, according to the director. "Bill was a natural. He's really gifted and he was practicing all the time. Penrose explained that by the time you're 17 or 18, your hand is developed and it's very hard to pick up a lot of magic tricks."

For Caine, who had no previous experience with sleight of hand, perfecting the card tricks proved more difficult. But that fit nicely with his onscreen persona, an itinerant performer who relied more on his patter than his skill as a magician. "The idea was never that Clarence was an A-list magician," Crowley points out. "It was more that he had spent a lot of time around magicians, but wasn't a really fine one himself."

Clarence and Edward are characters who meet at the opposite ends of life: a man trapped in the past and a boy unable to get started living. "Clarence helps teach Edward to engage with the world," says Crowley. "He needs to learn to about friendship and growing up and someone has to help him do it. His parents are too busy trying to run the nursing home. Meanwhile, Edward is trying to give Clarence something he has never had before: a chance to make peace with his mistakes. And, in one my favourite scenes, that happens as Clarence unwittingly makes contact with his late wife through Edward's mother."

Crowley and Saraf are both hopeful the film will resonate with audiences on several levels. "The bottom line is that I hope they are moved and that the emotional depth of the film comes through," says Crowley. "I also hope the humour comes across because it's actually a classic odd couple film. And I hope that they can appreciate the quality of the performances, particularly Michael's, which I think is an absolute gift."

## ABOUT THE CAST

**MICHAEL CAINE (Clarence)** is one of the film industry's most esteemed actors, with a career spanning over half a century and encompassing more than 100 films and myriad acting honours. A two-time Academy Award® winner, Caine won his first Oscar®, for Best Supporting Actor, for his work in Woody Allen's *Hannah and Her Sisters*. He also received Golden Globe and BAFTA award nominations for the role. He took home his second Best Supporting Actor Oscar for his performance in *The Cider House Rules*, also winning a SAG Award and earning Golden Globe and BAFTA nominations.

Caine has also earned four Oscar nominations for Best Actor, the first coming in 1966 for his performance in the title role in *Alfie*, which also brought him a Golden Globe nomination and a New York Film Critics Award. He received his second Oscar nod, as well as a Golden Globe nomination and an Evening Standard Award, for the part of Milo Tindle in 1972's *Sleuth*. Caine's role in *Educating Rita* earned him his third Oscar nomination as well as Golden Globe and BAFTA wins.

The actor's latest Oscar, Golden Globe and BAFTA award nominations (Best Actor) were for his work in 2002's *The Quiet American*, a role for which he also won a London Critics Circle Award. Caine previously won Golden Globe and London Critics Circle awards, as well as a BAFTA nomination, for Best Supporting Actor in *Little Voice* (1998).

Caine won another London Critics Circle Award for his performance in 2006's *The Prestige*, which reunited him with director Christopher Nolan following their collaboration on the 2005 blockbuster *Batman Begins*. He reprised his role as Alfred the butler to Christian Bale's Batman in 2008's *The Dark Knight*.

Caine's recent film work includes Gore Verbinski's *The Weather Man*, Alfonso Cuarón's *Children of Men* and the 2007 remake of *Sleuth*, in which he turned the tables on his 1972 role and played Milo's adversary, Andrew.

Caine was born Maurice Micklewhite in South London in 1933, the son of a fish market porter and a charwoman. His interest in acting began at an early age and, at 16, he left school for odd jobs with local film companies, hoping to be discovered. When he was 18, he was called to do his national service with the Queen's Royal Regiment and the Royal Fusiliers. Upon his discharge in 1953, Caine began pursuing his acting career, taking his stage name from Herman Wouk's novel The Caine Mutiny.

Starting out on the stage, Caine toured Britain in a variety of before landing his first major film role as Lieutenant Gonville Bromhead in *Zulu* (1964). The following year, he starred in the hit thriller *The Ipcress File*, earning his first BAFTA Award nomination for his portrayal of secret agent Harry Palmer.

In the 1970s and '80s alone, Caine starred in more than 40 films, including Robert Aldrich's *Too Late the Hero*; *X, Y and Zee*, opposite Elizabeth Taylor; John Huston's *The Man Who Would Be King*; *Harry and Walter Go to New York*; Richard Attenborough's *A Bridge Too Far*; the Neil Simon comedy *California Suite*; Brian De Palma's *Dressed to Kill*; John Huston's *Victory*; Sidney Lumet's *Deathtrap*; Stanley Donen's *Blame It on Rio*; John Frankenheimer's *The Holcroft Covenant*; Neil Jordan's *Mona Lisa*; and *Dirty Rotten Scoundrels*, for which he received a Golden Globe nomination.

On the small screen, Caine won a 1988 Golden Globe for Best Actor in a Miniseries or TV Movie for his starring role in "Jack the Ripper." He earned Emmy and Golden Globe nominations for the dual title role in the telefilm "Jekyll & Hyde" and again for his portrayal of

South African President S.W. de Klerk in the historical drama “Mandela and de Klerk.” He was also Emmy nominated for the docudrama “World War II: When Lions Roared.”

Also an author, Caine wrote an autobiography entitled What's it All About? as well as Acting on Film, a book based on a series of lectures he gave on BBC television.

In the 1992 Queen's Birthday Honours, Caine was awarded the CBE and eight years later received knighthood.

**BILL MILNER (Edward)** made his film debut in Garth Jennings' critically acclaimed *Son of Rambow* as the lead character, Will Proudfoot. The role earned him nominations for the Best Newcomer Award at the 2008 British Independent Film Awards and Young British Performance of the Year at the 2009 Critics Circle Awards. He has just finished shooting the role of Michael in the drama *Skellig*, directed by Annabel Jenkel and starring Tim Roth, John Simm and Kelly Macdonald.

In 2007, Milner was cast as Nicholas in the BBC short “Who Killed Mrs. De Ropp,” directed by Sam Hobkinson, and then in the role of Peter in “My Boy Jack” alongside Daniel Radcliffe, Kim Cattrall and David Haig, directed by Brian Kirk for Channel 4. His next project was the short film *Pop Art*, directed by Amanda Boyle, in which he played Toby. The film won the audience award at the 2008 Austin Film Festival.

**ANNE-MARIE DUFF (Mum)** is an actress whose body of first-class work extends from screen to stage. Her unforgettable portrayal of Margaret in Peter Mullan's *The Magdalene Sisters* helped the film win the Best Film award at the Venice Film Festival and the Critics Choice prize at the Toronto Film Festival. She worked alongside Helen Mirren and Christopher Plummer in the soon-to-be-released *The Last Station*, and is currently filming Sam Taylor Wood's *Nowhere Boy*, a drama about John Lennon's childhood co-starring Kristin Scott Thomas.

Duff took the National Theatre by storm in 2007 with her portrayal of Joan Of Arc in Marianne Elliott's revival of *Saint Joan*, for which she won The Best Actress award at the Evening Standard Theatre Awards, The South Bank Show Awards and The Critics Circle Awards. She was also nominated for an Ian Charleson Award for her Cordelia in Richard Eyre's *King Lear* at the National Theatre and an Olivier for Howard Davies' *Collected Stories* in the West End. Other notable theatre credits include Peter Gill's *Days of Wine and Roses* at the Donmar Warehouse and *War and Peace* at Shared Experience.

Duff has been nominated for three BAFTA TV Awards: in 2005 and 2006 for her memorable role as Fiona in the Channel 4 series *Shameless* and in 2007 for her remarkable portrayal of Elizabeth I in the miniseries *The Virgin Queen*. Other television credits include Dominic Savage's *Born Equal*, *Charles II* and *Dr. Zhivago*.

**DAVID MORRISSEY (Dad)** is considered one of the most versatile British actors of his generation, having performed in an eclectic range of productions for film, television and stage. Last year, he starred in *The Water Horse* and *The Other Boleyn Girl*. In 2009 he will be seen in “U be Dead,” a thriller for ITV1, and has appeared in Anand Tucker's Channel 4 film trilogy known as “Red Riding”, a dark and powerful series of interlinking films set in Yorkshire in the 1970s and 80s. He is currently filming Neil Marshall's *Centurion*, followed by Sam Taylor Wood's *Nowhere Boy*, which also stars Anne Marie Duff.

Morrissey left school at 16 to join the Everyman Youth Theatre and this decision proved to be pivotal in his career as it led to his first break, winning the lead role of Billy Rizley in Channel 4's series "One Summer" (1983). Morrissey then left Liverpool to study at RADA. He has since appeared in popular and critically acclaimed television dramas like "Our Mutual Friend," "Clocking Off," "Holding On" (RTS nomination), "State of Play," (BAFTA nomination), "The Deal" (RTS Award), "Blackpool," (Arena Award, Golden Globe Award nomination for the series), and most recently, "Sense and Sensibility" (as Colonel Brandon).

Morrissey's stage work has included a number of productions with the Royal Shakespeare Company and the National. Most recently, he received fantastic reviews for his performance in Neil LaBute's "In a Dark Dark House" at the Almeida Theatre.

Morrissey's accomplished television and stage performances brought him to the attention of the film world. He has played roles in a range of films including *Hilary and Jackie*, *Some Voices*, *Born Romantic*, *Captain Corelli's Mandolin*, *Derailed*, *Stoned* and *The Reaping*.

In addition to his acting career, Morrissey has founded his own production company, Tubedale Films. The company co-produced Patrice Leconte's *The Man on the Train* and has enabled him to branch out into directing: Morrissey directed the telefilms "Sweet Revenge" and "Passer-By." He has recently finished directing his first feature film, *Don't Worry about Me*.

**ELIZABETH SPRIGGS (Prudence)** began her career in the theatre as a regular member of the Royal Shakespeare Company from 1962 to 1976. In the film world, she received a BAFTA nomination for her role in *Sense and Sensibility*. Spriggs' television work includes "Shine On Harvey Moon" and the BBC dramatizations of "Martin Chuzzlewit" and "Middlemarch."

Sadly, she passed away during the postproduction of this film.

**LESLIE PHILLIPS (Reg)** is part of the quintessentially British comic establishment. He rose to fame in the 1950s and '60s, perhaps best known for his roles in the *Doctor* and *Carry On* films. Phillips has starred in numerous television series and most recently appeared alongside Peter O'Toole in *Venus*, for which he received a BAFTA nomination.

**PETER VAUGHAN (Bob)** has starred in numerous television shows, including the classic British comedy *Porridge*, the BBC adaptation of *Bleak House* and gained a Best Actor BAFTA nomination for his role in *Our Friends in the North*. He is also known for his parts in *Time Bandits*, *Brazil* and the TV Film adaptation of *Fatherland*.

**RALPH RIACH (Clive)** began acting later in life, enrolling at drama college in Glasgow at the age of 45. Since then he has worked in both film and television with performances in *Braveheart*, *The Governess* and the television series "Hamish Macbeth."

**ROSEMARY HARRIS (Elsie)** has been acting on the British and American stage for more than half a century, starring in shows such as Peter O'Toole's "Hamlet," "The Lion in Winter" and "War and Peace." She is an Academy Award® nominee for *Tom and Viv* and most recently starred in the *Spiderman* film series as "Aunt May" Parker.

**THELMA BARLOW (Ena)** began her acting career in the 1960s with the Bristol Old Vic Theatre Company. In 1971, she became part of the long-running ITV television series "Coronation Street" and remained with the show until 1997, starring in over 2000 episodes. She has since been featured in "Dinnerladies" and "Doctor Who" and made her film debut in 2005 with a role in *Mrs. Henderson Presents*.

**SYLVIA SYMS OBE (Lilian)** is a three times BAFTA nominated actress. She is best known for her work in the 1950s and 60s (such as *Ice Cold in Alex* and *Victim*), but has been very active in television, film and theatre since. In cinema, she recently featured in *The Queen* as Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother, whilst her television work includes roles in *Eastenders*, *Dalziel and Pascoe* and *Judge John Deed*.

**RALPH INESON (Mr. Kelly)** has appeared in several films including *First Knight*, *From Hell* and *Shooting Fish* but he is perhaps best known for his role as Chris Finch in the multi-award winning series *The Office*.

## ABOUT THE FILMMAKERS

**JOHN CROWLEY (Director)** made his name in theatre in his native Ireland before moving to London where he directed a string of acclaimed productions at the Donmar Warehouse. In 2005 he directed Martin McDonagh's "The Pillowman" at the National Theatre, to wide acclaim. When the production moved to Broadway (starring Billy Crudup and Jeff Goldblum), he was nominated for a Tony award. He has also gained critical acclaim in the film world since his first feature, *Intermission*, netted him a British Independent Film Award and an Irish Film and Television Award for Best Director. The film starred Colin Farrell and Cillian Murphy. Crowley won a BAFTA TV Award for his 2007 telefilm "Boy A," which was also nominated for Best Drama. The film, which starred Andrew Garfield and Peter Mullan, received a number of awards including four BAFTA wins. Crowley's 2005 film adaptation of Harold Pinter's *Celebration*, starring Colin Firth, James Fox and Michael Gambon, earned an Irish Film and Television Award nomination. He also directed "Come and Go" for television, based on the Samuel Beckett play.

**PETER HARNESS (Screenwriter)** was born in 1976 in the North of England. He spent his childhood living in the old people's home that his parents ran in his hometown, Hornsea. Harness began writing at an early age and his first play was produced when he was only 15. After leaving school, Harness studied English at Oxford University, where he graduated with a first class degree. At Oxford, he wrote, acted and directed several plays for the Oxford University Dramatic Society. He was also President of the Oxford Revue.

Harness' first movie script, *The Chocolate Billionaire* (Film4) was also his first professional commission, at the age of 24. He spent a couple of years writing plays, including "The Picture of Dorian Gray" and "Mongoose" (produced at the Edinburgh Festival and in London's West End), before winning the prestigious Dennis Potter Screenwriting Award. Since then, he's written extensively for film and television and his credits include the critically acclaimed series "City of Vice" (starring Ian McDiarmid and Iain Glen) and the telefilm "Rather You Than Me," a biopic of comedian Frankie Howerd that starred David Walliams and Rafe Spall.

In 2007, Harness was named one of *The Times* and *Screen International's* "Stars of Tomorrow."

**DAVID HEYMAN (Producer)** was educated in England and the United States. He began his career as a production runner on Milos Forman's *Ragtime* and David Lean's *A Passage to India*. Heyman went to Los Angeles in 1986 where he worked as an executive at Warner Bros. and then United Artists. While in the US he subsequently embarked on a career as an independent producer, making several films including Ernest Dickenson's *Juice* starring Tupac Shakur and Omar Epps, and the low budget classic *The Daytrippers*, which was directed by Greg Mottola and stars Liev Schreiber, Parker Posey, Hope Davis, Stanley Tucci and Campbell Scott. In 1997 Heyman returned to the UK and has since produced all five of the Harry Potter films as well as the Robert Carlyle/Guy Pearce film, *Ravenous*, (directed by Antonia Bird) and has executive produced *Taking Lives* starring Angelina Jolie and Ethan Hawke. Besides *Is Anybody There?*, other recent releases produced by David Heyman include the Will Smith starrer *I Am Legend* (directed by Francis Lawrence), *Yes Man* (directed by Peyton Reed, starring Jim Carrey) and *The Boy In The Striped Pyjamas* (directed by Mark Herman). This year also sees the release of *Harry Potter and the Half Blood Prince* (directed by David Yates). Heyman won ShoWest's Producer of the Year

Award in 2003, becoming the first British producer ever to have been given this accolade.

**PETER SARAF (Producer)** co-founded Big Beach with Marc Turtletaub in 2004. Since the company's founding, Saraf has produced Jonathan Dayton and Valerie Faris' *Little Miss Sunshine*, Liev Schreiber's adaptation of a Jonathan Safran Foer novel *Everything is Illuminated*, Laurie Collier's *Sherrybaby* and Matt Mulhern's *Duane Hopwood*. He executive produced Ramin Bahrani's *Chop Shop*. Upcoming films include Christine Jeffs' *Sunshine Cleaning*, starring Amy Adams and Emily Blunt, and Sam Mendes' *Away We Go*, starring Maggie Gyllenhaal and John Krasinski.

Before Big Beach, Saraf was an independent producer and long-time partner of director Jonathan Demme and Edward Saxon at the production company Clinica Estetico. His credits include the multiple award-winning *Ulee's Gold*, directed by Victor Nunez and starring Peter Fonda (Golden Globe winner for Best Actor, Academy Award nominee); *The Truth About Charlie*, directed by Jonathan Demme and starring Mark Wahlberg, Thandie Newton and Tim Robbins; and the critically acclaimed *Adaptation*, directed by Spike Jonze, written by Charlie Kaufman and starring Nicolas Cage, Meryl Streep and Chris Cooper.

Saraf has also produced a range of successful documentaries, including Demme's *The Agronomist*, which won the IFP Gotham Award for "Best Documentary," the Academy Award-nominated *Mandela: Son of a Nation* and *One Foot on a Banana Peel, the Other Foot in the Grave*, a portrait of the AIDS crisis.

**MARC TURTLETAUB (Producer)** has been a producer for eight years through two production companies. He created Deep River Productions in 2000 with David Friendly and in 2004 founded Big Beach with Peter Saraf, to produce and finance independent films. Turtletaub has served as a producer on all of the latter company's films, including the Academy Award-winning *Little Miss Sunshine*, directed by Jonathan Dayton and Valerie Faris and starring Greg Kinnear, Toni Collette, Steve Carell, Alan Arkin (an Academy Award winner for this role), Paul Dano and Abigail Breslin (an Academy Award nominee).

Turtletaub was also a producer on Liev Schreiber's *Everything is Illuminated*, adapted from the best-selling novel by Jonathan Safran Foer and starring Elijah Wood; Matt Mulhern's *Duane Hopwood*, starring David Schwimmer and Janeane Garofolo, which debuted at the 2005 Sundance Film Festival; Laurie Collyer's *Sherrybaby*, starring Maggie Gyllenhaal, released in 2006 by IFC; and Ramin Bahrani's acclaimed *Chop Shop*, which premiered at the 2007 Cannes Film Festival.

He also produced two upcoming films: Christine Jeffs' *Sunshine Cleaning*, starring Amy Adams and Emily Blunt, and Sam Mendes' *Away We Go*, starring Gyllenhaal and John Krasinski.

**ROSIE ALISON (Co-Producer)** was a documentary producer and director for 10 years, working on a wide range of television films that focused on writers, dancers, actors and playwrights. Her credits include "The South Bank Show," "Omnibus," "Grand Designs" and "The Lipstick Years."

In 2001, she made the switch to the film industry and joined David Heyman's production company, Heyday Films. She is Head of Development at Heyday's U.K. office and was a co-producer on Heyday's drama *The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas*, written and directed by Mark Herman.

**ROB HARDY (Director of Photography)** emerged from the U.K.'s Sheffield film and music scene. His first short film as director and DP was *Pufferfish*, which won a BAFTA Award nomination. In addition to being a prolific lenser for commercials, Hardy has shot four features, including the horror film *Jelly Dolly*, which won a special award in Berlin in 2004. Recent credits include *Dogging: A Love Story*, *Exhibit A*, *Nineteen Seventy-Four* and John Crowley's highly acclaimed telefilm "Boy A," starring Peter Mullan, for which Hardy won a BAFTA.

**FIONA WEIR (Casting Director)** served as casting director on a number of prominent films of recent years, including *Master and Commander*, *Enduring Love*, *Love Actually*, *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*, *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix* and the forthcoming *Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince*. She was also nominated for an Emmy in 2006 for Outstanding Casting on the telefilm "The Girl in the Café."

Weir recently completed casting for Richard Curtis' *The Boat that Rocked*, starring Philip Seymour Hoffman, and Roman Polanski's *The Ghost*, which features an all-star ensemble including Ewan McGregor, Pierce Brosnan, Olivia Williams and Kim Cattrall. She is currently working on the final two Harry Potter films and Clint Eastwood's *The Human Factor*.

**KAVE QUINN (Production Designer)** began her career in the costume department but has been working as a production designer for over 15 years now. A frequent collaborator with director Danny Boyle, her credits include *Shallow Grave*, *Trainspotting* and *A Life Less Ordinary*. More recently, she worked on *Layer Cake*, starring Daniel Craig; the drama *Incendary*, starring Michelle Williams and Ewan McGregor; and the forthcoming *Frequently Asked Questions About Time Travel*, starring Ana Faris. She is currently in production on the thriller *Harry Brown*, starring Emily Mortimer and Michael Caine.

**TREVOR WAITE (Editor)** has cut a wide range of feature films and television dramas. His feature credits include *Jude*, *24 Hour Party People* and *Welcome to Sarajevo*, all directed by Michael Winterbottom, and *Beyond the Sea*, directed by Kevin Spacey. Small screen credits include the award-winning BBC drama "Hawking," "Einstein and Eddington" and "Prime Suspect 7: The Final Act," for which Waite received a BAFTA Award nomination and won an ACE Award. His latest film is Anand Tucker's *Nineteen Eighty-Three*, starring Sean Bean and Mark Addy.

**JANE PETRIE (Costume Designer)** has a wealth of feature film experience in the wardrobe department, working on *Notting Hill*, *Elizabeth* and *Star Wars Episode 1: The Phantom Menace*. Her credits as assistant costume designer include *Captain Corelli's Mandolin* and *The Constant Gardener*. More recently, she was the Costume Designer on *An American Haunting* and *28 Weeks Later*.

**JOBY TALBOT (Composer)** In 2000, Joby's score to the primetime comedy *The League of Gentlemen* won the Royal Television Society Award for Best Title Music and a series of high profile commissions followed from BBC television including *Chambers*, *Grass*, *Wild West* and *Gil Mayo*. Joby went on to score *The League of Gentlemen's Apocalypse* for the big screen, and the same year, 2005, he wrote the music for the cinema adaptation of *The Hitch*

*Hikers Guide to the Galaxy*. Since then, Joby has scored *Sixty Six* for Working Title, *Arctic Tale* and *Penelope* for Paramount, and *Son of Rambow*. As well as *Is Anybody There?*, Joby has recently scored *Angus, Thongs And Perfect Snogging* and *Franklyn*. In 2006, Joby produced and arranged an album of tracks by The White Stripes. Entitled Aluminium, the album received critical acclaim and was the basis of a new choreography performed by The Royal Ballet at London's Royal Opera House, Covent Garden. As a classical composer, Joby has worked with all the major UK orchestras and has been commissioned by the BBC Proms Festival. An album of music written as Classic FM's first Composer In Residence, entitled *Once Around The Sun* was released in 2005.

**LIZ GALLACHER (Music Supervisor)** has established herself as the one of the most experienced and creatively diverse music supervisors in film and television today. Her work on projects such as *The Full Monty* (winner of a Brit Award for Best Soundtrack) and *Resident Evil* (Grammy nomination for Best Metal Performance) has garnered praise from producers, directors and the press. *24 Hour Party People* was short listed for Film Music at 2003's NME Awards. Liz's film credits also include the Oscar Award winning documentary *One Day in September*, Golden Globe winner *The Gathering Storm* and feature films such as *Layer Cake*, *Calendar Girls* and *Bend It Like Beckham*. Recent film credits include *Stardust*, *The Damned Utd.*, *Is Anybody There?* and the Sundance 2009 award winning documentaries, *We Live In Public* (Grand Jury Prize: US Documentary) and *The Cove* (Audience Award: US Documentary). Liz has worked with such acclaimed directors as Michael Winterbottom, Atom Egoyan, Gurinder Chadha, Matthew Vaughn and Harmony Korine.

**FAE HAMMOND (Hair & Make-up)** is an award-winning Hair & Make-up artist, whose credits include *Elizabeth I* with Helen Mirren, for which she won an Emmy and received a BAFTA nomination, and *Doctor Zhivago*. Other credits include *Pride and Prejudice*, for which she received another BAFTA nomination, *Snatch*, *Lost in Space* and *Miss Pettigrew Lives For a Day*.

**MARK HUBBARD (Line Producer)** After teaching for six years at the post-graduate film course of the Royal College of Art Film School, Mark Hubbard moved into film production, working as a Line Producer with directors such as Stephen Poliakoff (*The Lost Prince*), Asif Kapadia (*The Warrior*) and Pawel Pawlikowski (*The Restraint of Beasts*) He is Co-Producer on the recent *St. Trinian's*.