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Film Description

FILM TITLE:

Clean

Programme: Viacom Galas
Director: Olivier Assayas
Country: France/United Kingdom/Canada
Year: 2004
Language: English, French, Cantonese
Time: 110 minutes
Film Types: Colour/35mm



SCREENING TIMES:
Friday, September 10 09:30 PM ROY THOMSON HALL
Saturday, September 11 12:15 PM RYERSON

Production Company: Rectangle Productions/Haystack Productions/Rhombus Media
Producer: Edouard Weil, Niv Fichman, Xavier Marchand
Screenplay: Olivier Assayas
Cinematography: Eric Gautier
Editor: Luc Barnier
Production Designer: François-Renaud Labarthe, Bill Flemming
Sound: Guillaume Sciamma, Herwig Gayer, Richard Flynn
Music: David Roback, Tricky, Brian Eno
Principal Cast: Maggie Cheung, Nick Nolte, Béatrice Dalle, Jeanne Balibar, Don McKellar, James Dennis, Martha Henry, James Johnston

The extraordinary Maggie Cheung and Nick Nolte deliver subtle, moving career performances in *Clean*, the new film from Festival favourite Olivier Assayas. They play a mother and grandfather embroiled in an emotional chess match for the heart and custody of the young boy who means so much to them. The film plays out in locations ranging from industrial Ontario and remote beachside British Columbia to Paris and London, giving a strong stamp of universality to its messages of redemption and the ability of love to triumph in even the most difficult of circumstances.

When her faded rock-star partner Lee Hauser (James Johnston) passes away in a dingy motel, Emily (Cheung) finds herself abandoned by friends and family amid the spewing smokestacks of gritty urban Hamilton. Her son Jay (James Dennis) lives in the nurturing sanctuary of his grandparents' rural home on the west coast. Albrecht (Nolte) and Rosemary Hauser (illustrious Canadian stage and screen actor Martha Henry) are awarded custody of Jay after Lee's death. Albrecht is sympathetic to Emily's desire to see Jay, but insists she leave behind her dead-end lifestyle before he will allow a reunion. So Emily returns to her former home in Paris to try to become the mother her son deserves and start over clean.

Assayas wrote the elegant script expressly for Cheung, whose award-winning performance is astonishing. In such talented hands, Emily's transformation is riveting, her every action, statement and expression suffused with a fragile, complex grace. As Albrecht, struggling with the meaning of family, Nolte finds perfect footing. His tender performance is endearing, and his signature gravelly tones take on tremendous resonance as the voice of pragmatism and faith.

Assayas shows a remarkable intimacy with our multi-faceted nation (local hero Don McKellar also makes an appearance), neatly contrasting Emily and Albrecht, frigidity and warmth, the bright lights of Paris and a

Pacific fishing village. Luxuriating in striking images, *Clean* is a stunning tribute to reconciliation and new beginnings, and a resounding testament to Assayas's great talent and the extraordinary actors he directs so effectively.



Olivier Assayas was born in Paris, where he received his master's degree from L'École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts. Feature filmography: *Désordre* (86), *L'Enfant de l'hiver* (89), *Paris s'éveille* (91) *Une Nouvelle Vie* (93), *L'Eau froide* (94), *Irma Vep* (96), Cinéma de notre temps: *Hou Hsiao-hsien* (97), *Fin août, début septembre* (98), *Les Destinées sentimentales* (00), *demonlover* (02) and *Clean* (04).

Associated with *European Film Promotion*, an initiative supported by the European Union's MEDIA Programme.

This film is rated PG.

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