



MILL VALLEY  
FILM FESTIVAL

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## 32nd Mill Valley Film Festival Presents Opening and Closing Night Films and Celebrations

*Opening night invited guests include Clive Owen and Scott Hicks*

The 32<sup>nd</sup> Mill Valley Film Festival (October 8–18, 2009) kicks off the 11-day festival with two powerful and compelling **Opening Night** films, sponsored by Wells Fargo, *The Boys Are Back* and *Precious: Based on the Novel "Push" by Sapphire*. *The Boys Are Back*, directed by **Scott Hicks** (*Shine*, MVFF 1996), is a deeply moving, wryly confessional tale of fatherhood that intimately evokes both the fragility and wonders of family life. Shot on location in the stunning countryside of South Australia, and starring Academy Award® nominee and Golden Globe® winner **Clive Owen**, the film is based on the memoir by Simon Carr, and inspired by the poignant, comic and uplifting true story of a witty, wisecracking, action-oriented sportswriter who, in the wake of his wife's tragic death, must suddenly raise his two sons alone. With turbulent emotions swirling just below the surface, he throws himself into the only child-rearing philosophy that he thinks has a shot at bringing joy back into their lives: "Just say yes." *The Boys Are Back* will be showing on two screens at the CinéArts@Sequoia on **Thursday, October 8 at 7:00 and 7:15 pm** Director **Scott Hicks** and actor **Clive Owen** are expected to attend.

*Precious: Based on the Novel "Push" by Sapphire*, from director **Lee Daniels** (*Shadowboxer*), is a vibrant, honest, and resoundingly hopeful film about the human capacity to grow and overcome. Set in Harlem in 1987, it is the story of Claireece "Precious" Jones (**Gabourey Sidibe**), a 16-year-old African-American girl born into a life no one would want. Pregnant for the second time, emotionally and physically abused by a domineering mother, Precious has reached the ninth grade with good marks and an awful secret: she can neither read nor write. But when Precious is offered the chance to transfer to an alternative school, all her instincts tell her this is the chance she has been waiting for. In a literacy workshop taught by the patient yet firm Ms. Rain (**Paula Patton**), Precious begins a journey that will lead her from darkness, pain and powerlessness to light, love and self-determination. *Precious: Based on the Novel "Push" by Sapphire* will be shown at the Christopher B. Smith Rafael Film Center on **Thursday, October 8 at 7:00 pm**. Director Lee Daniels and actresses Gabourey Sibide and Paula Patton are expected to attend.

Immediately after the screenings, join us at the **Opening Night Gala** for delicious savories and sweets, wine and cocktails, and live music by Steve Lucky & the Rhumba Bums at **9:30 pm** at the Mill Valley Community Center. Special thanks to Wells Fargo for Sponsoring the Gala, Strawberry Village's Pizza Antica for providing dinner and to Whole Foods, Marin French Cheese Company, Judy's Breadsticks, Lagunitas Brewing Company, Barefoot Wine & Bubbly, Townley Wines and Thumbprint Cellars.

The curtain is drawn on the 32nd Mill Valley Film Festival on **Sunday, October 18** with two new critically acclaimed **Closing Night** films, *Looking for Eric* and *The Young Victoria*, sponsored by Pacific Gas & Electric Company. *The Young Victoria*, from director Jean-Marc Vallé, is a stunning film that focuses on the early days of Queen Victoria's reign over the United Kingdom. Light years from the aged, widowed Queen Victoria of popular imagination, Emily Blunt is radiant, vivacious and enchanting as the sheltered princess who ascended the British throne in 1837 at age 18. This captivating, sumptuously mounted production, beautifully performed and graced with an elegant, witty screenplay that adheres largely to the historical record, traces the earliest years of Victoria's long reign: her struggle for autonomy from her mother, the Duchess of Kent (Miranda Richardson), as she takes the crown; hard knocks and political fallout from a checkered alliance with Prime Minister Lord Melbourne (Paul Bettany); and her gentle, cautious, finally fervent courtship with first cousin Prince Albert (Rupert Friend). Depicting a formidable yet vulnerable court in the midst of tumultuous social upheaval, *The Young Victoria* takes this legendary royal romance as its heart, tracing the evolution of two young people who would become the 19th century's ultimate power couple. *The Young Victoria* will screen on **Sunday, October 18, at 5:15 pm** at the Christopher B. Smith Rafael Film Center.

British director Ken Loach, who has had a plethora of films at MVFF including *My Name Is Joe* (1998) and *Bread and Roses* (2000), returns to the Festival with his newest work, *Looking for Eric*. In this tale of a man on the edge of a midlife crisis, lonely postman Eric Bishop (Steve Evets) feels as if his very existence is slipping through his fingers. His chaotic family, his wild stepsons, and the cement mixer in the front garden don't help, but it is Eric's surreal encounters with a famous French footballer-philosopher that are driving him to the brink. Despite outrageous efforts and misplaced goodwill from his football-fan mates, Eric continues to sink. In desperate times, it takes a spliff and a special friend to challenge Eric to journey into the most perilous territory of all—the past. *Looking for Eric* will screen on **Sunday, October 18, at 5:15 pm** at CinéArts@Sequoia.

After the films, the Festival sails off with Hornblower Cruises & Events for a **Closing Night Party** aboard the *California Hornblower*. Hors d'oeuvres and desserts will be served dockside at the Sausalito Ferry Dock at 1 Anchor Street prior to boarding at 8:00 pm, and then the yacht will set sail at 9:00 pm for a San Francisco Bay Cruise.

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### **California Film Institute**

The California Film Institute celebrates and promotes film as art and education through the presentation of the Mill Valley Film Festival and year-round exhibitions at the Christopher B. Smith Rafael Film Center, and by building the next generation of filmmakers and audiences through CFI Education. For more information visit [cafilm.org](http://cafilm.org) or call 415.383.5256.

### **32nd Mill Valley Film Festival**

Presented by the California Film Institute, the 32nd Mill Valley Film Festival runs October 8–18, 2009 at the CinéArts@Sequoia (25 Throckmorton Avenue, Mill Valley), Christopher B. Smith Rafael Film Center (1118 Fourth Street, San Rafael) and other venues throughout the Bay Area. Tickets are \$12.50 (CFI Members, \$10) unless otherwise noted and are available for purchase on September 20–23 for CFI members only, and beginning on September 24 for the general public. Regular tickets may be purchased online at [mvff.com](http://mvff.com). For additional information, please visit [mvff.com](http://mvff.com) or call 877.874.MVFF.

### **Sponsors**

As a nonprofit arts organization, MVFF relies on the generosity of its community to sustain not only the festival, but also the year-round programs of the California Film Institute. The invaluable support of our sponsors, foundation, and individual donors ensures our continued success as we celebrate our 32nd year. CFI is once again proud to acknowledge the leadership support of Christopher B. and Jeannie Meg Smith, and the continued major support of the Bernard Osher Foundation, the Gruber Family Foundation, Jennifer Coslett MacCready, the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, the Marin Community Foundation, the Zecca Foundation, and the National Endowment for the Arts. We are also fortunate to have the continued contributions of the following Major Sponsors of the Mill Valley Film Festival: Qantas Airways, Maroevich, O'Shea & Coghlan Insurance Services, Frantoio Ristorante and Olive Oil Co., Zaentz Media Center/Wareham Development, Pacific Gas & Electric Company (PG&E), and CFI Membership Sponsor, Wells Fargo. Longtime friend and dedicated supporter of the festival, Bellam Self Storage & Boxes, is also returning as a major sponsor, and will be receiving this year's Distinguished Sponsor Award.

This release and other press materials are available at <http://filmmakers.mvff.com>.

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