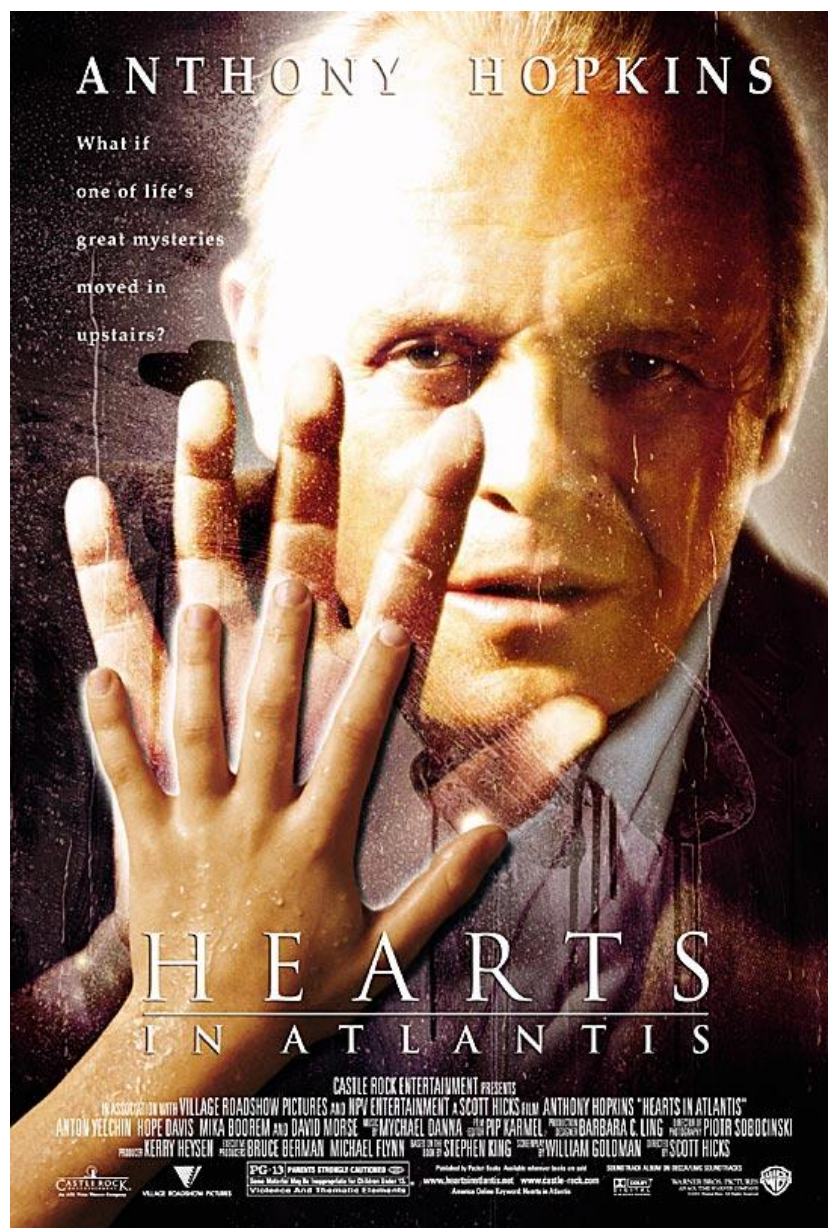


Hearts in Atlantis

US : 2001 : dir. Scott Hicks : Castle Rock / Village Roadshow : 101 min
 prod: Kerry Heysen : scr: William Goldman : dir.ph.: Piotr Sobocinski
Anton Yelchin; Mika Boorem; Wil Rothhaar
 Anthony Hopkins; David Morse; Hope Davis; Alan Tudyk; Tom Bower; Celia Weston;
 Adam Lefevre; Deirdre O'Connell; Timmy Reifsnyder

Ref:	Pages	Sources	Stills	Words	Ω 8 ∅ M ∅	Copy on VHS	Last Viewed
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After "E.T. the EXTRATERRESTRIAL" and "SCHINDLER'S LIST", haven't we just about exhausted this big hand / little hand poster motif yet?

Source for all stills except where indicated: Warner Bros.com official website



*Anton Yelchin – that's **not** Yeltsin – goes through the traditional Hollywood Bar Mitzvah of boyhood's "last summer", although from here he looks to have a year or two of boyhood still left in him.*

All Reviews.com review:

"When one thinks of author Stephen King, visions of horror and gore and things that go bump in the night are likely to follow. But there is a gentler, more heartfelt Stephen King – the man who penned the novella, "*The Body*" which was turned into the classic 1986 film "**STAND BY ME**", as well as the serial novel, "*The Green Mile*". It is this softer King that "**HEARTS IN ATLANTIS**", based on two of the stories in his anthology novel of the same name, stems from.

Directed by Scott Hicks (1999's "**SNOW FALLING ON CEDARS**"), "**HEARTS IN ATLANTIS**" is a lovingly crafted, nostalgia-filled walk through memory lane¹. It is not all sunshine and roses, however, as the dysfunction of families, the growing pains of prepubescent kids, and an underlying mystery sweep over the proceedings.

Bobby Garfield (David Morse) has returned to the quaint New England town of his childhood for the first time in almost forty years to attend the funeral of an old friend named Sully (played as a child by Will Rothhaar). Later, he learns that the girl he loved as a child, Carol, has also passed away, something that tears

Bobby up inside. Revisiting his old house, which is now broken down and boarded up, he allows his mind to drift back to 1963.

The bulk of the film is told in an elongated flashback, as young Bobby (Anton Yelchin) receives a library card instead of the bicycle he wanted for his 11th birthday from his self-centred, widowed mother (Hope Davis). Stubbornly insisting she doesn't have the money to buy him much of anything, Bobby really knows that she simply spends it all on expensive dresses for herself. Bobby's life is changed with the arrival of the enigmatic Ted Brautigan (Anthony Hopkins), a self-proclaimed "strange" retiree who moves into their upstairs apartment. Ted proposes to give Bobby one dollar each week if he will read the newspaper to him (his eyes aren't as strong as they used to be), as well as keep a lookout for any signs of "low men" – dark, dangerous figures in wide-brimmed hats who he claims are out to get him. They form a quick, close bond, all the while Bobby experiences first love [sic] with the glorious [sic] Carol Gerber (Mika Boorem), his best friend.

There are three key relationships dealt with in "**HEARTS IN ATLANTIS**" – that of Bobby and his mother, Bobby and Carol, and Bobby and Ted – of which the former two are more successful than the latter. The film,

¹ That's **down** memory lane, **down**...

unfortunately, focuses primarily on the weakest of the three, and while Anthony Hopkins (2001's "**HANNIBAL**") is his usual radiant, understated self as Ted Brautigan, the subplot involving his psychic abilities and fear of the "low men" doesn't quite fit with the more realistic sections of the picture. Slightly uneven and with too much screen time devoted to it², the fatherly bond that forms between Ted and Bobby, nonetheless, remains quietly touching.

Faring better is the lovely friendship between Bobby and Carol, which radiates the innocence [sic] and beauty of childhood first loves. A scene set atop the ferris wheel at a Coney Island carnival, as Bobby and Carol experience their first kiss, is nothing short of enchanting, and the young performers are real finds. Anton Yelchin (2001's "**ALONG CAME A SPIDER**") must carry the whole movie, as it is told from his point-of-view, and he does a wonderful job of expressing the wide-eyed savviness of a kid on the verge of becoming a teenager. Even better is Mika Boorem (also in "**ALONG CAME A SPIDER**"), a glorious standout as the angelic Carol.

Finally, the rocky mother-son relationship is one that, for once, does not feel like a cliché. Bobby's mother is not an idyllic, loving parent, and yet she isn't presented as an entirely cruel person either. Instead, screenwriter William Goldman (1999's "**THE GENERAL'S DAUGHTER**") and actress Hope Davis (1999's "**ARLINGTON ROAD**") inject Elizabeth Garfield with more dimensions; she's a flawed woman who does, indeed, care about her son, but can't help but care about herself even more.

Splendidly photographed by late cinematographer Piotr Sobocinski (2001's "**ANGEL EYES**"), for which this was his final project before his death, "**HEARTS IN ATLANTIS**" ends up packing quite a wallop by the finale, as the movie allows the viewer to recollect on their own childhood [sic]. Whether it was overall good or bad, everyone has memories of being a kid that rank up there with the best, or most carefree, times of their lives, and it's all the more sad when you finally realise you can never go back to those days.

"**HEARTS IN ATLANTIS**" has its problematic areas, and not every moment is as good as the last, but those sporadic downfalls

² Yes, we should spend more time looking at the "glorious" Mika Boorem, I guess?

do not take away the mood or powerful effect that director Scott Hicks creates as a whole. Most of all, "**HEARTS IN ATLANTIS**" leaves you with something to ponder when the lights come up – a great feat for a relatively slow moviegoing season. *** ”

– Dustin Putman

Haro Online review:

“Watch "**HEARTS IN ATLANTIS**" for the performances more than the story itself. Based on two of the short stories in Stephen King's "*Hearts in Atlantis*" collection, the movie is a nostalgic look back at childhood mixed in with some supernatural elements. Anchored by a wonderfully low-key performance by Anthony Hopkins ("**HANNIBAL**", "**Dr. SEUSS' HOW THE GRINCH STOLE CHRISTMAS**"), "**HEARTS IN ATLANTIS**" moves at a leisurely pace, evoking memories of the endless days of being a kid. It all begins when Robert Garfield (David Morse, "**PROOF OF LIFE**", "**BAIT**") returns home for a funeral of a childhood friend. This prompts him to start reminiscing about the summer when he was eleven.

That was the summer that Ted Brautigan (Hopkins) moved into his house. Brautigan was renting the room upstairs. Robert (as a youth³, played by Anton Yelchin, "**ALONG CAME A SPIDER**", "**15 MINUTES**") lived alone with his widowed mother Elizabeth (Hope Davis, "**JOE GOULD'S SECRET**", "**ARLINGTON ROAD**"). Robert's days consist of playing with his friends Carol (Mika Boorem, "**ALONG CAME A SPIDER**", "**THE PATRIOT**") and Sully (Will Rothhaar, "**LOVE AND SEX**", "**FAIL SAFE**"). Robert's dream is to get a brand new bike, but Elizabeth says that they have no money because of his father's gambling debts. Oddly enough, she has enough money to constantly buy new clothes.

Salvation for Robert comes in the form of Brautigan. He offers to pay Robert one dollar a week to read the paper. Brautigan becomes both a friend a surrogate father to Robert. Yet, he also seems distant at times. Oblivious to the world, he will stare off into space for a few moments. As the two become closer, Robert becomes more worried. Brautigan confides in him that mysterious "low men" are looking for him, and Robert begins noticing some peculiarities about Brautigan's behavior, and his spells become longer. William Goldman's

³ Or "boy", as we say in English...

("THE GENERAL'S DAUGHTER", "ABSOLUTE POWER") adaptation retains the spirit of the source material. This is all about a boy turning into a man. Yelchin gives a surprisingly good performance that never wavers, except for some emotional points near the end that he does not handle that well. It's fine, because it would be hard for anybody his age to do so. Davis is also good, although at times it feels as if she is reacting to events around her instead of acting.

Robert must deal with everything that young boys must deal with. Girls, loss, and learning that one's parents are not always perfect. Director Scott Hicks ("SNOW FALLING ON CEDARS", "SHINE") brings all this together delicately, almost too delicately at times. In wanting to capture the emotion of the characters, Hicks lets the pace of the movie wander. The character development is there, but there does not seem to be much depth to the story. Plotlines are underdeveloped and never fully fleshed out, leaving audiences with a sense of something missing. Haro Rates It: *Not Bad.*"

San Francisco Examiner review:

"For some reason, that old stigma – that movies based on Stephen King novels stink – still stands today despite such marvellous films as De Palma's "CARRIE", Kubrick's "THE SHINING", Cronenberg's "THE DEAD ZONE", Rob Reiner's "STAND BY ME" and "MISERY" and Frank Darabont's "THE SHAWSHANK REDEMPTION". I think it's because the stigma for horror films in general still stands, and most people feel the need to put them down in favour of real "art." ⁴

The newest film based on a King book is "HEARTS IN ATLANTIS". Like "STAND BY ME", "THE SHAWSHANK REDEMPTION" and "THE GREEN MILE", it's not concerned with supernatural horrors but more the everyday horrors of growing up, growing old and dying. It's directed by Scott Hicks, the slick prestige director behind such lovely and empty films as "SHINE" and "SNOW FALLING ON CEDARS". But this time the material is there, and Hicks' knack for gazing thoughtfully at actors' faces and getting the feel of the seasons works.

⁴ Actually it's because the majority of King adaptations *have* been crap, as the author himself was the first to admit, in "Danse Macabre"

Anthony Hopkins stars as the main object of Hicks' gaze, a mysterious old fellow named Ted who moves into the empty upstairs unit belonging to Bobby Garfield (Anton Yelchin) and his mother (Hope Davis). Bobby is a typical kid who has fun with his best friends (Mika Boorem and Will Rothhaar) in the summer of 1960 (the movie loads up the soundtrack with a typical selection of pop tunes to define the era). But at home with his divorced mother, it's a different story. Constantly short of money except when she needs a new dress for work, Bobby suffers the consequences, getting a library card for his 11th birthday instead of the bike he's been longing for.

That's where Ted comes in. By offering Bobby a job reading to him, Ted gives him the chance to earn some money and to exercise his youthful imagination. As part of the job, Ted asks Bobby to keep a watch out for "men in yellow coats" who drive sports cars and post flyers on telephone poles. These men will eventually come to take Ted away, we're told. Ted also has weird attacks, where he withdraws and stares into space for long moments. Ted seems odd and dangerous⁵, but he fascinates the young Bobby.

As adapted by master scribe William Goldman ("THE PRINCESS BRIDE" and "MISERY"), the film works for a long time by playing with Ted's impending mystery. And Hopkins helps things immensely with his usual gleefully sinister performance. Goldman also devises a lovely wraparound sequence showing the adult Bobby (played by the wonderful David Morse) revisiting his home town and his childhood.

Likewise, the film deals with several unconnected yet resonant "coming of age" scenes – such as dealing with a vicious, repressed bully – that remind us of the superior "STAND BY ME".

But as the film winds down Goldman blatantly releases the mystery, and everything becomes too literal and loses momentum. What we initially imagined is a far cry from what we actually get. (1999's "THE GREEN MILE" suffered from the same problem, unable to sustain the magic from the first hour all the way to its third.)

⁵ Dangerous? To whom does he seem dangerous?

Fortunately, before the credits roll, we go back to Morse again and the film ends on a high note. And though the mystery – the film's real draw – turns out to be less than it seemed at first, the theme of childhood loss still hits home with a beautiful ache.”

– Jeffrey M. Anderson

Warner Bros.com website synopsis:

“For middle-aged photographer Bobby Garfield (David Morse), the past comes kicking the door down one day when the death of a childhood friend beckons him back to the town of his upbringing, and the memory of his 11th summer in 1960.

It's a summer of friendship shared with his closest pals, Carol (Mika Boorem) and Sully (Will Rothhaar), and marked by the arrival of a new lodger, Ted Brautigan (Anthony Hopkins) in the upstairs apartment of the boarding house where Bobby lives with his self-obsessed mother, Liz (Hope Davis).

Bobby's memory of his long-dead father is clouded by his mother's bitterness, but Ted fills the gap, offering him adult friendship and attention, and helping to open the boy's eyes to a bigger world.

But Ted brings with him too a haunted past, and strange powers which both puzzle and alarm Bobby. When he offers Bobby a job, it's more than simply reading the paper to save the old man's failing eyes – Ted enlists the boy to help him avoid a powerful danger that's pursuing him.

As the last summer of Bobby's childhood draws to a close⁶, Ted gives him a new understanding of his father, and the possibilities of life and love, before events overtake them all. Ted's pursuers close in, forcing Bobby to find depths of courage and forgiveness he never imagined.

And for the adult Bobby, revisiting his childhood home and the memories of a summer long gone, a chance encounter completes the circle of his journey back in time.

Castle Rock Entertainment presents, in association with Village Roadshow Pictures

⁶ *Who says the eleventh summer is “the last one of childhood”?*

and NPV Entertainment, **"HEARTS IN ATLANTIS"**, a drama about love, courage and the enduring bonds of friendship directed by Academy Award nominee Scott Hicks (**"SHINE"**, **"SNOW FALLING ON CEDARS"**) from a screenplay by Oscar winner William Goldman (**"BUTCH CASSIDY AND THE SUNDANCE KID"**, **"MISERY"**) based on the best-selling book by Stephen King. Oscar winner Anthony Hopkins (**"SILENCE OF THE LAMBS"**, **"HANNIBAL"**, **"THE REMAINS OF THE DAY"**) stars, along with Anton Yelchin (**"ALONG CAME A SPIDER"**, **"15 MINUTES"**), Hope Davis (**"MUMFORD"**, **"NEXT STOP WONDERLAND"**), Mika Boorem (**"ALONG CAME A SPIDER"**, **"THE PATRIOT"**), David Morse (**"PROOF OF LIFE"**, **"THE GREEN MILE"**), Alan Tudyk (**"A KNIGHT'S TALE"**), Tom Bower (**"POLLOCK"**), Celia Weston (**"SNOW FALLING ON CEDARS"**), Adam Lefevre (**"YOU CAN COUNT ON ME"**), Will Rothhaar (CBS's **"ON GOLDEN POND"**, **"JACK FROST"**), Deirdre O'Connell (**"CITY OF ANGELS"**) and Timmy Reifsnyder (**"FINDING FORRESTER"**).

The producer is Kerry Heysen (**"SNOW FALLING ON CEDARS"**). The executive producers are Bruce Berman (**"THE MATRIX"**, **"ANALYZE THIS"**) and Michael Flynn (**"REMEMBER THE TITANS"**, **"PUSHING TIN"**). The late Piotr Sobocinski (**"RED"**, **"RANSOM"**) was the director of photography. Barbara C Ling (**"RANDOM HEARTS"**, **"BATMAN & ROBIN"**) is the production designer. The film editor is Pip Karmel (**"SHINE"**). Julie Weiss (**"AMERICAN BEAUTY"**, **"12 MONKEYS"**) is the costume designer. Mychael Danna (**"THE ICE STORM"**, **"THE SWEET HEREAFTER"**) is the composer.

"HEARTS IN ATLANTIS" is distributed worldwide by Warner Bros. Pictures, an AOL Time Warner Company and, in select territories, by Village Roadshow Pictures. Castle Rock Entertainment is an AOL Time Warner Company. This film has been rated PG-13 by the Motion Picture Association of America for "violence and thematic scenes⁷." "

⁷ *Whatever **that** bit of gibberish might mean*

[**no listing** in "Leonard Maltin's Movie and Video Guide 2001" or "Radio Times Guide to Films"]

No further information currently available

See also "**BADKONAK-E SEFID**" and "**BASHU**" - both recent Iranian films, and subject index under **ARAB WORLD / MIDDLE EAST**.