

Short Synopsis

When Did You Last See Your Father? is an unflinching exploration of a father/son relationship, as Blake Morrison deals with his father Arthur's terminal illness and imminent death. Blake's memories of everything funny, embarrassing and upsetting about his childhood and teens are interspersed with tender and heart-rending scenes in the present, as he struggles to come to terms with his father, and their history of conflict, and learns to accept that one's parents are not always accountable to their children.

Directed by Anand Tucker (Hilary and Jackie), from a screenplay by David Nicholls, adapted from Blake Morrison's novel of the same name, the film stars Colin Firth, Jim Broadbent, Juliet Stevenson, Gina McKee, Claire Skinner, and Matthew Beard.

Long Synopsis

Arthur Morrison (Jim Broadbent), and his wife Kim (Juliet Stevenson), are doctors in the same medical practice in the heart of the Yorkshire Dales, England. They have two children, Gillian (Claire Skinner), and her older brother Blake (Colin Firth). Blake is a forty-year-old established author, married with two children and confronted with the fact that his father is terminally ill.

The film opens during a summer family trip in the late 1950s. Arthur hits the hard shoulder to skip a long queue of traffic at a car racing event, and eight-year-old Blake and the rest of the family, are overwhelmingly embarrassed. It's the first of many flashbacks that illustrate Arthur's bluff attitude to life and his pride in getting something for nothing. These childhood episodes also introduce Beaty (Sarah Lancashire) and her daughter, Josie. It soon becomes clear that Beaty and Arthur are more than just friends and that Josie is potentially Arthur's child. Adult Blake strives to find out the truth about Josie, and in doing so uncovers the interesting parameters of his father's marriage.

The essence of this father and son relationship is further explored through flashbacks to Blake's teens – a family holiday, a fumbled affair with the au pair – where the awkward and introverted Blake is constantly crushed by his father's flirtatious ways and need to be the center of attention. There are happy and tender memories too; of Arthur teaching Blake to drive, a camping trip in the rain, and Arthur saying goodbye to Blake as he leaves for university. In the present it becomes clear that Arthur still dominates his grown-up son, a dynamic to which Blake is resigned, much to his wife Kathy's (Gina McKee) annoyance. When he and his family confront the reality of Arthur's cancer, Blake is forced to reconcile himself with the past. Blake's recollections are interspersed with heart-rending and uncompromising scenes of Arthur's decline and submission to the disease that is killing him. It is ironic that Arthur's battle with his failing health is paralleled by Blake's struggle to come to terms with their relationship, but there's a human inevitability we can all identify with. It is only after Arthur's death; only when the tears come, that Blake is finally able to make peace with his memories.

Cast List

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| Colin Firth | Blake Morrison |
| Jim Broadbent | Arthur Morrison |
| Juliet Stevenson | Kim Morrison |
| Gina McKee | Kathy Morrison |
| Elaine Cassidy | Sandra |
| Claire Skinner | Gillian |
| Matthew Beard | Young Blake Morrison (Age 14) |
| Bradley Johnson | Young Blake Morrison (Age 8) |
| Sarah Lancashire | Beaty |

Crew List

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|---------------|----------|
| Anand Tucker | Director |
| David Nichols | Writer |

Based on the Novel by Blake Morrison

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| Elizabeth Karlsen | Producer |
| Stephen Woolley | Producer |
| Laurie Borg | Co-producer |
| Lizzie Francke | Executive producer |
| Tessa Ross | Executive producer |
| Gary Smith | Executive producer |
| Paul White | Executive producer |
| Howard Atherton | Director of Photography |
| Trevor Waite | Editor |
| Alice Normington | Production Designer |
| Caroline Harris | Costume Designer |
| Barrington Pheloung | Original Music |
| Christine Blundell | Make-Up and Hair Designer |

The Production

First published in 1993, Blake Morrison's *When Did You Last See Your Father?* is an extraordinary portrait of family life, and an honest and moving account of his father's life and death. It became a best seller, winning both the J R Ackerley Prize and the Esquire/Volvo/Waterstone's Non-Fiction Book Award, and inspiring a whole genre of confessional memoirs.

Blake Morrison explains: "I never imagined that I would write a book about my father but when he became ill, I was in such a state of shock, I found myself keeping diary entries as a way of dealing with it. As I wrote, I started to recover childhood memories, which proved to be therapeutic in coming to terms with my father's death. I showed the diary entries to somebody who thought they might interest people, and so something that was very private to begin with, eventually became a book."

The power of the story lies in its extreme candor, a characteristic which Blake acknowledges may not have existed had he not written the book when his father was dying. He explains: "My normal censorship rules weren't in place. I was so disorientated by what was happening, it all spilled out."

When producer Elizabeth Karlsen read the book, it completely captivated her: "I thought it was absolutely wonderful, a really beautiful book, and a universal story that would work very well on screen," says Elizabeth. Unfortunately, she was to discover the book had already been optioned. "I thought that was the end of the story," says Elizabeth. However, some time later, Elizabeth began to wonder what had happened to the book. "With things that get under your skin," she says, "you can't help but return to them". To her delight, she discovered that the option had lapsed, and together with veteran producer Stephen Woolley, snapped up the option on the spot for their company Number 9 Films.

Their first move was to ask David Nicholls, writer of *Cold Feet*, to write the screenplay. He had read the book when it was first published, some ten years before, and was gripped by its raw honesty. He had long since harbored a desire to adapt the book for the screen.

Says David: "I found the book to be incredibly moving. It dealt with a subject that had seldom been dealt with before, with so much honesty, and frankness, and detail. I'm in awe of Blake's ability to be that emotionally honest. He really 'spilled his guts' in the book. It's what makes it so compelling."

The writer and the producers, however, were well aware of the difficulties of adapting this particular book into a script. Although it has a remarkable relationship at its center, the story is very impressionistic and episodic, and does not lend itself naturally to a narrative. Explains David: "The problem with adapting a memoir for the screen is that real life tends not to follow the arc of a film – a beginning, middle, and end. The biggest challenge has been staying true to the contents of the book whilst imposing the shape on it, and wheedling out details which will work well on screen."

David continues: "In the film, we're trying to replicate the sense you get of the process Blake goes through as he writes the memoir - at the beginning maddened by his father's self-righteousness, by his pomposity, by him constantly hogging the limelight, towards a coming to terms with all of those qualities and finally finding peace with the memory of his father, and that in spite of his exasperating qualities, he was a compelling and attractive man. What's extremely moving about the book, and what I hope we've achieved in the adaptation, is Blake's journey from resenting his father to embracing his memory, and that is a very powerful journey." "Although it's tragic that the father dies, and that Blake experiences such loss and such confusion in his grief," observes Elizabeth, "it is also a real celebration of a life – and a relationship."

With a script in the works, the producers turned their attention to finding the right director for the project, and found they shared a common vision for the film with director Anand Tucker. "It really moved me, and I wanted to do it. It was as simple as that," recalls Anand. "It was one of those rare lightening strikes moments... David had written a very beautiful script that was also funny, touching, and tender. There's something very compelling about real life, and the way Blake was so honest about what happens to you when someone's dying. It was essential to preserve that truthfulness, and hopefully it will allow an audience to experience their own emotions through the filter of the character, and move them without them feeling exploited."

Says Elizabeth: "We approached Anand to direct the film because we felt he was a perfect fit for the material. He showed with the brilliant *Hilary and Jackie* how capable he is of handling intimate, emotional narrative without making the story feel small or the images mundane. He is a real filmmaker, who can take a personal story and raise it to great visual and emotional heights."

Coming at the project with his own enthusiasm and perspective, Anand worked alongside David to shape the shooting script. Says David: "Anand embraced the material in a sensitive and poetic way." Blake was assured of Anand's dedication to authenticity by his many probing questions. Blake remarks: "I have a great deal of respect for Anand Tucker as a director. He had questions about things not in the book because he wanted to get it right. I had to accept that a film and book are different creatures, and that the film has to work in a different way, but I trusted Anand from an early stage that he would find an equivalent form of expressing both the humor and sadness. I knew that he would be attentive to the emotional power of the material. What's specific to me and my family isn't that important, what's crucial is to convey the elemental things about relationships in a family, and I'm absolutely sure the film will honor that."

The Morrison Family

At the center of the story is an unflinching portrait of a father and son relationship. Blake sheds light on Arthur Morrison, and their relationship: "I loved my father, but he was a difficult man. He was overbearing and the rest of the family, me, my mother, and my sister, lived in his shadow. He was however a larger than life character and very charismatic." He continues: "Many fathers want their sons to follow in their footsteps and that was certainly true of my father. It was his dream that I would take over the family practice. Unfortunately I had no interest in being a doctor so I disappointed him. At the same time, when he saw that I was doing quite well in my chosen field as a writer, I believe there was some pride."

In the pivotal roles of Blake Morrison, the son, and Arthur Morrison, the father, the filmmakers were lucky enough to secure the services of their first choice for both roles, two of Britain's finest actors, Colin Firth and Jim Broadbent. Says Elizabeth: "Our hope was that because the script was so powerful and Anand such a talented director, this would be a project that they couldn't say no to... We were thrilled that they both wanted to do it."

"I saw a story which was simply irresistible in its honesty," says Colin, about his decision to take on the challenge of an autobiographical figure. "I knew the book, and loved it from the moment I read it for all sorts of reasons. I didn't just respond to its honest and moving description of the relationships within it, I also responded to the flavor of the 60s, and the 80s, washing your car on a Sunday, putting up a tent come hell or high water, having iodine put on your cuts, and also what it feels like to be a teenager, desperate to be taken seriously. From the little details to the main thrust of the material, the whole thing resonated. When I saw David Nicholls' beautifully pared down, restrained script, to be directed by Anand Tucker, I knew this was something I wanted to do."

In spite of his enthusiasm to step into Blake's shoes, Colin explains: "I found the character of Blake difficult to approach initially simply because the other characters are so vividly described, particularly the powerfully drawn figure of Arthur, and there is always something quite nebulous about a first person character. However, there is something extraordinarily strong about the way Blake comes across internally." It is not the first time Colin has undertaken the challenge of playing a real person, and he explains: "What's important is capturing the spirit of the person. You have to depart from the details and concentrate on that."

About the relationship between father and son the film explores, Colin comments: "I think Blake admires his father enormously. I don't think things would be so difficult for him if he didn't. He's overwhelmed by his father's strengths rather than ashamed of any inadequacies. He envies his father's ease with people and ability to get attention. It resonates so strongly with everyone, I think... The conflicted relationships we all have with our parents, the little ways in which your dad can push those buttons. You can be a triumphant 45 year-old, yet you go home and within ten minutes you're back to being a surly adolescent again – with just one little word".

Anand says: "Colin is a wonderful actor. This is a hard role to play because it is quite passive. Blake's journey is a very interior one, in which he is reflecting on his past so you are watching a man thinking. That is very hard for an actor to play convincingly but Colin has that rare quality of being able to be still and yet convey so much." Given the universality of the story, it was essential to cast an actor in the role of Blake with whom an audience could empathize. Anand continues: "The thing about Colin is that you care about him from the moment you see him on screen, even if he is angry and being difficult, he has an essential humanity to him."

Elizabeth agrees: "We needed to cast an actor with whom an audience can identify because of the familiarity of the story. He also happens to be charming and entertaining, intelligent and focused, so working with him is a delight."

Academy Award winner Jim Broadbent also responded extremely enthusiastically to the script. "It's a gift of a part," he says. "I was struck by the way in which the relationship between Blake and Arthur has been expressed. Blake Morrison in his book, and subsequently David with the script, have taken a dispassionate view of the father-son relationship, but at the same time managed to be incredibly compassionate. They have depicted an utterly caring relationship, in spite of its difficulties."

Jim readily recognizes that Arthur is an intriguing character to play, and relied upon the clearly drawn description in both the book and screenplay to capture the essence of the man: "He is an extremely complex character. He was funny, yet at the same time rude and awkward, stubborn, yet charming and delightful. The combination of all those characteristics makes Arthur a fascinating role."

About the relationship between Blake and Arthur, Jim comments: "There's an awful lot that resonates in Blake's relationship with his father which is so universal. I think we see the arc of a relationship that many of us go through from Blake as a child who hero worships his dad, to a teenager who both resents him and is embarrassed by him, to an adult who begins to respect him and through understanding him better, love him again. The fun is in the detail that Blake wrote about, and that David has captured in the script, that also allows us to relate to the material."

"Jim is just an extraordinary actor," observes Elizabeth, who has worked with him several times before on films including *Little Voice* and *The Crying Game*. "He is able to capture the soul of each scene and it seems so effortless for him. He gets right under the skin of the part". She continues: "Jim has a chameleon-like physicality. He really uses his body in the work which allows him to very convincingly portray Arthur at different ages". Anand concurs: "Jim is a force of nature. I think his secret is that he has thought about the scene before he comes on set but when you come to shoot it, he is totally in the moment and has that rare ability and confidence to allow the scene to 'happen'..."

Blake Morrison was delighted that Jim Broadbent was cast in the role of his father. "It is hard to imagine anyone else portraying my father as well as Jim Broadbent. While he is not a physical match, he has grasped the sound of his voice brilliantly, and most importantly, he has captured the spirit of the man."

Cast in the role of Blake's mother, Arthur's wife, Kim, celebrated stage actress Juliet Stevenson, keenly responded to the familiarity of the story. "It's about family dynamics – from love to rage, and every shade in between." She also looked forward to the challenge of playing a woman at various different ages. She says: "I looked forward to exploring all those different chapters of a life." She continues: "I feel a huge sense of responsibility playing someone's mother – an iconic person in most people's lives – but it is a joyous responsibility because I'm fascinated in discovering the essence of who Blake's mother was... Having found it, I can then make my own decisions about how to portray her." To assist with this process, Juliet looked to another of Blake Morrison's books, *Things My Mother Never Told Me*, to learn more about the character she had been chosen to play.

About the relationship with Arthur, and her children, Juliet says: "I think she did love Arthur, and he adored her, but I believe there was an internal withdrawal on her part away from Arthur, in large part due to the infidelities she had to endure throughout their marriage. I think she probably channeled her passions into her children. I think she is sensitive to the huge effect that Arthur has on Blake and that's why she's always there trying to keep things calm, mediate between them. She is sensitive to even the adult Blake's sensitivities towards his father. Her function is still to protect him from what his father can do to him, even as an adult."

Playing opposite Colin and Jim has been a great experience for Juliet. "I think Colin is a wonderful actor. He's very fluid and we share an interest in the dynamic between the characters. There's something very boyish about him too so it's easy to feel very maternal with him". She continues: "Jim, too, is a wonderful actor. He comes with an enormous amount. His performance is very richly detailed although it appears effortless."

Juliet embodied everything the filmmakers were looking for in the role of Kim. Elizabeth remarks: "We needed someone with a solid presence – as well as someone who could do the age span. We needed someone an audience could believe would put up with Arthur for all those years. He is a lovable character but he does transgress and we needed someone whom an audience would believe would be there through all of that and still love him. Juliet is a really fine actress and we knew that she would be able to carry that off, that she could convey that level of graciousness and emotional maturity."

Anand adds: "I saw something already in Juliet close to my impression of Kim." This is an important element for Anand as he explains he is interested in an actor's own essential quality.

Working with Anand has been a wonderful experience for Juliet. “Anand is glorious on set. He is full of quiet enthusiasm and has a love for the work which is really fresh. He makes very interesting and creative choices. He is lifting the material out of biography into something more poetic and is not afraid to use that language and is shooting it in a very interesting way.”

In the role of the teen Blake, the filmmakers were thrilled when casting director Priscilla John ‘discovered’ Matthew Beard. Whilst Matthew has been acting in television and theatre productions since the age of five, *When Did You Last See Your Father?* is his first feature film. Says Anand: “I watched several audition tapes and Matthew stood out. He moved me! He is a very intelligent young man and having been through his own family drama, he showed an ability to really understand the material. He also happens to be a fine actor and a delightful young man.” Matthew was thrilled to be offered the part and recognizes the teen Blake he plays in many of his contemporaries: “He’s a typical teenager – and though he has an overbearing dad who imposes his opinions – we still get to see them having a laugh together.”

Rounding out the rest of the Morrison family is Gina McKee as Blake’s wife, Kathy, who says of the project: “It was a beautifully written script, illustrating the relationships in this family in a raw and moving, yet humorous way. I felt a great deal of support for the project and was thrilled to be a part of it.” Claire Skinner fills the role of Gillian, Blake’s sister: “It was a wonderful story – and everybody can relate to it. Having to deal with the extraordinary experience of saying goodbye to a parent, and yet still having to go and get the milk. I think that’s the beauty of it. It deals with the normality of life – and death.”

The Shoot

When Did You Last See Your Father filmed for seven weeks, on location in London, Sussex, and Derbyshire for five weeks, and on sets built at Twickenham Studios for two.

The filmmakers were charged with the enormous task of representing three eras – the 50s, 60s, and 80s – but the shared vision, commitment and talents of the cinematographer Howard Atherton, production designer Alice Normington, costume designer Caroline Harris, and hair and make up designer Christine Blundell has paved the way for a stunning looking film.

Anand has worked with Alice several times before and says: “We have developed a professional shorthand and understand each other”. They sat down together at a very early stage and worked out how they wanted to represent each period. A wealth of photographic reference material provided by Blake Morrison helped inform their designs and ensure a great degree of authenticity.

Locations included London’s Liberal Club for the Awards Ceremony; in Sussex, the famous Goodwood Motor Circuit, where Arthur embarrasses his family by jumping the queue; the picturesque Petworth Park, where child Blake catches Arthur in the car with Beaty; the beautiful West Wittering Beach, where Arthur teaches Blake to drive; and Brighton, for the game of Crazy Golf. Derbyshire locations included two Lodges; Cromford and Weston, which provided the setting for The Grange, home of the Morrison family.

Summing up, David says: “The film is about an ordinary father-son relationship and all the anxieties, pain, embarrassment and emotions of that relationship. The story’s everydayness and extreme frankness will hopefully make it a compelling and emotional experience.”

The Cast

Colin Firth – (Blake)

Colin Firth is a classically trained British theatre actor, and a veteran of television and film. Most recently, Colin has starred in Doug Lefler's *The Last Legion*, Kirk Jones' *Nanny McPhee*, Atom Egoyan's *Where The Truth Lies*, and reprised his role as dashing Mark Darcy in the hit British comedy *Bridget Jones; The Edge of Reason*. He charmed audiences worldwide when he first starred as Darcy opposite Renée Zellweger in *Bridget Jones's Diary* in 2001. He recently completed filming *Then She Found Me*, written, directed by, and co-starring Helen Hunt, and Griffin Dunne's *The Accidental Husband*, opposite Uma Thurman.

Prior to this Colin starred in the psychological thriller *Trauma*, opposite Mena Suvari, and *Girl With a Pearl Earring*, based on the best-selling novel by Tracy Chevalier, as the 17th century artist Johannes Vermeer opposite Scarlett Johansson and Tom Wilkinson. In October 2003, he appeared in the Working Title production *Love Actually*, written and directed by Richard Curtis, together with Hugh Grant, Emma Thompson, Liam Neeson, Laura Linney and Keira Knightley. In 2002, Colin starred opposite Rupert Everett and Reese Witherspoon in the Miramax film, *The Importance of Being Earnest*.

In 1998, Colin portrayed Lord Wessex in *Shakespeare in Love*, the evil intended husband to Violet De Lesseps (Gwyneth Paltrow). In 1996, he appeared in the multi-Oscar® nominated film, *The English Patient*, opposite Kristen Scott Thomas and Ralph Fiennes. His other film credits include *What a Girl Wants*, *Hope Springs*, *Relative Values*, *A Thousand Acres* (with Michelle Pfeiffer and Jessica Lange), *Apartment Zero*, *My Life So Far*, *The Secret Laughter of Women*, *Fever Pitch*, *Circle of Friends*, *Playmaker* and the title role in Milos Forman's *Valmont*.

On the small screen, Colin is infamous for his 1995 breakout role, as Mr. Darcy in the BBC adaptation of *Pride and Prejudice*, (he received a BAFTA nomination for Best Actor and legions of female admirers). Colin's most recent television appearances were in Dominic Savage's *Born Equal*, a BBC drama, which followed the stories of ordinary British people affected in different ways by homelessness and poverty, and *Celebration*, written by Harold Pinter. In March 2004, he starred as the host of NBC's *Saturday Night Live*. He was nominated for an Emmy Award in 2001 for Outstanding Supporting Actor in the critically acclaimed HBO film *Conspiracy* and has also received the Royal Television Society Best Actor Award and a BAFTA nomination for his work in *Tumbledown*. His other television credits include *Windmills on the Clyde: Making Donovan Quick*, *Donovan Quick*, *The Widowing of Mrs. Holroyd*, *Deep Blue Sea*, *Nostramo*, *Hostages*, and *Tumbledown*. He made his London stage debut in the West End production of *Another Country* playing Bennett; he was then chosen to play the character Judd in the 1984 film adaptation opposite Rupert Everett.

Jim Broadbent - (Arthur)

Jim Broadbent has successfully built a body of outstanding film, television and theatre credits to become one of Britain's leading, recognizable and most loved actors. Jim gained huge critical acclaim for his role in *Iris* (2001) winning the Academy Award and Golden Globe for Best Supporting Actor. In the same year Jim won the BAFTA for Best Supporting Actor for his role opposite Nicole Kidman in Baz Luhrman's *Moulin Rouge* (2001)

Further major film credits include Mike Leigh's *Vera Drake* (2004), *Bridget Jones: Edge of Reason* (2004) and *Bridget Jones Diary* (2001), Martin Scorsese's *Gangs of New York* (2002) and Leigh's highly praised *Topsy Turvy* (1999), for which Broadbent won Best Actor at the Venice Film Festival.

Among his many other films are Terry Gilliam's *Time Bandits* and *Brazil*; Mike Newell's *The Good Father* and *Enchanted April*; Neil Jordan's *The Crying Game*; Woody Allen's *Bullets Over Broadway*; Richard Loncraine's *Richard III* and *The Gathering Storm*; Mark Herman's *Little Voice*; Stephen Fry's *Bright Young Things*; Frank Coraci's *Around The World In 80 Days*; and Mira Nair's screen adaptation of *Vanity Fair*. His most recent credits include *Hot Fuzz* (2007), *Art School Confidential* (2006) and *The Chronicles of Narnia* (2005). He is currently filming *Inkheart*, New Line's adaptation of Cornelia Funke's best-selling children's novel, directed by Iain Softley.

In television, Jim won a BAFTA TV Nomination for *The Young Visitors* (2003) as well as Golden Globe and Emmy Nominations for the HBO classic *The Gathering Storm* (2002). Most recently Jim appeared in *The Street* (2006) for BBC and *Longford* (2006) for HBO/Channel 4.

Having begun his career as an assistant stage manager at the Regent Park Open Air Theatre, his leading theatre credits include Richard Eyre's *The Government Inspector*, *The Pillowman*, and most recently *Theatre of Blood*, all for the Royal National Theatre. Other leading theatre credits include Sam Mendes *Habeas*

Corpus for the Donmar Warehouse and Max Stafford Clarke's *The Recruiting Officer* for the Royal Court Theatre.

Juliet Stevenson - (Kim)

Juliet Stevenson is one of the most respected actors of her generation. She is best known for her performance opposite Alan Rickman in Anthony Minghella's *Truly Madly, Deeply*, a performance that won her the Evening Standard Film Award for Best Actress. More recent film credits include Anthony Minghella's *Breaking and Entering*, *Infamous*, *Red Mercury*, *A Previous Engagement*, *Being Julia*, *Mona Lisa Smile*, *Nicholas Nickleby*, *Food For Love*, and *Bend It Like Beckham*. Juliet entered films as one of a trio of women who share the same name and the same murderous streak in Peter Greenaway's *Drowning by Numbers*. Other screen credits include *Ladder of Swords*, David Jones' *The Trial*, Howard Davies' *The Secret Rapture*, and Douglas McGrath's adaptation of Jane Austen's *Emma*.

Although Juliet has gained fame through her television and film work, she is primarily a stage actress. After training at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art, Juliet became a company member of the Royal Shakespeare Company where she quickly rose from small roles to leads, starring in *Measure for Measure*, *As You Like It*, and *Les Liaisons Dangereuses*. Juliet went on to join the National Theatre where she solidified her standing as one of Britain's best stage actresses in productions of *Yerma*, *Hedda Gabler*, *Burn This*, and *Death and the Maiden*; a performance for which she garnered some of her best notices and both the Laurence Olivier Award and the Time Out Award for Best Actress. She made her American stage debut in the LA production of *Scenes From An Execution* in 1993, for which she was awarded the LA Drama Critics Circle Award for Best Actress.

Her television career took off in 1978 when she appeared in the popular TV serialization of Catherine Cookson's novels, *The Mallens*. Other notable television work includes *Life Story/The Race for Double Helix*, *Living With Dinosaurs*, which received an Emmy Award for Best Children's Film for Television, *A Doll's House*, *The Politician's Wife*, for which she received a BAFTA nomination, *Cider With Rosie*, *Trial by Fire*, *The Road from Coorain*, *The Pact*, *Hear the Silence*, *The Snow Queen*, and most recently as Annie Pierrepont, opposite Timothy Spall, in *Pierrepont*. Juliet was awarded a CBE in 1999.

Gina McKee – (Kathy)

Gina McKee (Kathy) is best known for her starring roles in the TV dramas *Our Friends In The North* and *The Lost Prince* for the BBC, and the ITV version of *The Forsyte Saga*. For her role as Mary in *Our Friends In The North*, Gina won three Best Actress Awards – the BAFTA, the Royal Television Society Award, and the Broadcasting Press Guild Award.

Her stand-out performance in the box office smash, *Notting Hill*, as wheelchair bound Bella brought her to the attention of international audiences. More recent film credits include the forthcoming *Atonement*, *Scenes Of A Sexual Nature*, *Mirror Mask*, *Mickybo And Me*, *The Divine Secrets of the Yaya Sisterhood*, *The Reckoning*, *The Zookeeper*, and *There's Only One Jimmy Grimble*. Prior to that her film credits include *Woman Talking Dirty*, *Wonderland*, for which she was received the British Independent Film Award for Best Actress, *The Loss of Sexual Innocence*, *Croupier*, and *Naked*.

On television, Gina recently filmed *Tsunami: The Aftermath*, a miniseries for HBO which focused on a group of fictional characters caught up in the harrowing aftermath of the tsunami that devastated the coast of Thailand two years ago. Other television credits include *Lewis*, *The Lavender List*, *The Baby War*, *Dice*, *The Passion*, *Mothertime*, *Beyond Fear*, *The Treasure Seekers*, *Element of Doubt*, *Chest*, and *Brass Eye*. In the theatre, Gina has lent her talents to, amongst others, productions of *The Exonerated*, *Aristocrats*, *Old Times*, and *Five Kinds of Silence*

Elaine Cassidy - (Sandra)

Elaine Cassidy is best known for her roles in Atom Egoyan's *Felicia's Journey*, for which she received both Golden Satellite and Genie award nominations for Best Actress, and Kirsten Sheridan's *Disco Pigs*, opposite Cilliam Murphy. More recent film credits include *The Truth*, *The Bay of Love And Sorrow*, and Alexandro Almonaber's *The Others*.

Elaine began performing at the age of five, making her debut in a school production of *Pinocchio*. At thirteen, she starred in Geraldine Creed's short *The Stranger Within Me*, and in 1996 she made her feature film debut in the director's *The Sun, The Moon and The Stars*, for which she was nominated for the Most Promising Actress at the Geneva Film Festival.

Elaine's television appearances include most recently *The Ghost Squad* and *Fingersmith*. Other television credits include *Uncle Adolf*, *Watermelon*, *The Lost World*, *Mission Top Secret*, and *Glenroe*. On stage, she has performed in *The Night of Dolls*, *The Children of Lir*, *Annie and the Witches*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, *The Sound of Music*, *Alice in Wonderland*, and *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*. Most recently Elaine was seen in the role of Abigail in Arthur Miller's 'The Crucible,' at London's Gielgud Theatre.

Claire Skinner – (Gillian)

Claire Skinner (Gillian) is a versatile British actress working in film, television, and theatre. Her film credits include Tim Burton's *Sleepy Hollow*, *The Escort*, *ID*, *Return of the Native*, *Clockwork Mice*, *Naked* and *Life Is Sweet*, both for director Mike Leigh.

On television, Claire has most recently been in *The Trials of Tony Blair*, *The Family Man*, *Class of 76*, *A Murder Is Announced*, *Murphy's Law*, *Life Begins*, *The Booze Cruise*, *Trevor's World of Sport*, *The Genius of Mozart*, *Bedtime*, *Swallow*, and *Perfect Strangers*. Earlier television credits include *Second Sight*, *A Dance To The Music Of Time*, *The Peter Principle*, *The Wingless Bird*, *Brass Eye*, *Coogan's Run*, *Chef*, and *Two Golden Balls*.

In the theatre, Claire has starred in Nicholas Hytner's *A Winter's Tale*, and Sam Mendes' *Othello* and *The Glass Menagerie*, for which she received the London Critic's Circle Best Actress Award, the Time Out Best Actress Award, and an Olivier award nomination for Best Supporting Actress. Other theatre credits include Nicholas Hytner's *The Importance of Being Earnest*, Trevor Nunn's *Measure for Measure*, *Invisible Friends*, *Talking Steps*, *Othello*, and *The Revengers Comedies*, all for Alan Ayckbourn.

Matthew Beard (Blake)

Matthew Beard's **first ever television appearance was as a five-year-old** in YTV's *Touch of Frost*. This was the start of a decade of television and theatre appearances which would be the envy of many a jobbing actor – twice his age!

His television work includes guest roles in *Where the Heart Is*, *Fat Friends*, and *The Royal*. He played young Paul Morel in *Sons and Lovers*, with Hugo Speer and Sarah Lancashire, and played Sam Eustace in *The Eustace Brothers*, with Ralph Little and Neil Morrissey. He took the lead role of Tom in *An Angel for May*, and most recently played young Tom in *Johnny and the Bomb*. Theatre work includes Shane in *Brassed Off*, Peter in *The Railway Children*, and Rodney in *Everyday Heroes*.

Matthew was also a regular on BBC radio's Play for Today with roles in *Keeping the Feast*, *Distant Whispers*, *War Zone*, and *A Winters Tale*.

Matthew lives in Sheffield, and has three little sisters. He is head boy at his school and delighted his family when he achieved 11 A stars in his GCSE's and 3 A's in his AS levels.

The Filmmakers

Anand Tucker (Director)

After 2 years as a director on the BBC's cultural flagship, *The Late Show*, **Anand Tucker** joined Oxford Films where he made many documentaries including a Bookmark profile of Anne Rice which won him a BAFTA in 1993.

His first drama, *Saint Ex*, starred Bruno Ganz as Antoine de St Exupery, writer of *The Little Prince*. He then went on to direct *Hilary and Jackie*, which won Oscar nominations for Emily Watson and Rachel Griffiths, before forming Archer Street Films and serving as a producer on the award-winning *Girl With A Pearl Earring*.

His last film, *Shopgirl*, starring Clare Danes, Steve Martin and Jason Schwartzmann, based on Martin's adaptation of his own novella, premiered as a Gala Presentation at the 2005 Toronto Film Festival. Buena Vista released the film to critical acclaim in October 2005.

Elizabeth Karlsen (Producer)

Elizabeth Karlsen began her career in independent film production in New York, working with directors such as Bill Sherwood, Zbigniew Rybczynski, Jim Jarmusch and Jean-Baptiste Mondino. She returned to London in the mid-80's to work as Head of Production for the UK's leading independent distribution and production company Palace Pictures, headed by Stephen Woolley and Nik Powell. There she oversaw productions such as Bill Duke's *A Rage in Harlem*, starring Danny Glover, Robin Givens and Forest Whitaker, which featured in the main competition at the Cannes Film Festival; Neil Jordan's *The Miracle*, starring Beverly D'Angelo; David Leland's *The Big Man*, starring Liam Neeson; Stephen Gyllenhaal's *Waterland*, and Richard Stanley's horror hit *Hardware*. She then co-produced Neil Jordan's *The Crying Game*, which was nominated for six Academy Awards including Best Picture and secured Jordan the Oscar for Best Screenplay.

She continued to produce for Woolley and Powell's Scala Productions where her credits include Terence Davies' *The Neon Bible*, which premiered in main competition at the Cannes Film Festival; Mark Herman's *Little Voice*, which was nominated for six Golden Globe Awards including Best Actor, (which Michael Caine went on to win), and an Academy Award nomination for Brenda Blethyn as Best Actress. The film was also nominated for six British Academy Awards including Best Picture. Other credits include Angela Pope's *Hollow Reed* and Mark Herman's *Purely Belter*, which premiered at the Sundance Film Festival and Cannes Film Festival Director's Fortnight respectively. *Hollow Reed* won the Audience Award at the Dinard Film Festival, and Maggie Smith and Judie Dench, the stars of 2004's release, *Ladies In Lavender*, were both nominated in the best actress category at the European Film Academy Awards for their performances.

Her most recent production *Mrs Harris*, starring Annette Bening and Ben Kingsley premiered at the Toronto Film Festival in September 2005, and was nominated for a total of 12 Emmy and three Golden Globe Awards this year including Best Actress and Best Mini-Series or Made For Television Motion Picture, two SAG Awards, a PGA Award, and Elizabeth was the recipient of the Women's Image Network Award for Outstanding Made For Television Movie. In 2006 she produced *Sixty Six*, starring Eddie Marsan and Helena Bonham Carter for Working Title Films.

After a long collaboration with Stephen Woolley under the banner of Palace and Scala they formed the London based Number 9 Films, which was awarded one of the much sought after UK Film Council Slate Development Funding schemes in 2005. Recent Number 9 releases include Woolley's directorial debut *Stoned*, starring David Morrissey, Paddy Considine and Leo Gregory; Neil Jordan's *Breakfast on Pluto*, starring Liam Neeson and Cillian Murphy; and Phyllis Nagy's multi Emmy-nominated *Mrs Harris* for HBO. Forthcoming Number 9 productions include Peter Straughan's *How To Lose Friends and Alienate People*, adapted from Toby Young's bestselling book, and starring Simon Pegg; Julian Schnabel's *Edith and the Lonely Doll*, written by Caroline Thompson (*The Corpse Bride*, *Edward Scissorhands*); *We Want Sex*, a social comedy set during the 1968 Ford strike, written by Billy Ivory; and Miguel Arteta's *Together*.

Stephen Woolley (Producer)

Stephen Woolley has spent a lifetime steeped in movies and filmmaking. His career began in 1976 at the Screen on the Green cinema in London where he tore tickets, sold ice cream, projected films and helped manage the cinema. After working with The Other Cinema, he programmed and subsequently owned his own cinema, The Scala, which won acclaim for its diverse, original and alternative programming. In 1982, Woolley launched Palace Video in partnership with Nik Powell, releasing titles such as *Eraserhead* and

Mephisto. Establishing a theatrical arm a year later, Palace acquired, marketed and distributed some 250 independent and European movies from *The Evil Dead*, *Diva*, and *Merry Christmas*, *Mr Lawrence* to *When Harry Met Sally*.

During this period, Stephen's producing career flourished, with a diverse range of critically acclaimed and successful films including *Absolute Beginners*, starring David Bowie, Ray Davies, Patsy Kensit and James Fox, and Golden Globe nominated dance comedy *Shag*, starring Bridget Fonda. Also *Scandal*, starring Joanne Whalley-Kilmer, John Hurt and Bridget Fonda attracted phenomenal critical acclaim and box office success on both sides of the Atlantic. Other Palace productions included *The Big Man*, starring Liam Neeson and Joanne Whalley-Kilmer; *A Rage in Harlem*, with Forest Whitaker and Danny Glover, and *The Pope Must Die*, starring Robbie Coltrane. Stephen also acted as Executive Producer on director Richard Stanley's first and second features *Hardware* and *Devil Dust*, as well as *Waterland*, starring Jeremy Irons, and Terence Davies' *The Neon Bible*.

Breakfast on Pluto, starring Cillian Murphy and Liam Neeson, has continued Stephen's long-term partnership with director Neil Jordan which began with *The Company of Wolves* in 1983. His other collaborations with Jordan include *The Miracle*, *The Butcher Boy*, *The Good Thief*, the Oscar-nominated *The End of The Affair*, *Michael Collins*, *Interview With A Vampire*, and the Oscar-winning *The Crying Game*, for which Stephen was awarded Producer of The Year by the Producer's Guild of America in 1992. Stephen also produced Jordan's Oscar nominated *Mona Lisa*. He also has over twenty executive producer credits which include *Hollow Reed*, *Fever Pitch*, *Purely Belter*, and *Little Voice*.

Stephen was until recently Chairman of the BAFTA film committee, where he'd served for ten years and was instrumental in ushering a new era of modernization and success at the British Academy. He is also a member of the American Academy.

In 2005 Stephen made his directorial debut with the film *Stoned*, starring Leo Gregory, Paddy Considine, and David Morrissey. Stephen's upcoming projects as producer include *How To Lose Friends and Alienate People*, starring Simon Pegg, written by Peter Straughan, and to be directed by Bob Weide.

Blake Morrison (Author of Original Novel)

Blake Morrison was born in Skipton, Yorkshire. His books include two collections of poems, *Dark Glasses* and *The Ballad of the Yorkshire Ripper*; two bestselling memoirs, *When Did You Last See Your Father?* and *Things My Mother Never Told Me*; a novel about Gutenberg, a collection of stories and essays, and a children's book.

Blake co-edited *The Penguin Book of Contemporary British Poetry*, with Andrew Motion, and with the actor and director Barrie Rutter, he has adapted several plays for the theatre company Northern Broadsides. He has also written three librettos, working with Gavin Bryars, Atom Egoyan and Robert Lepage. Formerly literary editor of the Observer and Independent on Sunday, he is currently Professor of Creative and Life Writing at Goldsmiths College, London. His latest book is a novel, *South of the River*, published in March 2007.

David Nicholls (Screenplay)

David Nicholls studied Drama and English at Bristol University, before moving to New York, where he trained as an actor at the American Musical and Dramatic Academy.

Returning to London, David worked as an actor for eight years, performing in many plays, and spending several years at the Royal National Theatre. After a period working as a TV script editor, he began to work as a fulltime writer in 1999.

David's TV writing credits include episodes of the hit TV series *Cold Feet*, as well as the original series *Rescue Me*, and *I Saw You*. His most recent play for television, a modern version of *Much Ado About Nothing* for BBC TV, received critical acclaim and a BAFTA nomination for Best Drama. His most recent play for BBC television, *After Sun*, was screened in September 2006.

David's first film credit was as co-writer (with director Matthew Warchus) on the film adaptation of Sam Shepard's *Simpatico*, which starred Nick Nolte, Jeff Bridges, Albert Finney and Sharon Stone. He has also written two best-selling novels, *Starter For Ten* and *The Understudy*. He then adapted *Starter for Ten*, for the screen, starring James MacAvoy.

David's current projects include a third novel, the film version of *The Understudy*, and a new romantic comedy for Dreamworks.

Howard Atherton (Director of Photography)

Howard Atherton credits include Adrian Lyne's *Lolita*, *Indecent Proposal*, and *Fatal Attraction*; Michael Bay's *Bad Boys*; Ridley Scott's *Black Rain* (additional photography); Richard Benjamin's *Mermaids*; and Stephen Sommers' *Deep Rising*.

More recently his credits include Q Mark's *The Legend of Simon Conjurer*; Charles Sturridge's *Lassie*; Brian W Cook's *Color Me Kubrick: A True...ish Story*; Stefan Schwartz's *The Abduction Club*; and Diane Keaton's *Hanging Up*.

Howard has also worked in television, earning an Emmy nomination for Outstanding Achievement in Cinematography on Charles Sturridge's *Gulliver's Travels*.

Trevor Waite (Editor)

Trevor Waite works in both feature films and television, working extensively with director Michael Winterbottom on films including *24 Hour Party People*, *The Claim*, *With Or Without You*, *Wonderland*, *I Want You*, *Welcome to Sarajevo*, *Jude*, *Butterfly Kiss*, and *Go Now*, for which he won the BAFTA Best Editing Award.

Recently, he edited Jeremy Brock's *Driving Lessons*, Kevin Spacey's *Beyond The Sea*, Marcus Adams' *Octane*, and Shane Meadows' *Once Upon A Time In The Midlands*.

As an editor at Thames TV, Trevor cut numerous dramas and documentaries including *Hollywood*, a 13 part series on the history of the American Film Industry, and the Emmy-award winning *Unknown Chaplin*. More recent television credits include *Prime Suspect 7: The Final Act*, *The Girls Who Came To Stay*, and *Bloodlines*.

Alice Normington (Production Designer)

Alice Normington previously worked with Anand Tucker on *Hilary and Jackie*, and the documentary *Saint-Ex*. Her other feature films credits include Alek Keshishian's *Love and Other Disasters*; John Madden's *Proof*; Marc Mudden's *Miranda*; Mike Barker's *The James Gang*; and Shimako Sato's *Tale of A Vampire*. In television, Alice won the BAFTA Award for Best Production Design for Tim Fywell's *The Woman in White*, and received BAFTA nominations for the television adaptation of Zadie Smith's best-selling novel *White Teeth*, and Julian Jarrold's *Great Expectations*. Other television credits include Sara Sugarman's *Very Annie Mary*, and Mar Munden's *The Secret World of Michael Fry*.

Caroline Harris (Costume Designer)

Caroline Harris credits include *Ripley Under Ground*; *The Order*; *A Knight's Tale*; *The Body*; *An Ideal Husband*; *Still Crazy*; *Croupier*; *The Governess*; *Swept From The Sea*; *E=mc²*; *Othello*; *A Midwinter's Tale*; and *Before The Rain*.

In television, her credits include *Stealing Lives*, *Iron Jawed Angels*, (for which she received a nomination for Excellence in Costume Design from the Costume Designers Guild), and *Very Annie Mary*, for which she received an Emmy Award for Outstanding Costumes for a Miniseries.

Christine Blundell (Make-Up and Hair Designer)

Christine Blundell won an Academy Award for Best Make-Up (shared with Trevor Proud) for Mike Leigh's *Topsy Turvy*, as well as a BAFTA for the same. She has worked extensively with Mike Leigh on his films including *Life is Sweet*, *Naked*, *Secrets & Lies*, *Career Girls*, *All Or Nothing*, and *Vera Drake*, for which she received a BAFTA nomination for Best Make-Up & Hair.

Her Recent credits include *Basic Instinct 2*, *Doom*, *The Constant Gardener*, *Closer* (for Natalie Portman), *Around the World In 80 Days*, *To Kill A King*, *Seven Years In Tibet* (for David Thewlis), *The Full Monty*, *Hackers*, and *ID*.

In television, she has worked on *Bertie and Elizabeth*, and *Lady Chatterley*.