

STUDIOCANAL Presents

JULIANNE MOORE
LIAM NEESON
AMANDA SEYFRIED

CHILDREN

A FILM BY

ATOM EGOYAN

PRODUCED BY

IVAN REITMAN
TOM POLLOCK

tiff. toronto
international
film festival

OFFICIAL SELECTION 2009



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A FILM BY
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SCREENPLAY BY
ERIN CRESSIDA WILSON

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STUDIOCANAL

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SYNOPSIS

Catherine (Julianne Moore), a successful doctor, suspects her handsome music professor husband **David (Liam Neeson)** is cheating on her. To lay her suspicions and fears to rest, she hires an irresistible young woman, **Chloe (Amanda Seyfried)**, to test David's fidelity. Chloe's torrid tales of her encounters with David lead Catherine on a journey of sexual and sensual re-discovery. But by opening the door to temptation, she puts her family in great danger...



INTERVIEW

JULIANNE MOORE
(Catherine)

*Could you briefly tell us what **Chloe** is about?*

The movie's about a family. My character, Catherine, is a gynecologist married to a college professor and they have a teenage son. She begins to suspect that her husband's having an affair. When she runs into Chloe in a bar, she hires her to solicit her husband and see what he does. The movie focuses on the relationship between the woman and this girl and how it takes over her life.

How did you hear about this project?

It came to me from Atom Egoyan. He's a director whose career I've followed pretty avidly and I've always wanted to work with him, so I was very excited about it. The script felt very edgy for me. I spoke to Atom about it at length because it's important to be really specific about these people, and their actions and intentions. Atom is so specific about the meaning behind behavior that I felt like I was in good hands with him. His work is so compelling and so grounded in emotion and feeling. You relate to the characters' behavior, but his films are always really provocative.

*Do you feel **Chloe** belongs to a specific genre?*

It's a drama that has aspects of a thriller, but I don't think you could call it a genre picture. To me, mostly, it's about behavior. It's such a pleasure to be in a movie where you have people interacting and you see how violent reactions can be to just simple behavior. It's the stuff of our lives, how we speak to each other and how we behave.

How did you imagine Catherine when you read the script?

Catherine moved me. She's at a point in her life where she feels that she's lost control. She felt she understood her relationship to her husband and son. Suddenly, she doesn't understand it at all and feels like she doesn't have a hand in it.

The people she loved and thought she understood now seem so far away. That doesn't seem too unusual to me. I think anybody can relate to that.





What's her intention when she hires Chloe?

Her intention is to understand her husband, to find a way to see what he wants. She thinks he wants to be with young women. She says to this young girl, "Okay, tell me what happens, what he says to you and what it feels like."

Chloe is Catherine's way of being with him. The intimacy that she develops with Chloe is about being closer to husband, but then it gets misconstrued. Even to be in a movie where there is a discussion of the nature of intimacy and how dangerous and loaded it can be is really compelling.

Is Catherine is trying to rediscover herself?

We define ourselves by the people around us, by our relationships, so maybe Catherine's lost her sense of who she is. Whenever you push the boundaries of human behavior, it's not easy to accept what you find on the other side. She realizes that maybe she felt safer, more secure, in the world she was in. Emotions can be dangerous. Catherine really pushes it as far as she can push it and probably learns that it's not something you can mess around with.

And Catherine's relationship with her son is also very important...

Absolutely. This is a woman whose relationship with her child has changed and she's not allowing it to change, she's not allowing him to grow up. For some reason, it's important for her to keep everything as it is and within her control.

What was it like creating a "safe" couple with Liam Neeson and a "dangerous" one with Amanda Seyfried?

It's been really interesting. They're both such wonderful actors and lovely people, very easy people to work with and also incredibly game. Everybody has been up for the challenge and not been squeamish about it. The movie's about intimacy and trying to let somebody else see you and know who you are. It's been very comfortable working with them and I've been very lucky to have such wonderful partners.

Were the intimate or erotic scenes the most difficult to shoot?

I think making sure that the movie's anchored in reality was the most difficult. What this woman does is quite a big transgression. You have to make sure that the audience watching her feels that they could do that too. The challenge is to keep all of it within the realm of the absolutely realistic and possible.





INTERVIEW

LIAM NEESON
(David)

*What was your first impression when you read the script of **Chloe**?*

I thought, "This is a film Americans don't make. It's very erotic, with a thriller element and it's dangerous, dangerous territory." It's sexually dangerous. I don't think I've ever seen a film like this. It's role-playing and game-playing taken to an extreme and it's got this very nice thriller element in it that keeps you guessing. There are not many directors that could go there with what **Chloe** deals with. I knew it was right up Atom Egoyan's street and that he'd make it in such a way that's very unique and special, and still keep all the elements that I saw in the script and that made the hairs stand up on the back of my neck.

You had already worked with Atom Egoyan, for the stage...

Yes, we did a little Beckett piece called *Eh, Joe!* at the Lincoln Center for just two weeks. Atom directed me on that. It was quite a unique little piece, which I guess gave me a sense of Atom the man, where his head's at and how intelligent, bright and funny he is. He's got a wicked sense of humor. I had read **Chloe** previously and when we were doing *Eh, Joe!*, I said to him, "We have to do this."

Were you familiar with his movies?

Yes, I've always been struck by the uniqueness of his voice, his cinematic voice. It's a sweeping generalization, but he makes these contemplative poems that really reverberate and touch you in ways that other moviemakers haven't tapped into before. He's such a unique voice. I just saw *Adoration*, too. It's profound. It really is a beautiful, beautiful films. I didn't want it to end.

How did you picture your character, David?

I think he's a loving father and husband and he idolizes his job—he's a professor of music specializing in Mozart's operas. He loves being a teacher. Talking to Atom, we didn't really go into a big analysis. I just said I wanted to play each scene for the truth that's there and not have an overall arc. To keep it simple and real and make the audience believe.







Would you say Catherine creates a fantasy world around Chloe or does Chloe create a fantasy around Catherine's family?

Chloe certainly does create fantasies—that's how she lives her life, but Catherine adds to that mix in a very unique way. It's kind of like a cat-and-mouse game going on. Atom likes to play with audience's perceptions of what they're seeing. You think you're going down this avenue and in fact he's taking you down here, then over there.

What was it like working with Amanda and Julianne?

The three of us get on very well and we had a good dynamic between ourselves as actors. We like each other and when you have that base of trusting someone, then you can explore other avenues. You can go down into these murky depths and highs and lows because you trust your scene partners. For such a young actress, Amanda's wonderful, a very rare talent. She just comes alive—I mean, she's a very bubbly lady, but she comes alive when the camera's on her. She's very, very good.

With so many intimate scenes in the movie, what kind of support do you need from the director?

I just need to know he's not going to shoot my big Irish butt and my thick Irish legs. Once I know that then I'm comfortable. Amanda and I have a sexual encounter in the Allan Gardens in Toronto and Atom shot our physical activity very simply and cleverly so that there was no embarrassment for Amanda or myself, but it still looks very erotic and very charged.



INTERVIEW

AMANDA SEYFRIED
(Chloe)

What was your first impression when you read the script?

I was, like, Woah! In terms of the character, it was unlike anything I'd ever done and really super challenging. I didn't think that I had what it took to pull it off. Then, in the audition, I read it with someone who was really connecting and it brought out a lot in me. The structure was like a good movie start-to-finish but so much more intense than the other scripts I was reading. It's a situation and a relationship no one's ever developed before in a movie, so that was special. It was amazing.

Do you feel it reinvents the love triangle?

Love triangles are always there, but this is a very different triangle. This one is definitely unique.

How would you describe your character?

Chloe's really smart in terms of the business. She's very experienced but she's young and damaged. She's been on her own, she's never experienced love or any positive relationship with anybody. There's this amazing vulnerability to her. It's beautiful and you can see there are some very good things about her. All those things mixing together made her a really intriguing character and very hard to play.

What kind of directions did Atom Egoyan give you?

We'd go through her motives in life and then in specific parts of the movie, before she falls in love and while she's discovering her feelings for Catherine. They're very confusing feelings because Catherine's very maternal yet very, very sensual. It's confusing to Chloe, but something is alive in her that's never been there before. It becomes a kind of obsession and it's so fulfilling to play, as an actress. One of the things that makes Atom so wonderful as a director is that everything's figured out already. We're always discovering new things but there's always a solid understanding there. Atom is probably the most unique director I've ever worked with.

How did you work on Chloe's look?

It was a very interesting process to find Chloe's image. Debra Hanson, the costume designer, had these incredible ideas that weren't based on any other movie. That's always a challenge. We had these incredible designer dresses and this huge coat with fur on it. The look, the hair... We basically created a hairdo that I feel might become iconic. And the make-up's never too much. Chloe doesn't try too hard, it's always just right. She's always very sophisticated.





And how does the character develop in the movie?

The evolution of Chloe always has to do with where Catherine is at that point. Every little thing Catherine does affects Chloe and adds to her feelings. It's a very different situation than Chloe has ever been in—just getting paid to flirt. Chloe has never been able to share what she does before. It's all very new for Chloe. She starts fantasizing and it gradually gets more intense until it becomes a passionate obsession.

Is Chloe a fantasy character?

I think it's a very powerful feeling to be able to give men what they need and then just walk away from it—to be just a memory. In a way, Catherine creates her just to have an intense sense of her own existence. Catherine is looking for something and all of a sudden, it's there in spades.

What was it like working with Julianne Moore?

Going into the movie, I was very nervous. It was very intimidating and having intimate scenes together is hard, really hard. The sex scenes were a first for both of us and we were both quite giggly. Luckily, it worked out in a way I could never have imagined. Julianne was amazing. Within a week, being around her just became so easy. She just snaps into it—you learn so much from her. She knows exactly what she wants, but she's so accessible and not at all intimidating.

Beyond the sex scenes, even the dialogue is very erotic...

When I'm telling the stories, I'm trying to get a lot out of Catherine, but I'm also reacting off of her. You can feel the wheels turning in Chloe's head, but it had to be direct and blunt. I'm talking about what I'm doing to her husband and it's like, "Is she turned on? Should I stop? Did I say too much?" It's really cool, really awesome, the way that's written. Chloe's just trying to keep Catherine in a place where she has the power over her, but then you see the power switch between them. It's really intense.

Who is Chloe at the end of the movie?

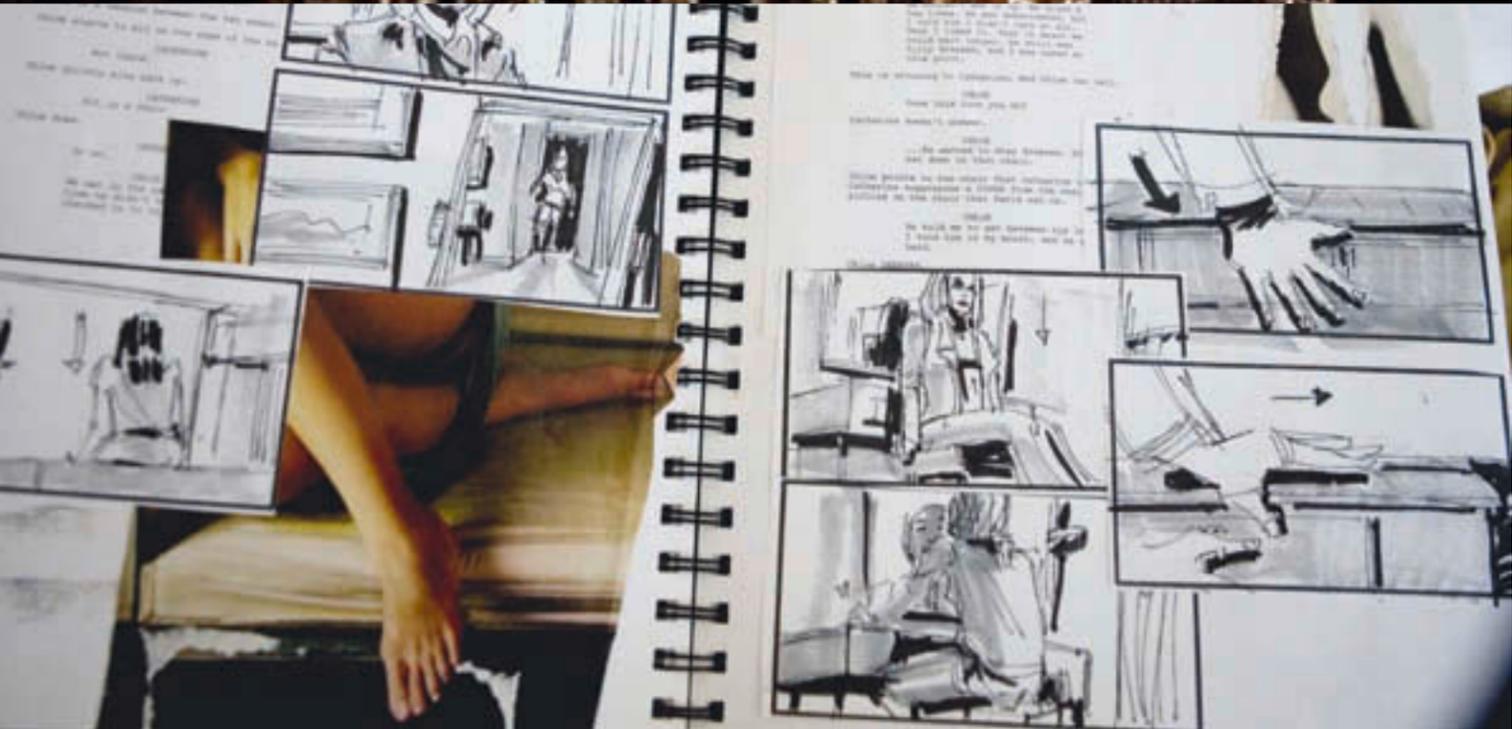
There's nothing evil about Chloe. She's just a very delusional, damaged woman. I think Chloe is a saint by the end of the movie, if anything.





INTERVIEW

ATOM EGOYAN
Director



*What is **Chloe** about?*

It's a story about a relationship that you think you control but when it involves other people's feelings you never truly have control. Catherine thinks she's able to control her life, but sees it beginning to fall apart. She thinks that she's no longer attractive to her husband. When he denies it, she has the idea of hiring a young woman to flirt with him and report back. Unexpectedly, she becomes quite obsessed by the stories Chloe tells about her romantic encounters with Catherine's husband. Catherine becomes compelled to go further and further. The relationship between the two women becomes incredibly loaded and complex and leads to unexpected results. I guess all my films deal with storytelling—how people recount their own lives—and this is a wonderful examination of how your fantasies can get the better of you.

Unusually for you, you didn't write the script...

No, but when Ivan Reitman approached me, I was aware of Erin Cressida Wilson's work and was a huge fan of hers from way back. As soon as I read her script, I got very excited because it was finally the chance for the two of us to work together and we'd been talking about it for a while. It's interesting for me to work with dialogue that is very different than the way I would write, and very gratifying to work with these actors because they're extraordinary and bringing it to life in a way that I wasn't entirely expecting. And it's great that it came from Ivan, who is someone that I respect a lot.

What makes a good script for you?

A good script is something that is full of possibilities and a little elusive, not entirely clear, something which needs to be discovered. It's challenging and exciting exploring ways to interpret those possibilities. What excites me about this story, as much as choosing these phenomenal actors, is rooting it in a city I know really well—the character of the city of Toronto is a huge part of the story. It's the possibility to explore the city's specific qualities that other films shot here don't explore, especially at this time of year, as we're emerging from winter and anticipating the spring. That's visually very exciting.

What exact tone were you looking for?

We tried to give Toronto a sensuality. It's cold, inviting people to go inside, so there's a romantic idea of people finding places that protect them from this brutal exterior where they feel exposed and unprotected. The visual style creates this sense of shelter that characters are looking for in their relationships.

In terms of genre, the movie swings from erotic to drama...

What makes the eroticism unusual is that it is rooted in drama, in the psychology of the characters. When you're working with performers of this caliber, it's crucial to situate the erotic episodes in the psychology of the piece. It's not in any way gratuitous. With these actors, it has to be something that they are exploring dramatically.

How does Chloe fit into Catherine and David's relationship—lover or fantasy?

The idea of surrogates is fascinating to me—people who can fulfill something that you feel unable physically to do because of all sorts of pressures, inhibitions or fears that restrict you from exploring certain things. It's what any drama is about. Catherine becomes the creator of her own drama. She hires a young woman to play this part and she becomes excited by the possibilities. She senses that it allows her to explore things she couldn't do in her rational life. She reenergizes an erotic connection with the man she feels she can no longer seduce. It's very rare to find a woman in a movie going through this crisis that a lot of people experience—when you feel like you're beginning to disappear, you're no longer the object of attraction. She subverts that by creating a surrogate, but it surprises her to realize there are things she cannot control, even in her own impulses.

How did you cast the movie?

Obviously, we needed an exceptional actress to be able to play Catherine and Julianne is someone I have admired for many, many years. I had the privilege of being able to work with Liam on a play and we just connected. I think he'll really surprise people. When we were auditioning, Amanda just emerged as the most exceptional actress, even before *Mamma Mia's* huge success. This is probably the last movie she was chosen for before *Mamma Mia*. She's disarmingly available and you think you understand this person but she has such incredible amounts of emotional reserve that are unpredictable and compelling. She's very rare.

How did you explain the role of Chloe to her?

First, I had to ascertain that in the age of internet, people like Chloe really exist. I brought back all this research and talked to Amanda about it to find what it is in Chloe's life that makes Catherine become so compelling for her. She projects something onto Catherine, and Catherine is not aware of this. There's a frailty and need on Chloe's part that must be made clear. Certainly, Amanda is able to express that. She is so unbelievably open and vulnerable, but she's able to be hard as well because that's the reality of Chloe's work.

But Chloe feels something she never felt before...

When someone feels that they are in love, they interpret things in a certain way, and that is so unpredictable. She realizes that the only way she can continue this relationship with Catherine, who is someone she would never usually have contact with, is to create this intimate mythology as she tells the stories, which become as powerful for her as they are for Catherine. We are not only shocked by the delusion that Catherine has allowed herself to believe, but also the desperation of Chloe that makes her sustain this myth, which is very disturbing and overwhelming. It's very touching because, for her, what happens with Catherine is so real.

Would you describe Chloe as your first Hollywood movie?

Yes, Ivan Reitman and Tom Pollock, are the quintessential Hollywood producers. We're all working with the idea that this will find a wider audience, based on the fact that, for me, it is a more linear script than one of my own movies. This is a different language. I'm enjoying it because I'm thinking of it as something I would like to watch as a viewer rather than making it as something I would like to express.





INTERVIEW

IVAN REITMAN
Producer

What interested you in this project?

Chloe has a brilliant premise about how a woman who's been married a long time comes to terms with her fears about her husband. Americans don't make too many movies about adult relationships, but issues of fidelity and sexuality in a long-term marriage are very interesting. I think it will be a controversial movie, a movie that audiences can talk about long after they see the film. To create the script, I contacted Erin Cressida Wilson, who'd written a couple of wonderful scripts, first of all, *Secretary*, which had the right kind of ironic, unusual eroticism that I thought would be appropriate for this movie. We worked together for almost four years on the screenplay.

When did you approach Atom Egoyan?

I got to know Atom because of our mutual work here in Toronto. We're both Canadian filmmakers and I became very close to him. I thought philosophically there's much in the movie that he's touched on in his own films. As a filmmaker myself I know that it's a gift when you receive something that is really well worked out. He responded very well because it's a wonderful script and he saw how it was an appropriate film for him to direct. That was about a year before we started shooting.

*What genre does **Chloe** belong to?*

I wouldn't know what genre to put it in. It's mysterious, hopefully thrilling and certainly erotic. The idea of storytelling between men and women, between women and women—there's something very voyeuristic about it. Even if we don't see what's going on, just to hear it, as our brain processes the story, that's really the center of our own arousal. It's a story where you're not going to guess what happens every moment and where there's a real strong emotionality that unfolds between the main characters, which hopefully will be riveting to our audience.

Does being a filmmaker yourself influence your relationship with the director?

Fortunately, my relationship with Atom couldn't be better and I've tried not to be too forceful a presence. I think this is his movie to direct, not my film. I took the movie in a certain way by finding it, working on the screenplay and helping cast the movie and I have lots to say, but it's his movie as a director, who has to take these actors and work with them to successfully translate what is on the page. I trust Atom to do that. As an experienced director, I understand the difficulties of shooting a film, so I can be an objective source outside of the whole thing and discuss the kind of things in an intimate, professional way that is different than most producer-director relationships.

What was the most challenging aspect of producing the movie?

The most challenging thing about producing **Chloe** was to get the cast. This is a movie that is totally dependent on the excellence of the people who are playing these roles. We are very close to the characters and we get to know them very well, in particular the role of Chloe herself—Amanda Seyfried. We not only looked at but read very carefully with hundreds of actresses in Los Angeles, Toronto and London. Although we saw many very good actresses, if we had not gotten Amanda to do this part, we're not sure we could have made the movie. There's just something about the chemistry of Amanda Seyfried in this role that is very startling and exciting and will be extraordinarily good for the movie and, in return, hopefully very good for her career. To find her was a great relief because for the longest time we kept wondering whether this movie could work at all. It's dealing with very intimate sexuality all the time and for the movie to feel like there's something honest and legitimate about telling this story, we had to find just the right performer and we did with Amanda Seyfried. Then, to find actors who present the kind of intelligence and mature relationship portrayed by Julianne Moore and Liam Neeson was the other great thing that we were lucky to have found. That the material was good enough, that Atom as a director was attractive enough that we could get people of their caliber to do this film gave me the greatest sense of satisfaction. I said, "I know we have a great script, we have a great director and now we have found the perfect cast to do this."

And you have made Toronto a character of the movie...

Atom and I were walking around the city discussing the movie we were about to do. We started talking about how beautiful it is and how rarely Toronto is itself in the movies. Paris is always Paris and New York is always New York, but Toronto is always pretending to be Chicago or New York. For that reason some of the most beautiful and specific parts of the city are never used. There's something about this city because it's a city of immigration. Since the 40s, there's been an extraordinary amount of immigration—almost more than any other city of this size. It's created a very cosmopolitan and unusual city, particularly for North America. That went hand in hand with a boom in startling architecture, so we saw a real opportunity for us both in the city where we grew up to celebrate the beauty and culture of this particular city.

SELECTED FILMOGRAPHIES

JULIANNE MOORE - *Catherine*

BLINDNESS by Fernando Meirelles 2007
I'M NOT THERE by Todd Haynes 2006
CHILDREN OF MEN by Alfonso Cuarón 2006
THE HOURS by Stephen Daldry 2002
Academy Award Nomination for Best Supporting Actress
FAR FROM HEAVEN by Todd Haynes 2002
Academy Award Nomination for Best Actress
THE SHIPPING NEWS by Lasse Hallström 2001
MAGNOLIA by Paul Thomas Anderson 1999
THE END OF THE AFFAIR by Neil Jordan 1999
Academy Award Nomination for Best Actress
BOOGIE NIGHTS by Paul Thomas Anderson 1997
Academy Award Nomination for Best Supporting Actress

LIAM NEESON - *David*

TAKEN by Pierre Morel 2008
THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA
by Andrew Adamson 2005
BATMAN BEGINS by Christopher Nolan 2005
KINGDOM OF HEAVEN by Ridley Scott 2005
LOVE ACTUALLY by Richard Curtis 2003
GANGS OF NEW YORK by Martin Scorsese 2002
STAR WARS: THE PHANTOM MENACE
by George Lucas 1999
MICHAEL COLLINS by Neil Jordan 1996
SCHINDLER'S LIST by Steven Spielberg 1993
Academy Award nomination for Best Actor
HUSBANDS AND WIVES by Woody Allen 1992

AMANDA SEYFRIED - *Chloe*

MAMMA MIA! by Phyllida Lloyd 2008
BIG LOVE (TV) 2006-2009
ALPHA DOG by Nick Cassavetes 2006
AMERICAN GUN by Aric Avelino 2005
NINE LIVES by Rodrigo Garcia 2005
MEAN GIRLS by Mark Waters 2004
MTV Movie Award for Best On-Screen Team
(with Lindsay Lohan...)

Atom Egoyan – DIRECTOR

ADORATION
In competition, Cannes 2008
WHERE THE TRUTH LIES
In competition, Cannes 2005
ARARAT 2002
FELICIA'S JOURNEY 1999
In competition, Cannes 1999
THE SWEET HEREAFTER 1997
Academy Award nominations
for Best Director, Best Adaptation
Grand Jury Prize, Cannes 1997
EXOTICA 1994
FIPRESCI Prize, Cannes 1994
CALENDAR 1993
THE ADJUSTER 1991
SPEAKING PARTS 1989
FAMILY VIEWING 1987
NEXT OF KIN 1984

Ivan Reitman – PRODUCER

I LOVE YOU, MAN by John Hamburg 2009
HOTEL FOR DOGS by Thor Freudenthal 2009
DISTURBIA by Ivan Reitman 2007
SUPER EX-GIRLFRIEND by Ivan Reitman 2006
OLD SCHOOL by Todd Phillips 2003
EVOLUTION by Ivan Reitman 2001
ROAD TRIP by Todd Phillips 1999
6 DAYS/ 7 NIGHTS by Ivan Reitman 1998
FATHERS DAY by Ivan Reitman 1996
SPACE JAM by Ivan Reitman 1996
JUNIOR by Ivan Reitman 1994
DAVE by Ivan Reitman 1993
BEETHOVEN by Ivan Reitman 1992
KINDERGARTEN COP by Ivan Reitman 1990
GHOSTBUSTERS II by Ivan Reitman 1989
TWINS by Ivan Reitman 1988
LEGAL EAGLES by Ivan Reitman 1986
GHOSTBUSTERS by Ivan Reitman 1984
HEAVY METAL by Gerald Potterton 1981
STRIPES by Ivan Reitman 1981
MEATBALLS by Ivan Reitman 1979
ANIMAL HOUSE by John Landis 1978
RABID (RAGE) by David Cronenberg 1976
SHIVERS by David Cronenberg 1974

Tom Pollock – PRODUCER

DISTURBIA by D.J. Caruso 2007
EUROTRIP by Jeff Schaffer 2004
OLD SCHOOL by Todd Phillips 2003
EVOLUTION by Ivan Reitman 2001
ROAD TRIP by Todd Phillips 2000

CAST

Catherine	JULIANNE MOORE
David	LIAM NEESON
Chloe	AMANDA SEYFRIED
Michael	MAX THIERIOT
Frank	R.H. THOMSON
Anna	NINA DOBREV
Receptionist	MISHU VELLAN
Bimsy	JULIE KHANER
Alicia	LAURA DE CARTERET
Eliza	NATALIE LISINSKA
Trina	TIFFANY KNIGHT
Miranda	MEGHAN HEFFERN



Photos : © Rafy

CREW

Director	ATOM EGOYAN
Writer	ERIN CRESSIDA WILSON
Produced by	IVAN REITMAN
Producers	JOE MEDJUCK
	JEFFREY CLIFFORD
Co-Producers	SIMONE URDL
	JENNIFER WEISS
Executive Producers	JASON REITMAN
	DANIEL DUBIECKI
	THOMAS P. POLLOCK
	RON HALPERN
Associate Producers	ALI BELL
	ERIN CRESSIDA WILSON
Production Manager	STEPHEN TRAYNOR
Director of Photography	PAUL SAROSSY
Production Designer	PHILLIP BARKER
Editor	SUSAN SHIPTON
Music	MYCHAEL DANNA
Costumes	DEBRA HANSON

STUDIO CANAL