



**Country:** Australia/United Kingdom  
**Year:** 2009  
**Language:** English  
**Runtime:** 104 minutes  
**Format:** Colour/D-Cinema  
**Rating:** PG

## PUBLIC SCREENINGS

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## Description

Director Scott Hicks returns to the Festival with a poignant story of a struggling single father living in the heart of Australia. Clive Owen stars as Joe Warr, a habitually roguish sports writer who must cope with the devastating loss of his vivacious wife. Reeling from grief, he has to learn to raise his young son, Artie (Nicholas McAnulty), who cannot accept his mother's passing. On top of this, Joe's older son from his first marriage arrives from England to stay, bringing his own teenaged disaffection with him. As his former life slips through his fingers, Joe constructs his own parenting rules. Adopting the mantra "just say yes," he leads the trio along the path of least resistance, eating junk food, running wild and attempting to rebuild family bonds.

Owen is excellent in the lead, allowing his character more vulnerability and less certain ease than he has before. As the grieving husband and father, he is both emotive and gentle in a finely nuanced performance. And Hicks, returning to Australia for the first time since *Shine*, revels in the colour and texture of the region. Cinematographer Greig Fraser is a long-time collaborator with Jane Campion – he shot *Bright Star*, also playing at this year's Festival. Using a palette of gold and ochre, he brings the rolling hills and sweeping plains to dazzling life before your eyes. Paired with a hauntingly ethereal score by Hal Lindes and featuring songs by the Icelandic band Sigur Rós, *The Boys Are Back* evokes a memorably compassionate tone.

Based on the memoirs of Simon Carr, the film explores the gender divide of parenting without ever falling prey to stereotype. Instead, *The Boys Are Back* paints a sensitive picture of the relationship between a father and his sons with subtle empathy and refined emotion.

## Michèle Maheux



**Scott Hicks** was born in Uganda and studied cinema at Flinders University in Adelaide, Australia. His fiction features and documentaries include *Freedom* (81), *Call Me Mr. Brown* (96), the Peabody Award-winning *The Great Wall of Iron* (89) and *No Reservations* (07). *Shine* (96), which won the People's Choice Award at the Festival in 1996 and was nominated for seven Academy Awards®, was his first film to screen here. It has been followed by *Snow Falling on Cedars*, which was a Gala presentation in 1999. *Hearts in Atlantis* (01), *GLASS: a portrait of Philip in twelve parts* (07) and *The Boys Are Back* (09).

## Credits

**Production Company:** Tiger Aspect Pictures/Southern Light Films  
**Executive Producer:** Peter Bennett-Jones, Clive Owen, David M. Thompson, Jane Wright  
**Producer:** Greg Brenman, Tim White  
**Screenplay:** Alan Cubitt, based on the memoir *The Boys Are Back in Town* by Simon Carr  
**Cinematographer:** Greig Fraser  
**Editor:** Scott Grav  
**Production Designer:** Melinda Doring  
**Sound:** Adrian Rhodes, Doug Cooper  
**Music:** Hal Lindes  
**Principal Cast:** [Clive Owen](#), [George MacKay](#), [Laura Fraser](#), [Nicholas McAnulty](#), [Emma Booth](#)

**Production:** Tiger Aspect  
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**Canadian Distributor:** Maple Pictures  
**US Distributor:** Miramax Films  
**International Sales Agent:** HanWay Films