

■ **SYNOPSIS** Iris writes the wedding column for the *Daily Telegraph*. At a Christmas party, she discovers that her ex-boyfriend Jasper is getting married. Meanwhile in California, wealthy Amanda breaks up with her cheating boyfriend. Looking online for holidays, Amanda finds Iris' remote Surrey cottage and emails her. Iris suggests a two-week home exchange over Christmas. The next day, Amanda flies to London and Iris to LA. Soon Amanda is bored and resolves to leave – until Iris' brother Graham knocks on the cottage door. They sleep together. Iris meets Miles, a film composer who works with Amanda's ex, and his actress girlfriend Maggie. Amanda decides not to leave and meets Graham and friends in the local pub. Graham stays over. In LA, Iris notices an elderly neighbour, Arthur, looking lost. She befriends him and discovers that he is a famous screenwriter. Miles meets him and they all bond. Amanda and Graham go on a date. Later that night she surprises him at his house, where she discovers he is a widower with two young daughters. In LA, Miles sees Maggie with another man; he confronts her and they split. Iris persuades Arthur to attend a prestigious tribute to his work; Miles composes the music. Miles has a call from a penitent Maggie and goes to see her. Iris is visited by Jasper, who is keen to rekindle their romance. Iris tells him to leave. Amanda and Graham say their goodbyes, having decided the long-distance relationship will not work. Amanda changes her mind and returns to embrace him. Iris accompanies Arthur to the tribute. Miles arrives and arranges to spend New Year's Eve in London with Iris. Iris, Miles, Amanda and Graham celebrate New Year's Eve together in Surrey with Graham's children.

Unit Production Managers

Helen Pollak
UK Unit:
Paul Frit

Production Supervisors

Nicolas Stern
Ralph Bertelle
UK Unit:
Adam Browne

Production Accountants

John C.R. Catron
UK Unit:
Nathan Woods

Location Managers

Chris T. Baugh
Kevin Funston
UK Unit:
Benjamin Greenacre

2nd Unit Directors

Bruce A. Block
UK:
Vic Armstrong

Assistant Directors

1st: K.C. Colwell
2nd: Paula Case
UK Unit

Key Make-up Artist

Karen Blynder
Department Head Hair
Frida Aradöttir

Main/End Titles

Designed by
yU+co
Additional Music
Ryeland Allison

Supervising Sound Mixers

Jeffrey J. Haboush
Bill W. Benton
Supervising Sound Editors
Dennis Drummond

Film Extracts

Chariots of Fire (1981)
Driving Miss Daisy (1989)
The Mission (1986)

CAST

Cameron Diaz
Amanda Woods
Kate Winslet
Iris Simpkins

Jude Law

Graham
Jack Black
Miles

Eli Wallach

Arthur
Edward Burns
Ethan

Rufus Sewell

Jasper
Miffy Englefield
Sophie

Emma Pritchard

Olivia
around the Christmas Tree" – Brenda Lee; "Mr Brightside" – The Killers; "Toto and Alfredo"; "Projection for Two" by Ennio Morricone. Andrea Morricone; "It's a Shame" – The Spinners; "Are You Gonna Be My Girl" – Jet; "Let Go" – Frou Frou; "Christmas Waltz" – Eddie Higgins Trio; "Wade in the Water" – Ramsey Lewis Trio; "Flight of the Foo Birds" – Count Basie & His Orchestra; "Moonglow" – Claude Bolling Big Band. Stéphane Grappelli; "Got to Be Real" – Cheryl Lynn; "Ska-La-La (Make Me Happy) – Al Green; "Santa Baby" – Kylie Minogue; "Chariots of Fire" by Vangelis; "Driving Miss Daisy" by Hans Zimmer; "Tara Theme" by Max Steiner; "Theme from Jaws"; "Raider's March" by John Williams; "Mrs. Robinson"; "Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas" – Ella Fitzgerald; "Just For Now"; "You Send Me" – Aretha Franklin
Production Sound Mixer
Petur Hlidal
UK Unit Sound Mixer
Tim Fraser
Supervising Sound Mixers
Jeffrey J. Haboush
Bill W. Benton
Supervising Sound Editors
Dennis Drummond
Michael O'Farrell
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Sophie

Emma Pritchard

Olivia

Additional Editors

Richard Marks
David Moritz
Art Directors
Dan Webster

UK Unit:

Andy Nicholson
Set Designers
Robert Fechtman

UK Unit:

Al Hobbs
Julia Levine
Lauren Polizzi

Set Decorators

David Smith
Cindy Carr
UK Unit:
Anna Pinnock

Property Masters

Mychael Bates
UK Unit:
Jamie Wilkinson

Construction Co-ordinators

Jeffrey Passanante
UK Unit:
John Maher

Costume Designer

Marlene Stewart
Costume Supervisors
Lisa Lövaas

UK Unit:

Mark Ferguson
Department Head Make-up
Brad Wilder

Key Make-up Artist

Karen Blynder
Department Head Hair
Frida Aradöttir

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Sophie

Emma Pritchard

Olivia

Infamous

USA 2006

Director: Douglas McGrath

With Toby Jones, Sandra Bullock, Daniel Craig, Peter Bogdanovich

Certificate 15 117m 53s

It might prove impossible for *Infamous* to overcome the fact that it is released within a year of *Capote*, one of 2005's most admired films, and covers precisely the same ground – the writing of Truman Capote's classic true-crime novel *In Cold Blood*, about the horrific murder of the Clutter family of Kansas. Some scenes are so perfectly matched – the uncomfortable Christmas dinner at the home of detective Dewey, the momentous arrival in Kansas of captured criminals Dick Hickock and Perry Smith, Smith's violent reaction upon discovering the book's title – as to prompt feelings of *déjà vu* that drive one to distraction. But worse still, the almost inevitable comparison between the two films only heightens *Infamous'* flawed, uneven handling of the subject matter.

Where *Capote* was a consistently intense psychological study of self-destruction, *Infamous* lacks any clear direction. One minute it is a faux documentary, complete with talking heads and eye-witness accounts; then a glittery *Breakfast at Tiffany's*-style period piece, all high-society glamour and gossip; then a TV courtroom drama; then a probing film biography. When it finally turns, most unexpectedly, into a love story of all things, with Capote and murderer Perry Smith kissing (the suggestion that Truman liked a bit of rough is only hinted at in *Capote*), *Infamous'* perpetual identity crisis finally undermines the whole film. The notion that, in small-town, pre-Stonewall, Midwestern America, a flamboyantly gay New Yorker could possibly carry on a homosexual affair in a prison cell with a four-time murderer undermines the true-life documentary aspect of the film. As viewers are pushed into wholesale disbelief of the events on screen which, at first, had been presented as a kind of accurate re-enactment. Our suspicions are aroused that *Infamous* (with its hyped-

up title) is moved by a taste for scandal rather than sensitivity for its delicate subject matter, reinforcing *Infamous* as *Capote's* trashy twin.

Which is not say that *Infamous* has no redeeming moments. The parallel between the slow, deliberate killing of the Clutter family and the slow, deliberate killing of Hickock and Smith makes for intense viewing; the death sequences here are far more emotionally fraught than in *Capote*. Yet whenever *Infamous* begins to get into gear it immediately swerves towards some new, unresolved place, renewing our sense of confused dissatisfaction. Truman Capote's brilliant, witty personality comes across delightfully here, providing *Infamous* with some very funny lines. But, in this non-fiction story about the senseless murder of an entire family, the lifelong effects of childhood neglect, the prolonged torture of death row alongside the horror of public execution, and the tragic self-destruction of one of America's most talented post-war writers, *Infamous* humour feels regrettably out of place.

The film's constant mood swings also underscore the unevenness of the performances, from Sigourney Weaver's glamorous Babe Paley, delivered in pure Hollywood-diva style, to one 'interviewed' rancher who is so believable as to suddenly return us to the docudrama mode, to Toby Jones' intensely perfected, theatre-trained character study of Capote. In fact, Jones' beautifully nuanced portrayal makes Philip Seymour Hoffman's Oscar-winning performance suddenly look rather less miraculous. In contrast, Sandra Bullock's caricature depiction of Nelle Harper Lee leaves you positively aching for *Capote's* Catherine Keener. With her on/off Southern accent, Bullock's strained performance suggests she should stick to light romantic comedy; especially in the scenes where her amateurishness is directly confronted with Jones' accomplishment, the film's leading players seem to belong to two different movies. Schizophrenic as ever, *Infamous* is perpetually unable to steer a single course, positioning itself on many levels – despite occasional highs – forever in second place.

◆ Gilda Williams



Out of step: Toby Jones, Hope Davis