PERSMAP



"When a court determines any question with respect to... the upbringing of a child... the child's welfare shall be the court's paramount consideration."

The Children Act, 1989.

THE CHILDREN ACT

Een film van Richard Eyre

THE CHILDREN ACT van regisseur Richard Eyre (NOTES ON A SCANDAL) is gebaseerd op de gelijknamige bestseller van Booker-Prize winnaar Ian McEwan ('Atonement'), die tevens het scenario schreef voor de film.

Fiona Maye (Oscar®- winnares Emma Thompson) is een gerespecteerd rechter van het Hooggerechtshof waar ze bekendstaat om haar professionele en weloverwogen uitspraken binnen het complexe familierecht. Wanneer haar huwelijk met Jack (Stanley Tucci) lijkt te bezwijken onder haar toewijding voor het vak stort Fiona zich op een ingewikkelde zaak.

De 17-jarige Adam (Fionn Whitehead, DUNKIRK) heeft leukemie en zal zonder een bloedtransfusie niet lang meer leven. Vanwege zijn geloof als Jehovah's getuige weigert Adam de noodzakelijke medische hulp te accepteren. Fiona moet besluiten of hij te jong is om zelf over leven en dood te beslissen of dat het recht op vrije wil toch zwaarder weegt. Haar uitspraak heeft hoe dan ook grote gevolgen voor hen beiden.



Speelduur: 105 min. - Land: UK - Jaar: 2017 - Genre: Drama Releasedatum bioscoop: 20 september 2018

Meer over de film:

https://www.cineart.nl/films/children-act-the

https://www.cineart.nl/pers/children-act-the

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RICHARD EYRE - DIRECTOR

Richard Eyre was Associate Director at the Royal Lyceum Theatre, Edinburgh from 1967 – 1972, Director of Nottingham Playhouse from 1973 – 1978, Producer of Play for Today for BBC TV from 1978 to 1981 and was Director of the National Theatre from 1988 to 1997.

His films include THE PLOUGHMAN'S LUNCH, IRIS (co-writer), STAGE BEAUTY, NOTES ON A SCANDAL, THE OTHER MAN (co-writer).

On television he produced *Just a Boy's Game, Long Distance Information, Chance of a Lifetime.* Director of *Waterloo Sunset, The Imitation Game, Past Caring, The Insurance Man, Laughterhouse, Country, Tumbledown, Suddenly Last Summer, v., Henry IV Part I and Henry IV Part II, The Dresser.* He was the presenter/writer of Changing Stages.

His theatre includes his adaptation of *The Ha-Ha* (Hampstead); *Hamlet, Kafka's Dick, Edmond* (Royal Court) *Comedians, Guys and Dolls, The Beggar's Opera, The Government Inspector, The Changeling, The Voysey*



Inheritance, Racing Demon, Richard III, Night of the Iguana; White Chameleon, Skylight, Napoli Milionaria, Sweet Bird of Youth, The Absence of War, John Gabriel Borkman, Amy's View, King Lear, The Invention of Love, Vincent in Brixton, The Reporter, The Observer, Welcome to Thebes, Liolà (National Theatre); The Crucible (Broadway); Mary Poppins (West End/ Broadway); Private Lives (West End/Broadway); A Flea in Her Ear (Old Vic); The Last of the Duchess; The Judas Kiss; Quartermaine's Terms (West End); The Last Cigarette; The Pajama Game (Chichester Festival Theatre and West End); Betty Blue Eyes; Stephen Ward, Mr Foote's Other Leg (West End); The Dark Earth and the Light Sky (Almeida); his own adaptations of Les Mains Sales, Little Eyolf, Hedda Gabler and Ghosts (Almeida and West End).

Opera: La Traviata (ROH); Le Nozze di Figaro (Aix-en-Provence); Manon Lescaut (Festspielhaus, Baden-Baden and The Metropolitan Opera), Carmen, Werther, Le Nozze di Figaro (Metropolitan Opera).

Books: He has written <u>Utopia and Other Places</u>, a memoir; <u>National Service</u>, a journal of his time at the National Theatre; <u>Talking Theatre</u>, conversations with theatre people; and <u>What Do I Know?</u>, a collection of essays and journalism.

He has received numerous awards for theatre, TV and film. He was made a Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature in 2011. He was knighted in 1997 and made a Companion of Honour in 2017.

Filmography

2017 THE CHILDREN ACT

2015 THE DRESSER (TV)

2008 THE OTHER MAN

2006 NOTES ON A SCANDAL

2004 STAGE BEAUTY

2001 IRIS

PRODUCTION NOTES

"Some years ago I found myself at dinner with a handful of judges" recalls Ian McEwan. "They were talking shop, and I was politely resisting the urge to take notes. At one point, our host, Sir Alan Ward, an appeal court judge, wanting to settle some mild disagreement, got up and reached from a shelf a bound volume of his own judgments. An hour later, when we had left the table for coffee, that book lay open on my lap. These judgments were like short stories, or novellas; the background to some dispute or dilemma crisply summarised, characters drawn with quick strokes, the story distributed across several points of view and, towards its end, some sympathy extended towards those whom, ultimately, the narrative would not favour."

"These were not cases in the criminal courts, where it must be decided beyond reasonable doubt whether a man is a villain or an unlucky victim. Nothing so black and white. These stories were in the family division, where much of ordinary life's serious interests lie: love and marriage, and the end of both, fortunes querulously divided, parental cruelty and neglect, the bitterly contested destinies of children. Here, in my lap, were realistically conceived characters moving through plausible, riveting situations, raising complex ethical questions."

"Three years after my supper with that bench of judges, Alan Ward told me of a Jehovah's Witness case he had once presided over. The character of the judge who was so compassionately and rationally intent on a good outcome, seemed inseparable from the story. When I heard it, I remembered my earlier impression – that the family division of the high court is rooted in the same ground as fiction, where all of life's vital interests lie. With the luxury of withholding judgment, a novel could interpose itself here, reinvent the characters and circumstances, and begin to investigate an encounter between love and belief, between the secular spirit of the law and sincerely held faith."

McEwan's novel *The Children Act* was published five years later, in September 2014. The novel's title recalls the UK's Children Act of 1989, which revolutionised the law relating to children by putting the welfare of the child above all else in cases brought to the family division. The novel won widespread praise, with the Guardian calling it "hugely enjoyable...a triumph of imagination over research", the Observer hailing it as "masterful", while GQ said the novel "shows McEwan as a master of fiction who strives to teach us how to live".

The novel's protagonist is a woman: Fiona Maye, a High Court judge in the Family Division. Having recently presided over an ethically complex and emotionally demanding case involving conjoined twins, Fiona is called on to decide urgently whether or not to allow a hospital to transfuse Adam Henry, a Jehovah's Witness boy with leukemia, against his wishes. Fiona's personal life is at a challenging point: in her fifties, she is coming to terms with being childless just as her marriage to university lecturer Jack seems to be falling apart.

"She's an intensely private woman," says McEwan of Fiona Maye. "I suppose she's another in the long line of characters of mine who try to live a rational existence but find that that's not easy and that rationality doesn't always protect you from the buffeting that life brings. She's moving towards the end of her professional career at which she's been a great success, having overseen decisions in the divorce courts for half a lifetime, and she's devastated by the possible collapse of her long settled stable marriage to Jack. She's a kind woman but not given to a great deal of emotional display and she finds she doesn't really have the language to talk to her husband about their sex life so she's not very well defended against this crisis that comes up in her life."

"Fiona decides mid-proceedings to visit the boy in the hospital, which is quite unorthodox," he continues. "She wants to find out exactly who he is and what he wants. Fiona's judgment in favour of

transfusion opens up a whole new, challenging, beautiful, terrifying world to Adam, whose life has hitherto been circumscribed by the dictates of his religion. With his new lease of life he is offered freedom, the right to believe what he chooses, and to think for himself: a world of learning, and wonder, and love."

Some months before the novel was published McEwan was discussing it with director and long-time friend Richard Eyre, and he mooted the idea of Eyre directing a screen adaptation. Having worked together on their first film *The Imitation Game* in the late 70's and then again on *The Ploughman's Lunch* in 1981, the pair had hoped to work together again, as McEwan elaborates: "Both of those were very agreeable experiences and I thought we would work together again sometime soon, and we kept mentioning it again for the next thirty years - but never got around to it. The prospect of working with Richard again was a sheer delight and the focus of a lifetime's ambition, so when I handed over the novel I said if this is ever made into a film the person to direct it would be Richard – it would be a very actor-centred piece. One of the great things about Richard is he's had such long experience in the theatre which has given him a wonderful approach and touch, and actors love working with him - and I knew that with Richard directing we could probably get anyone he wanted to work with into the film."

The novel's compelling examination of its two protagonists, the middle-aged judge, the teenager on the brink of death - investigating the moral choices they face, and the impact each has on the other's life - resonated immediately with the director. "Ian is a rationalist who examines, sometimes forensically, the characters he's preoccupied with," says Eyre. "But most importantly he endows those characters with a full-blooded humanity so you never feel you're watching a chessboard of moral imperatives. They're always people who have lives out of which actions emerge, sometimes benevolent, sometimes disastrous."

"Fiona's intervention, and her ensuing judgment allowing the blood transfusion, lead to a relationship of mutual dependency between the judge, who has been, in a way, in the position of playing God, and the boy whose life she saves," continues Eyre. "Meanwhile her husband accuses her of opting out of their marriage. It's not a conscious opting-out, it's just that her very important and all-consuming work has preoccupied her to the extent that she's become increasingly insulated from the world of emotions and from her relationship with her husband. All the while, she becomes increasingly attached to, or obsessed by, a boy whose life she has saved, and she has become to him a kind of luminous intelligence and calm and tranquility - everything that doesn't exist in the rest of his life."

McEwan was not initially keen to write the screenplay: "It started with maybe a rather negative impulse as I didn't really want to revisit the material, but I didn't want anyone else to do it either, and so it was an agreeable surprise that I found the process fascinating. A novel gives you access to people's thoughts, a screenplay does not, and finding the transcription from what is thought or implied in a novel to what has to be said and done between people in a film is an intellectual and emotional challenge. Once I found it was really enjoyable I got deeply into it and spent as much time writing this screenplay as I did the novel."

To help bring the story to the screen, Eyre and McEwan decided to ask British film producer Duncan Kenworthy if he would take it on. Kenworthy read a pre-publication copy of the novel in one sitting and immediately said yes. "They had me at hello!" he laughs. "There are so few opportunities for intelligent, engrossing, moving storytelling in film, and this is one of the best. I've always loved lan's writing, but here it's as if all his preoccupations have found their perfect shape and place. The central story sounds so straightforward – a courtroom drama – and yet the emotional intricacies of a brilliant, childless judge caught between her husband and the boy whose life she must save or sacrifice are miraculously complex."

"The beauty and pleasure of lan's writing is in its precision - in his ability to absolutely nail every idea and emotion," says Kenworthy. "He loves research and investigates the milieu of his stories with complete diligence. This all translates seamlessly to the screen. There's a wonderful clarity and almost an inevitability about his screenwriting which draws you on, and in."

Kenworthy was clear that the creative partnership of McEwan and director Richard Eyre would yield rich rewards. "Richard and Ian are close friends and each clearly knows and values the strengths of the other. Even if that had not been the case, Richard would always have been the ideal director for this film because it's the territory that he's inhabited so perfectly before in Iris and Notes on a Scandal. He's also a consummate director of actors, and in addition to its narrative strengths this film was always going to depend on some great performances."



CASTING

With the protagonist, a high court judge whose intelligence and commitment have got her to the top of her profession, there was, according to Richard Eyre, only one actor who could do justice to the role of Fiona Maye: Emma Thompson. "If Emma hadn't wanted to do the film we wouldn't have made it, we couldn't have made it," says the director. "Emma is the most extraordinary actress and it's impossible to imagine the role being played by another actress, even more now with hindsight."

It didn't take long for Thompson to agree to join the project. It wasn't just the finesse of the writing but the fact that the role allowed her to immerse herself into an entirely new and fascinating world. "The book is so spare and beautifully written," she explains, "but I think what really bit into me with this project was learning about the female judges in family court and doing the research to prepare for the part. The work they do, the life they lead, the drudgery of it and the responsibility took my breath away - I was so impressed with these women."

The character's having to negotiate a difficult personal life and a challenging professional case was an irresistible draw. "The film starts just as this massive crack appears in Fiona's marriage, which has been rocky for a while, and you see her having to step over it straight into the court room and work, work, work. She returns home to this chasm and she can't address it because she's got to do the work. She's dealing with the fact that she and her husband haven't had sex for 11 months and he's acting out because she won't talk."

"A truism about this kind of work is that it leaves very little space for anything else," continues Thompson. "They have to take in so much information and then extrapolate what they need for a judgment that they have to make very quickly because someone might die if they don't. Playing a character who has to handle that kind of intellectual hurdle-jumping was inspiring and invigorating because there's a great energy from that kind of intellectual capacity which is perhaps that's why they can carry on beyond normal."

Thompson also recognised how perfect the match was between the material and the director . "The story with all its complications needed someone like Richard Eyre," she says. "He spends his life telling very complete stories on stage. He knows where actors should stand and sit and he knows what he wants day-to-day. He's a brilliant editor so not only can he see what you're doing but he can see how to get more out of your performance. I was constantly grateful to him."

Duncan Kenworthy was already a great admirer of Thompson's skill and sensitivity as an actor, having produced the film Love Actually in which she stars. "The scene of her crying in the bedroom — or rather holding back the tears as she straightens the counterpane — is famous for a reason. Which is that Emma completely inhabits the characters she plays from the inside. So in The Children Act every gesture, every look, every intonation fits a High Court judge. She is miraculously good at putting in the work, thinking it through and then being it".

Ian McEwan adds: "I trusted Richard and from very early on he wanted Emma for the role and even when we sat around her kitchen table for a read through adjusting lines to make them as comfortable on her tongue as possible and she came up with some very good suggestions it was clear to me she was the judge and it's a commanding performance. She captured something very English, a certain kind of person whose feelings run deep but whose expression of those feelings is highly defended. She turns in the most extraordinary performance - she is the film, and she took it to another place. It was a real privilege to work with her."

Sir Alan Ward – the film's legal consultant - concurs: "Emma played the role magnificently. She was astonishingly perceptive and punctilious in her preparation. I introduced her to a number of judges, especially female judges, as she was anxious to understand the pressures of being a woman in the job – pressures that are different from those of being a man in the job. She understood that sense of isolation that one has to have without forfeiting the humanity that you need to bring to the job, and she captures that in her performance. She is wonderful."

In the role of Fiona Maye's frustrated husband, Jack, is Stanley Tucci. For Tucci, the film fulfils several of his professional ambitions. "I've always wanted to work with Emma Thompson - she is one of the greatest actresses ever, she's so versatile, she's a comedienne and a great dramatic actress. And I've always wanted to work with Richard Eyre," he says. "I really admire Ian McEwan as a writer and I thought the script was very beautiful. So all those elements were very attractive."

Tucci describes the milieu in which Fiona and Jack live as "almost rarefied. They're both very well educated and they live in Gray's Inn in central London and they want for nothing. But Fiona has become more driven as she's got older when other people might be winding down at that point in their career, and it's that drive that's taken her away from the relationship emotionally. She ends up having a sort of platonic love affair with a young man who is dying. Jack's a professor of ancient history and, faced with a marriage that's faltering, he states quite plainly that much as he loves her he misses the intimacy and would like to have an affair."

"When we came up with the idea of Stanley in that part, the whole film made sense," says producer Duncan Kenworthy. "Stanley can do things other actors can't get away with: he's able to be the bad boy and tell the heroine that he's going to have an affair but still make you want them to be together at the end. With Stanley in the role, Jack is exactly as we wanted him to be."

Emma Thompson agrees: "Stanley is just such a marvellous actor – extraordinary, really. His character is very hard to bring off and still have people like him as he's got some quite difficult things to say. But Stanley was remarkable."

For Richard Eyre, "Stanley brings to any film a kind of authority which is born partly of experience, partly of his natural gravitas. He's a seriously likeable, grown-up, intelligent man."

Ian McEwan adds: "I was overjoyed with the way Stanley Tucci played the part of Jack. There was such authority in the way he played him. In general what he brings to it was to give a sympathetic and warm reading to Jack. There is also a directness which is well expressed by an American to an English person, and a human touch that really makes a difference. Right at the end he has great tenderness. It a beautifully poised, beautifully pitched, performance."

The role of Adam, the teenager who is prepared to die for his faith, is played by rising British star, Fionn Whitehead. "This was a really critical part - Adam has to be both the child that Fiona never had and also a romantic figure for her," says Kenworthy. "Fionn fits in both of those categories. He's nineteen but was able to very convincingly play a seventeen year-old while also having the solidity that suggests adulthood and was vital for the role of Adam."

Whitehead describes Adam as "sheltered, innocent and pure because of his upbringing as a Jehovah's Witness. Fiona opens his eyes to beauty and art and poems and to expressing himself, which has been repressed, and it floods into him and he's unable to keep it back. All the positivity and creativity really affects him and has a resounding impact on him. He's a very sensitive soul and that was one of the things that surprised me on reading the book: he's so open; most people have their defenses up whereas Adam is completely without barriers. He was really interesting to play because he's completely raw and experiences things to extremes, so when he's excited about

something he's the most excited person in the world, and when he's anguished about something he's completely bereft, and there's not a lot of in-between. His openness has a profound impact on Fiona. Because of her job, she is quite de-sensitized to people and she craves closeness to anybody at that point, so when she meets Adam she realizes what she has been missing."

As a young man, Whitehead recognized the truths in the way the character was drawn and the pressures he is forced to confront. "Adam is being opened up to the world around him," he says. "All the wonder as well as all the bad things that face him are things most teenagers can relate to. That was an interesting theme to explore. Being a teenager is often talked about as the best time of your life but no one really talks about the craziness of it all, how you're suddenly expected to be grown up and how overwhelming it all is."

It was also, says Whitehead, a joy to savor the elegance of Ian McEwan's writing. "The way Ian writes is so vivid and descriptive of the characters, and the setting of the whole story is so rich," he says. "He uses one word where another writer might use twenty - his writing is very precise so when you read it every word is meant to be there."

Whitehead's sensitivity as an actor was immediately obvious to all involved. "Fionn is ingenious, charming and intelligent and somehow beyond his years, but at the same time he's not precocious," says Richard Eyre. "He's very curious, very enquiring and very watchful."

"Fionn plays a young man who is brought up in a very closed environment of the Jehovah's Witness community and is refusing life-saving treatment," says Emma Thompson. "Fiona Maye is surprised by him – not only is he exceptionally beautiful but he's a musician and a profound thinker. She listens to him with absolute sincerity and conviction, without condescending to him, and that changes his life because he has never been listened to before like that. And he infects her with a sense of youth and vitality and so there's no question of what she must do and she saves his life."

Ian McEwan was extremely impressed by Whitehead's performance: "Fionn had a mountain to climb with this part because he had to deliver a boy who has lived in a very closed religious community, sparky, yet determined to present his own religious case. Innocent beyond belief, with a barely concealed hunger for life, vulnerability, cockiness and a demanding nature, he's hungry for something else beyond his religious instruction and he knows in his heart that she's the one to deliver it. He rose beautifully to it, it's a fabulous performance."

The combination of a compelling story, richly complex themes, brilliant writing and a cast of superlative talent made filming The Children Act a delight for Richard Eyre. "I'm thrilled to be directing these brilliant actors in this powerful story by one of our greatest living novelists," he says.

For Sir Alan Ward, the experience was enormously enjoyable. "It was a privilege to see, in Richard Eyre, a master at work," he says. "Richard's care and knowledge of the subject, his understanding of the technicalities of being a judge and conducting a trial, and his understanding of human frailty, all made it eye-opening for me and a most enriching couple of months in my life."

Producer Duncan Kenworthy concludes: "It's impossible to imagine a better cast or director to bring to life lan's wonderful, emotional story about the degree to which we are all responsible for those we love or in whose lives we intervene."

THE LOOK

With cast and crew in place, filming started in October 2016 on location in central London at Gray's Inn, Lincoln's Inn, the Royal Courts of Justice, and on sound stages at Pinewood Studios.

It was important to the filmmakers that London be shown in a particular light, as Ian McEwan explains: "In our earliest conversations Richard and I decided this had to be a London movie. London on film always seems to have a kitchen sink quality and is often about double decker buses, drains and aerials and not Blackfriars or Waterloo bridge. These are beautiful things, the skyline is beautiful, so it was marvelous that we got them in."

Production designer Peter Francis was given the task of creating the look of the film. Francis and Eyre opted to create very different designs to reflect the distinct worlds of their characters. After investigating the environments of those working in the legal system, Francis decided to avoid soft tones and surfaces and go for a starker design. "The legal world is quite regimented," says Francis. "Everything looks a little municipal, with hard lines and sharp edges, and all the people working there are dressed very smartly, often in uniform."

McEwan adds: "I applaud Richard's decision that Fiona Maye should preside over a modern court room and that we would get away from the usual ancient oak paneling, it opened up real possibilities for the design. The fact that her office is just four steps away from the court room and she has to knock on the door – so we inhabit the space, there is a sort of routine to it. We imagined that Fiona lived in Alan Ward's old apartment, and part of it was actually filmed on his staircase at Gray's Inn which gave it a nice connection."

Thanks to Sir Alan Ward's connections and Richard Eyre's and Duncan Kenworthy's reputations, the filmmakers were given special dispensation to film inside the Great Hall of the Royal Courts of Justice, and to capture its magnificent Victorian Gothic design. For Francis, this was a fantastic boon. "It gives us immediate scale and beds us into the reality of the legal world," he says. "Fiona Maye's universe is effectively confined to one square mile: Gray's Inn, where she lives, and the Royal Courts of Justice, where she works.

"In contrast to her courtroom and office, her home life needed to feel more personal and individual," continues Francis. "We had quite distinct color palettes for the two worlds, with Fiona's Gray's Inn apartment an accumulation of her life with Jack."

Ian McEwan describes the scenes set outside London: "As in the novel I thought there had to be one excursion from London, which is why I seized on the notion that high court judges have to travel around the country to crown courts - taking the London judiciary to the provinces to try cases that can't be heard in front of magistrates. So this was an excuse to get away from the tight London scene and open the film up beautifully in terms of design. A train journey where Fiona is reading Adam's intellectually demanding letters as the whole of England is rushing by – beautiful fields but also the post-industrial world of solar panels and rotting buildings – is beautifully pitched."

Francis is proud of having been able to showcase some of the capital's most architecturally impressive - but still relatively unfamiliar - buildings. "I believe we were able to show London at its best," he says. "Gray's Inn and Lincoln's Inn are very central but quite hidden and we wanted to give a real sense of this beautiful, almost secret world right in the middle of London. Thomas Cromwell, Henry VIII's famous minister, was a member of Gray's Inn, and apparently William Shakespeare himself acted in Gray's Inn Hall, the setting for our film's climactic Christmas concert."

BOEKVERFILMING: IAN MCEWAN – DE KINDERWET

Ian McEwan

Ian McEwan (1948) werd geboren in de Engelse garnizoensplaats Aldershot en bracht zijn jeugd door in Singapore en Tripoli. Toen hij elf jaar was stuurden zijn ouders hem naar een het prestigieuze Eton College, een kostschool in Engeland.

Hij studeerde Engels aan Sussex University en was de enige masterstudent van de studie Creative Writing aan de University of East Anglia in Norwich, waar Malcolm Bradbury een van zijn docenten was. McEwan vond in 1973 een literair agent en verhuisde een jaar later naar Londen waar hij werkte als journalist.

McEwan werd in 1975 in één klap wereldberoemd met zijn verhalenbundel De laatste dag van de zomer. Deze verscheen eerst in Nederland en daarna pas in Engeland. Zijn romans en verhalen zijn inmiddels in meer dan dertig landen verschenen.

Het vroegere werk van McEwan richtte zich meer op de duistere kant van de mens. Met *The Child in Time* (*Het kind in de tijd*) kwam daar verandering in. Het boek is realistischer en milder dan voorgaande werken. Deze lijn zette zich de afgelopen jaren door met als gevolg dat *Atonement* (*Boetekleed*) met recht gezien wordt als een hoogtepunt in zijn oeuvre.

Een aantal van zijn romans zijn verfilmd, waaronder THE CEMENT GARDEN, ENDURING LOVE, ATONEMENT, ON CHESIL BEACH en nu THE CHILDREN ACT.

De Kinderwet

Rechter Fiona Maye wordt alom geprezen om haar ethische en weloverwogen uitspraken. Wanneer haar echtgenoot haar verlaat na een ruzie over een mogelijk open huwelijk, stort ze zich op haar werk. Ze richt zich op een ingewikkelde zaak van een doodzieke 17-jarige jongen die, samen met zijn ouders, een noodzakelijke bloedtransfusie weigert omdat het in strijd is met zijn geloof als Jehova's getuige. Besluit Fiona dat de jongen te jong is om zelf over leven en dood te beslissen of weegt het recht op vrije wil toch zwaarder? Haar uitspraak heeft hoe dan ook grote gevolgen.

Wim Brands interviewt McEwan over De Kinderwet: https://vimeo.com/114145231





Nederlandse en Belgische pers over De Kinderwet

de Volkskrant

'Een superieur geschreven roman'

Trouw

'De kinderwet is zo'n roman waarin de schrijver tegen zichzelf in durft te denken. Dat levert de vruchtbare ambiguïteit op die de kracht is van grote literatuur'

TV Tubantia

'Somber van toon, maar zoals altijd fraai van stijl, toont lan McEwan wat literatuur, en ook alleen literatuur, kan in het vrije veld tussen ratio en gevoel'

Humo

'De grootmeester (...) McEwan begint clean en sec, als het vonnis van een rechtbank, maar zwenkt dan naar emotioneel en pakkend, als een roman van McEwan'

NRC Handelsblad

'McEwan is groots als stilist en plotbedenker, maar ook als moreel baken. Dat blijkt uit deze botsing tussen recht, geloof, gezag en menselijkheid'

De Standaard

'Aangenaam vertoeven tussen de eerste en de laatste bladzijde'

Elsevier

'Het is een indrukwekkend verhaal, opgezet in de beperkte ruimte van tweehonderd pagina's die je ademloos uitleest'

Literair Nederland

'McEwan is er opnieuw in geslaagd bloot te leggen wat dilemma's met een mens doen. En opnieuw aangrijpend'

Internationale pers over The Children Act

<u>People</u>

'Powerful. . . . Heartbreaking and profound'

The Washington Post

'A svelte novel as crisp and spotless as a priest's collar. . . . Another notable volume from one of the finest writers alive'

The London Review of Books

'As ever, McEwan achieves the rich, finegrained realistic texture that makes his novels, sentence by sentence, a pleasure to read'

The Huffington Post

'A finely written, engaging read. . . . Poignant, challenging, and lyrical'

Los Angeles Times

'A quietly exhilarating book'

O, The Oprah Magazine

McEwan here crafts a taut morality tale in crystalline sentences'

The Wall Street Journal

'Profound. . . . You would have to go back to Saturday or Atonement to find scenes of equivalent intensity and emotional investment'

The Boston Globe

'Highly subtle and page-turningly dramatic. . . . Only a master could manage, in barely over 200 pages, to engage so many ideas, leaving nothing neatly answered'

The Times (London)

'Fascinatingly complex and finally heartbreaking. . . . A quite beautiful work of fiction'

CAST

Fiona Maye EMMA THOMPSON Jack STANLEY TUCCI Adam FIONN WHITEHEAD Kevin Henry **BEN CHAPLIN** Nigel Pauling JASON WATKINS Amadia Kalu QC NIKKI AMUKA-BIRD Mark Berner **ANTHONY CALF** Marina Green **ROSIE CAVALIERO** Naomi Henry **EILEEN WALSH** Rodney Carter **NICHOLAS JONes** Sherwood Runcie **RUPERT VANSITTART**

EMMA THOMPSON – FIONA MAYE

Emma Thompson is one of the world's most respected talents for her versatility in acting as well as screenwriting. She is the sole artist thus far to have received an Academy Award for both acting and screenwriting.

Thompson made her feature film debut in 1988, starring opposite Jeff Goldblum in the comedy THE TALL GUY. In 1992, Thompson caused a sensation with her portrayal of Margaret Schlegel in the Merchant-Ivory adaptation of E.M. Forster's HOWARDS END. Sweeping the Best Actress category wherever it was considered, the performance netted her a BAFTA Award, Los Angeles Film Critics Award, New York Film Critics Award, Golden Globe and Academy Award. She earned two Oscar nominations the following year for her work in THE REMAINS OF THE DAY and IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER. In 1995, Thompson's adaptation of Jane Austen's Sense and Sensibility, directed by Ang Lee, won the Academy Award for Best Adapted Screenplay as well as the Golden Globe for Best Screenplay and Best Screenplay awards from the Writers Guild of America and the Writers Guild of Great Britain, among others. For her performance in the film she was honored with a Best Actress award from BAFTA and nominated for a Golden Globe and an Academy Award. Her performance in Richard Curtis' LOVE ACTUALLY earned Thompson Best Actress in a Supporting Role at the 2004 Evening Standard Film Awards, London Film Critics Circle Awards and Empire Film Awards, along with a BAFTA nomination. In 2013, Thompson's moving portrayal of author P.L. Travers in SAVING MR. BANKS earned her both the National Board of Review and Empire Best Actress Awards, along with Golden Globe, Broadcast Film Critics, SAG and BAFTA nominations.

Thompson can next be seen in Noah Baumbach's MEYEROWITZ STORIES alongside Dustin Hoffman and Adam Sandler. She is Mrs. Potts in Disney's international blockbuster, live action BEAUTY AND THE BEAST.

Thompson wrote the screenplay and portrayed the title character of the magical nanny in NANNY MCPHEE (2004), her film based on Christianna Brand's <u>Nurse Matilda</u> stories, directed by Kirk Jones. She reprised the title role in NANNY MCPHEE RETURNS (2010), for which she again wrote the screenplay and acted as an Executive Producer.

In 2004, Thompson brought to the screen JK Rowling's character of Sybil Trelawney in HARRY POTTER AND THE PRISONER OF AZKABAN (2004) for director Alfonso Cuaron, and reprised the role in HARRY POTTER AND THE ORDER OF THE PHOENIX (2007) for director David Yates.

Her other film credits include HENRY V; DEAD AGAIN; PETER'S FRIENDS; MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING; JUNIOR; CARRINGTON; THE WINTER GUEST; IMAGINING ARGENTINA; PRIMARY FICTION; STRANGER THAN FICTION; LAST CHANCE HARVEY (Golden Globe nomination as Best Actress); LOVE PUNCH; Pixar's Academy Award-winning animated film, BRAVE, and MEN IN BLACK 3.

For director Mike Nichols, she starred in the HBO telefilms *Wit* (2001, in a Golden Globe-nominated performance) and *Angels in America* (2002, Screen Actors Guild Award and EMMY Award nominations). For her performance in the BBC Two television production of Christopher Reid's narrative poem, *Song of Lunch*, opposite Alan Rickman, Thompson was nominated for a 2012 Emmy Award (in the U.S. it aired on "Masterpiece" on PBS). Also in 2012, she portrayed Elizabeth II in the Sprout/SKY ARTS production *Walking the Dogs*.

In March of 2014, to the delight of both critics and audiences, she portrayed 'Mrs. Lovett' in the New York Philharmonic's staged production of Stephen Sondheim's *Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street*, opposite bass-baritone Bryn Terfel, in the title role. The production marked Thompson's New York Philharmonic debut, New York stage debut, and first time performing the role. She and Terfel reprised their roles this Spring, in a sold-out, limited run at the London Coliseum with the English National Opera, for the ENO's first ever season of musical theater.

In September of 2014, Penguin Press published *The Spectacular Tale of Peter Rabbit*, the third in the series written by Thompson. To celebrate the 110th anniversary of Peter Rabbit, Thompson was commissioned to write the 24th tale in the existing collection of Peter Rabbit stories. It marked the first time that Frederick Warne, the publisher, had published an additional title to the series, which Beatrix Potter wrote between 1902 and 1930. The book, entitled *The Further Tale of Peter Rabbit* was published in September of 2012 to great critical acclaim and, in October of 2013, Penguin published *The Christmas Tale of Peter Rabbit*.

Thompson was born in London to Eric Thompson, a theatre director and writer, and Phyllida Law, an actress. She read English at Cambridge and was invited to join the university's long-standing Footlights comedy troupe, which elected her Vice President. Hugh Laurie was President. While still a student, she co-directed Cambridge's first all-women revue *Women's Hour*, made her television debut on BBC TV's *Friday Night, Saturday Morning* as well as her radio debut on BBC Radio's *Injury Time*.

She continued to pursue an active stage career concurrently with her TV and radio work, appearing in *A Sense of Nonsense* touring England in 1982, the self-penned *Short Vehicle* at the Edinburgh Festival in 1983, *Me and My Girl* first at Leicester and then London's West End in 1985, and *Look Back in Anger* at the Lyric Theatre, Shaftesbury Avenue in 1989.

Throughout the 1980s Thompson frequently appeared on British TV, including widely acclaimed recurring roles on the Granada TV series *Alfresco*, BBC's *Election Night Special* and *The Crystal Cube* (the latter written by fellow Cambridge alums Stephen Fry and Hugh Laurie), and a hilarious one-off role as upper-class twit Miss Money Sterling on *The Young Ones*. In 1985, Channel 4 offered Thompson her own TV special *Up for Grabs* and in 1988 she wrote and starred in her own BBC series called *Thompson*. She worked as a stand-up comic when the opportunity arose, and earned £60 in cash on her 25th birthday in a stand-up double bill with Ben Elton at the Croydon Warehouse. She says it's the best money she's ever earned.

Thompson is President of the Helen Bamber Foundation, a UK-based human rights organization, formed in April 2005, to help rebuild the lives of, and inspire a new self-esteem in, survivors of gross human rights violations. On behalf of the Foundation, Thompson co-curated "Journey," an interactive art installation which used seven transport containers to illustrate the brutal and

harrowing experiences of women sold into the sex trade. Thompson and "Journey" traveled to London, Vienna, Madrid, New York and the Netherlands for exhibitions and interviews.

Two years ago, Thompson joined Greenpeace on their Save the Arctic campaign. She is also an Ambassador for the international development agency, ActionAid, and has spoken out publicly about her support for the work the NGO is doing, in particular, in addressing the HIV/AIDS epidemic that continues to sweep across Africa. She has been affiliated with the organization since 2000 and thus far has visited ActionAid projects in Uganda, Ethiopia, Mozambique, South Africa, Liberia and Myanmar.

Thompson has served as President of the Teaching Awards since 2010. The awards are open to every education establishment in England, Wales and Northern Ireland teaching pupils between the ages of 3 and 18, to nominate and celebrate teachers (and schools) who transform lives and help young people realize their potential. She is a Patron of the Refugee Council and also patron of Edinburgh College's Performing Arts Studio of Scotland.



STANLEY TUCCI - JACK MAYE

Academy Award nominee Stanley Tucci has appeared in over 90 films and countless television shows. He has performed in more than a dozen plays, on and off Broadway, and has been behind the camera working as a writer, director and producer.

Tucci reached his widest audience yet in the role of Caesar Flickerman in THE HUNGER GAMES franchise. A box office sensation and critical success, the fourth and final installment of the series (MOCKING JAY) was released on November 20, 2015.

This past February Tucci debuted FINAL PORTRAIT at the Berlin International Film Festival. The highly-anticipated drama, which Tucci wrote and directed, stars Geoffrey Rush, Armie Hammer and

Tony Shalhoub. Based on the memoir <u>A Giacometti Portrait</u>, the film recounts the story of Swiss painter and sculptor Alberto Giacometti.

Most recently, the actor starred in *Feud*, an anthology TV series developed by Ryan Murphy, where Tucci played Jack L. Warner, the Canadian-American film executive and president of Warner Bros. Studio. He was also recently seen in Bill Condon's BEAUTY AND THE BEAST alongside Emma Watson, Ewan McGregor, Luke Evans, Dan Stevens, Emma Thompson and Ian McKellan. Tucci played a new character – Cadenza, a grand piano and neurotic maestro – to the classic. BEAUTY AND THE BEAST was released on March 17, 2017.

Later this year he will appear in TRANSFORMERS: THE LAST KNIGHT with Mark Wahlberg and Josh Duhamel; PATIENT ZERO, alongside Natalie Dormer and Clive Standen; SUBMISSION, opposite Addison Timlin and Kyra Sedgwick. He also lent his voice to the comedy SHOW DOGS.

Lauded for his work in all mediums, Tucci was nominated for an Academy Award, Golden Globe Award, BAFTA Award, SAG Award and received a Broadcast Film Critics nomination for his performance in Peter Jackson's THE LOVELY BONES. He also won an Emmy and a Golden Globe for his starring role as fast-talking tabloid tattler Walter Winchell in the Paul Mazursky-directed TV movie *Winchell*. He received another Golden Globe for his brilliant portrayal of Lt. Colonel Adolf Eichmann in HBO's *Conspiracy*.

Tucci is also a writer, director and producer. BIG NIGHT, Tucci's first effort as co-director, co-screenwriter and actor on the same film, earned him numerous accolades, including the Waldo Salt Screenwriting Award at the 1996 Sundance Film Festival, Recognition of Excellence by the National Board of Review, an Independent Spirit Award, The Critics' Prize at the 1996 Deauville Film Festival, and honors from the New York Film Critics and the Boston Society of Film Critics.

His second project, THE IMPOSTORS, was an Official Selection at the 1998 Cannes Film Festival. The film, which Tucci wrote, directed, co-produced and starred in, was acquired by Fox Searchlight Pictures later that year. The 1930's farce starred Tucci and Oliver Platt as a pair of out-of-work actors who find themselves aboard a cruise ship accompanied by Steve Buscemi, Alfred Molina, Lili Taylor and Hope Davis.

Next, he directed and co-starred as famed New Yorker staff writer Joseph Mitchell in JOE GOULD'S SECRET, opposite Ian Holm in the title role; executive produced BEHIND THE SUN, starring Rodrigo Santoro; co-wrote, directed, and starred in BLIND DATE (a remake of the 1996 Theo Van Gogh film); and produced the Ivan Kavanagh horror film, THE CANAL.

Tucci's additional film credits in front of the camera include *Spotlight*, A LITTLE CHAOS, TRANSFORMERS: AGE OF EXTINCTION, WILD CARD, MUPPETS MOST WANTED, MR. PEABODY & SHERMAN, SOME VELVET MORNING, THE FIFTH ESTATE, PERCY JACKSON: SEA OF MONSTERS, THE COMPANY YOU KEEP, JACK THE GIANT SLAYER, CAPTAIN AMERICA: THE FIRST AVENGER, MARGIN CALL, BURLESQUE, EASY A, JULIE & JULIA, THE TALE OF DESPEREAUX, KIT KITTEREDGE: AN AMERICAN GIRL, SWING VOTE, WHAT JUST HAPPENED, THE DEVIL WEARS PRADA, SHALL WE DANCE, THE TERMINAL, THE LIFE AND DEATH OF PETER SELLERS, SPIN, ROAD TO PERDITION, AMERICA'S SWEETHEARTS, SIDEWALKS OF NEW YORK, A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM, THE ALARMIST, DECONSTRUCTING HARRY, THE DAYTRIPPERS, BIG TROUBLE, A LIFE LESS ORDINARY, KISS OF DEATH, MRS. PARKER AND THE VICIOUS CIRCLE, IT COULD HAPPEN TO YOU, THE PELICAN BRIEF, PRELUDE TO A KISS, IN THE SOUP, BILLY BATHGATE and *SLAVES OF NEW YORK*.

His work on television includes *BoJack Horseman*, *Metropolis*, *Fortitude*, *Bull*, *Equal Justice*, *Wiseguy*, *The Equalizer*, *thirtysomething* and *The Street*. He also played Captain Hook in ITV's two-hour drama,

Peter & Wendy, alongside Laura Fraser and Paloma Faith. Tucci received Emmy nominations for his work in *Murder One* and *ER*, and an Emmy Award in the category of Outstanding Guest Actor in a Comedy Series for *Monk*.

Stanley's theater work includes *Frankie & Johnny in the Claire de Lune, Execution of Hope, The Iceman Cometh, Brighton Beach Memoirs* and *The Misanthrope*. He has also performed in a number of off-Broadway plays at Yale Repertory Theater and SUNY Purchase, where he first studied acting.

Tucci made his directorial debut on Broadway with a revival of Ken Ludwig's *Lend Me a Tenor* starring Tony Shalhoub. The production received a Tony Award nomination for Best Revival of a Play.

<u>The Tucci Cookbook</u>, released in October 2012, appeared on the New York Times Best Sellers List. His second cookbook, <u>The Tucci Table: Cooking with Family and Friends</u>, was released on October 28, 2014. The family-focused cookbook includes recipes from Tucci's traditional Italian roots as well as those of his British wife, Felicity Blunt.

Although Stanley currently resides in London, he continues to serve on the Board of Directors of The Food Bank for New York City.

FIONN WHITEHEAD – Adam Henry

Fionn plays the lead role of Tommy in Christopher Nolan's next feature DUNKIRK opposite Tom Hardy and Mark Rylance.

Other screen credits include the mini-series *Him* for Mainstreet. Theatre credits include *Queer* at the Old Vic and *Natives* at the Southwalk Playhouse.



ANTHONY CALF - Mark Berner

Anthony Calf is a familiar face on both stage and screen.

Anthony is currently rehearsing *Racing Demons* for the Theatre Royal Bath, directed by Jonathan Church. He also recently played the role of Malvolio in *Twelfth Night* at the Manchester Royal Exchange. He can most recently be seen on television playing Tony in the political comedy *Power Monkeys* for Channel 4.

In other theatre work, he most recently starred in the Broadway transfer of *King Charles III* in the role of Mr Stevens, directed by Rupert Goold.

JASON WATKINS – Nigel Pauling

Jason Watkins is an Award-winning British Stage, Film and Television actor. He is perhaps best known for his performance in the title role of THE LOST HONOUR of Christopher Jefferies for which he won Best Actor at the 2015 BAFTA Television Awards. He is also known for playing Gavin Strong in Comedy Series *Trollied*, Simon Harwood in BBC Series *W1A* and appearing as Gordon Shakespeare in the *Nativity!* film series.

Jason trained at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art and then went on to establish himself as a stage actor and is a member of the National Theatre Company. He has appeared in over 70 plays. He was nominated for a Laurence Olivier Theatre Award in 2001 for Best Supporting Actor for his performance in *A Servant For Two Masters* at the Royal Shakespeare Company/Young Vic and in the West End.

Other theatre work in the West End includes *Kafka's Dick, Filomena*, and *Bedroom Farce*. And for the Royal Court Theatre, *King Lear* and *Rafts and Dreams*. Original productions of Caryl Churchill's *Blue Kettle*. Most recently there, playing Mr Twit in *The Twits*.

Recent theatre includes, at the Almeida Theatre, playing Taxi in Sam Shepherd's *The Late Henry Moss*. And for the Hampstead Theatre, *A Farewell to the Theatre*. At the National Theatre has perfumed in *Inadmissible Evidence, A Laughing Matter* (with The Out of Joint Theatre Company), *Strange Interlude, Our Class* and the Joe Penhall play, *Landscape with Weapon*.

Watkins' most prominent early television roles have included vampire leader William Herrick in *Being Human, Sex Traffic* directed by David Yates. Stephen Downing in *In Denial of Murder*, directed by David Richards. Bradley Stainer in *Funland* and dog-walking crime witness Francis Cross in *Five Days*. Mr Plornish in the 2008 BBC production of *Little Dorrit*, Jason Buliegh in *Conviction*, directed by Marc Munden, and Cabbage Patterson in the *Lark Rise to Candleford series*. Watkins had a cameo in episode seven of the second series of *Life on Mars*, as Gene Hunt's dissolute lawyer Colin Merric.

He then featured in BBC's comedy *Psychoville*, as the duplicitous toy-shop owner Peter Bishop. He was fortunate to work with Victoria Wood twice, on *Mid Life Christmas* and the Emmy Award winning, *Housewife 49* in 2012. He took a part in John Morton's *Twenty Twelve*. In 2013, he appeared in the *Doctor Who* story *Nightmare in Silver*. He also appeared in episodes of *The Wrong Mans*.

In 2014, he played the lead role in a two-part ITV drama entitled *The Lost Honour of Christopher Jefferies*, about the innocent initial suspect in the 2010 murder of Joanna Yeates, for which he won the BAFTA TV Award for Best Actor. Also that year, he appeared as Simon Harwood in BBC comedy series *W1A*, which has just completed filming its 3rd Series. Since 2011, he has also appeared as the

hapless store manager Gavin Strong, in the highly popular Sky1 comedy *Trollied*; which begins shooting its 7th series summer 2017.

In 2016, Watkins played the role of Pastor Hansford in the four-part ITV BAFTA-nominated *The Secret*, and Suffolk in the equally nominated *The Hollow Crown*. Also in that year, Watkins was cast in the role of Mr. Humphries in the BBC revival of *Are You Being Served?* As the seemingly harmless Colin, in the *Inside No9* comedy series. And blinking Tony, in *Friday Night Dinner* for Channel 4. He has more recently appeared as Solomon Coop in the much-praised *Taboo*, alongside Tom Hardy. Has recently been seen in the adaptation of Evelyn Waugh's classic novel *Decline and Fall*. And in the key role of forensic coordinator Tim Ifield in the acclaimed BBC Series 4 of *Line of Duty*.

Watkins' first feature film was Mike Leigh's HIGH HOPES. The wedding planner Gregory Hough, in the 2006 improvised comedy Confetti. He appeared in BRIDGET JONES: THE EDGE OF REASON, TOMORROW NEVER DIES, THE GOLDEN COMPASS and WILD CHILD. He developed and plays the role of Gordon Shakespeare in the hugely popular *Nativity!* family films.

Jason has two films to be released soon. HAMPSTEAD opposite Diane Keaton and he has just completed THE MAN WHO KILLED DON QUIXOTE, directed by Terry Gilliam. He is finishing recording the new four-part BBC animated series *Watershed Down*. He is about to begin work on the comedy series *Edith*, with Alison Steadman and John Cleese.

BEN CHAPLIN – Kevin Henry

Ben Chaplin is a familiar face from film and television.

His recent film credits include Kenneth Branagh's CINDERELLA, David Yates' TARZAN and Oliver Stone's SNOWDEN.

He recently starred opposite Emily Watson in the hit television series Apple Tree Yard.

Earlier film credits include: Richard Linklater's ME AND ORSON WELLES, OI Parker's DORIAN GRAY, Terence Malik's THE NEW WORLD and THE THIN RED LINE, Richard Eyre's STAGE BEAUTY and James Ivory's THE REMAINS OF THE DAY.

On stage he has recently starred in *Consent* at the National Theatre, directed by Roger Michell. Other notable stage roles include *The Reporter* at the National Theatre, directed by Richard Eyre. He was nominated for an Olivier Award as Best Supporting Actor for his role in *The Glass Menagerie*, directed by Sam Mendes.

CREW

Directed by RICHARD EYRE

Produced by **DUNCAN KENWORTHY**

Screenplay by IAN MCEWAN

based on his novel

Executive Producers BEN BROWNING

GLEN BASNER

CHARLES MOORE

Executive Producers JOE OPPENHEIMER

BETH PATTINSON

Co-Producer **CELIA DUVAL**

Director of Photography ANDREW DUNN BSC **Production Designer**

PETER FRANCIS

Editor DAN FARRELL

NINA GOLD

Casting Director Costume Designer FOTINI DIMOU

Hair and Make-Up Designer **NAOMI DONNE**

Original Music by STEPHEN WARBECK Sound Design by **GLENN FREEMANTLE**

