

# 'Boyz N the Hood' paints convincing picture

NEW YORK (CNS) — A harrowing look at three black youths struggling just to make it to manhood in a violence-shattered neighborhood is depicted realistically in *Boyz N the Hood* (Columbia).

Convinced her only son needs a male role model, Reva (Angela Bassett) sends 10-year-old Tre (Desi Arnez Hines II) back to her estranged husband, Furious Style (Larry Fishburne), who lives in drug-infested South Central Los Angeles. Tre thrives on his father's strict discipline while his best friends, Ricky (Donovan McCrary) and his plump half-brother, Doughboy (Baha Jackson), have only the shrill attentions of their single mom (Tyra Ferrell).

Seven years later Tre (Cuba Gooding Jr.) is preparing for college; Ricky (Morris Chestnut), already a father, is skeptically eyeing a football scholarship; and gun-toting Doughboy (Ice Cube) has surrendered to drink and drugs in their worsening neighborhood.

Nights are most problematic with studying nearly impossible under the racket of



Columbia Pictures Industries, Inc.  
Cuba Gooding (from left), Larry Fishburne and rap star Ice Cube star in *Boyz N the Hood*, a powerful drama about black youths coming of age in urban America.

overhead helicopters, nearby gang gunfire and the never-ending wail of police sirens.

A gang of toughs challenges Ricky one fateful evening, setting in motion a fatal chain of events that bears testimony to the statistic that mindless violence kills one in every 21 young black males in America.

In his first movie, writer-director John Singleton gets across a loud-and-clear message that parents, especially men, must take more responsibility for guiding and raising sons, who face tremendous temptations in urban ghettos.

The movie vigorously fleshes out the three teens and their single parents in both mundane situations and emotional scenes.

Subtlety is at a premium, however, as the tone is often preachy. This is especially true in the character of Tre's father (Fishburne), an almost too-good-to-be-true, stand-up guy who delivers many of the film's lectures about doing the right thing.

Violence, drug and alcohol abuse never are glamorized. On the contrary, the images of dying boys and female addicts so desperate for a fix they ignore their babies have a haunting quality that cries out for greater attention to the problem of children having children.

The movie takes a strong law-abiding, pro-education, pro-family stance, but viewers may be put off by its equating condom use with sexual responsibility — abstinence is never mentioned as a choice.

What stands out is the film's convincing portrayal of the horrifying living conditions that face urban blacks and the human toll it takes them, as promiscuity, substance abuse and random violence intensify among the young in the inner city.

Due to excessive rough language and gutter talk; repeated, mindless violence; drug and alcohol abuse and brief bedroom shots with flashes of nudity, the USCC classification is A-IV — adults, with reservations.

## Film ponders question of post-war accountability

NEW YORK (CNS) — Opening in late 1945 on an Indonesian island, *Prisoners of the Sun* (Skouras) shows what happens after the remains of more than 300 Australian prisoners of war have just been discovered.

In attempting to gather evidence against the accused Japanese officers and soldiers, hard-driving Aussie trial lawyer Capt. Robert Cooper (Bryan Brown) runs into obstacles on all sides. His supervisor (John Bach) seems uninterested while a U.S. major (Terry O'Quinn) seems more than interested in seeing that Baron Takahashi (George Takei), the top Japanese officer, gets away with murder. Meanwhile, the

Japanese involved are silent, stoic and stick together.

Denying all wrongdoing, the baron is acquitted for lack of evidence and smugly returns to Tokyo with the relieved American major. Undeterred, Cooper builds a case against the baron's second-in-command, Capt. Ikeuchi (Tetsu Watanabe). Breaking the code of silence, a witness (Toshi Shioya) implicates the baron and Ikeuchi, who promptly commits harakiri.

Cooper gradually discerns that there is a secret agenda involving the baron's political role in rebuilding postwar Japan. Will Cooper's cry for justice for the hundreds of

unnecessary POW deaths be deliberately ignored, or will one honor-bound Japanese witness speak out?

Australian director Stephen Wallace's fact-based drama meticulously gathers the threads of its story, weaving them together slowly until they simmer in the courtroom climax and the everyone-loses ending.

While less than riveting, *Prisoners of the Sun* does eventually personalize crucial questions of loyalty and ultimate responsibility in one character's decision to risk his life to preserve his integrity.

Due to some wartime violence and some rough language, the USCC classification is A-II — adults and adolescents.

## SPECIAL ADVERTISING PROMOTION

### View historic chapel at Ottawa gallery

By David Warner

It has been said that when one door closes, another opens.

Sometimes it may take time and persistence before that other door gives way. But what a revelation when it does.

A case in point is the Rideau Street Convent Chapel, a significant restoration in the center of the National Gallery of Canada in Ottawa, Canada's beautiful capital city and a popular tourist destination.

Built in 1888, the chapel originally was part of the Convent of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart, a girls' school administered by the Sisters of Charity (formerly the Grey Nuns of the Cross).

Featuring an unique example of French-Canadian ecclesiastical architecture, the chapel was saved from a wrecker's ball at the 11th hour, although the convent itself was demolished in 1972.

The chapel's dismantled fragments lay in storage until 1984, when a restoration team took over. The various components were identified and inventoried. Destroyed elements were reproduced, and accurate drawings prepared for reconstruction and installation of the chapel.

The reconstruction work took four years, and in 1988, almost exactly 100 years after its original dedication, the restored chapel was unveiled with its original altars and ornate altar screen. It is the only known 19th-century ecclesiastical interior in North America to feature a neo-Gothic fan-vaulted ceiling supported by slim iron columns. It also marks the first time in Canada that such an installation has

been conceived in a museum.

The National Gallery is an elegant, airy, glass structure that is the nation's showcase of painting and sculpture. Ottawa, with its thousands of acres of greenery, has a parkland atmosphere unlike any other capital city in the world. In springtime, thousands of tulips — commemorating Canada's aid to Holland during World War II — provide a breathtaking blaze of color, marking another reason for the city's popularity among Rochesterians and other upstate New Yorkers.

The Rideau Canal, flowing through the heart of the city, becomes alive with pleasure boat cruises in summer. In winter, the canal is a focal point for Winterlude, a carnival featuring sports events, exhibits and entertainment.

During July and August, the Governor General's Foot Guards and the Canadian Grenadier Guards — wearing scarlet tunics, bearskin hats, boots, and spurs — perform the "Changing of the Guard" ceremony daily at 10 a.m. on Parliament Hill. Tours are offered at the House of Commons, the Speaker's Chamber, the Senate Chamber and the beautiful building that houses the Parliamentary Library.

Ottawa offers good and varied choices among entertainment events, trendy wine bars and cuisine of all descriptions.

More detailed information on Ottawa and its attractions can be obtained from Ottawa Tourism Convention Authority, 2nd floor, 111 Lisgar St., Ottawa Ontario K2P 2L7.

To get your upcoming trip listed, send information to: Going Places, Catholic Courier, 1150 Buffalo Road, Rochester, NY 14624. If you would like to advertise your travel agency or related service in this monthly section, call the Courier's advertising department at 716/328-4340.

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