

Plenty of refreshing twists during 'Breaking In'

NEW YORK (CNS) — A buddy caper movie with some refreshing twists, "Breaking In" (Goldwyn) has no violence, no excessive profanity and no car chases.

And if this sounds too good to be true, you'll be floored to discover that it stars Burt Reynolds, who plays against type as a gray-haired, low-key career thief.

In a delightful departure on all counts, the film follows the nutty exploits of Ernie (Reynolds), a professional safecracker, and Mike (Casey Siemaszko), Ernie's naive protege. When the two men meet accidentally on the job — young and lonely Mike rotates tires for a living but enjoys breaking into houses to raid their refrigerators — Ernie takes Mike under his wing and teaches him the tricks of the safecracking trade.

A sculptor by day, Ernie trains Mike in the fine art of nitro manufacture, how to case a job and how to maintain a respectable cover.

Reynolds is excellent and touching as the aging artisan Ernie, who sees his career slowly drawing to a close and Mike as his means to rejuvenating the dying trade that is fast taking a back seat to electronic and mob-controlled crime.

Siemaszko (a standout in "Young Guns") is equally appealing as a wide-eyed, goofy young man in need of direction and a father figure. Unlike Reynolds' recent movies with female co-stars, this movie shows actual chemistry between Reynolds and Siemaszko.

Directed in gentle, serio-comic fashion by Scottish director Bill Forsyth ("Local Hero") and written by John Sayles ("Eight Men Out"), "Breaking In" focuses more on its two fringe protagonists than crime. Although they live off the financial fruits



Burt Reynolds (right) and Casey Siemaszko star as an aging professional safecracker and a young apprentice in "Breaking In."

of others, they're basically harmless guys. But since Forsyth never romanticizes their behavior or turns them into heroes at final fade, "Breaking In" has a ring of truth that is refreshing and entertaining.

Due to some locker-room language laced with sexual vulgarities and clearly suggested sexual hanky panky with prostitutes, the U.S. Catholic Conference classification is A-III — adults. The Motion Picture Association of America rating is R — restricted.

My Left Foot

Dramatizing the life story of Irish-writer Christy Brown (1932-1981), "My Left Foot" (Miramax) is a powerful movie.

One of 22 children born to a Dublin bricklayer and his wife (13 survived),

Brown was severely handicapped by cerebral palsy. Doctors advised his impoverished parents to institutionalize their handicapped child since he was predicted to be no more than a vegetable.

His mother refused to part with the boy; and this film, a first feature for Irish director/co-writer Jim Sheridan, zeroes in on how Brown and his close-knit Irish-Catholic family triumphed over the disability.

Brilliantly acted by both Hugh O'Connor (Brown as a boy) and Daniel Day-Lewis (from age 17 up), Brown is shown truly to be a product of his extraordinarily ordinary environment and especially his mother's undying love and encouragement.

Despite his contorted body and distorted speech, Brown was always perfect in the eyes of his patient, ever-pregnant mother (Brenda Fricker). Mrs. Brown never gave up hope for her special son, no matter that the child was constantly ridiculed as a neighborhood idiot. She somehow sensed the raging intelligence bottled up inside his young, twisted body.

Thanks to the sensitivity of its writer-director and the acting brilliance of O'Connor and Day-Lewis ("The Unbearable Lightness of Being"), one will have to look far and wide to find a more insightful portrait of a handicapped individual's life.

"My Left Foot" traces Browns's evolution from a virtual house pet whose first frustrating attempts to communicate with his family were stymied to his eventual use of his left foot to draw, paint and type books that led him to become one of Ireland's foremost literary and artistic figures.

Due to some violence, rough language and sexual innuendo, the USCC classification is A-III — adults. The Motion Picture Association of America rating is R — restricted.

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Edward R. Murrow
October 15, 1958

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