

A PINEWOOD DIALOGUE WITH SAM MENDES

Sam Mendes was an acclaimed British theater director before making an astonishing screen debut with *American Beauty* (1999), a satirical, compassionate, highly theatrical dark comedy set in contemporary American suburbia. The film, starring Kevin Spacey and Annette Bening, won five Academy Awards, including Best Director and Best Picture. For his second film, *Road to Perdition*, Mendes ventured into a mythological American landscape to create a 1930s period film about gangsters, fathers and sons, violence, and redemption. Exquisitely crafted and deeply felt, *Road to Perdition* further establishes Mendes as a distinctive cinematic stylist, and as a remarkable collaborator. He talks about working with two screen icons—Tom Hanks and Paul Newman—and about his creative partnership with the great cinematographer Conrad Hall, who received a posthumous Academy Award for *Road to Perdition*.

A Pinewood Dialogue following a screening of *Road to Perdition*, moderated by Chief Curator David Schwartz (July 8, 2002):

SCHWARTZ: Please welcome Sam Mendes. (Applause) After the incredible success of *American Beauty*, you know, after such a great debut, everybody's sort of looking to what to do next. And could you talk about that process, how you decided that *Road to Perdition* would be your second film?

MENDES: Well, the first thing I did was go back home. After the six months on the road with *American Beauty*, I felt like [I was] kind of touring with a rock group, you know, wandering around the country with Kevin Spacey. And... (Laughter) hard living.

And after the Academy Awards, the best thing that could've happened was what did happen, which was I went back home. And I went back and did a play, and I had a chance to not think about it for a while. Because I think if I did, I would've just frozen. I think for about the first three or four months, I thought, well, I've kind of trapped myself, you know, I've painted myself into a corner.

But then, you know, the moment you read a script that you want to do again, it's like the director muscle kicks in. You start thinking in pictures again, and you get lost in a story, and you feel passionately about it, and you stop thinking about the end result. And you start thinking about the

minutiae. And it's the minutiae that keep you going and that fascinate you on a day-to-day basis. It's, you know, who you're going to cast, and it's who else are you going to cast, and where are you going to shoot it, and how are you going to shoot it, and developing a shooting style and... And suddenly, all the worries go out, because you're focused on something completely. And I think that it's only now, strangely—now it's sort of, there are posters, and people are seeing the movie—that I kind of feel nervous again, because, you know, suddenly it's out there, and you can feel people's hopes and expectations.

And I think if I'd been worrying too much about the end result, I wouldn't have done anything at all; I'd still be just waiting, you know? And I think that that's what you can do. The other thing is, I've made one film before this, and I want to—albeit in quite a broad public spotlight—I want to keep stretching in different directions. I don't want to apply the same shooting style to another piece of material; I wanted something that would pull me in another direction, that would force me to shoot in a different way, would force me to design and to compose shots in a different way. And there are certain similarities, definitely, but there are more differences, I hope, than similarities. And one of the things that attracted me to the piece was, it was completely different.

SCHWARTZ: Now, was your first encounter with *Road to Perdition* in the form of the graphic novel,

the comic-book novel in which it was first published, or was it the screenplay?

MENDES: It was the screenplay, actually. And I'm glad it was the screenplay. And the reason that I'm glad is because when I read the screenplay, I started thinking immediately in the images. The images that came to me were from the screenplay. And I didn't even realize, actually, at that stage, that it was from a graphic novel. And about two weeks later, someone sent me the graphic novel. And it has such a distinctive and brilliant look of its own that I think it might have actually hampered me in imagining the film myself; I would've imagined what was drawn on the page. It's like storyboards, really. But no, it was the script, it was David Self's script that first attracted me.

SCHWARTZ: And what was it that most attracted you? You know, obviously, there are some themes—what's interesting is that this movie is so different than *American Beauty*, but there are some themes that are very strong in both films. And obviously, the father-and-son theme is a very strong component of *American Beauty*, but it's not the one that you first think about. It was actually in just going back recently and looking at the film again that I saw how strong and important the father/son relationships were in that film. But was it that or the story itself? What was it?

MENDES: Well, I think it's a combination of things. I think it was—on the one hand, it was an incredibly simple story with very complex themes. Initially, you just read it as a straightforward revenge drama. And then the more you looked at it, there wasn't just one father/son relationship, there were two. And both fathers were set on a course of mutual destruction by protecting their least favored son, the son that they had always considered a difficult and problematic figure in their life. And that began to fascinate me. And the fact that it has at its core very contemporary issues. Without wanting to be preachy about it—kids and violence, you know—does the watching of violence by children force them themselves to be violent?

But at the heart, it was also a family drama, and began, again, with a family in which something wasn't right, and featured this morally ambivalent central figure who you're having a shifting relationship with during the course of the film, and

who ends by dying. (I can say that because you've all seen the movie, but I can't say that to the press.) In a slightly more—even more graphic way than Kevin Spacey, you know, cops it at the end of *American Beauty*. So, you know, there are similarities. But I think that the other thing is—and it would be wrong to ignore this—the landscape of the picture and the canvas against which it was told were very attractive to me. I found the kind of bleak poetry of the emptiness, the sense of father and son getting lost in the Midwest, under those blank skies, and the flatness of the landscape, and the beauty of the place, and the sense of it starting in darkness and moving to light, starting in winter in this frozen world and moving to spring, as the central figure became humanized—you know, those things really interested me, and I felt they were built into the story quite clearly from the beginning.

SCHWARTZ: And how would you say you got a feeling for the landscape, for this particular American landscape? Is there any way that you immersed yourself in real landscapes?

MENDES: On both movies, I found myself depending a lot on the location scout to learn about the landscape. And with this one particularly, I changed the script and changed certain scenes to fit locations that I found that mirrored—without wanting to sound pretentious—the emotional state of the characters during the story. And so I shifted scenes. That diner scene was originally set in a town, and I put it on its own. I felt that the isolation was important. All sorts of things, like Conner living in that hotel at the beginning, the sense of him being isolated from the family. You know, various things. But it's partly because I found those locations and changed the story to suit the landscape that we found in kind of an hour's drive from Chicago and in Chicago itself.

SCHWARTZ: Yeah. It's early in your career to talk about a great collaboration, but obviously your work with Conrad Hall, the partnership that you have in both these films, is extraordinary. And this is one of the most beautiful-looking films in quite a while. So could you talk a bit about your work with him?

MENDES: Well, I feel incredibly fortunate to work with this master of his art and craft. One of the saddest things for me is this is a 77-year-old man,

who, unless he lives to 110, I probably won't be working with for very much longer. And that saddens me. And I got nostalgic about it even as I was making it, because he's become a very good friend. He's a wonderful person to have there.

You can get very caught up in the science of moviemaking. You storyboard everything, you plan everything to the nth degree. And then you're dependent on someone, or some people, if you're lucky—actors, hopefully, but in this case a cinematographer, to provide the last 10% of magic, of something that you haven't imagined, something you couldn't possibly explain.

And I think he does something that people don't talk about a lot. He understands light, and how to create emotion with light, how to paint character with light, what to hide and what to show, how daring you can be. And sometimes it's not just the prettiness of the picture, it's what it tells you. That, plus the composition of the shot, what it tells you about the story. And here was a movie where I was trying to tell the story in pictures more than in words. *American Beauty* is a very dialogue-heavy movie. It took half the time to cut, because often times you're cutting to the person who's talking, basically. Occasionally you decide not to, and there are reasons to begin in other ways. But here, because I knew that the story had to be carried in pictures more than in words, I shot much more footage. And I was much more dependent on the light to create the atmosphere and the emotion.

And I was also very dependent on Tom Newman, who wrote the score, to, again, add another dimension of emotion to the story, which, if mistreated, could be cold, because I was trying to deal with it in a way that was at arm's length, and not sentimental and not indulgent with the emotion. Because I think with a kid, you're only just a hair's breadth from sentimentality.

SCHWARTZ: Well, there seems to be an interest of yours, in both the films, of finding a balance between a kind of tough, unsentimental look and a real intimate emotionalism. And when I first saw *American Beauty*, I remembered all the tableau shots. Some of the dinner-table scenes and some of the very sort of theatrical-looking tableaux. But in seeing the film again, and in this film tonight, there's a real powerful use of close-ups. You don't

seem to use close-ups a lot, but when you do use them, they seem to be very pointed and very effective. Could you talk about how you decide when to use a close-up?

MENDES: When I came to make the first movie, I continued what had been a lifelong crash course in movie-making by watching them. I began to realize the way I wanted to make a film by watching people make films in different ways. And I thought that the two things that were most overused were Steadicam—well, three things, really: excessive cutting, Steadicam, and close-up. And it's purely taste. I mean, it's nothing to do with anything. I have no philosophy; I have no way I think other people should make films. It's just what I like. I remember very distinctly watching *The Ice Storm*, which I thought was a wonderful movie. And I'm a huge admirer of Ang Lee's work. And I remember right at the end, he cut to a close-up of Sigourney Weaver waking up in the sunlight, after her own son had died, and she didn't know this yet. And I suddenly realized as I was watching this movie that he hadn't used an extreme close-up until that moment. Or maybe two or three. And it had the effect—it was like an explosion. It was the most powerful shot in the film, and it was just the human face waking up from sleep. And I was very moved by that. And I was reminded again how powerful it can be to use a close-up at the right time, when you haven't seen that.

And I think that when you study movies from the 1930s and 1940s, the close-up, the use of close-up is minimal. Well, certainly the gangster movies. You're using them sparingly. And the other thing is the monitor screen, which I think is a very dangerous thing. If you sit and watch the monitor screen on set the whole time, it's a very small screen, you're constantly wanting to see the face up close. You're moving the camera close, because you can't see it on the screen. But if you look through the camera, or if you sit by the camera, which is what I tend to do until I start bugging the actors, in which case I bugger off...But you're reminded of how much you see in a mid-shot or a single. And how much body language and the space that you place between people can tell the story.

But then, there should be some scheme, some structure to the way that you shoot a central

character. For example, Sullivan in this movie. You know, there's, I think, one close-up in the first 35, 40 minutes of the film, of Tom Hanks. And that's partly because the boy does not know his father. The movie keeps the character at arm's length, in some subliminal attempt to make you want to get into the car with the boy when he goes to find out what his dad does for a living. And I think that that sense of trying to keep him, both as an actor and as a character, at arm's length is very important. He's behind a half-closed door, his face is reflected in a mirror, he's through a crowded room of dancers; he's unreadable on some level. And it's very difficult to make Tom Hanks unreadable because he's so emotionally explicit all the time. But in a story where, as I said before, the central character needs to be humanized, he needs to be cold and distant at the beginning. The way we shot, the way we designed that long corridor at the beginning, the way we designed the colors of the rooms, the sense of a frozen world, of an emotionally inert environment that the story starts in—that's in everything, including the way he's shot.

SCHWARTZ: Yeah, and I think we don't see Paul Newman really close. I might be wrong, but the scene when they're doing the piano duet, I remember that being the first time we really...

MENDES: First time you get a close-up, yeah.

SCHWARTZ: ...get a close look at him, and it's quite stunning.

MENDES: Yeah, yeah. Well, it's not a bad face. (Laughter)

SCHWARTZ: One thing that's true in both of the films is that there's an incredible, relentless forward energy to the narrative. So on one level, this is sort of classical, old-fashioned, straightforward storytelling, which is becoming rarer and rarer. I mean, we're used to seeing movies now that are jumping all over the place in time, or maybe have three or four different storylines going simultaneously so you can never lose interest in one of them. But combined with the layer of meaning—thematic layers and motifs in this movie—the water motif, obviously. And I'm wondering if you could just talk a bit—I mean, it's sort of a general question to talk about: how you combine these two different things, the story that's

sort of always moving ahead, and the layers of meaning which, for a work of art to be worth coming back to time and time again, are important.

MENDES: Well, I mean, as far as the story moving forward, I think there's a difference sometimes that's not clear in contemporary films; that sometimes the story feels like it's moving fast, and actually nothing's happening. "Oh, Christ, there's nothing happening; we better cut to make it look like there is something happening." And there's a whole lot of story in this movie, a lot of story, and it comes in under two hours. But the story is never, I hope, rushed, and it has a kind of... Well, what I was trying for was a sort of hypnotic pace, at the beginning. And that, again, goes to how you shoot. You need to know that a lot of the story is going to be carried in single shots, or one single traveling shot, or a well-composed master shot. All of those things are what's going to keep you interested in the film, not close-ups and not excessive cutting. So, you know, you have to shoot like that from the beginning.

There are certain scenes—there's that scene in the dance hall, when father and son are talking about, "When do I get my share of the money?" And [Tom Hanks] says, "How much do you want?" [Tyler Hoechlin] says, "Two hundred dollars." That's just a two-shot. And I took no coverage in that scene; I just knew that I wanted to cover that scene with a two-shot. It meant I took a lot of takes of that one two-shot to get the timing right, because I hoped an audience would respond during the lines. And my career in theater has taught me that you need to leave space for—if you're lucky enough to get a laugh, you need to leave space where that can happen, so you don't obliterate the next line. All of those things you're trying to plan for up front.

Thematically, the layering of the film... The water motif in this film came from a piece of research about wakes in the '30s, Irish wakes. And I read that they used to keep the dead bodies on ice. And the ice used to melt and drip into buckets. The buckets used to catch the water. And I just thought, what a great image for decomposition and for the sense of fate that I wanted to hang over the film—that eventually the dam will burst, that life...you know, once you've set one domino in motion, all of them will have to fall. And you can't control it. And to me, water is uncontrollable; it slips through your

fingers. So it's in every scene. It found its way into every scene in which there was a death. Bathrooms, rain in the streets, the lake at the beginning of the movie, and the end, the very sound of the water and the sound of the rain, the sense of this claustrophobia within space, which was something that I thought was created by that. So that was just that one strand of it.

SCHWARTZ: Do you think you're freer as a director when you're not the writer of the work? There's been such a tradition, maybe since the rise of auteur cinema, of the idea of the writer/director. And so every director has to write their own screenplay. And your background is in theater, where that tradition isn't true, where a director interprets a piece of material. It's refreshing to see somebody, a director, who really wants to direct and interpret, and not worry that it has to be their screenplay as well.

MENDES: Yeah, I mean, I think I'm blessed that I'm a terrible writer, so that makes it impossible (Laughter) for me to even think about it. And it does. But you know, in all honesty, I much prefer getting a script and using it as a springboard. Because I think if you analyze a script too much, you know, you can lose the first initial instinct as to why you wanted to do the story. And I need to kind of jump on an already-moving train. I just need it to be in action in some way. I'm very bad at generating material. I'm even bad at developing things, really. I need to get my hands on something that resembles a script, and then I can kind of go on from there. I really enjoy that. I love reading. I love the screenplay format. I love that it's working in images. I love that it has to work within a certain number of pages. I love that for most people, there is a kind of three-act structure, even though I don't pretend to understand what it is. But I like the notion of a three-act structure. I can never tell where the act breaks come, though, you know. Almost like: I think this is this end of act—oh, no, that's the end of act two.

SCHWARTZ: You said something in our local newspaper here, *The New York Times*, that was really interesting, because you talked about the works you do in theater as being sort of ephemeral; they don't last forever. And when you make a film... There was a phrase that you were quoted as saying, that you're sort of "reaching for immortality;

that a film is in the culture, and it lasts forever." And I want to ask you, in relation to that, about working with such great stars as Tom Hanks and Paul Newman, because the first thing you see, you know, when the credits start to roll, is those names, Tom Hanks and Paul Newman. And, you know, it just makes you think right away of the great movie stars, you know, Henry Fonda, James Stewart—and all the meaning and importance that comes with those names. And what responsibility do you feel? You're working with their images and everything that we bring to...

MENDES: I'm not sure you should have too much of a responsibility to actors, other than to put them in a good movie. I mean, I think that you can't second-guess what an audience will think of their characters, or of them in the role, or anything like that. I think you have a responsibility when you're making a movie, because I think people look to movies for some kind of guidance—particularly in these times. So I think there is a responsibility to take violence seriously, in this film. But in the case of Tom...

But what I love about the American cinema—which in a sense doesn't really exist, and has never really existed, anywhere else, [except] possibly in France, for maybe ten or fifteen years—[is] where you have an ongoing relationship with an actor, as an audience, as a public. You know, you have a sense of what Tom Hanks represents. And you can use that, or you can subvert it. And you can enlarge an audience's relationship with an actor, in some way. And that's what I felt. You know, if you look at a movie like *Vertigo*—the way you take the existing notion of Jimmy Stewart and you turn it around, you turn it on its head. Someone asked Hitchcock—who was great with one-liners, always—"Why do you cast movie stars in your movies, and not just actors?" "Why do you cast Cary Grant and Jimmy Stewart?" And he said, "Because it saves me twenty minutes of exposition." (Laughter) The audience already knows these characters, they know these men. I can just get on with the story, you know? And when you watch *North by Northwest*, you know what he means, because he tells you nothing about Cary Grant, but you absolutely know who he is. You know, he's your best friend; he's Cary Grant, you know. (Laughter)

Of course, you're going to want to cast Cary Grant. There's another Hitchcock phrase, actually, that was with me all through the shooting of this movie, which is another one-liner: "Shoot your murders like love scenes and your love scenes like murders," which I think is one of the greatest things ever said about moviemaking. And the idea behind that: subvert expectations, twist clichés, turn it 180 degrees and then think of it again. There is a scene at the end, the scene between Tom and Paul in the rain, which is shot as a love scene, even though there are nine people killed, and scored as a love scene, and the sound is dealt with in an appropriate manner, too. And I think that that was something that I was looking to try and achieve.

SCHWARTZ: Now, that scene was very different from what we see in the book, in the original novel. The idea of just having the two of them, this very pared-down scene that evokes the showdown from a classic western, maybe. But was that something that was in the script?

MENDES: That was something that I developed with David. [In the book,] for those who don't know, he killed him in a boxing ring, during a union rally, in front of about 3,000 people. He killed about twenty other people, and it was a festival of blood. And it was kind of an amazing scene, but it was completely incredible. He walked out, of course, unscathed, being a hero. And I partly thought, within the context of this, even though this is not a real movie in the traditional sense. That's incredible. But I also wanted something that was a personal scene between the two of them. And, you know, there's a big change between the movie and the graphic novel. In the movie, Paul Newman's character is a conflicted man, not just a bad man. He is someone who also, like Tom, realizes that he has built a life on sand, and that he is a morally bankrupt human being. But he's covered that up brilliantly with a show of warmth and friendship for years.

SCHWARTZ: And another invention, and I don't know when it came along, was Jude Law's character, the photographer, which to me echoed the son with the video camera in *American Beauty*. This idea of the observer. And that's new; that's not in the novel at all, the idea of this sort of cameraman-slash...

MENDES: That was the screenwriter's creation, David Self's creation. But Jude brought a very distinct originality to it. And I loved working with him on it. The photographs you see in the movie are photographs taken by a police photographer, genuinely, at the time. And what's fascinating about the photographs is not that they're very well-composed and strangely beautiful—which they are; and there are many thousands of them, and they're all unsigned—but that the photographer, in almost every photograph, has gone to the crime scene and moved the dead body into a place which makes a better photograph. You know, moved the hat and, like, rearranged some of the furniture. I mean, it's bizarre. And you can see he's moved it because the blood splatter is over on the wrong side of the wall, or the bullet hole is over here. And that man that moved the body to make a better photograph—that's kind of who he is. They're published in a book called *Evidence*. It's an amazing book. And you can see his feet, because he used a tripod. So you see his feet occasionally, but you never see him.

SCHWARTZ: Just to jump back—we did talk a bit about Tom Hanks, but just to jump back to that and his performance, because it is a different kind of role. Cary Grant also is, I think, sort of an underrated actor, because he was able to do so many different roles, and always seemed like Cary Grant. But this is a different Tom Hanks than we've seen. And could you talk a bit about what—you know...and how you worked with him, too.

MENDES: Yeah, I think that...I mean, I think you put your finger on it when you say he's not...

The thing about Tom, for me, is that he never stands outside the character and comments on it. He never says, "It's okay guys, it's just me, it's Tom Hanks. You can relax." You know, so there's no wink that just lets you off the hook.

There's no little moment that says, Ah, but he's a good guy, really. You know? He is very contained. And I think we worked very hard on taking away things that we felt the character couldn't say, or didn't have the ability to say. He did not know how to communicate with his family; he did not know how to analyze his own situation within the narrative. I think films are very fond of lines like—in a scene, for example, where he goes to see Frank

Nitti, there was a line that...at one stage, they would've liked me to put in something like, "My wife and son are dead; would you walk away?" You know, this kind of weird kind of rhetorical... People don't speak like that. This kind of sense of, you want the audience to be in my shoes; would you walk away? And movies are filled with that kind of rhetoric-speak. "Ah, but David, you are a man who knows no love. And a man who knows no love knows no fear. And a man who fears nothing—well, who is he?" You know? It's like hang on a minute I thought I knew what was going on at the beginning of that sentence, and I'm lost now. It sounds important, but what are you talking about? And anyway, people don't talk like that. People are inarticulate. They say the wrong things. And I think one of the things I love about the scene with Frank Nitti—with Stanley Tucci, who's brilliant, I think, in the movie—is how inarticulate Tom is, how he says it wrong, at the wrong time. He has an idea, which is slightly off-balance, about how his first line will sound to Frank Nitti. He's nervous, too. And I think that the violence also is an attempt to kind of capture what I know—which is blessedly little—about violence, which is that it happens very fast, and when it does, it's very, very awkward. It happens when people are off-balance. People get hit in odd ways and stabbed in odd ways. And it's very, very explosive, and it's over in a flash. And, you know, it's only afterwards that you reel it back and you go back over it in slow motion.

SCHWARTZ: Yeah. Were there things that you had to do physically with Tom Hanks? I read a little bit about makeup, that his face looks sort of tougher, and it looks a bit different than, you know, we're used to seeing him.

MENDES: Yeah, we did some...

SCHWARTZ: And also, you have the lighting of the—I mean, the fact that he's wearing a hat so much.

MENDES: Yeah, the hat helps. But, you know, it's from the inside, really. I mean, that kind of thing is only a grace note in what he's doing. He, like Paul, is very, very still in film. And a lot is achieved by not looking at people. And then when he does focus on them, focusing a little bit harder than anyone else. I mean, these things happen on the day, and you piece it together very gradually in the cutting room. There isn't a kind of master plan. But I did spend a

lot of time asking him to talk quieter and lower, and not move so much. And he was, you know, delighted to do that, because he said, "Hey, normally they ask me to say, 'More, more. Please do more.' You know, 'I want more smiles, give me more energy.'" I was saying, "Just—you don't need to do that much." Given how much energy he has as a man, this was, I think, remarkable.

SCHWARTZ: Yeah. I have to ask you about your use of, you know, windows. Which seems to be—if there's one motif that I really see in both movies, it's this idea of sort of what's private, and what's not private, of secrets. You've talked a lot about secrets, as a director, trying to uncover the secret of the text that you're trying to interpret. But people have secrets, and they're often seen. We often get glimpses through windows into private lives. It's the kind of thing directors hate to do, analyze their own work, but if you could talk about that...

MENDES: Yeah, it is, it's difficult, because it sounds premeditated, and so often it isn't. So often, it's something that comes on the day, or you see a shot that suddenly strikes you, and all that kind of thing. But I think both movies are filled with very lonely people, I think if there is a kind of thematic link between the films, I think they're full of lonely people. And I think the loneliest people are the people who live together in a house and call themselves a family. I think that's by chance. I don't think I believe that of all families, but I think that it is definitely the case in this. I think that the key moments in both films—*American Beauty* and this—to characters often happen when they are on their own. I think about Sullivan's realization of what's about to happen with his wife and child; I'm thinking about his moment of peace at the end of the movie; I'm thinking about Michael breaking down and crying in the reading room, with all those people around. Those are very solitary moments. And those are the moments when character is revealed, away from other character, when nothing is between them and the other person, so that they're not editing what they do; they're not self-conscious, ever. They are... And so you, the audience, have access to their inner world, as it were.

And the window thing was used more specifically in *American Beauty*, in a movie about entrapment and imprisonment. It's used differently here, I think. The

only time I use it really consciously as a storytelling device is the very, very end, when... My feeling about the last scene, when he's looking out over the beach, and you have that reflection shot, obviously, of Michael Junior waving at him, and, you know, you have these three planes of activity... You have the reflection, you have the beach itself, and then you have what's in the room, which is Maguire standing behind him and shooting him. What's happened there is he has, in a sense, already passed on. Because to me, the movie—and I can say this, because you've seen it—is a flashback, at the beginning, from the boy on the beach, and it's a film populated entirely by ghosts. It's a film populated by people who are already dead. Because they're people who, in a sense, already know that they're dead; they already know that they're doomed. On some level, they've killed themselves years ago. And so the soundscape of the film, the sense in which people float through it—

their feet barely touch the ground; the rain, even though it's heavy, heavy, it's this softest whispering sound, most of the time. That's because ghosts occupy this landscape. And the only real person in it is the boy, whose eyes you see the movie through. Now, that's a very subliminal thing. But it's something that actually dictated, in many ways, how we dubbed the film, how we scored it and how we shot it, too.

SCHWARTZ: Yeah. Okay. Well, actually, you're on a whirlwind tour here, with the premiere of the film tomorrow. And I know we actually promised to get you to your next appointment, which is not sleep, but you're going off to a dinner. So we'll end on that note, and I really want to thank you and congratulate you. It's a great film. (Applause)

MENDES: Thank you very much. Thank you, David.

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