

**SCREEN YORKSHIRE, SAMPSONIC MEDIA and CMI present in association with LIPSYNC**

**an ORIGIN PICTURES production**

# **HOPE GAP**

**Written and Directed by WILLIAM NICHOLSON**

**Produced by DAVID M. THOMPSON & SARADA McDERMOTT**

**Starring**

**ANNETTE BENING**

**BILL NIGHY**

**JOSH O'CONNOR**

## **SHORT SYNOPSIS**

Grace (Annette Bening) and Edward (Bill Nighy), married for 29 years, live in a small seaside town near a cove under the cliffs called Hope Gap. When their son Jamie (Josh O'Connor) comes to visit for the weekend, Edward informs him that he plans to leave Grace, that same day.

HOPE GAP tracks the unravelling of three lives, through stages of shock, disbelief and anger, to a resolution of sorts.

There are no villains; only good people who've lived too long with old mistakes and are now paying the price. There are no easy answers, and no simple paths to redemption. A husband, a wife, a son are forced to face hard truths, and out of those truths to fashion new lives. In the end, HOPE GAP is a story of survival.

## **LONG SYNOPSIS**

Grace (Annette Bening) and Edward (Bill Nighy) have been married for 29 years. They live a quiet life in the seaside town of Seaford, on the South Coast of England, in a home cluttered with years of accumulated books and artefacts.

Grace, retired, spends much of her time working on a poetry anthology; her great passion. Edward is a school teacher, who busies himself fact-checking Wikipedia in his spare time, bemusing and irritating Grace in equal measures.

At his father's request, their son Jamie (Josh O'Connor) agrees to come back from London to visit them for the weekend.

After a tense family dinner which ends, as is often the case, with a frustrated Grace urging the brow-beaten Edward to show a bit more passion in their relationship, Jamie retires to his room at the start of what he feels will be a long few days.

The next morning, while Grace is at church, Edward stuns Jamie by revealing his ulterior motive for inviting him: he plans to leave Grace that very day, and he's asked Jamie along to help soften the blow.

Edward has fallen for Angela, the parent of one of his students at school, and plans to move to hers as soon as the deed is done. Jamie tries to persuade him otherwise, but quickly realises that it is futile – Edward's decision is made and the wheels are in motion.

Grace returns from mass and is blindsided by Edward's declaration. At first she dismisses him, incredulous, the end of their marriage inconceivable to her. She demands he reconsiders. But when Edward goes upstairs to collect his bag, which he has already packed, and leaves in Angela's car, the reality sinks in.

Days pass and Grace is in a state of despair, she can't believe what has happened – Edward has been true to his word. Jamie has returned to his flat, leaving her alone.

Back in London, Jamie struggles to come to terms with his parents' separation, breaking down in front of his friends Jess and Dev as they console him. He reflects on the effect their relationship has had on his own unsuccessful love life. His friends suggest that perhaps he's too much of an emotionally closed book, much like his father.

Returning most weekends to support his devastated mother, Jamie finds that Grace's behaviour has become increasingly erratic.

She is incapacitated by her grief, abandoning her poetry anthology, and spends hours sitting on the stairs gazing at the door through which Edward just might return. She leaves notes saying 'I love you' in various places around the house, in the hope that if Edward returns he'll discover them, and stay. Meanwhile Edward has had to change his phone number, after receiving countless anonymous silent calls, which he knows are from Grace.

Jamie confronts his mother in an attempt to make her see sense and curtail her alarming behaviour. Grace, however, is incapable of seeing any future or purpose to her life without Edward, without her marriage.

Edward explains to his son that when he met Grace for the first time, on a train 30 years before, he was in a state of grief following the recent death of his father. He believes his state of emotional turmoil was what bonded them together, and in fact they were never suited to each other, Grace always wanting Edward to be something he wasn't. Angela makes him feel happy to be himself; something he never felt with Grace.

He asks Jamie for help in getting Grace to sign their divorce papers, so they can all move forward with their lives. The agreement is heavily in Grace's favour, leaving her the house, but she has refused nonetheless.

Some time has passed and Grace has resumed some semblance of normal life. She has even taken in a puppy to lift her spirits, which she has named 'Eddie', much to Jamie's embarrassment. Jamie implores Grace to sign the divorce papers and she agrees; but only if Edward will meet her in person to do it.

They meet at Edward's solicitor's office, with Jamie acting as peacekeeper. Grace cannot resist angrily confronting Edward. To her the papers are meaningless; she doesn't believe in divorce. And she doesn't care for the 'entire value of the family home', as this is exactly what she feels has been taken from her. Edward acquiesces, moved by her heartbreak, witnessing the pain of someone he long cared for, one way or another. The papers go unsigned.

Later, Jamie walks with his mother, and opens up about his own relationship struggles, leading Grace to share how deep her depression has been, suggesting that she's not sure she can go on any longer. Jamie urges her to do so, for the simple reason that he needs her to keep going, because then he'll know if she can get through this, he will be able to overcome anything he has to go through himself. Grace says she'll try her best to keep going, for Jamie.

Grace slowly begins to engage with the world again; volunteering at a local depression help-line centre, starting a poetry self-help website with the help of her son, and slowly but surely adjusting to life without Edward. Meanwhile, Edward is now happily ensconced at Angela's house, and Jamie has come to terms with his parents' divorce, and in the process, learned that he must overcome his own emotionally withdrawn behaviour.

With her fortitude restored but irritation lingering, Grace drives to Angela's house, with the excuse that she's returning his last possessions. The front door is open and she lets herself in unannounced, to the shock and surprise of Edward and Angela. Grace herself is taken aback by how dull the house is, in stark contrast to her own, amazed that this is what Edward wants. She asks Angela what she thought she was doing. Angela replies with the brutal truth: 'There were three unhappy people, and now there's only one.' Grace leaves, perhaps for the first time finally accepting that despite the painful end, this is how it should be.

Edward has built another life, and Grace is now ready to try to rebuild her own. Jamie recalls fond memories of playing among the rock pools at Hope Gap as a boy, and goes on to explain his new found understanding – that he cannot take on the pain of his parents who he loves so dearly; they need to find their own happiness, looking to the future, as does he.

## **ABOUT THE FILM**

### **A STORY OF PARTING**

“I suppose I’d been living with what happened in my life for a long time.”

William Nicholson’s journey to bring the story of a marriage breakup to the big screen has been a long time coming – since the experience of his own parents’ separation.

As a young man, Nicholson’s parents parted after nearly 30 years of marriage, affecting him deeply and ultimately changing the way he viewed his family as a seemingly unbreakable unit. Years later, Nicholson felt that this very personal situation would be fertile ground to draw from in his own writing – in a film inspired by (but not directly based on) his own experience.

“My parent’s breakup isn’t anything particularly special, it happens to so many people,” explains Nicholson. “But I’ve thought about it a lot, and the confusing fact that I’m on the side of both my mother and my father.”

“Why did it happen? Why did thirty years of marriage come to nothing? Why did it cause so much pain to my mother?”

“When I settled down to write this it became very emotional. There are some very strong emotional moments, some of which actually happened to me and to my parents.”

As well as addressing the effect of the breakup on a couple’s life, Nicholson sought to depict the emotional impact upon grown-up children when their parents separate later in life.

“We tend to act as if divorce is devastating for little children but fine for grownups. It isn’t. If you’re grown up and your parents split up, it makes you rethink the basis of your childhood.”

After writing the script, Nicholson approached producer David Thompson, who saw potential in the slow-burning drama of the latter age break up, particularly in its contemporary resonance.

“I was drawn to the script because it felt so authentic - powerful without being sentimental. Parents splitting up when their children are in their late teens or twenties is, quite sadly, a common contemporary phenomenon, making the story incredibly resonant. Especially as the film focuses as much on the impact of the divorce on the couple’s son as it does on the parents.”

It was a phenomenon that connected on a personal level with many of the crew on the project, too.

“It pulled on every heartstring for me,” says Hair and Makeup Designer Melanie Lenihan. “My parents divorced when I was 10, I’ve gone through a divorce, and my children are two teenage boys, so I identified with all the themes in the story.”

Nicholson continues: “What struck me when we were putting together this film, crewing it up with people, was how many people said this rang a real bell with their own lives, because something had happened with their parents.”

“The film looks at relationships, the burdens that relationships place on people and particularly the burdens that parents place on their children.”

Given his personal connection to the material, Nicholson couldn’t envisage anyone else taking on the role of director.

“I’ve been working as a screenwriter for a long time,” explains Nicholson.

“I love it and I’m very proud of some of the work, but I have no control over the way the films I write come out. That’s as it should be – the director makes the film, not the screenwriter. But there are times when that can get a little frustrating.

“With HOPE GAP I couldn’t bear someone else directing it. So here I am, doing it myself.”

David Thompson was keen to back him as director.

“I’ve been lucky enough to work with William over many years, going all the way back to *Shadowlands*, but I really wanted to work with him as a director, as he has such a vivid creative take on the world. I thought it would be fantastic to have the opportunity to work with a writer/director with such a strong vision, who I know from experience is also open to collaboration.”

The personal, yet simultaneously universal nature of the material was a key draw for many of the cast and crew.

“It’s a big, big subject; how two people co-exist, co-habit, co-raise a family, and remain faithful,” says Bill Nighy, who plays husband and father Edward Axton in the film.

“I was moved by it - it’s that simple,” adds Annette Bening, playing Edward’s wife Grace Axton.

“I was swept away by it and I really was grateful that William asked me to do it. It’s inspired by something that happened to him and so I know how personal it is to him. I wanted to be respectful of that.”

The emotions involved were immediately apparent to cinematographer Anna Valdez Hanks too.

“When I first read the script I connected very strongly with the story on an emotional level. I got about half way through and found myself tearing up.”

“I’d been sent a script at a time when I was being bombarded with scripts,” says Josh O’Connor, who plays Grace and Edward’s son Jamie. “This felt like the kind of project that was very poetic to me; not in an overly poetical way – it felt truthful.”

Truth was always at the heart of what Nicholson wanted to convey in the script and the story – the fact that no one is a winner and there’s often no right and wrong side in situations such as these. To write dramatically but truthfully was always the challenge.

“It’s hard to write well if you don’t write a villain” says Bening. “It’s much easier if you have a protagonist and an antagonist. This is more subtle than that. I think it’s more like real life in that aspect.”

Nighy agrees. “That it was truthful and accurate, and that it had an unsentimental and un-judgemental attitude, which is rare, particularly with this kind of subject matter, is to be admired.”

## CASTING THE AXTONS

With such a tight and focussed cast, casting the Axton family was vital in being able to convey the turmoil of a family conflict, in a sensitive and compassionate manner.

“When I first read the script, the people who most came to mind were Annette and Bill,” says David Thompson.

“They’ve never worked together before, and they’re both really great actors in their own way. It felt like ideal casting.”

Nicholson’s first challenge was approaching Annette Bening for the role of Grace.

“I flew out to the US to meet her and we talked a lot about it. She was very cautious but she liked it. She liked the project, she liked the script; she just wanted to test me out and figure out if would she be safe with me.

“As soon as we met and started talking, I thought, I hope to God she does this!”

“I thought it was very beautiful and original. I really liked this woman he was asking me to play and I thought it was really a challenge, which interested me,” explains Bening.

Initially, however, she wasn’t sure about how she could make the character work on the big screen.

“I didn’t know if I could make this much dialogue work in a film, so I said no. But I couldn’t get it out of my head and about a week later I called Bill directly on his cell phone.”

Bening’s reasons for saying yes were simple.

“One of the beautiful things we get to do as actors is be completely subjective when we approach our characters. We love them and back them up- we’re their advocates. This was somebody I really felt I could back up.”

With Bening on board, the team approached Bill Nighy.



"I'd always known I wanted Bill Nighy, but I wanted to know who was going to be Grace before going to him. We said Annette is going to play Grace and we'd love you to play Edward, and he accepted at once!"

The conflict of Edward's duty to his marriage and his desire to escape it was a major selling point for Nighy.

"What drew me to the part of Edward was that it's a really good part; they're thin on the ground.

"As far as Edward is concerned, he came to an understanding that the marriage was based on a mistake, and they've made the best of it since that mistake was made."

"It's the discovery of what it's like to be loved for himself," says William Nicholson. "He's felt all along she has loved somebody who isn't him."

"Bill [Nighy] said to me at the beginning 'Am I supposed to be the villain?' and I said 'No, you are not, there are no villains in this. You're a good man who's made a mistake.'"

Nighy connected immediately with Bening.

"To work with Annette Bening is a great privilege and an enormous pleasure. She has been a staunch colleague and a very present companion throughout.

"What she brings is great talent, great intelligence, great humanity, great humour and marvellous tenderness."

That feeling was reciprocated by Bening.

"When I heard he was willing to do it, I was thrilled. He's generous and he's present and he's always a good example to follow."

David Thompson considers the special quality that the Bening and Nighy's experience brings to the screen.

“They’re both such sensitive and authentic actors. There’s no posturing. They’re totally direct and they create an enormously powerful emotional effect with seemingly very little effort.

“I think they could both see that the script has so many layers and nuances and that it doesn’t judge either character.”

The third vital component to the story was Grace and Edward’s son, who witnesses and suffers from the family falling apart.

“Casting Jamie was much harder,” remembers Nicholson.

“Somebody suggested Josh O’Connor to me, a New York agent who I’d met on another project. So I met Josh and of course, the minute I met him I thought, ‘This is it, this is the guy.’”

Arriving on set, Josh won plaudits on all sides for his emotionally aware, fraught depiction of Jamie Axton.

“He’s a consummate actor because he can completely change his whole being; he’s also incredibly sensitive, likable, and has a sort of every-person feel to him,” said Nicholson.

“He is, in a way, the pivot of the whole film, the emotional centre of it, because the film is so much about the impact of what these parents do to this boy Jamie.”

O’Connor didn’t see too many similarities between his own family and that of the Axtons, but could envisage the emotional impact that such a monumental change would have on a family dynamic.

“I’m from a family where my parents have been together my whole life and I’ve had a wonderful upbringing.

“Jamie’s career, everything about his relationship with his parents isn’t anything like mine. I’m quite close to my parents and I feel like he’s not that engaged.”

“There’s a scene in the park where he’s telling his friends about memories of his parents and he starts to cry,” recalls Nicholson. “Every time he did it he said ‘I can’t stop myself, because I just think about my own parents; think about what it would be if they weren’t there on either side of me.’”

Jamie's own relationship with his father and mother as individuals, as well as a couple, inform the kind of young man he has become – something he has to confront and grapple with when his familial life breaks down.

"Jamie's relationship with his mother, Grace, is like his bedroom" says O'Connor. "She's kept his bedroom as a shrine and he exists in her life as the child we see at the beginning."

"It's very fraught with his father, very unengaged and in a weird way that works well for Jamie. They don't need to talk; it makes things easier for everyone else if they don't talk."

"It's possible," adds Bill Nighy, "that Edward has done that thing where people repeat their parents' marriage; that he's kind of repeating his father's relationship with him."

"It's not just about the suffering mother and the kind son who supports her," elaborates William Nicholson. "It's about the son discovering how much he has failed too."

"He's been growing up with parents who have in fact not been well matched and he's sensed that as a child. It's made him nervous of intimacy, and that makes it hard to make relationships."

"He's a delightful man, a fine actor and a dedicated person," says Annette Bening of her time opposite Josh O'Connor on set.

"He is one of those people who is delightfully present when he is working, very responsive. I really appreciated him, and his sense of truth and simplicity."

"He's a tremendous actor," says Nighy. "He's been very easy to work with, not in thrall to any of the acting myths, and super, super professional and prepared."

"He is the balancing between the two of them, and that comes across really well," says Sarada McDermott, producer on the film alongside Thompson.

There's no doubt in Nicholson's mind about O'Connor's future after watching his work up close.

"I think he is going to be a terrifically big star. Just watch him when he's saying nothing, when he's reacting to his mother or his father. He has a face that tells you everything."

With the triumvirate complete, watching the emotional situation unfold brought a sum of performance greater than its multi-talented parts.

“I have been gifted three incredible performances,” says Nicholson.

“The effect as you go through the film of these three remarkable actors at the top of their game will I hope be overwhelming.”

David Thompson was also struck by how the emotional weight of each scene affected everyone during filming, a testament to those performances.

“These actors are really put through the ringer emotionally. There was a great quietness, respectfulness and integrity on the set.”

## **THE LOOK OF HOPE GAP**

Despite only his second feature film as a director, William Nicholson knew exactly how he wanted HOPE GAP to look; his main task was ensuring he found a team to accurately echo those aesthetic sensibilities.

The location of the story was vital.

“It’s based in this town called Seaford, which is a small, rather quiet seaside town with an enormous beach, dominated by the bare hills of the South Downs and by great white chalk cliffs.

“I wanted every frame to be very strong and very deliberately composed. We decided to shoot on anamorphic wide frame, a very long, wide frame that calls for long straight lines and empty vistas.

“The idea was that this balanced, strong, calm look would give a powerful frame to the emotions unleashed.”

Nicholson met with Anna Valdez Hanks, a UK-based cinematographer who had worked with similarly strong UK landscapes in the past, shooting episodes for critically acclaimed dramas *Line of Duty* and *Endeavour*.

“I wanted there to be an essentialisation of visual information,” explains Nicholson. “It’s very powerful, I think, to create a space within which the light on the face then resonates. To do that, you have to take away visual information a lot of the time.

“As soon as I met Anna, who became our DP, I knew she shared this vision. I was already excited by her work in the visually ambitious short films she’d shot. We started swapping images that we liked from photographers and bits of clips from films and I knew she absolutely got it. She, more than me, is responsible for the remarkable look we’ve achieved in HOPE GAP.”

The emotional power of the material struck Valdez Hanks immediately, as did the visual power of stripping back the elements contained within each shot to its essential parts.

“It’s about attaining power and purity through simplicity and that’s been our main reference for the film.

“Bill and I talked quite a lot about the landscape of the South Downs and the sea, the landscape of the house and also the landscape of the face; there’s a lot of dialogue in the script and we wanted to think about how we’d use the face as a landscape in itself.”

Being able to imbue the film with a sense of realism whilst retaining creative flair with the visuals was an important touch point for the production design, costume and hair and makeup departments.

Costume Designer, Suzanne Cave, ensured that the subtly changing looks she created for Annette Bening mirrored the changes in Grace’s emotional state.

“I read the script, did a character mood board for her and had some initial email contact with Annette herself, just to bounce some ideas around.”

“We made a decision to start off quite colourful and patterned, and then when Edward leaves and she goes down into a dark place, we sucked the colour out of everything.”

Hair and Makeup Designer Melanie Lenihan aimed to echo that descent into depression and despair through subtle changes in her hair and makeup, too.

“There’s always a journey for a character, so we break down the script, we break down the character and we put that character on an aesthetic journey,” says Lenihan.

“Annette’s character changes the most when we see her waking up on the morning, where we see her feeling really desolate; there’s a period in the film where she just doesn’t care what she looks like.”

Working with a Hollywood star such as Bening did come with some rather unusual difficulties in creating a less glamorous look.

“Her hair was very auburn and red, and I wanted it to look blonde and natural, so that it would look good windswept on the cliff-faces.

“It’s more difficult to do a no make-up look too, because you don’t want to see any make-up on someone’s face, but you still have to get them camera ready.

“Annette looks so beautiful in so little make-up, so it’s very difficult for her to look like she’s got no make-up on!”

The world around Grace needed to echo her personality too – none more so than the house she and Edward had inhabited for all these years.

“I discussed with the Production Designer what kind of house she had, how she furnished it because that’s her domain, so any decisions he was making were quite important for me as well,” says Cave.

William Nicholson was inspired by what the production design team, led by Simon Rogers, were able to create on set in Yorkshire where the interior scenes were shot.

“When I first walked on to the set I thought ‘Oh my goodness, this is extraordinary.’ It’s only the interior of a house, and people watching the film won’t think twice about it, but look carefully in these giant frames we’re offering you and you’ll realise somebody made a decision about every single visual detail there.

“The amount of passionate detail that has gone into it is more than you’ll ever pick up on screen, but you can sense it there.”

Melanie Lenihan worked with Rogers to ensure a joined-up approach to the colour palette.

“Simon, the production designer, showed me pictures of what he was thinking for internal shots so again I could figure out the colour palette for different places and have an idea of tones; so it was always quite collaborative with the other creative departments.”

Suzanne Cave was keen to underline the emotional gap between Grace and Edward through disparate colours and clothing styles, too.

“I was always playing things down with Grace, but at the same time wanting to introduce colour and pattern in her wardrobe. Whereas Edward is quite neutral, he’s got no jazz about his costumes, to kind of mark that difference. They’re in different worlds, essentially.

“We avoided the tweedy cord, academic look, though he still looks old-fashioned in a way.”

David Thompson speaks very highly of William Nicholson’s ability to bring together top-quality collaborators to help spark the minutiae of the Axtons’ world to life.

“He is one of the most open and collaborative directors I have worked with. He’s worked with a great team, who have been amazing partners on this venture. I think essentially, because he is confident enough with the strength of his own vision, he is able to open up to others.”

## **MAKING THE FILM**

The film received backing from Screen Yorkshire, which added to the geographical filming requirements for the shoot. The positive effects of this were clear for Nicholson to see.

“We shot all the exteriors in the real place, Seaford, but we shot all the interiors in Yorkshire; whether it was a church, a school, an office, or the main house in which the characters lived. I found myself for three weeks in and around Leeds and Doncaster, shooting my Sussex film, which was kind of odd! But it had this terrific benefit.

“There’s a whole community of film crews who operate around there and they know each other, and they were just the most wonderful people. So it had a very strong kind of family feel to it, this Yorkshire operation.”

Sarada McDermott’s task was to make the movement of an entire production shoot a few hundred miles to the North run as smoothly as possible.

“The film structure was set up in three parts, from a logistical point of view. We shot Seaford first, which was mainly down to the weather and when the schools would be open, because Seaford gets very busy then. Filming in that environment has its own issues, but we were blessed with the weather.

“We then came up to Yorkshire and shot for seven days and on location, then we were in studio, which is a much more stable environment. These scenes were much more emotional, therefore you need to have stillness.”

Nicholson’s pre-shoot planning with Valdez Hanks paid off too, allowing them to focus on finding the shots to best depict the fractious nature of the Axton family dynamic.

“On a small budget and a tight schedule, that’s exactly what you need” says McDermott.

“There are lots of shots of the family separately walking on the Downs and walking by the cliffs, combined with isolated shots of nature and shots of them in the house,” adds Valdez Hanks.

“The shots we found there were often simple shots of the sea, which would be almost like an abstract picture with waves coming in, running parallel to the frame line.”

Valdez Hanks found other ways to use the natural environment around Seaford to tell the story too.

“We wanted to use visual metaphors for time from nature, using things like waves and wind so that we could both tell the process of time moving on in the film.”

Luckily for the production, filming externally landed right in the middle of a record-breaking summer for the UK.



“The weather was bizarre, and for us very fortunate as it could have been an ‘English Summer’ but we got uninterrupted sunshine,” says Bill Nighy.

“It’s an incredible coastline; really, really spectacular.”

Annette Bening was equally impressed by their surroundings.

“There was a majesty to the landscape, but the town is very modest and I thought that was a great metaphor for the movie. There’s something very important about the character of that place, the character of the town and how it’s part of our story.

“Many, many days I would stand on the cliffs and look out and think, ‘This is one of the most gorgeous places I’ve ever been in my life.’”

As the cast spent more time on set, so their understanding of their characters and their motivations began to develop.

“I felt that there was something nuanced and real about her,” comments Annette Bening on her character, Grace.

“She was an individual, not an idea of someone, but a real, breathing human being and all that goes with that.”

Bill Nighy tried to keep an open mind about the motivations of his character, Edward.

“The risk is that you start making judgements as the performer. You do the best you can not to load the dice, not to solve the questions for the audience; the audience gets to do that themselves.”

Josh O’Connor relished the opportunity to act in the presence of such established company.

“For any young actor it’s a dream to watch them.

“They have complete respect for me. They have belief in what I’m doing. I haven’t done a film like this before, where you turn up and you feel so safe because they know exactly what they’re doing – it’s a lovely feeling.”

David Thompson was particularly impressed by just how quickly O'Connor stepped up to the plate, despite his comparatively limited film experience.

"He has incredible range and depth, which is all the more remarkable given he is still relatively new as a screen actor."

All Nicholson wanted was for each of the actors to find their own sense of authenticity in the story, to "be real, be true, and don't do anything in order to make me feel something; just feel it yourself."

They succeeded in doing so.

"I think what you feel when you watch is that the camera is observing, almost like a documentary, real people going through this very emotional experience" says David Thompson.

"They've lived it and they've breathed it, they've already created this world," adds Sarada McDermott.

## **WORKING WITH BILL NICHOLSON**

"I wanted the audience from the minute the film begins to feel confident, to feel we're in the hands of somebody who knows why we're seeing what we're seeing."

Despite only having directed one feature length film in the past, Nicholson felt so close to the material he'd written that he couldn't envisage anyone else taking on the job of bringing it to life.

The benefits of a writer/director were immediately apparent to those working alongside Nicholson.

Anna Valdez Hanks says:

"We had a really rich prep period. Often with a director, they'll be trying to interpret the script as written by the scriptwriter and try to find the meaning in it. There may be a number of different ways you can go.

"He was very specific about where he would need certain beats, or why certain things in the script were written, and how we would need to realise that visually."

As a relatively inexperienced director, but one with a clear vision all the same, Valdez Hanks was pleased to discover that Nicholson's approach was very much one of collaboration.

"We spent a lot of time together looking at films and photographs. I was partly gauging his reactions to see what he liked and what he didn't like and throwing things out there that I thought might be strong for the film.

"I understood that he likes darkness, and creating shape, frame and story through the interplay between darkness and light; something I also like to do but of which some people are quite frightened. It was fantastic that he was willing to embrace those ideas."

David Thompson bore witness to that collaborative approach, too.

"He's incredibly confident but also incredibly open, which is a rare combination. He really knows what he wants to achieve and he's also inclusive and not at all difficult or grand in the way he approaches any aspect of the shooting, the crew or the cast.

"So many films get lost in translation somehow because too many people meddle and interfere, and there's no singularity of vision. In this case there's a real clarity of what the writer/director wants to do, and hopefully that will really increase the intensity for the audience."

Nicholson felt similarly inclined towards collaboration with his cast, though that's not to say he didn't have ideas about performances. Moreover, he was very happy to share these with the cast – quite literally, according to Annette Bening.

"The first thing that we did was go through it and he acted it all out for us – which sounds crazy!

"We thought it was really hilarious but important, because when you have someone do that, you see where they're coming from without having to describe it, by illustrating it through doing."

Josh O'Connor never felt any pressure in terms of projecting the real life experiences of William as a young man on to his own role.

“The film has an autobiographical background, but Bill Nicholson has never forced that on us and I don’t think he’d want to. As soon as you cast actors, this isn’t going to be a memory anymore. Bill understands that.”

The rehearsal process was an intense seven days, which proved incredibly valuable for the actors in terms of understanding Nicholson’s motivations, and being able to flesh each character out in their own way.

“I love to rehearse; you’re getting to know each other and sense each other and bond,” says Annette Bening.

“He [Nicholson] understands what to say and what not to say. When he does say something, it gives you a different way of thinking about something. It’s usually very concise and very direct which is incredibly helpful.”

“I would describe Bill’s directorial style as brief and to the point,” says Bill Nighy. “I always feel more responsible and more exposed when performing in front of the writer because they’ve obviously heard this in their head.

“He has a proper, genuine respect for actors; it’s an understanding that’s informed by an instinctive respect.”

“I really appreciated his energy, his enthusiasm and the way he likes to get things moving,” continues Bening. “He has a very positive way of approaching the work, which for me was fantastic.”

Nicholson gives credit back the other way.

“They did what good actors do – they took it their own way and performed a character that essentially they’d created.”

While remaining determined not to be too prescriptive in his direction, Nicholson nevertheless made it clear that many of the emotions and scenarios that the Axton family face in HOPE GAP have their origin in his own life experience.

“When we were filming in Seaford, there’s a scene where Grace is talking to Jamie about not being able to live on”, says Josh O’ Connor.

“I asked Bill Nicholson ‘Would someone say that to their son?’ and he said, ‘Well, yes, I did.’ That’s when it becomes very useful. It makes it authentic.”

David Thompson believes that authenticity is a key element of the emotional validity of the film.

“It’s sad and it’s moving and I think it’s quite deep in some ways and agonising at times, but it’s not miserable. That’s a lot to do with Bill’s writing.”

## **THE IMPACT OF THE STORY**

Though the themes of family separation and emotional turmoil in HOPE GAP are dealt with in an uncompromising way, ultimately there is a chink of light that emerges.

“It’s not a grim story. It’s a story of sadness but it’s also a cathartic story. People go through very difficult experiences and come out the other side stronger.”

“It’s a hard thing to pull off for a writer, to make that dramatic and to make it honest, and without judgement or sentimentality,” says Bill Nighy.

“The audience can see people in a very, very difficult situation treated with great humanity by the filmmaker, an accurate, very moving account of something a lot of the audience will be familiar with.”

The separation of Edward and Grace ultimately leads to Grace’s re-evaluation of her relationship with her son too – learning that just as she must let go of her husband, she must also learn to love Jamie as his own man.

“I think what Grace does with Jamie is what happens to a lot of people inadvertently when they’re splitting up, particularly the one who has been left,” explains Annette Bening.

“She is not an extravagant or eccentric character; she’s just a woman. Jamie becomes a way of linking herself to her husband because he won’t see her.”

For William Nicholson, Jamie's journey is something he felt would resonate with a younger audience in particular.

"When I first wrote it I thought it was the story of a breakup of a marriage, but while I've been making it, I changed my mind," explains Nicholson. "I realise as I watch it that it's actually Jamie's movie; it's the story of the son. "

"I think that the younger generation will look at this and find themselves thinking a whole lot of new thoughts about their relationship with their parents; whether their parents have split up or not."

The same was true for David Thompson.

"I think the great thing about the script is younger people can relate to it too, because it's about the impact on this child. We need our parents to be beacons for the future; if they can't be, and they give up in some way, it's pretty devastating.

Learning to let go is a two-way street for Jamie and Grace.

"With both his parents, Jamie has to look after them, be there for them and be the carer, which is a learning curve for him," says Josh O'Connor.

"Jamie talks about his dad being the first among men and his mother being the first among women. The idea of him being strong for them is very powerful to me."

The mirroring of the lessons learned by both Jamie and Grace was a key element of the plot for William Nicholson.

"In the end, both of them realise that they have to let go. She has to let go of the marriage that she's lost anyway, and she has to let go of her son; he has to let go of the parents who have always been his grounding and supported him throughout his life, to forge his own life."

"There's no happy ending, and yet it's uplifting" says William Nicholson, on what he wishes audiences to take away from the film. "I think in the end it's all about this elusive thing called emotional truth. You watch these unflinchingly truthful performances and you realise you're not being lied to, you're not being fooled with; this is actually how it is. This is how life is."

## ABOUT THE CAST

### **Annette Bening / Grace Axton**

Annette Bening is a four-time Academy Award nominee, two-time Golden Globe and Screen Actors Guild Award winner. Most recently, Bening appeared in Dan Fogelman's *LIFE ITSELF* alongside Oscar Isaac and Olivia Wilde, as well as Michael Mayer's film adaptation of Anton Chekhov's play *THE SEAGULL* with Saoirse Ronan, Elisabeth Moss and Corey Stoll. Upcoming projects include *CAPTAIN MARVEL*, Christoph Waltz's directorial debut *GEORGETOWN*, with Waltz and Vanessa Redgrave. Other film credits include *FILM STARS DON'T DIE IN LIVERPOOL*, *20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY WOMEN*, *RULES DON'T APPLY*, *DANNY COLLINS*, *THE SEARCH*, *THE FACE OF LOVE*, *RUBY SPARKS*, *GIRL MOST LIKELY*, *GINGER & ROSA*, *THE KIDS ARE ALRIGHT*, *MOTHER AND CHILD*, *BEING JULIA*, *AMERICAN BEAUTY*, *IN DREAMS*, *THE SIEGE*, *THE AMERICAN PRESIDENT*, *MARS ATTACKS!*, *RICHARD III*, *LOVE AFFAIR*, *BUGSY*, *REGARDING HENRY*, *THE GRIFTERS*, *GUILTY BY SUSPICION*, *VALMONT*, *POSTCARDS FROM THE EDGE*, and *THE GREAT OUTDOORS*.

On stage, Bening will next star in Gregory Mosher's Broadway revival of Arthur Miller's classic *ALL MY SONS*, alongside Tracy Letts. She was last seen on stage in Audible's presentation of *HAVE A NICE DAY* at the Minetta Lane Theatre in October 2018. Previous stage credits include the Public Theater's 2014 Shakespeare in the Park production of *KING LEAR*; *RUTH DRAPER MONOLOGUES* at Geffen Playhouse; Anton Chekhov's *THE CHERRY ORCHARD* at Mark Taper Forum; Alan Bennett's *TALKING HEADS* at Tiffany Theater; Henrik Ibsen's *HEDDA GABLER* at the Geffen Playhouse; and *MEDEA* at UCLA.

Bening received a Tony Award nomination and won the Clarence Derwent Award for Outstanding Debut Performance of the Season for her role in *COASTAL DISTURBANCES*.

Bening graduated from San Francisco State University and trained at the American Conservatory Theater in San Francisco.

### **Bill Nighy / Edward Axton**

Bill Nighy is an award-winning actor of the stage and screen who has received among others a BAFTA Award, a London Film Critics Circle Award, an Evening Standard British Film Award and a Golden Globe.

Bill was most recently seen in film *THE BOOKSHOP* as reclusive book-lover Edmund Brundish, and in the TV mini-series adaptation of Agatha Christie's *ORDEAL BY INNOCENCE*, in which he played the lead role of Leo Argyll. He is soon to appear in films *SOMETIMES, ALWAYS, NEVER*, a detective fantasy/drama written by Frank Cottrell Boyce.

In September 2017, Bill was seen on screens in *THE LIMEHOUSE GOLEM*, which premiered at The Toronto International Film Festival in 2016. Also premiering at the festival that year was *THEIR FINEST*, which saw Bill 'on irresistible form' (Daily Express) alongside Gemma Arteton and Sam Claflin.

Bill's iconic turn as an aging rock star in Richard Curtis's 2003 hit *LOVE ACTUALLY* won him his Evening Standard British Film Award. He recently reprised the role in the 2017 charity special *RED NOSE DAY ACTUALLY*.

In recent years, Bill has lent his talent to *THE BEST EXOTIC MARIGOLD HOTEL* and its sequel, *THE SECOND BEST EXOTIC MARIGOLD HOTEL* in 2015. Bill starred in *PRIDE*, which won Best British Independent Film at the 2014 BIFAs. In 2013, Bill once again teamed up with Richard Curtis for time travelling romantic comedy *ABOUT TIME*.

Bill's incredible list of film credits also includes *WILD TARGET*, *PIRATE RADIO* (which reunited him with Richard Curtis), Bryan Singer's *VALKYRIE*, Richard Eyre's *NOTES ON A SCANDAL*, Fernando Meirelles' *THE CONSTANT GARDENER*, *LAWLESS HEART* and *STILL CRAZY*.

Bill began his career on the stage and has since earned acclaim for his work in numerous plays, including David Hare's *PRAVDA* in 1985, *SKYLIGHT* ten years later in 1995, and *A MAP OF THE WORLD*. He received an Olivier Award nomination for Best Actor in 2001 for his performance in Joe Penhall's *BLUE/ORANGE*.

In 2012, Bill earned a Golden Globe nomination for Best Actor for his performance in the BBC television movie *PAGE EIGHT*, directed by David Hare. He reunited with Hare in 2014 for the second and third installments of *THE WORRICKER TRILOGY*. On the small screen, HBO's *THE GIRL IN THE CAFÉ* brought Bill a Golden Globe Award nomination for Best Actor in a Television Movie or Miniseries. Later in 2005, he won a Golden Globe in the same category for his performance in the telefilm *GIDEON'S DAUGHTER*.



## **Josh O'Connor / Jamie Axton**

British actor Josh O'Connor trained with the Bristol Old Vic Theatre School and has garnered critical acclaim for his roles across film, television and theatre, being named a Screen International Star of Tomorrow in 2016 and a BAFTA Breakthrough Brit in 2018.

Josh made his feature film debut in Lone Scherfig's THE RIOT CLUB opposite Sam Claflin and Douglas Booth and roles soon followed working with Stephen Frears, both in THE PROGRAM and in FLORENCE FOSTER JENKINS, alongside Meryl Streep and Hugh Grant.

After appearing on TV in PEAKY BLINDERS and RIPPER STREET in 2014, he undertook the role of Lawrence "Larry" Durrell in ITV's hugely successful THE DURRELLS, the final season of which is set to broadcast in 2019.

Josh took the leading role in the critically acclaimed film GOD'S OWN COUNTRY, a bold love story heralded as "Britain's Brokeback Mountain", which earned him a nomination for EE BAFTA Rising Star and an award for Best Actor at the British Independent Film Awards, both in 2018.

Josh can next be seen in the role of Marius in the BBC One adaptation of LES MISÉRABLES, and the feature film ONLY YOU, alongside Laia Costa. Currently Josh is filming the role of Prince Charles in THE CROWN for Netflix and Left Bank Pictures.

## **ABOUT THE FILMMAKERS**

### **William Nicholson / Writer & Director**

William Nicholson was born in 1948, educated at Downside School and Christ's College, Cambridge. He worked as a documentary film maker for BBC TV, where his ambition to write, initially directed into novels, was channelled into television drama. His plays for television include SHADOWLANDS and LIFE STORY, both of which won the BAFTA Best Television Drama award in their respective years; other award-winners include THE MARCH and SWEET AS YOU ARE. In 1988 he received the Royal Television Society's Writer's Award.

His first play, an adaptation of SHADOWLANDS for the stage, ran for a year in the West End, was Evening Standard Best Play of 1990, and went on to a Tony Award winning run on Broadway. He was

nominated for an Oscar for the screenplay of the film version, which was directed by Richard Attenborough and starred Anthony Hopkins and Debra Winger.

Since then he has written more films - SARAFINA, NELL, FIRST KNIGHT, GREY OWL, GLADIATOR (as co-writer, for which he received a second Oscar nomination), Elizabeth: THE GOLDEN AGE, LES MISERABLES, MANDELA: LONG WALK TO FREEDOM, UNBROKEN, EVEREST, and BREATHE. In 1997 he wrote and directed FIRELIGHT.

He has written five plays for the stage: Shadowlands, MAP OF THE HEART, KATHERINE HOWARD, THE RETREAT FROM MOSCOW (which ran for five months on Broadway and received three Tony Award nominations), and CRASH.

His novel for children, *The Wind Singer*, won the Smarties Prize Gold Award and the Blue Peter Book of the Year Award. Together with its sequels, *Slaves of the Mastery* and *Firesong*, it has been sold in every major foreign market, from the USA to China. His second trilogy for older children, *The Noble Warriors*, is made up of *Seeker*, *Jango* and *Noman*. He has also published a teen romance novel, *Rich and Mad*.

His novels for adults are 2004's *The Society of Others* and *The Trial of True Love*, published in 2005. His sequence of seven Sussex novels began with *The Secret Intensity of Everyday Life* in 2009, and now comprises *All the Hopeful Lovers*, *The Golden Hour*, *Motherland*, *Reckless*, *The Lovers of Amherst* and *Adventures in Modern Marriage*.

He lives in Sussex with his wife Virginia and their three children.

### **Anna Valdez Hanks / Director of Photography**

Anna was the first cinematographer to be named by BAFTA as a Breakthrough Brit in 2015 and was selected as a Berlinale Talent at the Berlin International Film Festival in 2016.

MILE END won best narrative feature at NYC Independent Film Festival in 2016, Best Cinematography at Filmmaker International Festival 2016 and was nominated for best British feature at Raindance Festival in 2015. Valdez Hanks was additional cinematographer on Pete Travis's 2008 film ENDGAME.

Her short films have won awards and screened at numerous international film festivals including GOBLIN MARKET, which also exhibited at Tate Britain and the Pushkin Gallery in Moscow. TO THE SEA won best experimental film at Aesthetica Film Festival, with a commendation for the film's cinematography.

Anna has been the lead director of photography on numerous high end dramas, including ITV's ENDEAVOUR, BBC drama series ACKLEY BRIDGE and Jed Mercurio's critically acclaimed LINE OF DUTY in 2016.

Anna's route to cinematography took her through clapper loading, focus pulling and camera operating on features and high end dramas, giving her the opportunity to learn from some of the best cinematographers and directors in the industry. Anna is a cinephile, with a passion for films ranging from auteur and experimental films to commercial and genre cinema.

### **Simon Rogers / Production Designer**

Simon is a leading U.K production designer who has designed everything from mesmerising rock gigs and award-winning comedy, to groundbreaking TV dramas and feature films.

His feature film credits of note include upcoming release OFFICIAL SECRETS starring Keira Knightley, FOR THOSE IN PERIL, TYRANNOSAUR (BAFTA Outstanding Debut for Paddy Considine, 2012), and the Nick Cave documentary 20,000 DAYS ON EARTH.

TV credits include LATER WITH JOOLS HOLLAND, INSIDE NO.9, THE LEAGUE OF GENTLEMEN, THE THICK OF IT, STEWART LEE'S COMEDY VEHICLE, UTOPIA and most recently in 2018 on THE CITY AND THE CITY, for which he won the 2018 RTS award for best Drama Production Design.

Simon previously won the 2010 Royal Television Society (RTS) Award for Best Production Design in Entertainment and Non-Drama for MONGRELS and received an RTS nomination for STEWART LEE'S COMEDY VEHICLE.

### **Suzanne Cave / Costume Designer**

Hailing from Dublin but now residing in London, Suzanne Cave studied at University College Dublin before embarking upon a career in Costume Design. She honed her skills working with numerous theatre companies in Dublin and Prague, the latter city during a spell teaching at Charles University.

Upon her return to the UK, Cave began working in film and TV Costume Design, most notably on BBC series 1 and 2 of THE HOUR before 2013's AN ADVENTURE IN SPACE AND TIME secured her a nomination for Best Costume Design at the 2014 BAFTA Craft Awards.

Other TV credits include Sean Durkin's SOUTHCLIFFE, NW, LONDON SPY, the BBC adaptations of the Robert Galbraith STRIKE series of novels, and most recently in 2018 on the critically acclaimed Stephen Frears drama A VERY ENGLISH SCANDAL, starring Hugh Grant and Ben Whishaw.

Cave's other film credits include X+Y, TRESPASS AGAINST US starring Michael Fassbender, and JOURNEYMAN, directed by and starring Paddy Considine.

### **Melanie Lenihan / Hair and Makeup Designer**

To be included

### **Pia Di Ciaula / Editor**

Pia Di Ciaula is an Italo-Canadian international film and television editor. Her love of independent cinema has taken her to work throughout Europe, America, Morocco, South Africa and London, UK where she resides.

Di Ciaula's credits include TYRANNOSAUR, by writer/director/actor Paddy Considine, winning 40 awards worldwide; A VERY ENGLISH SCANDAL starring Hugh Grant and directed by two time Oscar nominee Stephen Frears; and Netflix's multi-BAFTA, Emmy and Golden Globe winning series THE CROWN, viewed by 96 million households around the world, directed by Emmy winner and three-time Oscar nominee Stephen Daldry. Di Ciaula has also collaborated with Oscar winners Hugh Hudson, Kate Winslet and Judi Dench.

Di Ciaula received a Gemini Award nomination for Best Editing on CHOICES OF THE HEART: THE MARGARET SANGER STORY. On her two Canadian/UK co-productions, INTIMATE RELATIONS and REGENERATION, she received two Genie Award nominations. Di Ciaula was BAFTA nominated for Best Editing on THE CROWN. She has also been nominated for an RTS award for Best Editing on A VERY ENGLISH SCANDAL.

Di Ciaula has tutored at the London National Film & Television School, and has given Masterclasses at BAFTA, Royal Television Society, Royal Holloway, University of London, BECTU, and Canadian Cinema Editors.

In addition to HOPE GAP, Di Ciaula is currently editing DIRT MUSIC, starring Garrett Hedlund and Kelly Macdonald.

### **David M. Thompson / Producer**

Producer David M. Thompson has received multiple awards including three BAFTAs, three Golden Globes and two Emmys. He began his career working for the BBC as a documentary maker before moving to drama to set up the *Screenplay* series producing films including seminal works from Alan Clarke – THE ROAD and THE FIRM – and the BAFTA award-winning SHADOWLANDS.

In 1997, Thompson went on to become Head of BBC Films and single drama and went on to produce and exec-produce over 150 films and TV dramas, many of which have garnered Academy Awards, Golden Globes and numerous other international prizes. These include BILLY ELLIOT, IRIS, MY SUMMER OF LOVE, DIRTY PRETTY THINGS, NOTES ON A SCANDAL, REVOLUTIONARY ROAD, FISH TANK, RED ROAD, EASTERN PROMISES, IN THE LOOP, BRIGHT STAR and AN EDUCATION. Films for television include the BAFTA award-winning CONSPIRACY, THE GATHERING STORM and Stephen Poliakoff's THE LOST PRINCE.

As Producer / Executive Producer, Thompson has worked with a wide variety of established directors including Woody Allen, Danny Boyle, Stephen Frears, Sam Mendes and David Cronenberg and has made a special contribution to backing the work of many first-time filmmakers, including Pawel Pawlikowski, Lynne Ramsay, Andrea Arnold, Stephen Daldry, Sarah Gavron, Steven Knight and Paul Greengrass.

In 2008 Thompson left BBC to set up film & TV production company Origin Pictures, where he has produced films including MANDELA starring Idris Elba and Naomie Harris, WOMAN IN GOLD starring Helen Mirren and Ryan Reynolds and THE SENSE OF AN ENDING starring Jim Broadbent and Charlotte Rampling. For television Thompson has most recently executive produced series including DEATH COMES TO PEMBERLEY and THE WOMAN IN WHITE for BBC, and the upcoming CATHERINE THE GREAT starring Helen Mirren for Sky and HBO.

### **Sarada McDermott / Producer**

After graduating from Sheffield University Film School, Sarada McDermott quickly worked her way up through every production level and is now a Producer for some of the world's leading feature film

production companies including Fox Searchlight, eOne, Universal, MGM, Film Nation, BBC Films, Film4 and the BFI.

McDermott has also collaborated with a range of celebrated producers, including David M. Thompson, Stephen McCrum, Andrew McDonald, Andrew Eaton and Kris Thykier; and with Directors Danny Boyle, Michael Winterbottom, Paddy Considine, Lynne Ramsay, Gavin Hood, Richard Longcrain and Stephen Merchant.

McDermott most recent release this year was FINDING YOUR FEET, starring Timothy Spall, Celia Imrie, Joanna Lumley and Imelda Staunton.

Other production credits include: FIGHTING WITH MY FAMILY, THE SENSE OF AN ENDING, MRS. BROWN'S BOYS D'MOVIE, LONDON ROAD, TYRANNOSAUR, POWDER, NICHOLAS NICKLEBY, THE JACKET, 28 DAYS LATER and 24 HOUR PARTY PEOPLE.

Television credits include COALITION, IF I HAD YOU, BRADFORD RIOTS and WHERE THE HEART IS. McDermott's current projects include Fox Searchlight's TOLKIEN, starring Nicholas Hoult and Lily Collins; and OFFICIAL SECRETS, a true story about the whistleblower Katherine Gun starring Keira Knightley, Matt Smith and Ralph Fiennes.

### **About Origin Pictures**

Origin Pictures is an independent production company making bold and ambitious drama for both film and television. The company was launched in 2008 by David M. Thompson, who previously ran BBC Films for over a decade, where he produced / executive produced over 150 films garnering numerous international prizes. For cinema, Origin have produced several award-winning films including THE FIRST GRADE starring Naomie Harris' THE AWAKENING starring Dominic West and Rebecca Hall; MANDELA: LONG WALK TO FREEDOM starring Idris Elba; WHAT WE DID ON OUR HOLIDAY starring David Tennant and Rosamund Pike; X PLUS Y starring Asa Butterfield and Sally Hawkins; WOMAN IN GOLD starring Helen Mirren and Ryan Reynolds; THE SENSE OF AN ENDING starring Jim Broadbent and Charlotte Rampling; and the upcoming drama HOPE GAP starring Annette Bening, Bill Nighy and Josh O'Connor. For television, productions include BAFTA-award nominated mini-series THE CRIMSON PETAL & THE WHITE for BBC2; adaptations of PD James' best-selling DEATH COMES TO PEMBERLEY, Daphne Du Maurier's JAMAICA INN and Wilkie Collins' THE

WOMAN IN WHITE, all for BBC1; and the upcoming CATHERINE THE GREAT starring Helen Mirren for Sky and HBO.

### **About Screen Yorkshire**

Screen Yorkshire champions the film, TV, games and digital industries in Yorkshire and the Humber. Its aim is to secure and support the very best projects, companies and individuals, helping to make Yorkshire and the Humber one of the most sought-after destinations for production in the UK.

Screen Yorkshire offers production financing through its Yorkshire Content Fund. Since it launched the YCF in February 2012, Screen Yorkshire has invested in 40 film & TV projects, including: DARK RIVER, YARDIE, GHOST STORIES, JOURNEYMAN, DAD'S ARMY, SWALLOWS AND AMAZONS, TESTAMENT OF YOUTH, '71, NATIONAL TREASURE, ACKLEY BRIDGE, THE GREAT TRAIN ROBBERY, PEAKY BLINDERS, JONATHAN STRANGE AND MR NORELL and HANK ZIPZER.

Screen Yorkshire heads up development of the Yorkshire Screen Hub, recognised in 2016 as the first awardee from the BFI Creative Cluster Challenge Fund, to develop a growth plan for the industry in the region. [www.screenyorkshire.co.uk](http://www.screenyorkshire.co.uk)

### **About Sampsonic Media**

Sampsonic Media is an eclectic multimedia production / financing company. It executive produced VITA & VIRGINIA, starring Gemma Arterton and Elizabeth Debicki, and co-executive produced UNSTUCK IN TIME, a documentary on *Slaughterhouse-5*-author Kurt Vonnegut by director Robert B. Weide. Both projects are currently in post-production.

Other projects include BEHIND THE MIRROR, which won Best Thriller at the Manhattan Film Festival, and which was later released through The Orchard. The movie was based on an epistolary novel created by the company. In terms of music, Sampsonic Media financed the original score by composer George Kallis for the children's fantasy-adventure ALBION: THE ENCHANTED STALLION, starring Jennifer Morrison, Stephen Dorff and John Cleese.

### **About Creative Media Investments**

CMI is a new boutique finance fund focusing on the media sector. We create opportunities for new ideas to become great businesses.

CMI combine talents from established businesses across the film, TV and media industry.

### **About LipSync Post**

LipSync Post is a leading UK and internationally recognised post-house, providing post-production services to the film and television industry for over 20 years. Since 2008, LipSync Productions has invested over £65 million in over 155 feature film and TV projects. With regular festival appearances and over 200 major award wins, including multiple BAFTA-wins, this has firmly cemented their reputation as one of the UK's most prominent production partners. Their recent film credits include SHOW DOGS, 6 DAYS, THE LIMEHOUSE GOLEM, CHURCHILL AND THE NICE GUYS, THE WEDDING GUEST, COLETTE and WOMAN WALKS AHEAD.

### **About Protagonist Pictures**

Protagonist Pictures is an international finance, production and sales company which has a proven track record in outstanding films and commercial successes. Based in the UK, the company handles films from around the world, always maintaining a strong focus on filmmakers with exceptional vision and storytelling skills.

Current successes on release around the world include Cannes 2018 Best Director winner COLD WAR from Academy Award winner Pawel Pawlikowski, Francis Lee's BAFTA-nominated GOD'S OWN COUNTRY, the 2017 Directors' Fortnight Art Cinema Award Winner THE RIDER from Chloé Zhao, and Toronto International Film Festival 2017 Official Selection BEAST from writer/director Michael Pearce.

In post-production are VITA & VIRGINIA starring Gemma Arterton and Elizabeth Debicki, THE SOUVENIR from Executive Producer Martin Scorsese and directed by Joanna Hogg, zombie comedy LITTLE MONSTERS starring Academy Award winner Lupita Nyong'o and Josh Gad, and Juan Cabral's TWO/ONE starring Boyd Holbrook and Beau Bridges. In production are CORPORATE ANIMALS, starring Demi Moore and Ed Helms, and MY ZOE, from writer/director Julie Delpy, starring alongside Daniel Brühl and Gemma Arterton.

HOW TO BUILD A GIRL, based on the novel by Caitlin Moran and starring Beanie Feldstein and Alfie Allen, is in pre-production. Forthcoming productions include THE CRADLE, starring Jack O'Connell and Lily Collins, THE SOUND OF PHILADELPHIA, with Matthias Schoenaerts, Garrett Hedlund and Scoot McNairy, PARAMOUR, directed by Alexandra-Therese Keining and starring Kristin Scott Thomas, and THE EDUCATION OF FREDRICK FITZELL, starring Dylan O'Brien and Maika Monroe.



## CREDITS

Line Producer **Karl Hall**

First Assistant Director **Thomas Bassett**

Lighting Gaffer **Carolina Schmidtholstein**

Location Manager **Nardia Hall**

Script Supervisor **Sharon Ranger**

Production Sound Mixer **Martin Beresford A.M.P.S.**

Associate Producer **Alex Gordon**

Post Production Supervisor **Shuna Frood**

Colourist **Tom Russell**

Re-Recording Mixer **Robert Farr**

Supervising Sound Designer **James Hayday**

Supervising Dialogue Editor   **Ben Tat**

**Cast**

Grace   **Annette Bening**

Edward   **Bill Nighy**

Jamie   **Josh O'Connor**

Jess   **Aiysha Hart**

Dev   **Ryan McKen**

Young Jamie   **Joe Citro**

Angela   **Sally Rogers**

Gary   **Nicholas Burns**

Peter Widdecombe   **Steven Pacey**

Friendline Man   **Derren Litten**

Receptionist   **Rose Keegan**

Robbie   **Finn Bennett**

Priest   **Nicholas Blane**

Stunt Coordinator   **Paul Kennington**

Stunt Double (Ms Bening)   **Stephanie Kerry**

Stunt Double (Mr Burns)   **Paul Bailey**

Unit Production Manager   **Kirsten Stoddart**

Production Coordinator   **Lucy Eaton-Whitfield**

Producer's Assistant   **Jo Wilding**

Assistant to Ms Bening **Jenny Brum**

Production Assistants **Rory Hathaway**

**Theo Macdonald**

Second Assistant Director **Chris Marshall**

Third Assistant Director **Amber Tordoff-Gibson**

Floor Runners **Annabelle Hood**

**Max Hatfield**

Production Accountant **Ben Arslanian**

Payroll Accountant **Martin Ainsclough**

Assistant Accountant **Edward Newman**

Assistant Location Manager **Andrew Henstock**

Unit Manager **Eleanore Carr**

A Camera Focus Puller (Yorkshire) **Kirsten De Maid**

A Camera Focus Puller (Seaford) **Alex Taylor**

A Camera Clapper Loader **Jonny Stillwell**

Steadicam Operators **Doug Walshe**

**Peter Wignall**

**Will Lyte**

Digital Imaging Technician **Steven Rundle**

A Camera Trainee **Agnes Aus**

Key Grip **Stuart Gibson**

Assistant Grip **Kurt Fox**

Second Assistant Grip **Jack Kelly**

Second Unit Director of Photography **Catherine Goldschmidt**

B Camera Operators **Doug Walshe**

**Tom Williams**

B Camera Focus Puller (Seaford) **Matt Hillier**

B Camera Focus Puller (Yorkshire) **Mike Richardson**

B Camera Clapper Loaders **Lina Rasmussen**

**Mitch Payne**

B Camera Trainee (Seaford) **Marcel Myrtil**

Best Boy **Alan Millar**

Electricians **Jenni Suitiala**

**David Mitchell**

Electrician (Seaford) **Henriette Jacobsen**

Generator Operator **Stephen McLean**

Studio Rigging Gaffer **Terry Maskell**

Studio Board Operator **Jon Towler**

Standby Rigger (Seaford) **Paul Berry**

Rigger **Lee Howarth**

Aerial Photography **The Helicopter Girls**

Drone Pilot **Steve Peters**

Aerial Camera Operator **Phil Arntz**

Director of Operations **Emma Boswell**

Art Director **Ben Clements**

Set Decorator **David Morison**

Standby Art Director **Jen Ainsley**

Production Buyer **Gaynor Millican**

Buyer **Kimberley McBeath**

Graphic Designer **Rosa Nolan-Warren**

Construction Manager **Dave Green**

Standby Carpenter **Adam Fortune**

Special Effects Supervisor **Scott McIntyre**

Animal Handler **Sue Clark**

Props Master **Duane Marshall**

Standby Props **Simon Lee**

**Warren Ormondroyd**

Dressing Props **David Hayden**

**Russ Lee**

Costume Supervisor **Jen Davies**

Costume Standby **Gemma Bates**

Costume Trainee **Kirsty Wise**

Make-Up Supervisor **Laura Lawrence**

Make-Up Artist **Natalie Fox**

First Assistant Sound (Yorkshire) **Lee James**

First Assistant Sound (Seaford) **Phil Cape**

Second Assistant Sound **Darryl Peat**

Casting Associate **Sonia Allam**

Casting Assistant **Finnian Tweed**

Unit Publicists **Jonathan Rutter**

**Eugene O'Connor**

Stills Photographers **Robert Viglasky**

**Gareth Gatrell**

**Ludovic Robert**

EPK **Maria Nicholson**

**Dan Faber**

Dialect Coach **Penny Dyer**

Transport Captain **Paul Walton**

On Set Transport Captain **Colin Barnett**

Unit Driver to Mr Nighy **Robert Hole**

Unit Drivers **Richard Spencer**

**Ryan O'Neill**

**Stewart Fleming**

**Russell Holmes**

Minibus Drivers **Andy Fergie**

**Andy Wilson**

Facilities Captain **Andy Thurlbourne**

Facilities **Iryna Thurlbourne**

**Lawrence Duncan**

Risk Management / Unit Medic (Seaford) **John Fillingham**

Unit Medic **Jessie Kirby**

Assistant Editor **Charlotte Gage**

Post Production Accountants **Tarn Harper**

**Polly Wilby**

Contractual Delivery Coordinator **Alexandra Montgomery**

Post Production by **LipSync Post**

Assistant Post Producer **Robert Wareing**

Facility Director **Lisa Jordan**

Head of DI **James Clarke**

DI Coordinator **Lizzie Newsham**

DI Operator **Andi Haw Shaun Chu**

Online Editors **Ben North**

**William Chetwynd**

Head of Technical Support **Rick White**

Technical operators **Alex Crone**

**Jordan Malonga**

**Clarissa Jean Jacques**

Head of Systems **Barry Zubel**

Post Production Engineer **Linden Brownbill**

Sound by **LipSync Post**

Foley Recorded at **Pinewood Studios**

Foley Mixer **Jemma Riley-Tolch**

Assistant Foley Mixer **Adam Bourne**

Foley Editor **Adam Oakley**

Foley Artists **Pete Burgis**

**Rebecca Heathcote**

Visual Effects by **LipSync Post**

Head of VFX **David Fowler**

Visual Effects Supervisor **Luke Butler**

Visual Effects Producer **Carrie Rishel**

Visual Effects Coordinators **Lily Knott**  
**Jacqui Marchant-Adams**

Compositors **Reno Cicero**  
**Andy Quinn**  
**Garth Reilly**  
**Pedram Razi**  
**Roni Rodrigues**  
**Valeria Rufa**  
**Robert Treen**

Visual Effects Editor **Manuel Mendes**

Pipeline Engineers **Keith Pang**  
**Olaf Razzoli**

Titles by **LipSync Design**

Head of Design **Howard Watkins**

Senior Designer **Julia Hall**

Designer **Tom Burke**

Design Coordinator **Chloe Tetu**

Orchestrator **John Ashton Thomas**

Music Preparation **Colin Rae**

Musician Contractor **Hilary Skewes**

Orchestral Leader **Simon Blendis**



Piano Solo **Tom Poster**

Score Recorded by **Peter Cobbin**

Score Mixed by **Peter Cobbin & Kirsty Whalley**

Score Recorded at **Air Lyndhurst Studios, London**

Protools Operator **Tom Bailey**

Engineer Assistant **Alex Ferguson**

Score Mixed at **Henry Licht, London**

Score Technical Advisor **Red Bennett**

Scoring Producer **Rebecca Dale**

Music Supervisor **Maggie Rodford**

Music Editors **Pia Di Ciaula CCE**

**Neil Stemp**

For **Origin Pictures**

Head of Development **Hannah Farrell**

Development Executive **Kate Leadbetter**

Development Editor **Isobel Carter**

For **Protagonist Pictures**

CEO **Dave Bishop**

Managing Director, Sales & Distribution **Vanessa Saal**

Head of Sales **George Hamilton**

Head of Acquisitions **Isabelle Stewart**

Director of Marketing **David Bartholomew**  
Director of Publicity and PR **Sanam Jehanfard**  
Head of Legal and Business Affairs **James Pugh**  
Director of Operations **Anne-Lise Fernandez**

For **Screen Yorkshire**

Chief Executive **Sally Joynson**  
Communications Manager **Rachel McWatt**  
Head of Finance **George Watts**  
Finance Assistant **Jean Pendle-Ash**  
Production Liaison Managers **Richard Knight**  
**Chris Hordley**

For **Creative Media Investments**

Fund Director **Matthew Barnes**  
Director of Finance **Steve Butterworth**

For **Apollo Media Ltd**

Chairman **Mark Beilby**  
CEO **Gavin Poolman**

For **LipSync**

**Sophie Oates Black**  
**Robin Guise**  
**Peter Raven**

International Sales by  
**Protagonist Pictures**

Legal Services by

**Lee & Thompson LLP**

Production Legal **Reno Antoniadis**

**James Walker**

**Mark Cohen**

Screen Yorkshire and Creative Media Investments Legal **Christos Michaels**

**Johan Ewing**

**Sarah Cundall**

Sampsonic Media Legal **Lee Stone**

**Alastair Mavor**

LipSync Legal **Sam Tatton-Brown**

**Rose Laget**

William Nicholson Legal **Nicki Parfitt**

**Anna Bowsher**

Completion Bond Services provided by

**Film Finances, Inc.**

**Ali Moshref**

Auditors **Shipleys LLP**

Collection Agent Services by **Freeway Cam**

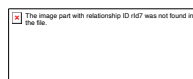
Insurance Provided by **Media Insurance Brokers**

Production Banking **Coutts & Co**

Script Clearance & Neg Checks **Capello Media Solutions**

Script Clearances **Asha Radwan (Jeva Films)**

Camera Systems



Avid Equipment	<b>Hireworks</b>
Lighting Services	<b>Panalux Manchester</b>
Vehicles	<b>Miller's Services to Film &amp; TV</b>
Facilities	<b>Wandering Star Facilities</b>
Location Services	<b>Location One</b>
Caterers	<b>Stage 3 Catering (Seaford)</b> <b>Eat On Location (Yorkshire)</b>
Unit Drivers	<b>PRW Chauffeurs</b>
Radio Services	<b>Audiolink Ltd</b>
Post Production Script	<b>Sapex Scripts</b>
Film Studios	<b>Northern Film &amp; TV Studio</b>
Unit Security	<b>Northern Film &amp; TV Studio</b>

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**"Mozart: 1. Kyrie [Mass in C minor, K.427 "Grosse Messe"]"**

Performed by Sylvia McNair, Diana Montague, Anthony Rolfe Johnson, Cornelius Hauptmann, The Monteverdi Choir, English Baroque Soloists, John Eliot Gardiner

Courtesy of Decca Music Group Ltd Under license from Universal Music Group Ltd

Edition revised by John Eliot Gardiner

**“Through A Looking Glass”**

Composer Philip Guyler

Published by Audio Network Ltd

**“Heart of Oak”**

Performed by The Yorkshire Military Band

Traditional arranged by Geoffrey Kingston

Published by SafeMusic Ltd

**“The Last Post”**

Performed by The Yorkshire  
Military Band

With thanks to

Leslie Wales, Govia Thameslink Railway Ltd, Space 2, Seaford Town Council, Mrs Barbara Dennis, Salvatore Fisco, McAuley Catholic High School, St Ignatius Catholic Parish Church, Nation of Shopkeepers, Leeds, Prime Studios, Leeds, Doncaster Council, The Society of Authors

‘Retreat from Moscow’ by William Nicholson

Was first produced at the Chichester Festival theatre in October 1999

And produced in New York at The Booth Theatre in October 2003 by Susan Quint Gallin, Stuart Thompson, Ron Kastner, True Love Productions, Mary Lu Roffe and Jam Theatricals

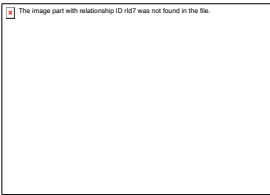
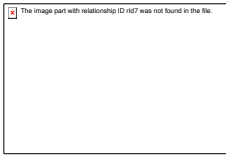
Filmed on Location in Sussex, Yorkshire and at Northern Film and TV Studio, United Kingdom

Produced by Immersive Limited

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