



IN THE FAMILY

Independent Spirit Award Nominee, Best First Feature
Filmmaker Mag, 25 New Faces of Independent Film
Hammer to Nail, Golden Hammer Award
Emerging Filmmaker Award, San Francisco IAAFF
Best Narrative Feature, San Francisco IAAFF
Emerging Filmmaker Award, San Diego AFF
Best Narrative Feature, San Diego AFF
2nd Place Audience Award, Galway FF
Most Promising Filmmaker, Spokane IFF
Best Feature, Spokane IFF
The New York Times Critic's Pick
Chicago Reader Critic's Pick
on over 25 best-of lists

Distributor In the Family LLC
Running Time 169 min.
Not Rated

Official Website www.inthefamilythemovie.com
Official Trailer www.inthefamilythemovie.com/trailer.html
High Resolution Stills www.inthefamilythemovie.com/for-press.html

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LOGLINE

In the face of all convention, a man battles for custody of his son after the death of his partner.

SYNOPSIS

In the town of Martin, Tennessee, Chip Hines, a precocious six year old, has only known life with his two dads, Cody and Joey. And a good life it is. When Cody dies suddenly in a car accident, Joey and Chip struggle to find their footing again. Just as they begin to, Cody's will reveals that he named his sister as Chip's guardian. The years of Joey's acceptance into the family unravel as Chip is taken away from him. In his now solitary home life, Joey searches for a solution. The law is not on his side, but friends are. Armed with their comfort and inspired by memories of Cody, Joey finds a path to peace with the family and closer to his son.

PROJECT DETAILS

Color:	Color
Camera:	Red One Camera
Aspect Ratio:	1.85
Screening Format:	35mm
Sound:	Dolby Digital
Laboratory:	Technicolor
Language:	English
Running Time:	169 min.
Year:	2011
Locations:	Yonkers, New York City

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

I made this film to defend the things I love, that they can continue to exist in some vibrant corner, independent of the time's fashions, accessible to those who wish to find them.

My father, in his last days, inspired me to do something meaningful. Among my inheritance from him was a front row seat to an extraordinary life. It was a life at times confusing, foreign and unfair. But he countered with contemplation, dignity and invention. That spirit was where I began this film. Then fiction took over, and I love fiction. Then all the things I love took over: the telling detail, the distance between people, perspective, performance, mystery, monologue, romance, composition, the complex ways we make decisions. This film shows, in ways neither easy nor obvious, a picture of recovery from loss and a picture of de-escalation. And in a subtle but satisfying way, this movie lets me wonder about America: its immigrants, its history, and the quietly complicated ways race, class, gender and sexual orientation color daily life.

I believe in style driven by content. The discovery and invention of an appropriate style for this material was pure joy. I am grateful we had time for our understanding and instincts to mature by the time we were shooting. This meant that as unconventional as some of our choices were, we would have the confidence and coordination to give them a fighting chance at succeeding.

This movie tells a story in narrative slices, with each slice playing out in real time, in rich and delicate detail. I work to keep the balance of design across departments agile like counterpoint rather than stacked like chords. Camera placement is key, but camera movement and cutting is minimal as I prefer to let the dynamics emerge from the characters and the events. The long takes, deep focus shots, environmental lighting, and lack of score let my eye and my thoughts go to any number of places, so this wonderful variety of viewing experiences is possible. Finally, most important to this film are the performances and how we capture them. Our techniques are risky, but the result is thrilling. Here are people. Here is a movie with people.

BIOGRAPHIES

DIRECTOR

Patrick Wang graduated MIT with a degree in Economics and a concentration in Music and Theatre Arts. As an economist, he has studied energy policy, game theory, and income inequality at the Federal Reserve Bank, the Harvard School for Public Health and other organizations. As a theater director, he has specialized in classical verse drama (world premiere of Diane Arnson Svarlien's translation of "Medea") and new works ("Surviving the Nian," Jonathan Larson Award). He has taught and directed productions at the Stella Adler Studio and The Neighborhood Playhouse. A collection of his short drama was published as "The Monologue Plays." His performance in "M. Butterfly" was the subject of Leah Hager Cohen's book, "The Stuff of Dreams." Film: "Surveillances" (Panavision Prize), "Little Mary." Television: "Saturday Night Live," "One Life to Live." "In the Family" is his first feature film.

DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY

Frank Barrera studied film at the State University of New York at Purchase where he received a BFA in Cinematography in 1995. After several years gaining practical lighting experience as a gaffer on numerous independent feature films and commercials, he took on the role of director of photography. He has gone on to shoot features ("Runaway," "The Poker Club," "As Good As Dead") and short films that have been screened at film festivals all over the world and have been broadcast on IFC, HBO, Showtime and PBS. He currently resides in Los Angeles, California.

PRODUCER

Andrew van den Houten, president of MODERNCINÉ, has produced Jack Ketchum's "The Girl Next Door," "The Woman" and the upcoming Chiller Network presentation, "Ghoul." Through MODERNCINÉ he has partnered with filmmakers Lucky McKee, Christopher Denham and Gregory M. Wilson. His films have played at Sundance, Deauville, and FrightFest. In 2005, he directed his first feature film, "Headspace." He next directed "Offspring." He produced two 2009 releases for IFC Films: "Made For Each Other," a comedy starring Christopher Masterson, Bijou Phillips, Danny Masterson, George Segal and Patrick Warburton, and "Home Movie," a dark drama starring Adrian Pasdar ("Heroes") and Cady McClain. In 2010, Andrew co-founded Doberman Entertainment, devoted to developing and producing family-themed

content. Their first theatrical release was "Rising Stars," directed by Daniel Millican, starring Kyle Riabko, with Barry Corbin and Fisher Stevens.

TREVOR ST. JOHN (CODY HINES)

Trevor St. John attended Whitworth College on a jazz performance scholarship. As a percussionist, he has played with Marshall Royal (Count Basie Orchestra), Slide Hampton and Bill Berry (Duke Ellington Orchestra) and Gene Harris. His first major acting role was opposite Glenn Close in the television movie "Serving in Silence." Starting in 2003, he portrayed the role of Todd Manning for eight years on "One Life to Live." Other television credits include guest-starring roles on "Murder, She Wrote," "Seaquest," "Pacific Blue," "Diagnosis Murder," "Nash Bridges," and "Just Shoot Me." Film credits include "The Bourne Ultimatum," "The Kingdom," "My Soul To Take," "Payback," "Crimson Tide," and "Higher Learning."

BRIAN MURRAY (PAUL HAWKS)

Film: "Dream House," "City Hall," "Bob Roberts," "Treasure Planet." Broadway: "Mary Stuart," "The Rivals," "The Crucible" (Tony nom.), "Uncle Vanya" (Drama Desk nom.), "Twelfth Night," "The Little Foxes" (Drama Desk Award, Tony nom.), "Racing Demon," "A Small Family Business" (Drama Desk nom.), "Noises Off" (Drama Desk Award), "Black Comedy," "Sleuth," "Da," "Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead" (Tony nom.) His numerous Off Broadway appearances include "Me, Myself And I," "Keep Your Pantheon," "Gaslight," "Colder Than Here," "Much Ado About Nothing," "Beckett/Albee," "Scattergood," "Hobson's Choice," "The Play About the Baby" (Obie Award), "Travels with My Aunt" (Drama Desk, OCC awards), "Ashes" (Obie). Recipient: 1998 Obie Award for Sustained Excellence, 1998 Lucille Lortel Award for Outstanding Body of Work, Fox Foundation Fellow. He was inducted into the American Theatre Hall of Fame in 2004.

PARK OVERALL (SALLY HINES)

Originally from Greeneville, Tennessee, Park Overall made her Broadway debut as Rowena, the prostitute, in Neil Simon's "Biloxi Blues," a role she would also play in Mike Nichols' film version. Off Broadway: "Psychopathis Sexualis," "Skin of Our Teeth," "Only You," "Loose Ends," "Something About Baseball." For seven seasons, she played nurse Laverne Todd in the NBC television show "Empty Nest," a role for which she received three Golden Globes nominations and won three Q Awards. She starred in the television movies "Fifteen and Pregnant," "When Andrew Came Home" and "The

Price of a Broken Heart.” Other television work includes “Reba,” “The Critic,” “Ladies Man,” “Nurses,” “The Golden Girls,” and “Buzz Lightyear Star Command.” Films: “Talk Radio,” “Mississippi Burning,” “Kindergarten Cop,” “The Vanishing,” “Sparkler,” “Abilene,” “Beer for My Horses.”

PETER HERMANN (DAVE ROBEY)

Broadway: “War Horse,” “Talk Radio,” “Judgment at Nuremberg.” Off-Broadway: “The Gathering” (Jewish Rep). Other NY theater: “Titus Andronicus” (NADA), “Egypt” (LaMaMa, ETC), “Moving Bodies” (EST), “Hot Keys” (PS 122). Regional: “Twelfth Night” (Guthrie), “Cat on a Hot Tin Roof” (Arena). Film: “United 93,” “Edge of Darkness,” “Too Big to Fail” (HBO), “Our Idiot Brother.” Television: “Law & Order: SVU,” “Cashmere Mafia,” “30 Rock,” “The Good Wife,” “Bored to Death.”

SUSAN KELLERMANN (MARGE HAWKS)

Broadway: “33 Variations,” “Last Licks” (Theatre World award), “Whose Life is it Anyway?,” “Lunch Hour,” “Judgment at Nuremberg.” National Tour: “An Inspector Calls” (Ahmanson). Films: “Last Holiday,” “The Devil’s Advocate,” “Beetlejuice,” “The Couch Trip,” “Oh Heavenly Dog.” Television Favorites: “Law & Order,” “Law & Order: SVU,” “Monk,” “Murphy Brown,” “L.A. Law,” “Murder, She Wrote,” “Hill Street Blues,” “Dear John,” “Perfect Strangers,” “Dixie: Changing Habits,” “The Fighter” and Latka’s mother on “Taxi.” Off-Broadway Favorites: “Book of Days” (Lanford Wilson), “2 Lives” (Arthur Laurents), “Ivanov” (Director of the Moscow arts Theatre), “Moon Over Miami” (John Guare), “Matty and the Moron and Madonna” (Lieberman), “Wine Untouched” (Bjornstad) and “33 Variations” (Moisés Kaufman) - Arena Stage (Helen Hayes nomination) and La Jolla Playhouse.

KELLY MCANDREW (EILEEN ROBEY)

Broadway: Maggie in “Cat on a Hot Tin Roof.” Off Broadway: “Still Life” (MCC Theater), “Lyric is Waiting” (Irish Repertory Theatre), “Trout Stanley” (Culture Project), “The Cataract” (Women’s Project), “Greedy” (Clubbed Thumb), “Book of Days” (Signature Theatre Company). Regional: “Precious Little” (City Theatre), “Holiday” (Olney Theatre Center, Helen Hayes nomination for Lead Actress in a Resident Play), “The Miracle Worker” and “The Great White Hope” (Arena Stage), “Talley’s Folly” (The Repertory Theatre of St. Louis and Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park), “Proof” (George Street Playhouse). Film: “Everybody’s Fine” (with Robert De Niro), “Superheroes,” “New Guy.” Television: “Law & Order,” “Law & Order: SVU,” “Gossip Girl,” “As the World Turns.”

FULL CREDITS

CAST

(In Order of Appearance)

Chip Hines	SEBASTIAN BRODZIAK
Joey Williams	PATRICK WANG
Cody Hines	TREVOR ST. JOHN
Betsy	LISA ALTOMARE
Marge Hawks	SUSAN KELLERMANN
Ed	CONAN MCCARTY
Sharon	HARRIETT D. FOY
Brent	ZACHARY SAYLE
Julie	LOVIE SIMONE TAYLOR
Dennis	GEORGIE DENOTO
Tim	JAKE BENNETT SIEGFRIED
Erin	JULIETTE ALLEN-ANGELO
Blake Robey	COLE SAVITZ-VOGEL
Anne Carter	EISA DAVIS
Dave Robey	PETER HERMANN
Nurse Jackson	GINA TOGNONI
Nurse Edwards	KIT FLANAGAN
Sally Hines	PARK OVERALL
Eileen Robey	KELLY MCANDREW
Doctor Sills	GREGORY JONES
Gloria	ELAINE BROMKA
Rebecca Hines	JULIA MOTYKA
Helen	ZOE WINTERS
Paul Hawks	BRIAN MURRAY
Darryl Hines	CHIP TAYLOR
Sam	BILL MOOTOS
Landscape Architect	CHRISTOPHER GRAVES
Police Officer	JAKE MOSSER

Jamie Carter	SANTANA PRUITT
Charles Grant	MATTHEW BOSTON
Security Guard	MICHAEL SCOTT KING
Cheryl	CHRISTINA HOGUE
Jefferson Robinson	EUGENE BRELL
Court Reporter	MARSHA WATERBURY

CREW

Writer & Director	PATRICK WANG
Director of Photography	FRANK BARRERA
Editor	ELWALDO BAPTISTE
Production Designer	JOHN EL MANAHI
Costume Designer	MICHAEL BEVINS
Make-up Designer	PAULA KELLY
Sound Designer	JOHNNY MARSHALL
Music	CHIP TAYLOR ANDY WAGNER
Casting	CINDI RUSH CASTING
Line Producer	MATT MILLER
Producers	ANDREW VAN DEN HOUTEN ROBERT TONINO PATRICK WANG
Associate Producer	FRANK BARRERA
Unit Production Manager	CHELSEA BROOKE GONNERING
First Assistant Director	MATT MILLER
Second Assistant Director	JASON RUBENSTEIN
2nd Second Asst Director	SKYLER PRENDERGAST
Script Supervisor	FRIDAY SAVATHPHOUNE
First Assistant Camera	OWEN STROCK
Second Assistant Camera	CLINT BYRNE
Second Assistant Camera	BENJAMIN BERGER
Steadicam Operator	SERGEI FRANKLIN
Sound Mixer	ERIC THOMAS

Boom Operator	ALLISON HOWE
Additional Boom Operator	JOSHUA HILSON
Gaffer	CHRIS CLARKE
Best Boy Electrician	KEN LEE
Best Boy Electrician	RICH MACDONALD
Key Grip	RYAN BEASECKER
Best Boy Grip	JORDAN BELL
Additional G&E Swing	MATT KESSLER DARCY SCHLITT NA THIRAKOMEN
Additional Make-Up	JEANETTE JAVORE CHRISTINE BRICE TOMASINA SMITH
Hair Stylist	ELENA ROULENKO
Additional Hair Stylist	CHARLEY MONTGOMERY MILTON BURAS
Wig Consultant	MICHELLE JOHNSON
Wardrobe Assistant	ERIN HUGHES
Wardrobe Intern	SANDRA RAMIREZ
Art Director	JAIME ROSEGREN
On-Set Dresser	TRICIA PECK
Set Dressers	RICHARD RANGLIN EVAN SEIDE
Property Master	AMBER V. PERKINS
Prop Maker	GWEN ROACH
Art PA	MARC SLANGER
Set Carpenter	STEFAN SZYMANSKI
New York Casting Associate	MICHELE WEISS
Key Production Assistant	MICHELE JEFFERSON
Production Assistants	MICHAEL SCHMIDT DANIEL HOURIHAN MARCUS SLABINE AQUILES CONDE TINA QUACH HARRISON HARBERS JOE WHITE

On Set Intern	AUSTIN HINTON
Production Interns	EDWARD BOTTENHEIM ANA NARVAEZ
Location Scout	CHRISTOPHER WILLIAMS PATTI BRASHEARS, FEATURED IN FILMS
Set Photographer	COKE O'NEAL
Production Accountant	BREDA LLC ROBERT TONINO
Catering	TARA SINGLETON CATERING & CRAFT SERVICE JANETTE KYLE
Lighting, G&E Equipment	FASTLIGHTS.COM
Camera Equipment	TECHNOLOGICAL CINEVIDEO SERVICES
Audio Equipment	PROFESSIONAL SOUND SERVICES
Post-Production Supervisor	ANDREW VAN DEN HOUTEN
Assistant Editor	MAX PRUM
Audio Editorial Services	MARSHALL SOUND DESIGN
Re-Recording Mixer	JOHNNY MARSHALL
Dolby Sound Consultant	DAVID BERTI
DI Color Timing	TECHNICOLOR
Project Mgr (Technicolor)	KRISTYN DIPANE
Digital Intermediate Colorist	MARTIN ZEICHNER
Digital Intermediate Editor	JESSICA ELVIN

Q & A WITH DIRECTOR PATRICK WANG

Where and when did the idea for your film come about?

A couple years ago, I met Evan Wolfson. He's a civil rights attorney unlike any lawyer I've ever met. He was talking about the idea of marriage for same-sex couples and how the idea makes a lot of people uncomfortable. To him, that discomfort shouldn't just be chalked up to the reaction of small-minded people. It is a legitimate feeling that needs to be addressed. Because those same people who are uncomfortable with the issue have something else in them that has served this country well over the years: an honest desire to be fair-minded. Appeal to that desire to be fair. Tell the story of how things as they are can hurt families and strain people trying to live a life with dignity, and in the end that desire to be fair can overcome any initial discomfort. That is one way change happens. That generous and optimistic spirit was one of the sparks for writing the film.

What inspired you to make this film about family or extended family?

I have a wonderful family in Texas. And when I was in high school, I went to Argentina as an exchange student. My host family there is also wonderful, and they taught me the magic that is the extended family you choose. After I had written the script, my dad in Argentina got very sick, then my dad in Texas got very sick. It was a reminder that you never know how much time you have left in this life, and so it was a kick in the ass to make the movie. My dad in Texas passed away before he got to see the movie, but if you go to a screening, you will get to see him. His fingerprints are all over it.

According to the film credits I believe the film locations are upstate New York. Please talk about your decision to set the movie in Tennessee?

Here's a sentence for you: my Argentine sister went to Barcelona where she met a Greek named Sokratis, and they got married and moved to Martin, Tennessee. I've spent time in other parts of Tennessee, but I had never been to Martin, and so I found myself wondering about it. And before long it was the setting for the screenplay. It was fun to set the movie in a real place that I had never visited. From time to time I would look up the weather, look at pictures of houses and trees, read the town census. Just for a couple points of reference, never too much or too literal. The place is a good size, some 40,000 people in the county. And there's a branch of the University of Tennessee there. This is not a film about being trapped in a geography, and so it felt like nice, neutral ground. I also think these modest sized cities and Southern cities don't often get a fair shake in movies. Their people and their ideas can be as surprising and diverse as any place.

Your film significantly covers the topic of child custody. Why did you feel it was important to address this topic?

There is something extraordinarily beautiful in the relationship between the father and son in this movie. And that beautiful thing is seriously threatened, and it makes me furious when the world takes aim at the beautiful things. So that makes me want to say something. These threats come in the form of questions about custody, so yes it's a significant part of the movie. And as a topic, it's significant for the hundreds of thousands of children being raised by same-sex parents in this country. But I think movies die when the topical crowds out the details. So I put my efforts into following the shifting dynamics of this particular family and finding the interesting path of escalation and deescalation among well-meaning people. All this gives life to the question of custody.

Describe what it was like working with your cinematographer. How did you find him?

Frank was recommended through a friend. And we had a great interview where we didn't start on the same page, but once I started explaining myself, I could see the gears turning, and he ran with me. And I knew I had found the right collaborator. We started working together early, about half a year before the shoot. In the first month we worked together, I told him, I don't want to talk visuals. We're not going to say a word about what the movie is going to look like. We didn't know, and we didn't have a basis for knowing yet. To start with, we're going to go through the script scene by scene and just talk about what's going on. Who's doing what and why. Why is this scene in there. What's not being said. What's important and what moves me and what surprises me.

Had he ever done that before?

No. But neither had I. I thought, since we have the time and the content is rich enough, let's take it slow and let the style emerge from the content. I can't emphasize enough how important that deep connection to the content was for us on this film. It was a place for us to come home to when we were getting confused, and it guided us through some unusual choices that we could make with confidence.

But eventually you did talk visuals.

Yes, we talked first at a high level about some design principles that seemed like a good fit for the film. Then we went through and talked scene by scene about what the shot design might look like. That first pass at the shot list, I wrote almost nothing down.

The idea was we're just getting started. The good ideas would stick with us and mature, the bad ones we would forget. Eventually, we started writing it down. Things changed even through the shoot, but the changes became rarer and rarer as we went along. We were still getting new ideas, but the bar was pretty high for changes. But it happens. Inspiration hits you the day of shooting, and you say thank you and go with it.

Do you have an example of that kind of last minute inspiration?

One of my favorite moments in the movie occurred to me in the early morning ride to set. I loved those rides. They were quiet, and I could spend some time just imagining our shoot for that day. And something about that morning mental haze just lets ideas slip in and out. I was thinking about Chip and Joey coming home from the memorial service, and they looked blurry to me. Before this scene, we will have been in blackout for a good stretch of time, and our eyes need some time to transition out of that, so a fade into something out of focus made sense. I couldn't wait to tell Frank. When the camera was up, I said, Frank, what if they're out of focus? He changed settings on the camera and said, Like this? I said, More. We went at it again. Like this? More, really out of focus. Like this? Yes. He stared at the picture for a moment, then started shouting, Okay okay okay okay and talking to his department. That's a Frank approval. We had a couple of moments like this where it just became clear what we should do. And at the end of this shot, when Joey and Chip turn the corner onto their home street, Frank did this lovely in-camera transition to bring the shot slowly back into focus. Add in the sound design, and you have a gorgeous sequence that seems so obvious after the fact.

Would he have told you if he didn't like the idea?

Oh yeah. And what's great about Frank is that he doesn't just give an opinion, he gives an assessment. I think there is too much decision-making on film sets before anyone has an accurate assessment of what the hell is going on. He had this knack for practical insight into what was before us, and that helped me to understand how to create to solve our problem.

Do you have an example of this?

I remember this one location Frank hated. It was bizarre. I had never seen him so unhappy. I asked him what was going on, and he said, "You know, you go in there, and you're in there. That's it. It's not architecturally interesting. It's not like our other locations. And I don't know what to make of it, and you can't decide what side of the

line you want to be on. But if this is the worst of our location troubles, I can live with that.” And I listened to him, and I didn’t know how to respond in that moment, but his assessment of the situation told me something. It told me that I would have to solve this scene with blocking and that the actors’ bodies would have to be how I get architecture and depth into the picture. That night I figured it out, and that scene, the Thanksgiving flashback, is I think the most elegantly designed scene in the movie. Four setups were condensed into one setup where the camera is on sticks and Frank gets to operate. Every move in the dance between actors and camera in that scene has so much personality. You really shouldn’t be able to fit so much in one shot.

That brings us to something that comes up again and again in your movie: covering scenes in long, single takes. Why did you decide to shoot this way?

I don’t think I realized until we were done with the movie that this was particularly unusual. I followed a simple design philosophy: I wouldn’t move the camera if it didn’t accomplish something worthwhile, and I wouldn’t cut if I didn’t need to. There’s a lot of power in the cut, and its overuse takes away that power when you need it. Also, when you know where to put the camera, a long take can reveal more information to you about the characters and their relationships than a dozen chopped up shots. So this philosophy led to a movie that has fewer than 300 cuts and only about 20 shots where there’s any camera movement. Not all movies should be like this, but it serves this movie well.

Doesn’t this limit your editing choices?

No. It gives you a quality choice. If you’re forced to get it right on set, you don’t need to pray that your editors will find a way to make it fly. It limits the editing tools you can apply, but I am more concerned with quality choices. I’ll take a great performance in one over extensive coverage of something lousy any day.

How did the actors react to this shooting style? Did the long takes require something different from them?

I learned after the shoot—ignorance can be such an asset—that the conventional wisdom is that long takes are risky and you should only do them with experienced actors, preferably ones you’ve worked with before who you know can perform. I’ve never worked with any of these actors before. I have four minute takes with a six year old kid where he has all the lines. And it’s beautiful. To him it wasn’t abnormal, it was just the scene. I have a ten minute take with Trevor that made it into the movie. It’s beautiful, and he loved it. Long takes can be extraordinarily honest. You put a long take in the hands of good actors, all sorts of information leaks out, and they will teach you a

lot about the rhythms of how a person thinks and behaves. The true rhythms. Not what you were expecting but that rare insight into something true. It's different, and the first instinct for a lot of people is to run in with the scissors and out with the stuff you don't recognize. Well not this time. Not this movie.

How long was the shoot? Were there any reshoots?

Three weeks. No reshoots.

Did you rehearse?

Yes, I love rehearsal. I think it's a shame how often that question is asked in film. Rehearsals give you a foundation, and you can rehearse and be spontaneous. I don't think anyone can accuse the actors in this movie of not being spontaneous. And they were rehearsed, the day players too.

How many of the scenes were improvised?

None. I think it's also a shame how often that question is asked in film.

There's a lot of responsibility for the movie that falls on the shoulders of Joey Williams. Did you always intend to act in and direct the movie?

No. At the beginning, I didn't intend to do either. I decided to direct the movie as a defensive move. I couldn't stand the things people were saying about the script. They wanted all the good stuff out and they wanted to bring in all the cliches I had managed to avoid. I decided to direct just to protect the movie.

And acting?

My producer Andrew was the one who told me to think seriously about acting in the movie, and I'm grateful to him for that. It's unexpected that a producer would encourage what could be a recipe for disaster. I took the decision seriously. I auditioned myself in front of the camera, gave myself direction, and assessed how well I could implement my own direction. When I decided it could be done, I started thinking about what advantages could come from this set-up. One major advantage of directing and acting in a film is that you can give the other actors direction from within the scene. If things are getting off track, you just do something in character to shift things, and the take is still usable. I knew this was the way I wanted to work with my kid, but it worked with the adults just as well. And I also rehearsed myself like a mad man.

And how exactly did you do that, rehearse yourself?

I prepared the way many actors prepare, with some research, some imagination and analysis of the role. Going over lines. I think one of the signs that you are effectively wearing a new hat is when you feel like you are starting over in your new role. Now that you have a different responsibility and job to do, everything looks different. For the actual rehearsals, I started off video recording them. I pretty soon dropped that, and I would just audio record the rehearsals from time to time. It kept me from getting too bogged down in too many details at the start. I was surprised how much the audio would reveal. You don't need to watch a bad performance to know it was bad, you could hear it right away. And you could hear what went wrong.

This is seen as an actor's movie and a director's movie. So let me ask, who are some of your favorite actors and directors?

First, I'm glad that this can be seen both as an actor's movie and a director's movie. There is sometimes this fiction that one element asserts itself at the expense of the other, and I don't believe that. The reference movies for this project reveal both my favorite actors and directors: "Scenes from a Marriage" and "A Woman Under the Influence." I love the balanced design of these movies, how they capture performance, and how they turn these intimate spaces into planets. I really love Tony Richardson and Orson Welles. And Sidney Lumet. I also love Adolfo Aristarain's movies. They're these precise portraits of Argentine families, particularly Argentine fathers. And they're so warm without being sentimental.